
EXPLORING EQUIPMENT

Getting Your Shop Together

Like the rooms in a home, each room or dedicated space in a maintenance facility has a specific-yet-simple purpose. Simplicity translates to improved organization, which in turn means keeping everything in a certain place. For this reason, the basic maintenance shop often includes the following dedicated rooms or spaces:

Superintendent's office. Superintendents and sports turf managers deal with employees and vendors daily. Their offices don't have to be "plush," but they do have to be large and *private* enough for small meetings.

Mechanic's area. Organization is of pivotal importance to a mechanic, which means mechanics need *dedicated* space. These areas should include lockable tool storage, work benches, parts inventory and storage systems, hoists, air compressors, etc.

Equipment storage area. Equipment protected from the elements lasts longer. The equipment storage space should be set-up so equipment used daily is easily accessible. Doors should be tall and wide enough so that equipment can be moved in and out efficiently. They should also be lockable. "Roll-up" doors are a common choice.

Computer room. Large or small, computer rooms *must* be climate-controlled. Computer reliability and durability have improved over the years, but temperature extremes are still the worst enemy of these high-tech machines, whether they're used to control irrigation or for scheduling maintenance crews.

Tool and supply room. Best located near the mechanic's area, this space can be used to store large tools, wheeled tool boxes, and other supplies (excluding pesticides, fertilizers, and other chemicals). This room should also be lockable.

Fertilizer storage area. Dry fertilizers should palletized and kept off the floor. Depending on local EPA restrictions, these areas may require a concrete gutter to capture spills. The area should be accessible to forklifts if applicable.

Chemical storage area. This may be the most sensitive area on the site. Like those of the fertilizer storage area, legal requirements will vary from locality to locality. Your local EPA office can furnish the necessary specific information and requirements.

The area must be separate from other areas of the facility and *lockable*. Shelves can be used to keep small containers of chemicals in order. Larger containers should be stored on the floor—always concrete and usually incorporating a spill gutter of some sort (Again, consult your local EPA office for specific requirements on chemical mixing and storage.)

The chemical storage area should include a place for mixing. In this area, all safety devices and tools needed for measuring and weighing materials should be well-organized and readily available. A solid, sturdy table for mixing is a must.

On a related note, employees should always wear protective apparel when working with chemicals. A shower and eye wash station should be in the room in the event of accidents or spills. Absorbent pillows and other spill clean-up and containment devices should be within quick, easy reach.

Irrigation parts storage area. Time spent simply "looking for things," particularly items used everyday, is time wasted. Irrigation parts are often small and easily lost or mixed haphazardly with one another. Labeled shelves and bins for commonly needed parts are a great idea. For easy reference, manuals can be stored on shelves above a study workbench. The work area itself should be well lit and should include an electrical outlet. Testing equipment and repair tools should be kept (locked) in this area as well. If the "irrigation man" uses a utility vehicle, it would be ideal if the area was accessible to the vehicle.

Lunch room/employee area. Employees need a place to take a break out of the elements. Like the superintendent's office, this area doesn't have to be plush—it just has to be functional and clean.

Tables, chairs, and a bulletin board for posting information are necessary. Refrigerators, hot plates, microwave ovens, and vending machines are nice additions.

Seed storage area. Seed must be stored in a cool dry place, away from chemicals. Bags should be stored off the ground, on shelves or pallets. Enough space for seed priming drums and pregermination bags should be allotted.

Practical Improvements

Should you "inherit" a maintenance facility in need of serious improvement, chances are you won't be able to start from "ground zero." But that doesn't mean you have to live with chaos. There are several inexpensive steps you can take to improve the situation.

One of the most basic problems in maintenance facilities is space — there isn't enough of it to create these specialized areas. Prefabricated metal storage buildings can help solve your space problems.

Organizational problems are less easily solved. They often have more to do with human behavior than maintenance facility design and layout. Assuming that you have a *place for everything* (dedicated spaces, well-marked bins, shelves, cabinets, tool boards, etc.), the challenge is to encourage all employees to put *everything in its place*. Make all employees accountable for returning their equipment to its proper place, as well as cleaning and maintaining it. You may want to create a set schedule for clean-up and organizational activities.

Tough situations rarely get better overnight, and a maintenance facility in disarray is no exception. Try to be patient and pragmatic, and make improvements gradually. Your problems may have less to do with allotted space and more to do with organization, but it probably took time to get that way. It will certainly take time to sort it all out. □

ROOKIES

PRODUCT UPDATE

Mid-Sized Topdresser



The model 75TD topdresser/spreader from Millcreek is rugged, affordable, easy to operate and versatile. Featuring patented PowerBrush™ spreading action, the 75TD applies a wide variety of materials to turf, including sand-and-peat topdressing, compost and more.

It has a 2-cubic-yard capacity, and operates behind a 24 horsepower compact tractor. It is PTO driven, with an engine drive option available. The high-density polyethylene flooring made from recycled milk cartons, is guaranteed for 10 years.

MILLCREEK MANUFACTURING

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AFG™ Attachments.

The Kromer Co. is proud to introduce AFG™ (Athletic Field Groomer) attachments for three-point-hitch tractors used for grooming ball fields. These attachments consist of a spring-tooth harrow, a leveling blade and a broom for producing a finished playing surface. A drag mat also may be used for breaking up clumps and finish grooming. Fits on Cat-0 through Cat-II, three-point-hitch tractors.

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Sports Turf Managers Association

Get Serious.

Are you ready to get serious about the sports turf industry? Then it's time to become a member of the Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA).

Who we Are

STMA is an organization of professionals representing all segments of the sports turf industry. Our members work to combine the science of growing grass and the art of maintaining sports turf to produce playing fields that are both safe and aesthetically pleasing.

What's in STMA for You

We help you — the sports turf professional — do your job better. Here are the benefits STMA provides its members:

- ◆ An opportunity to share knowledge and expertise for better and safer sports turf areas
- ◆ A resource library of valuable technical information
- ◆ Education through the STMA National Conference and Trade Show, regional institutes and workshops
- ◆ A subscription to *Sports Turf Manager*, the STMA bi-monthly newsletter
- ◆ Facilities tours
- ◆ Support for sports turf research
- ◆ A National Awards Program
- ◆ An Annual Membership Directory to keep you in touch with your peers
- ◆ Scholarships for students with an interest in sports turf technology
- ◆ Participation in STMA Chapter meetings
- ◆ Complimentary subscription to *sportsTURF Magazine*
- ◆ Registration discounts for STMA events

Get serious about your profession. Complete the membership application below and join STMA today!

Get Serious With STMA

Application for Membership

The Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) is an organization of professionals representing all segments of the sports turf industry. Our members work to combine the science of growing grass and the art of maintaining sports turf to produce playing fields that are both safe and aesthetically pleasing.

STMA provides members with a variety of benefits, including: Education through regional institutes and conferences; support for sports turf research; facilities tours; a national awards program; access to the STMA National Conference and Exhibition; complimentary subscriptions to *Sports Turf Manager* and *sportsTURF Magazine*; and much more.

If you're serious about the sports turf industry, then it's time to become a member of STMA. Join today!

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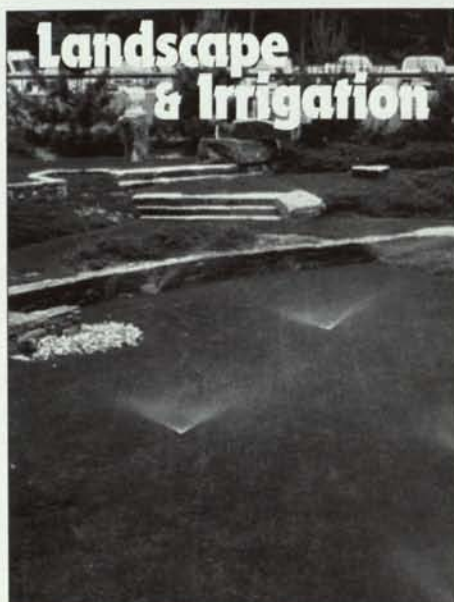
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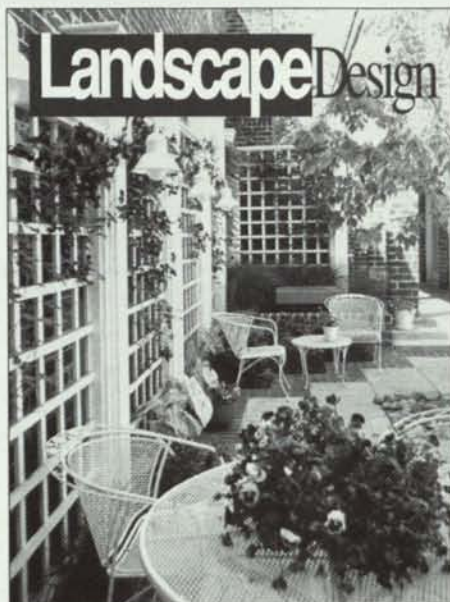
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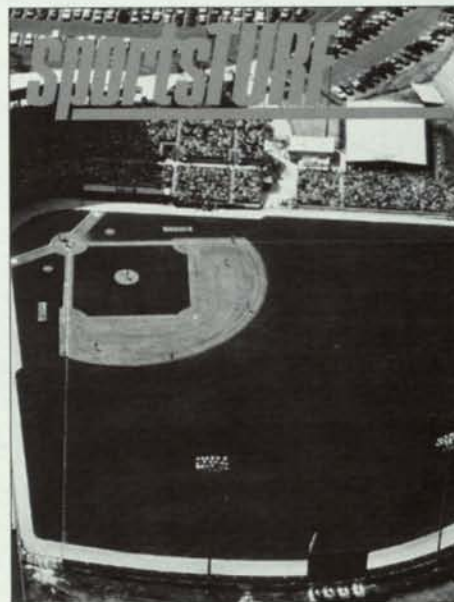
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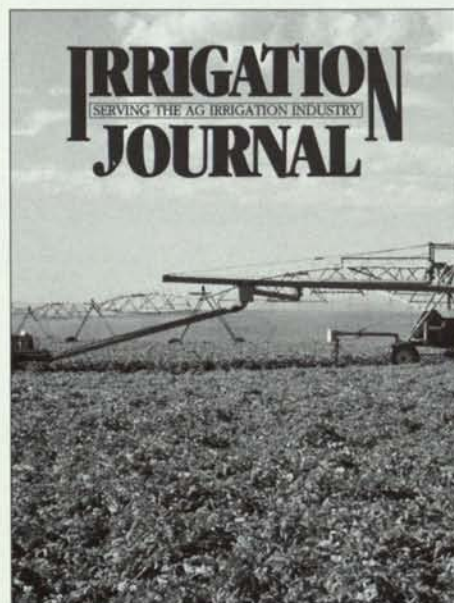
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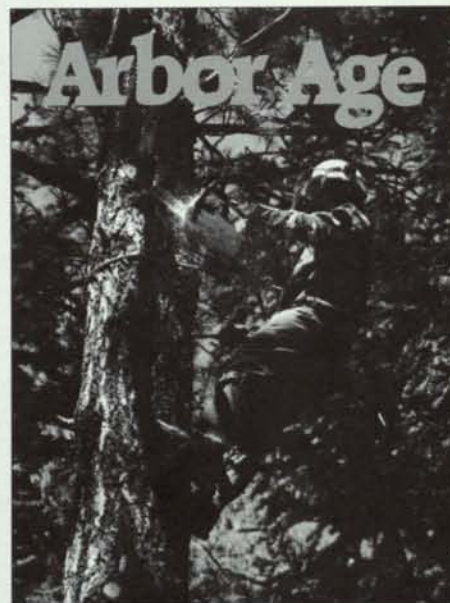
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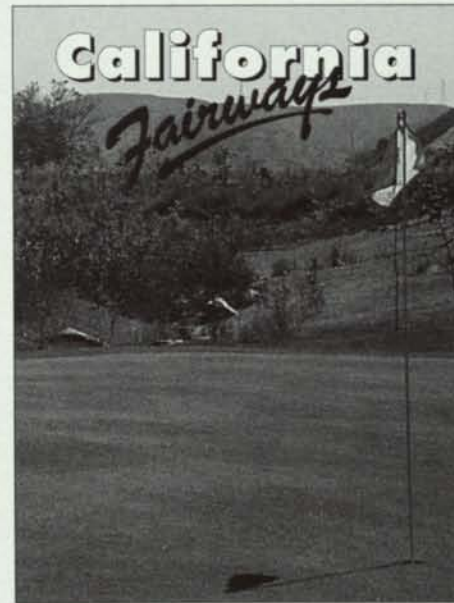
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