

STMA introduces Innovative Awards Program for Commercial members

STMA recognizes that new technology and advancements in science, equipment, products and services continue to improve the sports turf management profession. To acknowledge those companies that are leading the evolution of the industry, STMA has created the Innovative Awards Program.

Any STMA Commercial member who is exhibiting at the upcoming Annual Conference and Exhibition is eligible. The company must display the product, service or technology at the STMA Exhibition. One submittal per company is allowed annually.

To qualify the product, equipment, service or technology must have been introduced for sale between the close of the current year's STMA show and the close of next year's STMA show. To be considered for the STMA Innovative

Awards the product, equipment, service or technology must *substantially enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Sports Turf Manager while making playing surfaces safer and more playable for athletes.*

Applications are due October 1, 2010. All submittals must be made electronically. Please follow the directions noted on the form that can be found at www.STMA.org, Awards page. Videos, photos and other media may be linked to the form for a comprehensive submittal.

The selection process consists of a panel of STMA non-commercial members representing all categories of membership to judge the entries. In any given year, there may be one or more winners. The panel of judges will make an award to those companies whose service, product, technology or equipment thoroughly meets

the definition of innovative described above.

The winner(s) will be kept confidential until announced during the first day of the trade show at the Annual Conference (Austin, TX January 13, 2011). STMA will recognize the winner(s) with:

- a special announcement during the trade show
- a special logo that the company can use in the promotion of the winning product, service, technology or equipment
- publicity via STMA communication vehicles and conference press releases
- special signage at the winner(s) booth(s) in the STMA Exhibition.
- verbal and visual recognition during the Annual STMA Awards Banquet. ■

Ask a CSFM Brian Winka, CSFM, City of Chesterfield, MO

Benefits of certification verified

Editor's note: For the next six issues we will present how becoming a Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM) can benefit turf managers professionally as well as improve their facilities.

HOW DID YOU PREPARE FOR THE CERTIFIED SPORTS FIELD MANAGER EXAM?

*Winka: I pulled out old text books and notes I had from my time at Missouri State. It's not a time to try and relearn everything, but a refresher course never hurts. I also read the book *Sports Fields: A Manual for Design Construction and Maintenance* from cover to cover, a couple times. If there was one book I would recommend that would be the one.*

HOW DID YOU APPROACH YOUR EMPLOYER TO SUPPORT YOUR CERTIFICATION, BOTH FINANCIALLY AND IN THE TIME NEEDED TO PREPARE FOR THE EXAM?

Winka: My employer was very supportive of the certification process, financially and initially in allowing me the time to study. I was able to discuss the benefits of having a CSFM on staff and my department head was very receptive. Preparing for the exam greatly expanded my knowledge base, and I was able to apply this knowledge directly to my job responsibilities. My certification helped me add to the continued improvement of our facilities.

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO PURSUE CERTIFICATION?

Winka: For me becoming certified was a personal and professional goal that I had set for myself since becoming a STMA member. Professionally I wanted to be seen as a knowledgeable professional and personally I wanted to challenge myself and my abilities as a sports field manager. I wanted to validate my years of experience as an agronomist, sports field manager, accountant, HR person, referee and everything else that we as STMA members deal with daily.

HOW HAS CERTIFICATION HELPED YOUR CAREER?

Winka: Since becoming a CSFM I have been elected to the board of my local STMA chapter and currently serve as the President of the Gateway Chapter. ■

