

SUMMER 2016

# ON THE TURF

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE FLORIDA CHAPTERS OF THE STMA

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on a Parks and Rec Budget

IMPROVING EFFICIENCY FOR  
**PEAK IRRIGATION  
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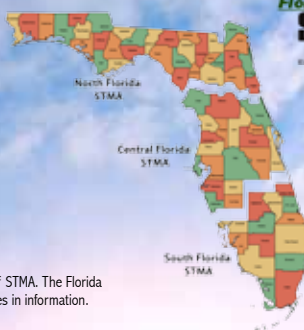


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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## CFSTMA

**H**ello Turfers,

This year has been a colossal year so far for CFSTMA regarding both new and existing memberships. I would like to say thank you to everyone for all of their support. As of today, we have reached 140 members.



It is very inspiring that so many of you believe in our chapter and want to take an active part in it. So from all of us, we wish to extend our sincere gratitude for having so much faith in us. With that being said, our goal for this year is to get over the 150 mark for memberships. We still need your help and support in reaching that goal. Please keep talking us up to your friends, co-workers, vendors, and customers. No rest for the weary.... LOL

I need to take a moment and reach out to all of our commercial members and contacts. We truly need your help with "ON THE TURF".

First, I want to say an enormous "THANK YOU" to those of you who have assisted with the start-up of the magazine and to our recent new inductees who helped with our continuing project. Yet there are still plenty of you who are resting on your laurels and letting this great tool pass you by. Out of all the commercial members across the state there are only eight of you who get it. That is a huge disappointment. I am afraid that if we don't make budget this year we / you could lose this tool.

When I am out in the field I hear from various commercial members "Oh how great this tool is for getting the word out". Yet when I ask you to get on board and run an ad, then it becomes WELLLLLLLL. Wells are only good for irrigation, drinking water, and oil!!

I understand that there are some boarder issues in that your territory may not be state-wide. But what better way to show support to your local chapter

and the other chapters throughout the state than by helping to keep our magazine going. And, for those of you who are a state-wide company or maybe an international company, I can't imagine what your excuse would be. The Magazine goes out state-wide as a hard copy to members and as an e-mag to over 800 contacts in the sports turf industry four times a year (two more times this year).

Yes, I am on my soap box and I am trying to drive the point home about how important this tool is to us all. Two years ago when I took the idea of a state-wide magazine to the CFSTMA board and started the project, I remember getting some funny looks. The good news was they were behind the project and helped get it started. Then when I brought it to the other two chapters' boards, there were some interesting conversations. Now I hear how cool this is and how helpful the information is and most importantly how successful it has become.

I also understand that whenever someone needs funding they reach out to the commercial members. This tool is something that can give back with new customers which equates to new sales which is a win win for all.

Ok, I need to get off of this soap box. Again I want to say "THANK YOU" to those of you who went out on the limb with your companies and bosses and got behind this project. Professional Members we need you to talk "ON THE TURF" up with your commercial contacts. If I can't convince you to write a profile maybe this one way you can help with "ON THE TURF".

It was started by a few but it is going to take an army to keep it going!

*Dale Craft*

CFSTMA President





# CHAPTER NEWS

In case you were unaware, we had another huge chapter meeting on March 15 at One Bucs Place and it was another prodigious experience.

The Bucs have really great team members. We need to take a moment to say thank you to **Joe Benson** and **Bruce Cohn** along with the other members of their teams! From the moment that we entered the building, shown to the meeting location, enjoyed a fantastic lunch, and the great tour guides, I must say we felt like rock stars getting the million dollar tour. I hope you were able to come away with some interesting tidbits. So again to the Buc's staff, "grazie" and hope we haven't worn out our welcome and can come back in the future.

We also need to give it up for **Dr. Travis Shaddox** for another fantastic presentation. I thought that once I understood what 10-10-10 meant I was done...WRONG. After hearing Dr. Shaddox's presentation, "Response to Fe, Mn, and Mg", I now know there is a lot more to fertilizer response than I ever knew... thanks Doc.

A little earlier I mentioned the fantastic lunch. Thank you **Jeffery Scott** with Drill Turf for sponsoring lunch and giving the demonstrating of the Drill and Fill process. Over the years, I had heard about the process and I was impressed, so again, thanks Jeff. A special thanks to **Bobby Ellis** with Golf Agronomics Supply & Handling for the great breakfast.

And, last but not least, thank you commercial members who provided many great prizes for our raffles. I believe everyone walked away with a great prize. ●








Improving Efficiency for

# PEAK IRRIGATION PERFORMANCE



**By Robert Diersing – CIC, CLIA  
EPA WaterSense Partner  
Public Agency Account Manager, FL  
Rain Bird Corporation**



**S**ports Turf Managers are constantly challenged to provide safe, functional and aesthetically pleasing athletic fields. An efficient irrigation system is essential to reaching that goal. Today, irrigation management in Florida can be stressful due to water restrictions, changing regulations, increasing water rates, water quality issues or being under staffed. Although Florida gets a fair amount of rain, rainfall is not consistent year-round which makes it extremely difficult to properly maintain an athletic field without an adequate irrigation system to supplement rainfall. In addition, field technicians have daily, hands-on challenges such as leaks, broken heads, dry areas and electrical issues. The key to improving irrigation maintenance is to improve efficiency and more effectively irrigate, allowing for a proactive approach versus reactive approach when issues do arise.

The most reliable way to determine the water-use efficiency of an irrigation system is to have an audit performed. An auditor will collect data, verify the system is operating as designed, and determine opportunities to improve efficiency. A Certified Landscape Irrigation Auditor (CLIA) should perform the audit and provide recommendations to increase efficiency. Results are used by a sports turf manager to make necessary system adjustments, which when implemented effectively, increase efficiency and generally improve their irrigation program system-wide.

## **Benefits of an Audit**

- Determines soil profile to understand how it will affect any irrigation program, for example, how the amounts of sand, silt, and clay will influence the amount of available water (holding) capacity of the turf root zone.
- Identifies poor spray patterns and where water is wasted or underutilized.
- Determines Distribution Uniformity and Precipitation Rates. Distribution Uniformity (DU) is a measure of how evenly water is applied across an area during irrigation. The value is expressed between 0 and 100%. A DU rate of 100% is unrealistic in almost every environment due to outside factors, however, DUs between 70-90% are considered “good,” DUs greater than 90% are “excellent,” and all DUs below 70% are considered “poor.” When a site has a low DU rate, there is a tendency to over water the site to compensate for dry areas. A Precipitation Rate is the rate at which water is delivered to an area and typically calculated in inches per hour.

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Audit results lead to recommendations to increase efficiency of the irrigation system, such as using Matched Precipitation Rates (MPR) nozzles, implementing pressure regulation, making proper repairs on broken lines, utilizing Evapotranspiration (ET) rates, and installing Soil Moisture Sensors (SMS) and rain sensors.

Other considerations to improve irrigation efficiency include using the correct components and replacement parts that are correctly chosen and sized to meet industry guidelines. When determining what nozzles to use for a sprinkler head, verify that the demand of the zone will not exceed that of the water source. This can cause a low pressure condition resulting in poor distribution uniformity. When working on systems where the heads are spaced further than system capacity, do not select a nozzle designed to throw further to lower the operating pressure – this almost always results in deficient coverage. Matched Precipitation Rate (MPR) nozzles apply water at the same rate regardless of the spray pattern. For example, a head spraying a half circle pattern flows at 2 gpm than a full circle pattern would flow 4 gpm, respectively. On another note, when repairing broken lines, it's important to replace the pipe with the same diameter pipe. A repair made with a smaller diameter pipe creates flow and pressure issues to the system downstream of the repair.

Manufacturers provide performance charts for their sprinkler products and each have an operating pressure that best suits a “sweet spot” for high efficiency. Sprays typically achieve maximum efficiency at 30 psi operating pressure (dynamic pressure). Small to medium  $\frac{3}{4}$ ” inlet turf rotors



operate at 45 psi, while large 1" athletic turf rotors operate best from 50-75 psi. Conversely, operating these components outside of the recommended pressures can lead up to a 40% deficiency rate.

Maintaining rain sensors, especially those using a cork disc design, will optimize their water saving functionality. Likewise, weather sensors should be tested during routine system checks and replaced when not operating within specification. Soil Moisture Sensors should be installed in a location that is most representative of the system, for example, avoiding shaded areas or sloped areas.

Broken pipe leading to high flow conditions and valve issues or restrictions leading to low flow conditions are other common issues which affect system optimization and overall water efficiency. A broken pipe can lead to substantial turf repair and potentially exceed pump capacity. Typically such issues would not be noticed until after someone observed dry areas, wilted landscape or erosion caused by broken pipes. Likewise, an unresponsive valve can create a low flow condition that could dead head a pump. Today's commercial controllers offer advanced features that allow turf managers to more effectively manage repairs of these kinds of conditions and also offer electrical troubleshooting features for service technicians. Efficiency and optimization-minded commercial controller features include:

**High Flow:** The controller will eliminate the high flow condition by closing the master valve to eliminate a mainline problem or closing the problem valve to eliminate a problem with a station.

**Low Flow:** The controller will eliminate the low flow condition by closing the master valve to eliminate a mainline problem or closing the problem valve to eliminate a problem with a station.

**Flow Management:** Some controllers allow the user to input maximum capacity of the pump or meter either manually or in conjunction with a flow sensor. Installing a flow sensor will improve accuracy in determining the flow of each zone as well as assisting with monitoring for leaks. Accurate information for the stations should allow for the system to run at peak efficiency allowing you to keep your watering window to a minimum.

**Diagnose Electrical Issues:** Traditionally wired controllers will allow wire raster testing on 2-wire controllers will allow you to troubleshoot decoders.

**Station Delay:** Depending on system configuration, delay between stations turning on may be necessary - this feature allows the amount of delay to be preset.


**Watering Window:** Program watering window into the controller to ensure compliance.

Another, more safety-oriented feature of modern controllers is PIN Code protection, which prevents unauthorized access to a controller as only those who have the access code can operate the controller. As a water efficiency measure, PIN Code protection limits who can change programs and other controller settings, minimizing the opportunity for waste through incorrect programming.

Central control is a solution where multiple irrigation controllers can be managed from one location, which allows a sports turf manager to increase efficiency without sacrificing manpower. Central control offers water use report management, flow graphs to demonstrate savings, as well as a reduction in drive time to sites and overall liability.

Most irrigation departments operate similar to firefighters, responding reactively to service calls, often times with only a report of a leak with limited information provided to inform

the technician what to expect upon arrival and what parts are needed for repairs. A central control system can send an email with detailed information such as "Site A recorded a high flow (actual 87 gpm vs. expected 65 gpm) on station 7." With that information, a technician will not waste time running through the system looking for a leak and should have an idea on what size pipe will be needed for the repair based on the system. In this scenario, when the system detects the leak, the system will determine if the leak is associated with the mainline or a lateral line and shut down the valve associated. If the mainline is leaking it will shut the system down to avoid further loss of water and erosion damage. If the leak is located on a lateral line, that station will shut down and the next

 Please email ideas for upcoming irrigation articles to [rdiersing@rainbird.com](mailto:rdiersing@rainbird.com).





station will run allowing the system to continue as programmed. In another example, an email indicating “Station X did not run, solenoid short” would be sent for an electrical issue associated with Station X.

Most central control systems are accessible by phone, tablet or computer from any location, and provide the opportunity to change programs, review flow graphs (actual vs. expected), run alarm or alert reports, review run times (actual vs. expected) for different controllers, remotely run wiring diagnostics, or find out the health of a 2-wire system.

In conclusion, a Sports Turf Manager’s goal of providing a safe, functional and aesthetically pleasing athletic field can be achieved by increasing the irrigation systems performance. An irrigation audit is an effective tool that will provide recommendations to improve the overall performance of the irrigation system. Referencing the audits recommendations, a system can be upgraded with efficient irrigation components, controller technology and proper scheduling. The real key is a long-term commitment to these recommendations, providing managers the best possible playing conditions, while helping save time, money, and water. ●



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# THE BENEFITS OF SUMMER TURF MAINTENANCE



**By Anita Alexander**  
Field scientist for  
Dow AgroSciences Turf  
& Ornamental

As a sports turf manager, it's important to stay on top of weed control. Anticipating problems ahead of time will prepare you for each coming season — and summer is no exception.

Regardless of turf type, weed control starts with a healthy turfgrass canopy. This is achieved through a strong root system, good field drainage and proper fertility. Begin by aerating warm-season turfgrass in late spring or early summer to minimize thatch, relieve soil compaction, improve drainage and encourage strong turf roots.

Watch for turf pests. In the sandy soils of Florida, when the bermudagrass begins to thrive, nematode pressure also builds. It is a best management practice to assay your fields for nematodes to ensure your counts are below threshold. Nematodes damage the root structure of the turfgrass and cause soil compaction. In summer,

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weeds like spurge will proliferate in the bare areas where soil compaction and turf loss has occurred.

Do you overseed your fields with a cool-season grass in fall? For the best-looking bermudagrass fields in summer, make sure to choose a spring transition aid that works slowly and smoothly. A product containing penoxsulam transitions the ryegrass out slowly and is extremely well-tolerated by bermudagrass. Going into summer with a strong bermudagrass root system is critical. Good fertility is important, but is a wasted expense if the bermudagrass roots are damaged and unable to secure the nutrients being applied.

These cultural methods are a good start to a healthy sports field, but they don't guarantee weed-free turf. Here are some additional tips to help you control some of the more troublesome weeds commonly found in summer.

## Sedges



*Sedges thrive in wet areas with poor drainage, and they are commonly identified by their triangular stems. Sedges are mostly perennial and spread by underground tubers, rhizomes and seeds. Once established, they can be difficult to control. Repeat applications may be needed throughout the growing season. The addition of adjuvants is sometimes recommended, but be cautious to ensure they do not increase the potential for turf damage.*

### **Kyllinga (Kyllinga brevifolius)**

#### Identification Tips:

- Dark green, narrow ridged leaves have a shiny grasslike appearance
- Tightly bunched round seed heads sit on spikes
- Forms dense mats and thrives with low mowing — preferring wet, poorly drained soils

Control Tips: Irrigate only when necessary. Deep, infrequent irrigation is better for turfgrass than light, frequent irrigation. Excessive moisture encourages germination and growth of sedges.

Postemergence applications of ALS-inhibiting herbicides like halosulfuron or penoxsulam will provide control. Multiple applications may be needed.

## Yellow Nutsedge (*Cyperus esculentus*)

### Identification Tips:

- Light green leaves with a long, tapered leaf tip
- Each leaf has a characteristic V-shape where the blade bends up along the midvein
- Golden yellow flower heads
- Reproduces by underground tubers and rhizomes

### Control Tips:

- Alleviate compaction to allow drainage.
- Minimize irrigation. Like other sedges, yellow nutsedge thrives in areas where soils remain moist from poor drainage or overwatering.
- Make multiple postemergence applications of products containing sulfentrazone or ALS-inhibiting herbicides, such as halosulfuron or penoxsulam.

## Grassy Weeds



*Managing grassy weeds in sports turf can be challenging because they look a lot like the desirable turfgrasses. Once established, there are very few herbicides that may be used to control existing grassy weeds without injury to the desirable grass. Two of the most prevalent grassy weeds found in sports turf in the summer are crabgrass and goosegrass. Herbicides containing dithiopyr will provide preemergence and early postemergence control of crabgrass with several months' residual.*

## Smooth Crabgrass (*Digitaria ischaemum*)

### Identification Tips:

- Summer annual germinates when soil temperatures reach a consistent 55 F
- Prostrate growth habit with leaves and sheaths that do not have hairs. Rolled vernation.
- Seed head with two to six fingerlike spiked branches
- Can be distinguished from large crabgrass (*Digitaria sanguinalis*) by the absence of hairs on the leaves and sheaths. Both species will grow under close mowing, but smooth crabgrass can survive and set seed at heights as low as 1/4".

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### Control Tips:

- Start by applying a preemergence crabgrass herbicide as soon as soil temperatures approach 55° F.
- Look for products containing the active ingredient dithiopyr. It provides season-long preemergence and early postemergence control. There are several liquid, granular and fertilizer granule options available.
- Consult the appropriate product label for recommended rates for your area, as well as reseeding and overseeding recommendations.



## **Goosegrass (*Eleusine indica*)**

### Identification Tips:

- Prostrate-growing summer annual
- Grows in a clump with the base of the leaves being distinctively white to silver
- Leaves are folded and may be smooth or have a few hairs
- Has a strong, extensive root system and readily invades hard, compacted soils found in high-traffic areas



### Control Tips:

- If you've had goosegrass previously, apply a preemergence herbicide containing the active ingredient dithiopyr just prior to crabgrass germination.
- In Florida, two applications, one in early spring and another in late spring, will provide season-long control of goosegrass and crabgrass.

# Broadleaf Weeds



*Broadleaf weeds are easier to identify in turfgrass than grassy weeds. There also are more effective postemergence control options for broadleaf weeds. Always read the product label prior to an application to determine proper rates, timing and tolerant turfgrass species. Postemergence herbicide labels may recommend the addition of an adjuvant, or multiple applications for hard-to-control weed species.*

## Spurge (*Euphorbia maculata*)

### Identification Tips:

- Red- or purple-tinged stems host opposite leaves and emit milky juice when broken
- Oblong leaves are smooth or sparsely hairy. Reddish green to dark green in color. Often with maroon or purple spot in center.
- Prostrate structure forms mats by branching from the base



### Control Tips:

- Apply a selective preemergence herbicide in late spring. Some products known for their grassy weed control also control spurge preemergence. Check the label.
- If you have germinated spurge, apply a postemergence herbicide when plants are small.
- Products containing 2,4-D, metsulfuron or dicamba will provide postemergence control. Spurge is a prolific seeder so a preemergence product will limit the spread of spurge more than postemergence product applications.

## Yellow Woodsorrel (*Oxalis stricta*)

### Identification Tips:

- Perennial with hairy stems; reproduces via seeds and rhizomes
- Leaves alternate along stem with three heart-shaped leaflets
- Bright yellow flowers have five petals that flare outward
- Prefers moist to slightly dry conditions in rich loamy soil

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### Control Tips:

- Perennial broadleaf weeds are capable of living more than two years. Proper turf maintenance is the key to controlling this weed. Fertilize, mow and water turf to encourage dense growth.
- Products containing triclopyr and clopyralid will control woodsorrel postemergence if applied when the weeds are small and actively growing.
- A preemergence herbicide, containing the active ingredient dithiopyr, does a good job controlling woodsorrel prior to germination.

For more information on these and other weeds, visit the Weed Watch digital guide at [www.digital.landscapemanagement.net/weedwatch2014](http://www.digital.landscapemanagement.net/weedwatch2014), or [www.DowProvesIt.com](http://www.DowProvesIt.com) for additional product recommendations. ●



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By Marlin Hall  
Team Supervisor II, CYSA,  
City of Tampa Parks and  
Recreation Department



# MAJOR LEAGUE DREAMS

## on a Parks and Rec Budget

*It is a cool, beautiful morning and the 4 am report time was well worth it as I stand there watching the teams roll in, ready for a day of play at our complex. The sun is just starting to peak above the horizon to shed light on one of our many flawless fields located within this department. As I glance across the recently mowed Bermuda I can see the intricate checkerboard pattern that was intentionally placed in the turf by one of the master equipment operators. Any weeds in this turf? Not a chance! Any bare spots? No way! The clay is smooth, without a single uneven spot or divot. Fresh, crisp white foul lines run as straight as an arrow and there is a crisp defined line where the clay seamlessly meets the turf. Any lips on this field? Not under my watch!*

**Beep, beep, beep... the alarm clock goes off and I realize it was all just a dream.**

My name is Marlin Hall and I oversee all athletic field maintenance for the City of Tampa Parks and Recreation Department. Responsibilities include 88 softball/baseball fields, 18 football/soccer fields, 35 acres of Bermuda turf, 38 acres of Bahia turf, 10 Little Leagues and 174 basketball goal nets as well as several sand volleyball courts, etc. To handle this responsibility I have 18 field staff, two supervisors and a parks and recreation budget.

Growing up in Tampa I was afforded many opportunities to participate in many sports programs through our City Parks and Recreation.

As a participant, we always looked forward to engage in the playoffs because the games would always be scheduled on one of the “nicer” fields. This was back in the day when they would burn lines in the grass to mark the field and we would get a snow cone or ice pop after the game as a treat. Just having these burnt

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lines markings in the grass (instead of just a few cones marking the end-zones) gave all the participants a feeling of playing on a pro field. It was that extra something that made that particular game feel super special, we had earned our way to the “Championship” and as a youth it felt like the “World Series”.

As childhood ended, my passion for recreation, sports and coaching was just beginning. The Parks and Recreation Department that I grew up in afforded me an opportunity to develop as a recreation specialist, coaching and working in the after school programs, giving me the chance to give back to the programs that meant so much to me as a youth.

When coaching during these years, I always remembered the special feeling when it was “playoff time” and always tried to go the extra mile for the kids in order to give them that same experience. We would paint the lines of whatever sport we were playing making sure to pay particular attention to the details, making the field look as professional as we could. If we had extra paint we would do our best to paint the team’s logo somewhere on the field, post up a player board with

individual player stats, water down batters boxes and rake in different directions to make patterns in the clay. Anything I could do to get that “Pro” field look for the kids. This philosophy holds true while prepping for the adult leagues as well.

The adult participants always looked forward to playing in this atmosphere, just as I looked forward to the playoffs as a child and playing on a sandlot playground with lines burnt in the grass. Playing on a properly groomed, well maintained Bermuda turf field, was that special something that set our league apart from the others. This attention to detail increased participation and the positive



feedback our department received from its citizens.

In recent years, I was given the opportunity to lead the grounds

maintenance team that was immediately renamed, “the ball field improvement team”. Even though my main background was in programming, I believe it was attention to detail and wanting the best playing atmosphere for the athletes that helped me obtain this position.

Over the past few years countless hours have been spent on learning the specifics of the athletic field maintenance profession.

Our team often attends trainings and meetings offered by the Central Florida Sports Turf Management Association in order to network and learn as much as possible from the professionals in this organization. Most of these meetings occur at premium stadiums or fields where the field is one of the main attractions for participants. Meetings have been conducted at the Yankees Complex, the Disney Sports Complex, the Buccaneer Practice Facility, Stetson University and so on. When touring these facilities I see the field that I described in the dream above. I then ask myself “What can I do to offer a pro league field experience to our participants on a parks and recreation budget”?

It is clear that many organizations have limited budgets making it



difficult to maintain their fields to the same level as some of the locations we visit. Even though your organization may not have an endless budget there are certain things that can be done to make every field special no matter what budget you are working with. Below are a few of the practices that we incorporate that cost little to no money but can yield major results:

**Pay Attention to Detail** – Make sure that bases are placed at the proper distance and square. Use a guide and take the extra time needed to make foul lines and field markings straight and accurate. Keep the area where the clay meets the turf, straight, properly edged and groomed. If time permits create patterns or that little extra something that will stand out to the players. Paying attention to just some of these small details can make a huge difference to a field.

**Set Up a Schedule and Stick to It** – Make sure that standard maintenance practices such as mowing,

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aerating, chemical applications, lip maintenance, etc. are put on a regular schedule and that it is followed religiously. Placing things on a schedule so they are not missed or forgotten will benefit your field tremendously.

**Follow the Standard Maintenance Practices** – Following a few standard maintenance practices can pay big dividends to a turf field. Mow at the proper height. Maintain extra sharp blades. Follow the 1/3rd rule. Go slow when mowing. Change mowing patterns. These are all simple rules that when followed have big results.

**Set Up Specialty Maintenance Teams** – It is good to have “utility players” on your team of sports field maintenance but we have also grouped teams into specialty groups. We have specialty teams for; Bermuda, Bahia, League Play fields, chemical application, and a projects crew that handles the more complex rehab projects. This allows each crew to know all the ins and outs of what they maintain on a regular basis. Going deep into learning about the specialty area that they are responsible for results in a better end product that the crew can feel proud of and take pride in.

**Reach out to the local turf professionals in your area** – Being fairly new to the sports maintenance field I looked to local professionals to help give me guidance and maintenance recommendations. We are very fortunate to be close

to the Buccaneers, Yankees, USF, and the University of Tampa. Each of the head groundskeepers of these organizations have been a great resource and a “go-to” when I need guidance. In addition, I have been able to reach out to many of the members of the CFSTMA where everyone is always more than willing to give advice or help out in any way possible. Do not let this resource go untapped!

**Listen to Feedback from Participants** – We always listen to feedback from the participants and organizers that utilize our fields. In the end they are the individuals that we do this for. Their perspective is very important and maintaining a field above and beyond their expectations is our ultimate goal. Keeping an open line of communication between the maintenance team and programming team allows us to always have the fields ready for whatever program is being scheduled and hear what they need to be successful. You never know when you are going to run across that one programmer that has the same passion for a quality playing field!

I know many of these are basic principles, but they can make a huge difference if followed. Paying attention to details and doing the little things that make your field special can affect your participants for a lifetime, even when you are working on a limited parks and recreation budget. ●

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Professional

# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

*Daniel Thomas*

Ten years ago I never could have imagined I would be the Head Groundskeeper for the Baltimore Orioles Spring Training facilities. Time has passed quickly, making new friends and gaining ample experience along the way. I never really knew the direction that this profession would take me in but I'm glad that my wife and I took several chances to get ourselves here to Sarasota, Florida. I started

fields. After many long years and many dinners in dusty grounds shops, realized I loved what I was doing despite the endless days and strenuous conditions. At the end of 2009, we decided to leave the Midwest on a chance to work for the Baltimore Orioles Spring Training. Coming to Florida and learning the pros and cons of Tifway 419 Bermudagrass vs. Kentucky Bluegrass was the biggest challenge. I dedicated myself to learning the science of our playing surface through the STMA, educational seminars/clinics and experience. This last March we were presented with the 2015 STMA Professional Baseball Field of the Year Award

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my grounds career tending grass & landscape at a funeral home. Moving into golf and then baseball for several years. Minor league baseball is where I learned the trade and put in extremely long hours meticulously grooming baseball





Commercial

# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

*Jim Granger*

I am the Director of Field Services for Lake Jem Farms. My primary focus is in sales and services for municipalities, athletic fields and golf courses.

I started my career in the turf industry in the late 1990's after leaving the construction field. I joined with Lake Jem Farms as a promotional sales representative, at the time when they were transitioning from row crop farming to turf production. In the beginning we all wore many hats. This gave me the opportunity to play a key role in helping to establish Lake Jem Farms as a premier producer of quality turf. Today we grow St. Augustine grasses, including shade tolerant hybrids, Zoysia and Bahia grasses. In addition we also grow many varieties of certified Bermuda grasses. We now offer a full range of products and services to cover projects from field preparation, irrigation, installation and best management practices. Our company continues to search out and experiment with new turf varieties, products and services to meet the needs of our customers. Currently we offer custom blended soils for specific top dressing



needs in the maintenance of athletic fields. I enjoy working with the many professionals in our industry. Consulting with superintendents to agronomist and many others, all who help me work to promote and create turf seminars. I find these classes benefit our customers and their staffs to better care for and maintain the various specialty turfs within their parks.

It is my privilege to play a role in the installation of professional and recreational athletic field projects across our state. Our team has installed sports fields from north Florida to the Florida Keys, including many for universities. It is my challenge to take these projects from bid to contract and on through completion. I strive to create new and useful ways to serve my customers and the industry as whole by promoting forums to educate and train. I pride myself in the promotion of the turf industry and look forward to the many new projects ahead. ●

*To submit profiles, please send them to [ontheturf@crngnet.net](mailto:ontheturf@crngnet.net).  
Maximum word count is 300.*



# On the Turf Tips from STMA

*Here are a few tips from STMA on the care of your warm season turf (Bermudagrass). Please keep in mind that they are just tips and you will need to develop a plan that works in your climate.*

## June - August

### Mowing

Recommended mowing heights 1-1.5" and should not exceed 1.5".

The general rule when mowing a stand of Turfgrass is not to remove more than 1/3 of the total leaf blade at one time.

Some of the effects from removing more than 1/3 of the leaf blade at one time are:

- Negatively affects photosynthetic production of food
- Depletion of the carbohydrate reserves in the plant roots
- Graying or browning of leaf tips
- Root growth restriction
- Weed encroachment
- Increased susceptibility to damage from insects, disease, drought and traffic
- Excess clippings

Warm season grasses are actively growing throughout the summer months. Mow as often as needed, which is generally 2-3 times a week.

### Irrigation

Recommended amounts per week (minus any rainfall) is 1" to 1.5".

It is important to know all the soil properties and that native soil root zones containing high amounts of clays and/or silt typically have high water holding capacity. Sand based root zones have little water holding capacity and may percolate water very quickly.

Soils that have a good aggregation permit more rapid infiltration than a soil with poor structural properties. If a soil is compacted, aggregation is reduced or absent. Compaction at or near the soil surface can greatly reduce the rate of water infiltration.

Always water at the first sign of wilt.

### Fertilizer

Recommended amount of nitrogen per month is 0.5-1.5 lb N/1000 sq. ft.

Make sure to check with your local and state agencies for any restrictions on applying nutrients. For some areas with restrictions on inputs or other management program constraints

or objectives, there are organic and microbial products available in the marketplace. STMA encourages you to talk with vendors and practitioners for recommendations to fit your specific needs.

### **Cultivation**

Soil cultivation should be done once a month when the turf is actively growing. If the turf is undergoing stress then soil cultivation should be avoided. Soil cultivation is a necessary practice in order to keep bermudagrass fields in acceptable condition. Bermudagrass produces significant amounts of thatch that should not exceed .5" throughout the growing season. When cultivating, 2-4 passes in different directions should be made on the field.

Some forms of cultivation are Hollow tine, Solid tine, Shatter coring, Water jet coring, Slicing, Vertical mowing, Spiking, Deep tine, Deep drill and drill and fill.

### **Weeds**

Healthy, dense stands of turf are the best way to prevent disease, weed or insect infestations. Following proper cultivation practices throughout the year, including fertilization, irrigation, mowing, seeding, and soil cultivation, can minimize and sometimes eliminate pest problems.

Make sure to check with your local state agencies for any restrictions on applying pesticides.


### **Insects**

Our little friends are also waking up, so be on the look out for Mole crickets, Armyworms, Cutworms, Chinch bugs, Sod webworms, Rhodegrass scale (mealy bug) and White grubs.

### **Diseases**

These diseases could possibly occur in this time frame:

- brown patch
- dollar spot
- fairy ring
- pythium blight



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## **CFSTMA 2016 September Chapter Meeting**

***Space Coast Stadium, home of the Washington Nationals and the Manatees***

More details to come. Visit our website at [www.cfstma.org](http://www.cfstma.org).

## **National STMA Conference and Exhibition**

**January 24-27, 2017**

***Disney's Coronado Springs Resort, Orlando, FL***

More details to come.



Pictured: Disney's Coronado Springs Resort

for Ed Smith Stadium. Improving the overall health of the turf along with many small renovation projects helped achieve the award. I can say that starting at the bottom and working my way to the top has kept me humble and appreciative of the people that work for me now, after all, it takes an army. Special thanks to Dale Croft and Rob Julian of the CFSTMA for presenting the award to our deserving grounds staff. And last but not least thank you to my wife Alexis and daughter Giselle for allowing me to chase this crazy dream. ●





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## Florida STMA Chapter Application Form

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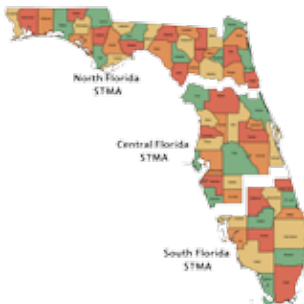
Employer: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Email : \_\_\_\_\_

If vendor, type of business: \_\_\_\_\_

Florida's STMA Chapters welcomes new members. We are a very inclusive organization and have a membership category for anyone interested in learning more about sports field management.



\_\_\_ **\$50 Sports Turf Manager** - If you are primarily responsible for managing or maintaining a sports field(s). This position is an eligible voting member and hold elective office.

\_\_\_ **\$35 Sports Turf Manager Associate** - If you are primarily responsible for managing or maintaining a sports field(s) and your organization already has a Florida STMA chapter member employed. The Associate(s) has the same benefits and privileges as the Sport Turf Manager. Dues are lower because of multiple members (groundskeepers, turf specialists, grounds maintenance, etc.).

\_\_\_ **\$50 Academic** - If you are in teaching, extension or research. This position is an eligible voting member in the Chapter and hold elective office.

\_\_\_ **\$75 Commercial** - If you work for a company engaged in a commercial enterprise providing services and/or products to the sports turf profession (consultants, architects, designers, contractors, management companies, distributors and manufacturers, etc.). This position is an eligible voting member and can hold elective office available to the commercial category.

\_\_\_ **\$50 Commercial Associate** - If you are the 2nd person (or more) from a commercial company. All Commercial Associates **must** first have a Florida STMA Chapter commercial member at their company before the lower dues category can be selected. This is a non-voting member and not eligible to hold office.

\_\_\_ **\$35 Affiliate** - If you are indirectly or on a part-time basis involved in the maintenance/management of sports field(s) (coaches, athletic directors, volunteers, or full-time students). This is a non-voting member and not eligible to hold office.

After being accepted for membership, members of any Florida Chapter have the same member benefits and privileges in all chapters except the right to vote and hold office. Voting rights and right to hold office are restricted to a member's home chapter, defined as the chapter to which member's dues are paid. Members may only claim Home Chapter membership in a single chapter.

### ☐ North Florida

Make checks payable to:  
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 NFSTMA  
 1471 Capital Circle NW, Ste. 13  
 Tallahassee, FL 32303

### ☐ Central Florida

Make checks payable to:  
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 ATTN: Rob Julian  
 3302 W. Martin Luther King Blvd.  
 Tampa, FL 33602

### ☐ South Florida

Make checks payable to:  
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