

Cleaner ponds now — advice from the experts

SPORTSTURF asked several nationally known vendors to share their advice on how you can make your ponds cleaner.

Respondents include: Terry Loucks, chief operating officer at Anderson BioSystems LLC; Bud Laidlaw, Western regional manager, and Steve Blackshire, Southeast regional manager, from Otterbine Barebo, Inc.

Say I'm a turf manager taking over responsibility for a dirty pond; what can I do immediately to begin cleaning it up?

Loucks: That is a complex question, but I will try to make the answer short and concise. The first issue is aquatic management is no different than turf management in that it took time to get this problem and it will take time to correct it. The reason ponds get hard to manage is due to the nutrient loading from fertilizer runoff.

The correct solution can be to approach the problem in two potential ways. The first is to not address the root problem and use a chemical like alum that will clear the pond but will not address aquatic weeds. You then can kill the aquatic weeds with aquatic herbicide, but this is short term; the problem will be back within a month or so. The other solution is to use an all-natural microbial product that will clarify the pond as well as control the nutrient loading. Microbial products take time to correct the problem; the amount of time is dependent on the severity of the problem.

Laidlaw: Poor conditions are symptoms of a problem that did not happen overnight, and understanding the cause of the symptoms is important and should guide you as you go forward. Certainly chemicals can be used to kill existing aquatic growth, but it's important to know that aquatic plants and algae thrive in ponds and lakes rich in nutrients, and when you kill the targeted plant life it goes to the bottom and becomes a nutrient source

for future aquatic growth.

Manual or mechanical removal of as much of the plant life as possible from the pond would be preferable, although budget constraints may limit this option, and chemical applications may be your only alternative. Lake dye may provide some immediate aesthetic relief, in addition to helping block the sun's rays from reaching the bottom of the pond. But once this is done, developing a comprehensive plan to minimize future nutrient availability in your pond by way of aeration, nutrient barriers, or microbial enhancement can all help minimize future plant growth.

Blackshire: In a dirty pond situation, assuming "dirty" to mean silty or turbid water, I would immediately "color" the water with an environmentally approved dye. The dye will mask the turbidity or cloudiness almost immediately as well as give a fresh look to the pond.

Maintenance budgets are tight. What's your recommendation for achieving a cleaner pond economically?

Laidlaw: The best way is to understand the requirements for a healthy pond ecosystem, and to begin with a well planned pond design, making sure that the depth, shape, and configuration of the pond is conducive to minimum maintenance and expense. Where budgets allow, hiring a good water feature design company can make all the difference in saving you money in the long run.

Ponds should be deep enough to keep the sun's rays from reaching the bottom of the pond. A minimum of twelve to fifteen feet is most desirable. This will also allow you the option of using a diffused air system for aeration, which is the least expensive type. Small coves and protrusions of land out into the pond can limit natural circulation and provide water management challenges. A littoral shelf can help limit the amount of nutrients that make their way into the main body of your pond. And it's



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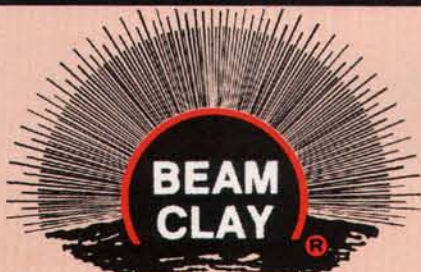
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around the grounds

important during fertilization to try to keep fertilizers from reaching your pond. Run-off is one of the main sources of nutrients in a pond. Minimizing this possibility where you can could also help reduce pond maintenance costs. In a man-made pond, natural processes need to be supplemented, and aeration is key to providing an oxygen rich environment, which will allow the aerobic bacteria to compete effectively for the nutrients in the pond.

Loucks: The most economical approach is to address the issue before the problem appears. Start first thing in the spring using a natural microbial product and the cost is reasonable. If you wait until a severe problem develops then the first-year cost will be much higher.

Blackshire: Economical pond management is a commitment to a daily routine and awareness of what's happening with the pond. Too many times the pond is left with no regard until it becomes an eyesore instead of an asset to the property. Once the pond loses its "eco-balance" or appeal it may be too late for a "tight budget" to turn it around. An awareness of what "feeds" the pond, like culvert drains, sewers and even runoff from surrounding areas all play a major role in your ponds health. That's why maintaining buffer zones is a must. A fertilization buffer zone say 30 feet or more from the pond's edge will help keep extra nutrients from entering the pond. Keeping mowing and weed eating to a minimum around the pond will help eliminate grass clippings, another source of nutrients, from entering

the pond's ecosystem. Keeping the water shaded or colored as a "sun block" will help keep the water temperature down as well as keep the sun light off the bottom minimizing any bottom rooted weeds. And of course some type of aeration system to help balance the pond's water chemistry is a must. A Lease-Purchase is a way when there is a tight budget to obtain the necessary equipment and service to maintain your pond. The cost in a lease becomes operational instead of a capital expense.

How much time and manpower should a turf manager budget for successfully maintaining clean ponds?

Loucks: This is dependent on the severity of the problem. In most cases during the warm weather months 6 hours per week should be scheduled.

Blackshire: Time and manpower to maintain a clean pond is minimal when the practices become routine as it is for the turf care. Pretty much running an aerator around the clock will provide much of what the pond needs to help itself maintain an ecological balance. Keeping the water shaded and colored is another way to support the pond and help keep the water temperature down. Maybe a monthly practice of minimal chemical applications to help address some of the algae and weed issues that may happen during the hotter times of the year. Minimizing runoff and nutrient loading in the pond will also help in maintaining a clean and healthy pond. **ST**

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The Professional Grounds Management Society (PGMS) has announced its faculty and curriculum for the 2005 School of Professional Grounds Management, November 2-5 at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando. The School is held in conjunction with the Green Industry Expo and the Professional Landcare Network's (PLANET) annual conference.

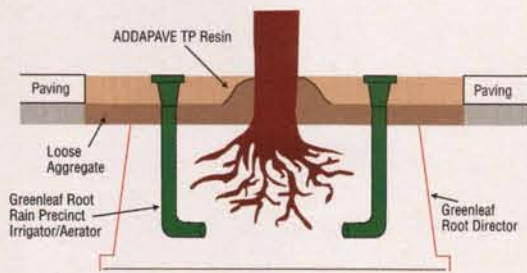
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Pioneer Manufacturing has launched its 9th annual Fields of Excellence contest to recognize outstanding athletic fields and the crews who maintain them. The contest is open to any institution or organization that regularly maintains an athletic field and feels they deserve recognition. Winners will receive a four-color banner and framed certificate, and a few winners also will receive scholarships to be used by their schools.

Entries must be postmarked by December 31, 2005. Pioneer encourages you to call them for assistance with the application process. See www.pioneer-mfg.com or call 800-877-1500.

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SAFE winner makes All-Star team

Steve Gilbertson, turf manager for the Lino Lakes (MN) Parks Department, won the SAFE (Foundation for Safer Athletic Field Environments) raffle last winter at the STMA Conference. The prize was joining Heather Nabozny's crew for MLB's All-Star Game in Detroit last July.

SPORTSTURF spoke with Gilbertson about his experiences. Our first question was about those designs in the infield dirt. "Those were a big internal joke," he said. "They were Major League Baseball's idea, they provided the stencils and so on. The "A" was readable, the "S" was fairly readable, the "G" not readable at all. I helped install them. We wetted down the infield dirt to get it dark brown, then we placed the pre-cut stencils down and put new, dry dirt on the stencil. Then we lifted the stencil. It was gone by the 5th inning."

Gilbertson helped drag the infield between the 6th and 7th innings. "I was concentrating those 2 minutes so there wasn't any time to look around at the crowd," he said.

Did he get a chance to mix with any All-Stars? "Well there's not any 'stargazing' for the crew," said Gilbertson. "The level of professionalism in that crew is tremendously high. I did get up close with some celebrities during the

Celebrity/Legends softball game, and saw Jack Morris, which was a thrill since I'm a Twins fan and was there in person for his famous World Series Game 7 performance in 1991," he said.

"I did get some fly balls during batting practice but MLB dictates that you can't keep them or even toss them to fans in the stands."

What memories will remain? "The crew in Detroit. Heather and her crew were fabulous and take lots of pride in their jobs; you can tell they do it the same whether it's the All-Star Game or a regular Tigers game," he said. "We did things to that field I'll never do at home! It was a once-in-a-lifetime shot and I really enjoyed it."

STMA established the Foundation for Safer Athletic Field Environments to support sports field specific research, educational programs and environmental concerns to promote user safety. STMA initially funded SAFE with a contribution of \$100,000. These funds are the first endowment for the Foundation, and only the income from this contribution will be used by SAFE. For more information see www.sportsturfmanager.org or contact STMA Headquarters at 800-323-3875.

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SAFE pioneer Schiller steps down

To all the wonderful members of STMA:

With the coming of our annual conference at Disney World, my time as the chair of the SAFE Foundation (The Foundation for Safer Athletic Field Environments) is coming to an end. It has been six years since we started The Foundation, and we have at times made progress, but have not gotten as far as I had hoped we would.

We have been able to give out scholarships for many worthy students in the 2-year, 4-year and graduate programs as well as pay their way to the conference. This has been a very wonderful experience to see our scholarship awards continue to grow. But, we need to get some big donations and get a nest egg built up so that we can begin to support research projects that are meant to help us in the sports field management business.

My good friend, the wonderful auctioneer Tom Curran, has done a tremendous job of raising money each year at Conference to support the scholarship program. Steve Torske has helped Tom, and I want to publicly thank them for their support and hard work.

As I leave The Foundation Board I would like to ask all of you a big favor. I want this to be the best auction, silent auction, and raffle in our history. I would like to see us raise more than \$20,000 this year from these activities.

Please, no matter where you work or who you represent, please make a pledge to bring all kinds of goodies for this fund-raising event. Emulate the great member from Texas A&M, Leo Goertz, and bring along a set of the shirts, hats, sweatshirts, etc., that you provide to your crew. Bring along anything that you think will raise money. Even if you think it is a "white elephant," bring it along—someone will bid on it!

From all the great vendors who continue to support STMA and SAFE, I ask you one more time to dig deep and donate a piece of equipment or items of clothing that bear your logo. We need EVERYONE'S help this year, so I ask you to be as generous as you possibly can. Remember, your donation to SAFE is tax deductible.

Finally, I ask each and every one of you to donate personally to The SAFE Foundation, whether it is \$5 or \$5,000. We need everyone's support. I thank you for your support over the past six years and I thank you in advance for your generosity for our upcoming conference. Have a great rest of the year. May your fields look better than the team deserves. I look forward to seeing you all in January.

Mike Schiller, CSFM
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Sports Turf Managers Association of Arizona:

For information on the Chapter or upcoming events, contact Chris Calcaterra at e-mail: chriscc@peoriaaz.com or call 623/412-4231 or Bill Murphy, at e-mail: bmurphy@ci.scottsdale.az.us or 480/312-7956.

Chesapeake Chapter STMA (formerly called Mid-Atlantic Athletic Field Managers Organization - MAFMO Chapter STMA):

The meeting at RFK Stadium in Washington, DC will be scheduled at a later date at which time we will see the change over from baseball's new team the Washington Nationals to MLS Soccer 2004 Champions DC United. For more information contact Graham Davis at gdavis@american.edu or call 301/495-5522.

Colorado Sports Turf Managers Association:

The CSTMA is looking for 2 Board Members and 1 Commercial Officer for next years Board. If you are interested, contact President Richard Buelter. The annual business meeting will be held at the RMRTA Conference and Trade Show which runs December 6th through December 8th. For more information about CSTMA visit the website at www.cstma.org or call the Chapter Hotline at 303/346-8954 or President Richard Buelter at 303/233-2922, dbuelter@jeffco.k12.co.us. Thanks to all who hosted and attended this year's seminars.

Florida #1 Chapter: The next Florida #1 Chapter meeting is October 18, 2005 at the University of Florida in Davie, FL. For more information on the Florida #1 Chapter, visit the Florida #1 Chapter page on STMA's website or contact John Mascaro at 954/341-3115 or STMA@turf-tec.com.

Gateway Chapter Sports Turf Managers Association: The Gateway Chapter is holding its annual Golf Tournament and Field Day on October 5th at Berry Hill Golf Course in Bridgeton, MO, from 7:30am - 2:30pm. For more information on the golf tournament or the Gateway Chapter, contact Mike Krone, Missouri Baptist College at 314/392-2328 or e-mail krone@mobap.edu.

Georgia Sports Turf Managers Association: For information on the Chapter or upcoming events, contact Skip Kirby at 770/928-1580 or by e-mail at skip@sportsturfmanagement.com.

The Greater L.A. Basin Chapter of the Sports Turf Managers Association: The Greater LA Basin Chapter will be holding their inaugural Sports Turf Seminar on Thursday, October 27, 2005 from 7:30am - 2:00pm at the Home Depot Center. For more information on upcoming events call Emilio Avalos at

949/824-8243 or e-mail eavalos@uci.edu.

Illinois Chapter (formerly Midwest Chapter) STMA: For information on the Illinois Chapter or upcoming events call chapter secretary Libby Baker at 847/263-7603 or e-mail Bake60ft6in@aol.com.

Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association: The ISTMA Football Workshop is October 18th at Upper Iowa University in Fayette, IA. The host manager is Mike Estrem and the featured speaker is Dr. William Meyer, Rutgers University on "New Wear Tolerant Kentucky Bluegrass, Perennial Ryegrass and Tall Fescues for Athletic Fields." For information on the Chapter or upcoming activities visit www.iowaturfgrass.org or contact Jeff Wendel of The Turf Office at ph. 515/232-8222 or fax 515/232-8228 or e-mail Jeff@iowaturfgrass.org.

Keystone Athletic Field Managers Organization (KAFMO/STMA): The KAFMO Cup Open is October 17, 2005 at Fairview Golf Course in Lebanon, PA. The 5th KAFMO Cup Open is the main fundraiser for the KAFMO Scholarship Fund. The scramble tournament is open to anyone who wants to enjoy a round of golf, chicken and rib dinner, drinks and prizes. Invite your friends, family, and co-workers to a day on the links. For information on the Chapter or upcoming events, contact Dan Douglas, Reading Phillies Baseball Club at 610/375-8469, ext. 212 or by e-mail to: kafmo@aol.com.

Kentucky Sports Turf Managers Association: The next KySTMA event will be held in conjunction with the Kentucky Turfgrass Council (KTC) Annual Meeting and Trade Show, October 24-27 in Bowling Green, KY. For more information on the Chapter or upcoming events, go to www.kystma.org or contact Donnie Mefford at dbmeff00@email.uky.edu or call 859/257-1451.

Michigan Sports Turf Managers Association (MiSTMA): For information on the Michigan Chapter, visit their website at www.mistma.org or contact Chad Follis at 269/377-3340 or 269/381-0596 or by email at chadfollis@farmngarden.com.

Minnesota Chapter STMA: Look for upcoming information on our Fall Workshop to be held in the City of Prior Lake on October 5. For information on the Minnesota Chapter, or other upcoming events, visit the Chapter website at www.mstma.org or

contact chapter President Greg Hoag at 651/486-8295 or by email at greg.hoag@metro-inet.us.

MO-KAN Sports Turf Managers Association: On October 12th the Chapter will host the 2005 Tour on Wheels. This is a great opportunity to see some of the areas premier sports facilities and hear first hand how they are maintained. For more information contact Paul Hecker at 913/971-9717 or phecker@olatheks.org.


New England STMA (NESTMA): For information on the New England chapter or other upcoming events, contact David Pinsonneault at 781/861-2757 or email dpinson@ci.lexington.ma.us or Nick Caggiano at 603/589-3370 or email caggiano@ci.nashua.nh.us.

Nebraska Sports Turf Managers Association: For information on the Chapter or upcoming events, call Loren Humphrey at: 402/461-2356 or e-mail to lhumphrey@cityofhastings.org.

Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey: For information on the New Jersey Chapter or upcoming events call SFMANJ at 908/730-7770, e-mail HQ@sfmanj.org or visit the Chapter website at www.sfmanj.org.

Ohio Sports Turf Managers Association (OSTMA): For information on the Ohio chapter or upcoming events, you can email us at ostma@aol.com or call us at 888/824-9805. You can

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also contact the Chapter President, Brian Gimbel, at 614/292-9450 or gimbel.1@osu.edu.

Pacific Northwest Sports Turf Managers Association: For information on the Chapter or upcoming events, contact Matt Johns at 253/445-4538 or mjohns@puysallup.wsu.edu.

Southern California Chapter: For information on the Southern California Chapter or pending activities, call the Chapter Hotline at 888/578-STMA (578-7862) toll free in Southern California or 760/226-8873 or Michael Tarantino at 858/679-2526 or by e-mail: MTarantino@powayusd.com.

South Carolina Chapter of STMA: For information on the South Carolina Chapter or upcoming events contact Trent Hale, Ph.D. at 843/662-3526 ext. 206 or by e-mail at thale@clemson.edu for more information or visit our website at www.scstma.org.

Texas Sports Turf Managers Association: TXSTMA will be hosting its Annual Scholarship Golf Tournament in conjunction with an Educational Seminar on October 19, 2005 at Tangle Ridge Golf Course in Grand Prairie, TX. The morning session will be composed of educational topics and speakers followed by a lunch and the tournament. Interested sponsors or participants should contact Travis Sales, Scholarship Chairman, at 972/216-6913 or at tsales@ci.mesquite.tx.us. This tournament supports two educational scholarships given by the chapter, one to a four year turf program student who has an interest in sports field management and the other to a professional member seeking continuing education through an accredited program. For additional information about upcoming events or membership call the chapter voicemail at 866/897-8621 or T.J. Thompson, President-Elect at 972/670-2138 or email at TXturfmanager@prodigy.net.

Tennessee Valley Sports Turf Managers Association (TVSTMA): For information on the Chapter or upcoming events, call Chapter President, Chris Pearl at 615/242-4371.

Virginia Sports Turf Managers Association: The Virginia Turfgrass Conference is January 9-12, 2006 at the Richmond Marriott. For information on the Virginia Chapter or upcoming events, please contact VSTMA President Bob Studholme of the Fairfax County Park Authority at 703/324-8590 or robert.studholme@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Wisconsin Sports Turf Managers Association: For information on the Wisconsin Chapter or other pending events, contact Chris Brindley at 715/346-3622 or cbrindle@uwsp.edu.

Forming Chapters:

North Florida STMA Chapter: For information on the newly forming North Florida Chapter, contact Mark Clay at 904/633-6116 or Jay McCord at 904/448-2583.

New York Sports Turf Managers Association: Contact - Mike Albino by phone at 315/468-6225 or (c) 315/427-1214 or email him at mikealbino@earthlink.net.

Idaho STMA: For information, contact Greg Liggett, at 208/496-2421 or email him at liggett@byu.i.edu.



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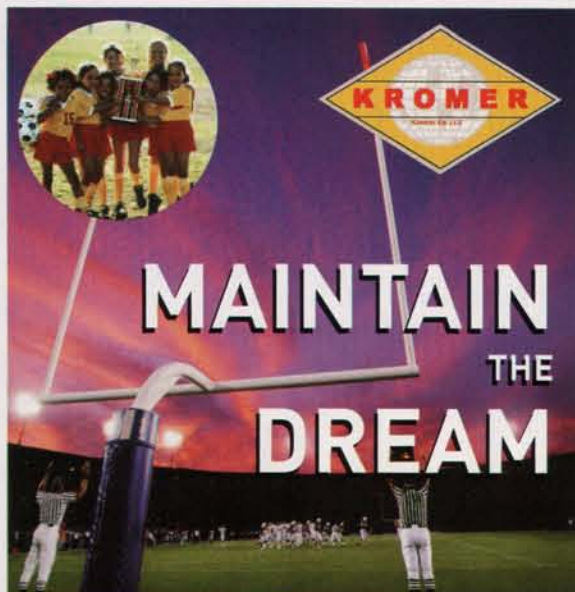
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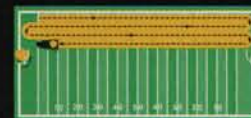
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