WINTER 2016

ON THE TURF™

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE FLORIDA CHAPTERS OF THE STMA

SHOUT OUT

TO WOMEN PROFESSIONALS IN THE SPORTS TURF INDUSTRY

Competitive Bidding Your Turf Services

Pesticide Breakdown in High pH Water

Mole Crickets

MUTANT BUGS FROM THE UNDERWORLD?

PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE
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ON THE TURF™

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Volume 2 - Issue 4

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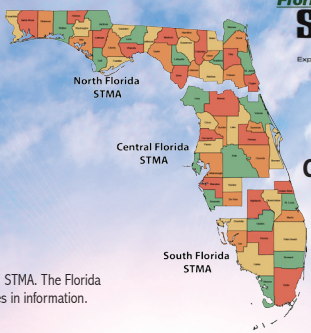

Florida Statewide Chapters
SportsTurf Managers Association
Experts on the Field, Partners in the Game.

North Florida STMA
Tim Legare, President

Central Florida STMA
Dale Croft, President

South Florida STMA
Tom Curran, President

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

CENTRAL FLORIDA SPORTS TURF MANAGERS ASSOCIATION

Hello Turfers,

Here we are with the last edition of On The Turf for 2016 and I hope it has been a good year for us all, even those of you went through Hurricane Matthew and the cleanup. We can be thankful that it wasn't worse. From someone who has cleaned up hurricane damage since Hurricane Andrew, my heart goes out to all of you that had to clean up and may even still be putting the pieces back together.

Since we are speaking of things that are now behind us, we can't forget about our memberships. As we close out the year, I have to remind everyone that it is also time to renew your membership in one of the three outstanding STMA chapters here in Florida.

For CFSTMA members, we finished the new member count at 150. This is really something to be proud of and I thank each and every one of you for your help in growing the chapter. In 2017, we need to set our goal for 200 members. What do you say, up for the challenge?

Speaking of our members, does anyone know who these people are (pictured left) for winning the APWA Parks award for 2015 – 2016? Well they are not only part of the Tavares Public Works Department several of them are members of CFSTMA. Way to go on all your hard work. I am sure this is a well deserved reward.

CFSTMA members should take notice of a couple of changes to the chapter website that will help make the membership renewal process a little smoother. It will reduce the double handling of our paperwork.

And, in case you haven't heard yet, the STMA National event will be held in Orlando in January. If you need more information, go to STMA.org and sign up for the event. I have been to two of these outstanding events. No matter what your turf knowledge, it is always great to hear a refresher item or to even learn something new. Not to mention the time spent with the commercial members exhibitors.

I want to close by wising each and every one a happy and safe holiday season and I look forward to seeing you next year.

Dale Croft

CFSTMA President

FLORIDA CHAPTER NEWS

CFSTMA held its Fall chapter meeting on September 14, 2016. It was our first visit (within recent memory) to the east side of the state at Space Coast Stadium, home of the Washington Nationals and Brevard County Manatees. It was quite the venue for CFSTMA. **Mr. Paul Lopez** couldn't have been a better host.

It is unfortunate that they are relocating so it may be a while before we get back to this location for those of you that weren't able to attend.

The speaker, **Mr. Lynn Griffith**, did his part to add a great event. His informative talk on *"Utilizing Soil Testing for maximizing Turf Nutrition"* was spot on. All picked up a tip or two to help with daily duties.

A shout out to **WESCO Turf** for helping with the lunch. It was some really good barbeque! It goes without saying; there is some pretty good food at these wonderful events.

Thank you to everyone who helped put this meeting together and those of you who took the time to attend. Thanks to your supervisors who saw the advantage of sending some of team members to the event.

Pesticide Breakdown in High pH Water

LYNN GRIFFITH - TROPICAL PLANT AND SOIL EXPERT

If you are managing turfgrass in Florida, chances are pretty good that your irrigation water and therefore your spray tank water are alkaline. Some exceptions are certain parts of the Panhandle and a few odd spots in Central Florida. The reason most of our waters are alkaline is that we have limestone in our underground aquifers. As groundwater passes through limestone in the ground, some of that lime becomes dissolved in the water. When limestone, which is largely calcium carbonate (CaCO3) gets dissolved, most of it splits into calcium ions and bicarbonate ions, HCO3. This is where your bicarbonates come from.

Now, a pesticide is not just a chemical that kills pests. Fungicides, miticides, nematicides and herbicides are all considered pesticides. Many pesticides will break down when mixed in alkaline spray tank water. Which ones? Well, it varies. Organophosphates and carbamates will often break down this way, to the point they become less effective or not effective at all in controlling the target pest or weed.

Here are a couple of examples. The popular grub insecticide Dylox (trichlorfon) will break down by 50% after 1 hour in water of pH 8.0. After an hour, half of it can be gone, and it may not work.

The herbicide flumioxazin, sold as SureGuard, BroadStar, and other trade names will be 50% broken down in 15 minutes in water with a pH of 9.0. Waters with pH above 8 are not uncommon in the southern half of Florida.

The fancy name for this pesticide breakdown is alkaline hydrolysis. Hydrolysis basically means “water splitting”. The pesticide molecule simply splits into smaller components. Think of a large tinker toy assembly being busted up into smaller components. There are numerous charts you can find on the internet which outline optimum spray tank pH values for various chemicals. Some also show their half-life, which is the amount of time needed for half of the pesticide to decompose.

However, there is usually a problem with these charts. Most of them only list very old chemicals, product that have been on the market for decades or may no longer be available at all. A lot of new products have entered the market in the last 10 years or so. It is often hard to find out whether these new products, some of which can cost $400 a pound or more, are stable in high pH water.

So, what’s turf manager to do? In the real world, you can’t really be checking the pH on every tank of spray you put out on your fields. I know virtually nobody who does this. There are different acids you can buy

(continued pg. 8)

inexpensively, including phosphoric, nitric, sulfuric, muriatic and even acetic acid (vinegar) from the grocery store can do in a pinch. There are also lots of acidifying and buffering products available. Most of your ag chem vendors will have one or more products to choose from.

My recommendations here are pretty straightforward. First, get a pH check on your water, from a local lab, extension agent, even a swimming pool store or water treatment company. Assuming your water is alkaline (it probably is), use the charts on the internet to see how susceptible your chemical is to alkaline hydrolysis. If you can't find it, call your chemical salesperson or call the manufacturer to see if that jug of Ultra Awesome Weedwaster Pro you just bought for $300 is on the sensitive list.

If you have one of the acidifying or buffering products, follow the directions on the container. If you have a jug of sulfuric, phosphoric, nitric or muriatic acid, first of all follow safety precautions, using gloves, eye protection, etc. The stuff can be nasty, and it can hurt you. Of course follow labels.

When I was a spray man in the 70s, this is what I would do. I got some phosphoric acid, and measured it out into a bunch of small 1 or 2 ounce vials, which I kept in a rack. I would put 2 ounces per 100 gallons in the tank each time before I added my chemicals. As for your target pH, it varies by the pesticide. I use 5.0 to 5.5 as my spray tank target pH. I find this works in most situations. Understand that acids vary in their strength, and that different waters need different amounts of acid to reach a pH target. I found 2 ounces per 100 to be a pretty good rule of thumb, but your mileage may vary. Getting a hold of a pH meter is most helpful. You can buy pretty decent pH pens for about $50.

So finally, why should you acidify your spray tank water? Several reasons:

1. Pesticides are expensive. The most expensive sprays are the ones that don't work, because then you have to apply them again.

2. Pesticide break down can lead to sublethal doses, meaning the chemical may not work.

3. Broken down pesticides can increase the chance for pesticide resistance.

4. The materials available to adjust spray tank pH are usually inexpensive, and the application rates are low.

5. Getting good control the first time reduces need for follow up applications, which reduces costs and reduces chemical inputs.

CONGRATULATIONS
FLORIDA GATEWAY COLLEGE!

On November 4, 2016, Florida Gateway College dedicated a monument as recognition for 48 years of golf and landscape programs on campus. The Golf Course Operations program developed a national and international reputation, and many alumni are still in states around the country and in other countries. Due to student demand, the program has changed to an all on-line format for employees working in these industries.

For information on the on-line program go to www.fgc.edu. Click on Academics, then Horticulture or call 386-754-4219.

Picture L to R: Dr. Kyle Brown, retired instructor, Bobby Weed, alumnus and golf course architect, John Wildmon, retired instructor, David Robinson, alumnus and management with Marriott Golf, B. J. Cannon, retired instructor, Mark Henderson, alumnus and golf course superintendent, Kevin Downing, alumnus and golf course & landscape consultant, Dr. Jerry Cheesman, retired Program Director and retired dentist, John R. Piersol, Executive Director at FGC, Chris Leahy, alumnus and superintendent, Anthony Baur, alumnus and superintendent, Joe Petersen, incoming online program coordinator.

COMPETITIVE BIDDING

OF SPORTS TURF MANAGEMENT SERVICES

By **Phil Busey, Ph.D.**
Agronomist
Phil Busey Agronomy Consulting

Public administration studies show that competition can cut costs to the taxpayer, particularly at the local level[1]. Privatization may or may not cut costs. But competition is the key. Bidding is the most common method, but not the only method, for competition in sports turf management services. I have skepticism about bidding for sports turf management, particularly in the service area. Most of my concerns are the actual language of written bid solicitations, which often wind up in the final binding contract. And contract management is also reported to be the weakest link in the service process.

For supplies such as fertilizer, bidding, or more strictly requests for quotations, can also be managed better. In a future article I would like make suggestions for improvement in fertilizer bidding, more accurately fertilizer quotations.

While bargaining to save money is important, sports turf fields must be of high quality. We must not bargain the safety of children and adults on the playing field for rock bottom bids. The environment must be protected. Local government must not be penny wise and pound foolish. Listen to my skepticism of bidding not as a rejection of the process, but as a way to make bidding better.

REQUESTS FOR BIDS

First let's get the words right. The buyer, usually local government in the case of most sports turf facilities, does not write bids. The government or other buyer writes a request for bids, same thing as invitations to bid, or a request for proposals. More on proposals later.

[1] *Henry, Nicholas. 2006. Public administration and public affairs. Pearson Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ.*

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When the buyer, usually government, has a fairly clear idea what it wants for a scope of services, that's when there is a solicitation or request for bids. Vendors respond with bids, which are offers of a price. Sometimes prospective bidders have to preregister or prequalify. That may screen out companies who don't have the tools or experience for the job. It may also be a way for government to intentionally favor disadvantaged minorities, veterans, local businesses, or other groups that elected officials believe are in the public's interest to be given a preference.

There is sometimes a pre-bid meeting for all the bidders to meet together with city managers and ask questions and all hear the same explanations. Having open meetings may reduce self-dealing and corruption and it's common sense. If someone's cousin is bidding, others may notice, and if it doesn't pass the smell test, competitors may report it. There might be errors or inconsistencies in the request for bids. Bidders can publicly make suggested changes, and the solicitation can be reissued. Service providers then write the bids by offering their best prices and terms.

COMMUNICATING A PLAN

The most fundamental problem that I have observed in sports turf management is not agronomics but communication. While mowing, fertilizing, irrigation, pest management, and cultural practices grow safe and functional turfgrass, in my experience, failure of communication almost always explains how fields get worn out and full of weeds.

What ultimately better instrument of communication could there be than a written agreement between two parties? Unfortunately, bid specifications are not often effective as they should be because they are badly written and badly followed. Some bid specifications are guaranteed to fail to accomplish good quality sports turf and sometimes people just don't understand.

The most **fundamental problem** that I have observed in sports turf management is **not agronomics but communication.**

When the City of ABC contracted their field maintenance to Vendor Q, you would think everything should have worked out well. It didn't. Neither ABC City nor Vendor Q understood what the agreement said.

It happens in-house as well. When XYZ County School Board did their field maintenance internally, that didn't work out well, either. The School Board technically did everything under one roof, but

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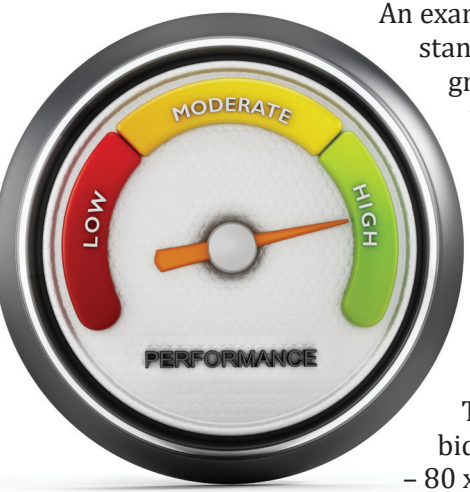
that didn't guarantee good communications. What one department was doing well in mowing and fertilization was destroyed by the pest control department who used the wrong herbicide.

Beyond the agronomics of field maintenance, both XYZ Schools and ABC City had dual issues of accountability and expectations. One way to manage accountability and expectations is to contract or supervise according to agreed performance standards.

PERFORMANCE STANDARD VS. PRESCRIPTION



An example of a sports turf performance standard is, "sports fields shall have 100% green (_____ cultivar) bermudagrass cover throughout the year to sustain up to 800 hours per year of team use from scheduled and unscheduled activities." Another example is, "sports fields shall have not more than 1% surface area weed density which shall be determined as a vertical downward view of the foliage cover."

The prescriptive approach from a City bid proposal was, "Sports Reel Mowing – 80 x year." The prescriptive approach might work well for mowing but might not work well for pest management. Goosegrass management, for example, should make sure there is irrigation available after preemergence herbicide application, and make sure that sand fields are not too dry before games.

Another problem with the prescription approach is that the prescription may be the wrong prescription and even if it were right it may be unresponsive to changing conditions such as weather and periods of excessive wear. Typically goosegrass is the worst weed in sports turf in Florida, and goosegrass germinates in worn areas. A steady spoon feeding of nitrogen fertilizer provides more continuous bermudagrass turf growth, which is more resistant to weeds including goosegrass. Importantly, in warm-season grass areas, three to five applications per year of preemergence herbicide can prevent goosegrass emergence.

The contractor should have been made **responsible** for preventing and/or controlling goosegrass.

Period.

No micromanagement.

No excuses. No weeds.

Along with fertilization and traffic management, preemergence herbicide will reduce costs compared with postemergence herbicide, by preventing weeds and keeping fields clean all the time. One maintenance agreement that I saw required three applications of postemergence herbicide per year and only one preemergence application. In my opinion, it should have been the opposite. The contractor also agreed to do spot treatment the other eight months of the year. Guess what? They were completely covered by goosegrass 12 months of the year. The contractor should have been made responsible for preventing and/or controlling goosegrass. Period. No micromanagement. No excuses. No weeds.

An otherwise well written, detailed agreement with another Florida municipality said, "Bermuda turf shall be fertilized sixteen (16) times

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Results of a grass weedy control prescription in a Florida municipal sports turf management agreement. The prescription was preemergence herbicide once per year and postemergence herbicide three times per year. If the prescription was even followed, it should have been the opposite.

per year at a rate of one (1) lb of N per 100 square feet." That doesn't make sense. It is at least twice as high as it should be. Either the City was paying for at least twice as much fertilizer as they were actually getting, or the contractor was doing what was required to destroy the fields. In another agreement, the contractor agreed to fertilize every month of the year but could never show how much fertilizer was actually used. There was no monitoring, even when the contractor was asked, he was incapable of saying.

INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT VS. SEPARATING LOTS

Outsourcing works well in regions with a mature business establishment. Throughout Florida there are many businesses with a distinctive business profile such as mowing services for rough turf such as roadsides as well as landscapes. There are fewer businesses capable of mowing sports turf as it should be mowed with either reel mowers or rotary mowers designed for fine turf. There are even fewer businesses that provide more specialized services in aerification and pest management, and still fewer businesses that can provide all the services needed, mowing, fertilizing and pest management, irrigation management, and specialized operations such as aerification. As a result, in responding to the local business environment, while it may be desirable to have one company to do a complete integrated sports turf management, such a company may not exist.

The solution is sometimes an à la carte approach in which bids are let according to "lots." This takes advantage of the best available businesses and allows companies to bid on different "lots" such as just mowing. The reason that this approach may not be the best approach is because it makes it harder to use performance standards contracts and can force the use of more prescription services.

Ideally sports turf management should be integrated. If there is a weed problem that is worsened by irrigation variability, the irrigation contractor would make irrigation more uniform. But the irrigation contractor may not look at the weed problem because the irrigation contractor is not getting paid for weed control. Businesses in Florida that can provide complete sports turf management are harder to find.

REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS

In contrast to simple solicitation for bids, a request for proposal is offered to consultants and designers and other folks who are asked to plan a project. That means the buyer doesn't know exactly what it wants—there is not a specific scope of services—but would like a sneak peek at what designers can come up with. Then, if buyer and seller have a pretty good match, the winning proposal writer gets to go further with the project. For really big projects there may be stages in which competing bidders are asked to up their ante by showing what they can do if given the chance, and may answer questions from elected officials and residents in a public forum. This drama can get the public involved in seeing what the best proposals might do for their community, and be a chance for dissenters to have their say. It is a useful part of the discernment to move a project forward. Or not.

The decision of a County School Board, City Government, or other public and private entity to contract out maintenance services is complicated and requires input from many sources. As my first suggested way to make bidding better, requests for proposal should be used more often instead of bid solicitation. Imagine, if your local high school and the parents and teachers could hear maintenance proposals from different companies. Some of these companies would educate the public on what they thought was wrong with the field and how they would fix it. The education that can come from competitive proposals is a good thing.

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MAINTENANCE BID SPECIFICATION

FOR SPORTS TURF MANAGEMENT

1. Requests for proposal may be a better way of starting maintenance service bidding. That gives the customer, often a government entity, a chance to size up the business environment and decide whether use bid lots or integrated services.

2. Whenever possible, well-defined performance measures should be given more weight than prescription. If the contractor does everything according to prescription but performance is poor, there needs to be a way of insisting on a better outcome, without micromanaging.

3. Ultimately it comes down to the contract administrator. But to make that job easier, include an evaluation and reporting procedure, both written and oral, as part of the plan. The contract administrator should communicate clearly with the contractor how the written specifications are interpreted. And reporting requires on-site observation, not merely the contractor stating that something has happened without details.

4. If the prescription approach is used, provide a mechanism for discretion. For example, a certain number of mowings per year may be required, but there would be an option to add additional mowings, as needed and as requested, for an à la carte price.

5. If there are multiple bid lots for different kinds of services such as irrigation and weed control, be cautious how these are separated to make sure the different awarded companies will be able to communicate and cooperate with one another.

6. If there are quantitative measurements in the request for bids, make sure they are reasonable and clear. For example, don't just say "80:20 mix," say, "80:20 sand:peat mix by volume, of which the 20% peat is sphagnum peat or other highly fibrous peat."

7. Get someone with sports turf management to read the bid specification and suggest changes, and hopefully administer the contract. There are lots of legal issues that go into bid specifications, and those are all important, that's why the city pays its attorneys. But agronomics must not be ignored.

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Mole Crickets

MUTANT BUGS FROM THE UNDERWORLD?

Mole crickets are odd, brown insects about 1 to 1.5" in length and resemble a house cricket. They are remarkably adapted for digging in our sandy soils. Their large strong forelegs are designed so they can virtually swim through Florida sands. Mole crickets live in the top six inches of the soil most of the time and feed on plant roots and other insects (depending on the species). Their favorite grass is bermudagrass, with bahiagrass and centipedegrass a close second. They will also feed on either St. Augustinegrass if a preferred turf is not present. This time of year, any tunneling you are seeing is from adults that are not feeding. Control of adults at this time is poor, and focus should be on mimimizing the young mole crickets shortly after the eggs hatch, and during the late summer and early fall.

By Dave Espey
Regional BDR
TruGreen Commercial

WHAT ATTRACTS MOLE CRICKETS TO MY TURF?

Besides the type of turf you have, bright lights, a full moon, rainfall, and overwatering will encourage mole crickets to invade your lawn or sports field. Mole crickets are also much more active during the full moon. They navigate by light, similar to a moth, so artificial lighting

Background Info

During the late spring, adult mole crickets can fly up to several miles to mate & lay their eggs. While highly visible and annoying, the adults do little actual turf damage.

Eggs hatch into tiny mole crickets as small as a chinch bug (the head of a pin). Immediately upon hatching, they begin to feed and tunnel through the turf. When they are very small, you will not see turf damage.

The two most common species of mole crickets are the southern and the tawny. The southern mole cricket is a carnivore and feeds mainly on other insects. The tawny primarily eats plant roots. Both damage turf by disrupting the root system of turf (they are also a problem in vegetable farming and young citrus groves).

confuses them and they fly into places where they are not wanted. By limiting irrigation you will minimize the number of mole cricket eggs deposited in your grass. Bahiagrass can go dormant and turn completely brown from lack of water, but it will recover when it receives rainfall. Bermudagrass, St. Augustinegrass and centipedegrass do require supplemental irrigation, but be careful not to over water. We cannot overemphasize that overwatering not only encourages mole crickets to become established, it also allows weeds to out compete the desirable grass. Water your turf only as it shows a need.

Mole crickets are often attracted to the lights in the pool, fall in, and drown.

WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT MOLE CRICKETS RIGHT NOW?

Unfortunately, not much. Their focus is on egg-laying, and they don't spend much time in the lawn, so it is not likely they would even be exposed to the insect treatment. The adults are not eating much right now, so insecticide-coated baits are not effective either. At this time of year, all we can do is let the insect go about their business of laying eggs. About 75% of the eggs will be laid between March and mid-June. Once the adults finish their mating and egg-laying cycle, they die.

WHAT ABOUT THOSE TUNNELS I SEE IN THE TURF?

Adult mole crickets make short tunnels to lay their eggs in. This is primarily what you are seeing right now. A new swarm of adults can fly into your grass each night for several weeks, and flying insects are next to

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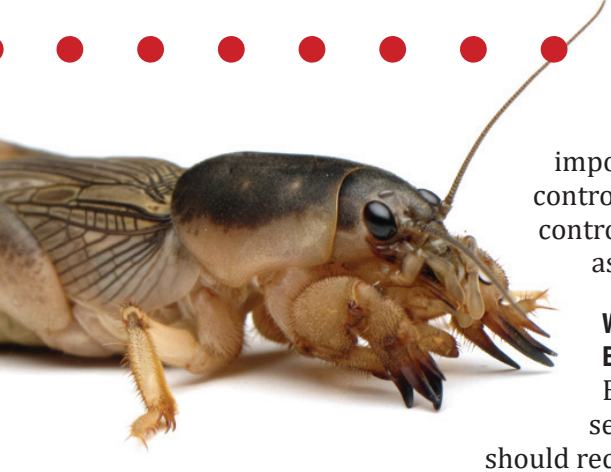

impossible to control. Therefore, control efforts should focused at controlling the mole cricket nymphs as they emerge from their egg.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE ABOUT THE EGGS?

Bermuda, Zoysia, Bahia, and selected St. Augustine Turfs should receive a blanket insect control application that is targeted at minimizing the hatchlings. Mole crickets are very small when they first hatch or about the size of ants. Their body weight is low and the materials applied should give about 90% control. Bermuda Sports fields may have other treatments that require watering in.

CONDITIONS THAT FAVOR MOLE CRICKETS

Besides the type of turf you have, bright lights and overwatering will encourage mole crickets to invade your turf. Mole crickets prefer Bermudagrass and Bahiagrass and Centipedegrass, then St. Augustinegrass. Bermuda Sports fields with illuminated fields for night games are unavoidably troubled with mole crickets flying in and aggravating both players and fans.

By limiting your irrigation to only when your turf requires water, you will help minimize the number of mole cricket eggs laid in your turf during the spring.

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Commercial Member SPOTLIGHT

Julie Adamski

As the director of retail and professional development, Julie Adamski joined the Sod Solutions team in February 2014. Sod Solutions, Inc., an international turfgrass research and development company, incorporated in 1994, is headquartered in Charleston, South Carolina. In conjunction with universities and breeders, Sod Solutions has developed a portfolio of turfgrass varieties in the St. Augustine, Bermudagrass, Zoysia, Centipede and Cool Season families. From their premier variety, Palmetto® St. Augustine, Sod Solutions continues to launch new variations of turfgrass to meet the environmental and consumer demands in the marketplace. The sports industry has been extremely receptive to our Celebration® and Latitude 36® Bermudagrass varieties.

A native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Julie holds of Bachelor of Science from Penn State University in Turfgrass and Soil Science and a minor in Agribusiness Management. Her extended experience with high quality, high traffic natural grass fields, began at the Chartiers Country Club in Pittsburgh, the Penn State Athletics Grounds Crew and Heinz Field with the Pittsburgh Steelers.

Julie's passion for the industry is enhanced with her creative and positive personality. Her vast understanding of natural grass and her willingness to learn made her a valuable member of the Maryland SocccerPlex crew, as the assistant grounds and environmental manager. At the SoccerPlex she managed sixteen native soil fields (nine cool season, seven bermudagrass), three sand-based fields (one cool season, two bermudagrass) and three synthetic fields.

Currently, Julie is developing new partnerships in targeted markets and strengthening existing relationships in sports turf, as well as many other areas of the turf industry including golf and lawn care. She identifies and creates programs that increase demand for Sod Solutions products.

For questions regarding turfgrass or where to buy contact Julie directly or visit www.sodsolutions.com for more information. ●

Professional Member SPOTLIGHT

Traci Anderson

Traci joined the Parks Department with the City of Tavares in October 2012 as their Landscape Specialist. Coming to the city as a nurseryman of twenty plus years and most familiar with organic methods, as she was operating a certified organic farm at the time, her job with the city has been an expansion of her knowledge base. Due to her background she believes in being environmentally responsible when evaluating a protocol and she tries to bring this experience to the table. Typically her job involves maintaining the landscape within the city and the shoreline management of two waterfront parks. This includes pest control, fertilization, general landscaping, invasive species removal and maintenance of numerous parks and facilities and in contributing to the protocol for the turf management of two sports complexes. She works under the mentorship of Chris Thompson, Director of Public Works and the Parks Manager, Perry Ragin and the company of Parks Foreman, Wendell Hunt along with a crew of eight.

It was in 2014 that Traci learned of CFSTMA and Tavares began actively attending meetings thereafter.

Revitalization of the city landscape and beautification figure heavily into Traci's goals. Accomplishments to date are an extensive butterfly garden capable of attracting twenty plus species of butterflies, two rain gardens, numerous new landscape projects complimenting various facilities with the most impressive being the Garden at the Pavilion on the Lake; a lush tropical paradise framing the beautiful new event pavilion established in 2014. She introduced a hanging basket program for the CRA district in 2015 and the Public Works department received the APWA 2016 Project of the Year Award Structures for the Central Florida District. The program that Traci is currently the most excited about is the city's participation in America in Bloom, a national awards program for cities and towns.

Traci enjoys the outdoors at home and is an avid gardener. She resides on a farm in Eustis where she, her husband of 25 years and their two sons own and operate a nursery specializing in herbs and heirloom roses and maintain a small herd of Nigerian Dwarf goats that they breed and show.

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.

December - February

MOWING

Recommended mowing height for ryegrass is 1"-1.5".

On non-overseeded bermudagrass fields and bermudagrass typically goes dormant during cooler temperatures. If this is the case, most maintenance practices become unnecessary. On bermudagrass fields overseeded with ryegrass will need to continue through these months.

IRRIGATION

Typically dormant bermudagrass generally doesn't require irrigation. Irrigation should occur on an as needed basis with overseeded fields. One or two irrigation applications per week are usually sufficient to maintain fields.

Always water at the first signs of wilt. Wilt is characterized by folded or curled leaves, blue-green color and visible footprints left after walking on the surface. Wilted turf can recover quickly if it is taken care of immediately. Traffic should not be allowed on wilted areas or recently recovered wilted areas if possible.

FERTILIZER

Recommended amount of nutrients per month if you have overseeded with ryegrass is .5 lbs.-1 lb. N/1,000sq. ft. Fertilizer applications are unnecessary on dormant bermudagrass fields, unless they are overseeded with ryegrass. They will perform better with monthly applications of fertilizer. If air temperatures are consistently less than 50 degrees F., turfgrass growth potential is low.

CULTIVATION

There are no recommendations for soil cultivation at this time of year. However, you know you micro climate and what you can and can't get away with.

Bermudagrass seeding or sprigging is not recommended during the winter because bermudagrass goes dormant. It requires warm

temperatures for proper establishment. Sod can be installed essentially any time of the year that the soil is not frozen. However, if the field is to be played upon the following Spring, bermudagrass sod installations should occur by early to mid-fall at the latest.

DISEASES

On non-overseeded bermudagrass fields diseases are generally not a problem. Overseeded bermudagrass fields need to be monitored for disease presence.

OFF SEASON MAINTENANCE

Winter is also a great time to devote to equipment maintenance repair. Proper equipment maintenance and care prologns the life of the equipment and saves money in the long run. This may also be a good time to replace or upgrade your inventory.

INSECTS

Insects are generally not a problem in bermudagrass fields during the cooler temperatures.

WEEDS

Recommended time to apply herbicides

- December, January, February - Postemergent control of winter annual and perennial broadleaf weeds
- February - Preemergent control of summer annual weedy grass

The goal of turf management is to produce healthy turf while limiting reliance on pesticides. Many managers follow Integrated Pest Management (IMP) practices. This program does not completely eliminate pests, but maintains the population to a tolerable level. Pesticides are oftern a part of IPM programs, but they are selected and applied responsibly to avoid health risks to other living organizms than those targeted. It is important to routinely scout the fields and identify the pest problem in the early stages. ●

Upcoming INDUSTRY EVENTS

National STMA Conference and Exhibition

January 24-27, 2017

Disney's Coronado Springs Resort, Orlando, FL

To find out more, visit stma.org/2017-conference.

Pictured: Disney's Coronado Springs Resort

Florida Statewide Chapters
SportsTurf Managers Association
Experts on the Field, Partners in the Game.

Florida STMA Chapter Application Form

Name: _____ Title: _____

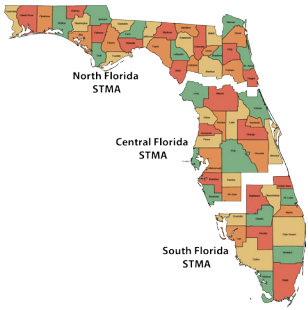
Employer: _____ _____Contact Phone: _____

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.

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