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Volume 4 Issue 10

November 2011



EPA announces plans to **REMOVE** **40% TURFGRASS RESTRICTION** from Watersense Program

Turfgrass Producers International along with our coalition partners has had success in convincing the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to remove the 40% turfgrass restriction in the landscape section of their Watersense program.

The EPA has announced a "Notice of Intent" to remove the 40% turfgrass restriction from the Watersense single-family new home specification to accommodate for varying regional climate conditions.

"Many members may not realize the efforts that have gone into getting this done. This is a huge success for TPI and our coalition partners who have been working on this for over 3 years and have repeatedly met with EPA in an effort to remove the turfgrass restriction," said TPI's Executive Director, Kirk Hunter, who was actively involved in meeting with and providing information to EPA decision-makers in Washington.

The Watersense single-family new home labeling program that enabled a new home to qualify for a Watersense label had previously contained two options for landscape design: (1) adhere to a water budget tool, or (2) restrict the use of turfgrass to 40 percent of the landscapable area.

With the recent announcement by Watersense, the only requirement for builders wishing to be eligible for this labeling would be to adhere to the water budget tool.

Hunter went on to say, "Through our coalition efforts, we have also submitted letters and comments regarding the IGCC (International Green Construction Code) limitation of 40% turfgrass in the landscape which may have been influenced by the initial guidelines proposed by the EPA that are now going to be removed."

Response from various green industry organizations echoed TPI's enthusiasm over the decision. John Farner, Federal Affairs Director for the Irrigation Association commented, "This announcement by Watersense is a huge win . . . and green industry partners should celebrate."

To view the official WaterSense "Notification of Intent" click below.



[WaterSense® Notification of Intent](#)



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Urban Forests Equal Cleaner, Cooler Air

As featured in: **The Dirt – American Society of Landscape Architects**

10/05/2011 by [asladirt](#)

Poor air quality has led to an explosion of asthma cases and other health problems among vulnerable populations including children, the elderly, and low-income residents. Each year bad air causes two million deaths worldwide. Also, in the U.S., there have been 8,000 premature deaths from excessive heat over the past 25 years. Urban heat islands, which are caused, in part, by sunlight being absorbed by paved surfaces and roofs, lead to higher surface temperatures, up to 90°F. Atmospheric air temperatures are also higher: in the day by up to 6°F and at night, by up to 22°F. Vulnerable populations also face greater risks of heat exhaustion.

(Sources: [Heat Island Impacts](#), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (E.P.A.), [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#))

Increasing the tree canopy in cities is one way to fight both poor air quality and urban heat islands. Research shows significant short-term improvements in air quality in urban areas with 100 percent tree cover. There, trees can reduce hourly ozone by up to 15 percent, sulfur dioxide by 14 percent, and particulate matter by 13 percent. U.S. trees remove some 784,000 tons of pollution annually, providing \$3.8 billion in value. Furthermore, a single large healthy tree can remove greater than 300 pounds of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere every year. In fact, New York City's urban forest alone removes 154,000 tons of CO₂ annually. Through their leaves, trees also provide evaporative cooling, which increases air humidity. Shaded surfaces may be 20-45°F cooler, and evapotranspiration can reduce peak summer temperatures by 2-9°F.

(Sources: [Heat Island Mitigation: Trees and Vegetation](#), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (E.P.A.), "Sustaining America's Trees and Forests," David J. Nowak, Susan M. Stein, Paula B. Randler, Eric J. Greenfield, Sara J. Comas, Mary A. Carr, and Ralph J. Alig, U.S. Forest Service.)

See video: <http://dirt.asla.org/2011/10/05/urban-forests-cleaner-cooler-air/>

###

But let's not forget about the benefits of natural turfgrass too!

- J. Novak

Environmental Benefits

- Cools the Air
- Produces Oxygen
- Filters Air & Reduces Pollution
- Captures & Suppresses Dust
- Recharges & Filters Groundwater Supply
- Reduces Storm Water Runoff
- Controls Soil Erosion
- Retains and Sequesters Carbon
- Assists Decomposition of Pollutants
- Restores Soil Quality

Community & Human Health Benefits

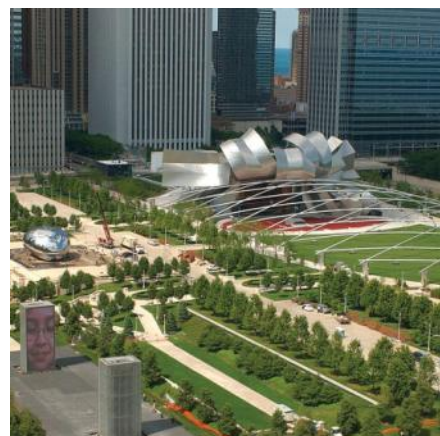
- Enhances Community Pride
- Natural Playing Surface for Recreation
- Provides Safe Surface & Reduces Injuries
- Promotes Outdoor Activity & Exercise
- Improves Physical & Mental Health
- Relieves Stress
- Lowers Allergy Related Problems
- Dissipates Heat
- Reduces Glare
- Diminishes Noise Pollution
- Minimizes Nuisance Pests
- Compliments Overall Landscaping
- Preserves Natural Wildlife Habitat

Economic Benefits

- Increases Property Values
- Reduces Home Cooling Costs
- Provides a Low-Cost Ground Cover
- Serves as a Fire Barrier
- Improves Visibility & Deters Crime
- Boosts Human Productivity



Chicago's Grant Park illustrates how the use of trees and natural turfgrass can come together to create a natural oasis in urban surroundings.



Chicago's Millennium Park incorporated both trees and natural turf to create a beautiful setting against an urban skyline.



A fun and rewarding way to support The Lawn Institute

500 CLUB

The purpose of **The Lawn Institute 500 Club** is to raise funds for education and research for the turfgrass industry.

Donors who reach a contribution that totals \$500 during the current calendar year qualify for the 500 Club and will receive the following recognition:

- The Lawn Institute polo shirt
- A "500 Club" pin
- Signage in The Lawn Institute booth and recognition in our publications

How to participate:

Attain your 500 Club card at the Registration Desk or at any qualifying Lawn Institute fundraising event.

If you have donated to The Lawn Institute directly or to a qualifying event at a Conference/Convention the dollars you donate will be added to your 500 Club card.

When your contributions reach a cumulative \$500 donation, you can turn your card in at The Lawn Institute booth or at the Registration Desk to receive your recognition gift. We will track your contributions for you. Turn your 500 Club card in at the Registration Desk or The Lawn Institute booth. If you make any additional donations within the current calendar year and you reach \$500 you will become a Member of the 500 Club for that year. Receipts will be e-mailed to you for your donation(s).

Ways to reach your "500 Club" goal!

Participate in one or more qualifying events and your donations will be added to your 500 Club card.

Donation Examples:

- Direct contributions to The Lawn Institute
- Qualifying Frisbee toss
- Qualifying Bean Bag toss
- Qualifying Balloon Buy
- Qualifying Games of Chance (Raffles/Drawings)
- Sponsorship* of a golf hole at The Lawn Institute Golf Tournament

* Golf Hole Sponsors' primary representative will receive credit for the donations on their card.

For more information speak to any member of the staff or contact Geri Hannah at: Ghannah@TurfGrassSod.org.



Current 2012 — 500 Club Members

Chip Lain / Pine Island Turf Nursery, Inc.

Mayfield McCraw / Hope Plantation

Ferdie Schmitt / F&W Schmitt Farms

Bobby Winstead / Winstead Turf Farms, Inc.

NYC's Fake Grass Gamble: A \$300M Mistake?

By Patrick Arden

As featured in City Limits

CITY LIMITS

In 1998, New York City began installing synthetic turf fields in parks and playgrounds, saying the artificial material would be more durable than grass. But a *City Limits* investigation finds that many turf fields are falling apart, including this one at Flushing Meadows-Corona Park.



Soccer players examine the turf at Flushing Meadows-Corona Park.

Adi Talwar/City Limits

Soccer players shout at midfield, but not about their game: The field is falling apart.

"It's been like this for five years," complains Israel Arreola, as he points to the open seams, torn patches and wavy folds in the artificial turf at Flushing Meadows Corona Park. Referees for public school league games already boycott two artificial-turf fields there, citing fears of liability. "This is bad: holes everywhere," says Arreola, a Manhattan sous-chef who plays in a weekend league.

"Somebody's going to get hurt." Over the past 12 years New York City has borrowed an estimated \$300 million to put 204 artificial-turf fields at parks, schools and playgrounds. An additional 52 fields are on the drawing board.

The reasons behind this buying binge have been many, ranging from the battle against obesity to an alleged cost savings on field maintenance. Artificial turf is part of PlaNYC, Mayor Michael Bloomberg's blueprint for an environmentally friendly future. Yet a *City Limits* investigation has found that overuse and chronic neglect has run turf ragged years ahead of schedule; price comparisons generally favor natural grass, even in the long term; and the health risks of turf—largely dismissed by the city after the destruction of one artificial field for high lead levels in late

2008—are much broader and deeper than previously reported.

After years of rejecting health concerns, the city recently agreed to switch materials and to set up new protocols for testing artificial turf, but the backroom negotiations that brought these concessions actually kept more threatening information from seeing the light of day. It's not clear that the new testing regime will eliminate the health risks, and the issues of cost and durability have not been addressed.

Documents we've obtained indicate that the city's regimen for testing the fields to make sure they don't contain dangerous levels of chemicals is not as rigorous as the public has been told. If new federal standards for lead were applied to turf fields in city parks, several would be forced to shut down.

Relentlessly pitched as a financial boon, plastic grass has turned into a pricey time bomb. As more fields hit the end of their useful lives, the city faces the prospect—and increased expense—of reconstructing them.

The price of new turf fields to replace the current, damaged ones is rising. And installing a new turf field requires the expensive task of disposing off the old one — meaning the shift to turf may have been a costly gamble.

In a random survey of 56 artificial fields this summer, *City Limits* discovered 25, or 46 percent, in serious state of disrepair, with gaps, tears and holes forming obvious trip hazards. At least 14 fields had minor damage, but without fixes, their defects are sure to grow worse.

How did an administration that prides itself on financial acumen dive headlong into a heavy investment in an untested material? And why has it remained steadfastly committed to buying more artificial turf?

The answers lie in the story of how New York City became the world's biggest buyer of fake grass.

As a participant at the TPI Midwinter Conference you can also sign-up for the optional TPI Post-Conference Technical Turf Tour

By: Lynn Grooms (TURF NEWS Managing Editor)

Turfgrass farm owners and managers and next generation leaders are encouraged to sign up for TPI's Post-Conference Technical Turf Tour, February 4-5, in the Phoenix and Scottsdale, Arizona area.

The Technical Turf Tour will take you away for a close up look at **Chase Field Ballpark**, home of the Arizona Diamondbacks, as well as one of the area's largest baseball spring training fields. Also on the tour will be the **Paradise Valley Country Club**, a recently renovated golf course; and a visit to Matt and Jim Smith's **Southwest Sod** farm, where you can exchange ideas and information with Matt and other attendees.

The second day's activities will include visits to two **Evergreen Turf** farms owned by TPI members Jeff Nettleton and Jimmy Fox. In addition, the group will travel to the **University of Arizona** campus to meet with turf research faculty and staff about new developments and future trends in turfgrass. The tour will return to the hotel for a final wrap-up in time for Super Bowl fans to watch the big game.

The tour includes two nights lodging at the Marriott Courtyard Phoenix, two lunches and two dinners, motorcoach transportation, tour guides and more. Step right this way—TPI is waiting to take you away!

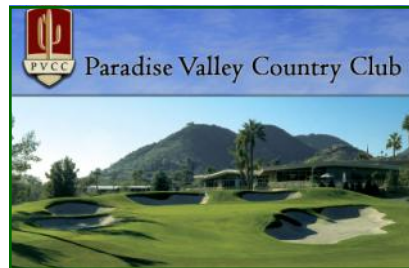
Register by January 12, 2012 by visiting the Midwinter Conference Registration link at www.TurfGrassSod.org.

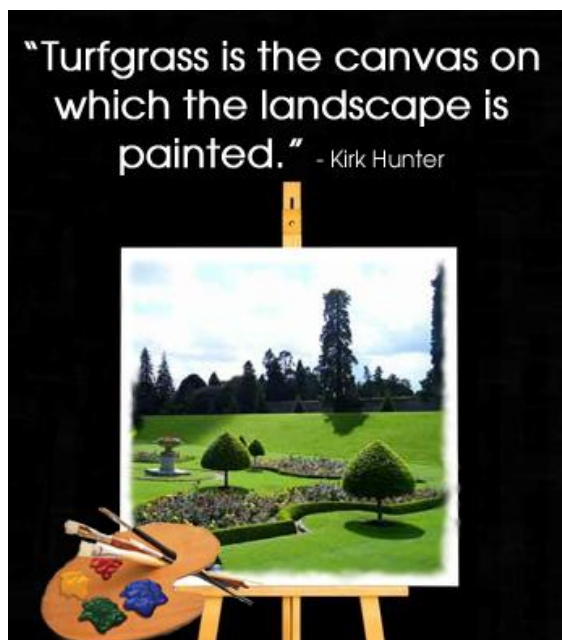


Matt, John and Jim Smith of Southwest Sod in Maricopa, Arizona.

Reserve your place
SIGN UP TODAY
Registration Deadline
January 12, 2012

As featured in the Oct/Nov 2011 TPI Business Management newsletter.





Powerscourt, Enniskerry, Co. Wicklow, Ireland - Photo: Jim Novak

A thoughtful **"Thank You"** from **Slovenia**

The following unsolicited note was received by Veronica Iwanski, TPI's Membership & Marketing Manager and we wanted to share it with our readers.

Thank you for the news from the turf production industry. Through our TPI membership we see what is going on, what is new between farmers that do the same work we do. We also meet a lot of people with the same ideas we share. My writing in English is not very good, but I hope you understand me. I wish you well. A lot of nice days and a lot of good company. We were on the Scandinavia tour with other TPI members, and we had a real good time together and made a lot of new friends. When TPI members visited our home and turf farm last year during the Italy-Slovenian tour we were very happy to see them again. You can feature my email and if you have some questions, ask me.

Best regards,

Janez and Metka Krivic
 Krivic Travni Tepihi D.O.O.
 Begunje, Slovenia



The above text was very slightly modified to convey the thoughts of the Krivic's with clarity.—J. Novak



"The larger we get the louder our collective voice."



Turfgrass Producers International REFERRAL PROGRAM

Earn a **\$50 gift certificate** for each company you refer that joins *Turfgrass Producers International*.

The gift certificate can be redeemed for your dues, conference package registration or product order. How easy can that be - it's a win-win situation! Your wallet grows, but more importantly, your association grows! The larger we get the louder our collective voice.



Contact us today for more information

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AT STONEHENGE



Photograph: Parsons Landscapes staff laying Rolawn turf at Stonehenge

TPI member, **Rolawn Turf** of Elvington York, England provided over 800 square meters of their Medallion® turf to specialist contractor Parsons Landscapes Ltd. as part of a restoration program at one of Britain's treasured historic sites.

The prehistoric monument of **Stonehenge** was built between 4,000 and 5,000 years ago. Today it is one of the last remnants of the Neolithic Age. With over 950,000 visitors annually, it is reportedly the busiest tourist attraction in Britain's southwest drawing more visitors than the acclaimed Windsor Castle.

The historic landmark has been undergoing a major renovation for several years to preserve its historic significance and that of the surrounding area.

English Heritage, a partly government-financed organization that owns Stonehenge and more than 400 other historic sites in the country is overseeing the renovation.

Rolawn's Medallion® turf is recognized as a quality, ryegrass/fescue mix acknowledged for its superior appearance, drought tolerance, deep rooting and wear and disease resistance; all positive factors in making it the turf of choice at the historic site.

Parsons Landscapes has used Rolawn turf on previous occasions to meet their annual renovation needs at Stonehenge.

Interesting facts about STONEHENGE



- Some historians believe construction of Stonehenge was completed between 3100 BC and 1100 BC.
- In the year 1986, UNESCO awarded Stonehenge World Heritage Status. The site has legal protection by the Scheduled Ancient Monument.
- The British Crown owns Stonehenge. Its management has been trusted to English Heritage. National Trust owns the surrounding areas.
- The circle has been aligned to coincide with the midsummer sunrise and midwinter sunset. The southerly and northerly rising of the moon is also seen.
- The architecture of Stonehenge has taken into account mathematical and geometrical considerations. The construction is structurally engineered to perfection.

Where in the world is
TPI represented?

EVERYWHERE!

An on-going series featuring photos and copy
from TPI member websites.

Iron Bridge Sod Farms
Bowling Green, Kentucky USA

<http://www.ironbridgesodfarms.com/index.htm>



Iron Bridge Sod Farms of Bowling Green, KY was established in spring of 2004 with five acres of fescue sod planted on the family farm in Warren County. Since 2004, we have added over 200 acres into production. Our growth is a result of putting quality and customer satisfaction first. Our sod is grown in the rich bottom soil of the Barren River, and is harvested only after reaching top quality. We service home owners, landscapers, contractors, and commercial projects.



Iron Bridge Sod Farms offers professional services including sod delivery, complete site preparation and installation. Our top quality locally grown turf will be a long lasting asset providing beauty while improving the environment. From homeowner improvements to supplying landscapers with all their sod needs, no job is too big or small.

Sod will be cut fresh to order, Turf type Fescue and Bluegrass blends available.

- Slabs - 16" x 48"
- Small Rolls - 18" x 6'
- Big Rolls - 108' x 30" - 50 yds

Other Services Include:

- Consultation
- Renovation
- Grade work
- Seed / straw
- Erosion control



Iron Bridge Sod Farms has products to help you create a beautiful lush lawn or improve any project you might have with prices you can afford.

Our Sod Products Are Used For:

- Residential lawns
- Landscaper supply

Iron Bridge Sod Farms is a proud member of
Turfgrass Producers International



TurfSide-UP

ADVERTISING 101



Where do we begin with this one?

RULE #1

High Visibility is critical to ensure your advertising can be easily read and isn't concealed by weeds.

RULE #2

Proper Placement of signage cannot be overstated. Position signs horizontally rather than vertically because most people do not walk sideways unless they are intoxicated or over-medicated, and in such cases they would likely have blurred vision anyway.

RULE #3

Clarity of your Message is critical so check all spelling before going to print so as not to suggest, as is the case here, that chickens are providing a service rather than humans.

Laughing at Ourselves

Laughing at Ourselves is a new feature intended to poke some light-hearted fun at TPI members and the TPI staff. If reader response is favorable we will make this a regular monthly feature. Let us know what you think. — jnovak@TurfGrassSod.org

Tell yah what I'll do. Place your order today and I'll toss in this Tupperware container and you can have the ham and cheese sandwich that's inside. And here's the best part, as an added TPI Field Day bonus special, I'll give you a little packet of mustard to go with it.



Photo: Jim Novak

Barry Green of Jonathan Green & Sons demonstrates his extraordinary selling skills to **Sheldon** and **Peggy Betterly** of Nokesville, Virginia during a TPI Field Day.

Let me see if I've got this right, Arthur. You have a new personal fitness trainer and he told you that the way to do a sit-up is to sit like that and put your arms up? Is that about right? Mind if I ask, how much are you paying this Bozo?



Photo: Kirk Hunter

Bobby Winstead of Winstead Turf Farms in Arlington, Tennessee poses a direct question to a somewhat confused and bewildered **Arthur Milberger** (retired) King Ranch Turfgrass, Wharton, Texas.

Photos and captions are pre-approved by all featured individuals.



Cornell University

Readin', Writin', 'Rithmetic and a little GRASS!



Students, faculty and staff relax on natural grass in the lobby of the Albert R. Mann Library at Cornell University to showcase the restorative benefits of nature.

With advice from turf grass specialist Dr. Frank Rossi of Cornell University, under graduate Gilad Meron installed a little lawn in the northeast corner lobby of Cornell's Albert R. Mann Library.

Various professors in Human Ecology had done research on the restorative benefits of nature. Instead of telling people about it, they decided to show

people. Visitors were encouraged to sit back, relax, lay down, and enjoy the grass!

Nearby signage reads: **"Yes, it's real grass. Yes, you can sit, lie down and roll around on the grass, but please don't stomp on it. The grass is part of the exhibit."**

Rossi says the grass should last a week or two, depending on traffic. Additional exhibits in the library lobby chronicle the paths that College of Human Ecology faculty and students have forged over the past century, highlighting the people and principles that have helped make the College a world leader in research, teaching and science-based extension.

Our thanks to **Greg DeBuck** of DeBuck's Sod Farm in Pine Island, New York for bringing this story to our attention.



TPI Midwinter Conference

January 30—February 3, 2012
Montelucia Resort & Spa
Scottsdale, Arizona



TWO BIG WAYS TO SAVE!

#1 — REGISTER EARLY

Registration is now open on-line

Early Bird Discount

SAVE — \$50.00 w/Full Conference Registration Package

SAVE — \$40.00 for Spouse/Companion

Deadline for Early Bird Discount

November 18, 2011.

#2 — STAY AT THE HOST HOTEL



\$100 REFUND VOUCHER

STAY AT THE HOST HOTEL

For more information go to:

<http://www.turfgrassod.org/publisher/events/2011/8/30/tpi-midwinter-conference>



THE LAWN INSTITUTE

PRESENTS THE

2012

DR. HENRY W. INDYK

SCHOLARSHIP

PROVIDED BY
TURFGRASS PRODUCERS INTERNATIONAL

DEADLINE JANUARY 16, 2012

Attention TPI Members

Dr. Henry W. Indyk Scholarship

The Dr. Henry W. Indyk Scholarship was established to honor a founding father of Turfgrass Producers International (TPI) while benefiting all TPI Members by assisting them in paying for the higher education of immediate family or the family of designated staff. Up to \$10,000 in scholarship funding is made available by TPI through the Dr. Henry W. Indyk Scholarship.

TPI would like to ensure that each scholarship application submitted is as informative as possible to provide adequate information about the candidate to scholarship judges.

To download the application click here:

[Scholarship Application.pdf](#)

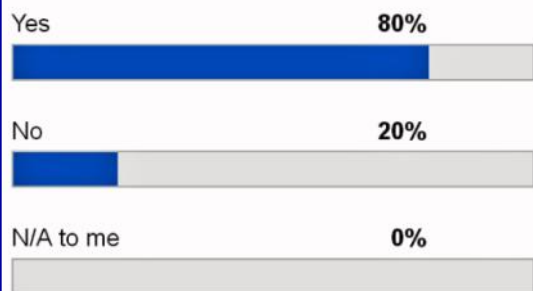
If you are interested in offering a scholarship through The Lawn Institute please contact us at 847-649-5555.

2

SECOND
SURVEY

October 2011 Survey Results

Does the Post-Conference Technical
Turf tour at our
2012 Midwinter Conference
interest you?



As a TPI Member your opinion matters. The new **2 Second Survey** on the TPI website is just one way to express your thoughts on a variety of issues. Survey questions change every month.

2

SECOND
SURVEY

November 2011 Survey QUESTION

Have you diversified some of your
turfgrass acreage for any of the
following?
(please check all that apply)

- ☐ Soybeans
- ☐ Corn
- ☐ Other Grains
- ☐ Forage Crops
- ☐ Fruits/Vegetables
- ☐ Other
- ☐ No

To participate go to: <http://www.turfgrasssod.org/default.aspx>, click on any tab, and then click on the **2 Second Survey** icon. It's that easy. Survey results are posted immediately.