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From Sedgwick

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OLCANNEWS

IT PAYS TO BE GREEN



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A GRATEFUL EMBRACE – NOVEMBER 6

Dayton National Cemetery, Dayton, OH

The Ohio Western Reserve Cemetery, Rittman, OH

We invite all lawn care and landscape professionals to join us on Saturday, November 6 at the Dayton National Cemetery in Dayton and/or Ohio Western Reserve Cemetery in Rittman for "A Grateful Embrace". Show your support to our soldiers and veterans by giving back to those who gave all.

For more information, visit www.ohiolawncare.org.

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT,

Joe Mittler, Brookside Lawn Service



The challenges this year have been many. We are living through a pandemic that has now begun to feel normal (and hopefully dissipating) only to be treated to a wave of Army Worms damaging lawns. Add to that, there has also been a change in mindset of the entire workforce making maintaining and hiring staff a greater challenge. All this coupled with record inflation driving higher costs for all of the inputs required to offer and perform lawn care services to our clients and properties.

It's easy to become overwhelmed and frustrated with the so many challenges coming at us.

During this time it is so very important to keep things in perspective. Remember what is most important. The only thing that is not replaceable is our own health and the people around us. Take a moment to appreciate that it's a privilege to have these challenges. So many people with less opportunities and far greater problems would give anything to deal with these types of challenges. Sometimes just a change in perspective can give you an entirely new outlook, which makes a huge difference.

Remember that the people around us are going through similar conditions. Be supportive of your team and others in your life. Show some extra patience. Give an extra day off. Spend some extra time investing in the people around you. The people in your life deserve and require it!

While we're talking about giving back a little more, have you signed up for the Grateful Embrace? Join us November 6th in Rittman and Dayton to treat the national cemetery grounds. Much of the product has been donated by our generous vendors. We will be done by lunch time with your help! Visit the OLCA website to sign up. See you there!

FROM YOUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,

Mark Bennett, CAE, IOM



We appreciate your continued support of the Ohio Lawn Care Association (OLCA) in 2021. It was great to be back in person this summer for our two field days. As the weather begins to cool and your season begins to slow, know that OLCA continues to strive to help you protect and grow your business.

The Grateful Embrace on Saturday, November 6 in Dayton and Rittman to help winterize the grounds of two veterans' cemeteries celebrated its 28th anniversary. Since 1994, OLCA, through its generous membership, has devoted countless volunteer hours and materials to the task of working on the hallowed grounds these cemeteries. Plan to have your company register for this annual event.

OLCA will hold its annual meeting in conjunction with the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation Conference & Show which will be back in person this year. Watch for additional information coming soon. This is your opportunity to hear about what your industry's association has done in the past year to help strengthen your lawn care business.

OLCA membership renewals will be mailing soon. Be sure to renew your membership to take advantage of all of the great benefits OLCA has to offer. For just \$125 for the year, your entire company can join OLCA. The average OLCA member saves more than \$2,000 annually on its workers compensation premium. That's a more than \$15 return on investment for every dollar you spend on OLCA membership dues! Additionally, OLCA offers its members additional discounts on lead generation, plant/pest diagnostics and soil sample analysis.

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The Batchelder Company

After spending the majority of July and August in their home districts, legislators returned to Columbus in mid-September to get back to work addressing the most pressing policy matters facing Ohio. Facing a constitutional deadline of September 30th, members of the legislature's Redistricting Commission passed an updated legislative map of all 99 House districts and 33 Senate districts on a party line vote. Because no Democrats voted in favor of the maps, they will only last four years, though the issue will likely end up before the Ohio Supreme Court sometime in the coming weeks.

Before the vote on September 29th, the statewide officials on the panel -- Gov. Mike DeWine, Secretary of State Frank LaRose, and Auditor Keith Faber -- tried to bring the leaders of the legislative caucuses together for a compromise. Democrats argued that the maps should more closely align to how votes were cast in the statewide elections by looking at the percentage of the vote each party received in recent elections. Republicans suggested that could also be determined by looking at which party was winning the elections overall. The vote does not end the work of the commission, which will likely have to return in October to attempt to draw new congressional district lines. Under the process, the General Assembly has until the end of September to come up with a bipartisan congressional map. If it does not, the task goes to the redistricting commission. If the General Assembly misses the September 30 deadline, the Ohio Redistricting Commission would have until Sunday, October 31 to adopt a congressional map. If the commission doesn't get it done, the General Assembly would have until Tuesday, Nov. 30 to adopt a map by a simple majority that would last four years.

One controversial topic the Ohio House has been attempting to address is vaccine mandates imposed by public and

private establishments. There have been several pieces of legislation introduced on the matter since the beginning of the year, each varying in size and scope of protection. Possibly the most publicized bill, H.B. 248 (Gross) would make it illegal for a private employer to inquire upon an employee or potential employee's vaccination status. The bill is currently stalled in committee, and the House is also holding hearings on H.B. 435 (Seitz/Carfagna) which would codify moral and religious exemptions that employers must honor, but has yet to receive much support from the business community's leadership.

Improving water quality remains a top priority for both the legislature and the Governor's administration. Gov. Mike DeWine and Ohio EPA Director Laurie A. Stevenson announced Friday, October 15th that \$3.7 million in H2Ohio grants will go to several local communities to help improve drinking water quality and to repair or replace aging water and wastewater infrastructure.

"Many of these systems have degraded to the point that they're a threat to public health because improvement projects are often much too expensive for our smaller communities to handle on their own," DeWine said in a prepared statement. "All of these projects are long overdue, and we're excited to contribute toward improving water service and quality of life in the areas of the state where H2Ohio's help is needed the most."

"Gov. DeWine's H2Ohio plan enables Ohio EPA to extend available funding to help communities across the state address their water and wastewater needs," Stevenson added. Lastly, thank you for the privilege to serve as your voice here in Columbus and we sincerely wish you a happy and safe remainder of your Autumn season.

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TURFGRASS WEED CONTROL – PLAN NOW TO CONTROL SUMMER AND WINTER ANNUAL WEEDS

David Gardner,
The Ohio State University

When asked to speak or write about what was unusual in a year of weed management and what does that mean for the coming year I usually pause because, honestly, weed growth tends to be opportunistic and unpredictable. The only predictable thing about weed growth and answers to questions such as “Which weeds will be a problem this year” is the unpredictability. Having stated this, there were some trends in weed management this year that were somewhat different from the past few years. While perennial weed management was fairly typical this year, it was the summer and winter annual weeds that stood out as management issues

Winter annual broadleaf weeds

Winter annual weeds were a significant issue at the beginning of 2021. There was nothing that stood out as far as weather this past winter. In fact, October-January monthly average temperatures were all within 1 degree of normal. February was 5 degrees below normal and March was 5 degrees above normal. Winter annual weeds tend to germinate in October or November and then persist as vegetative over winter before growing and setting seed in very early spring. Since temperatures in March warmed up quickly that might have given them a boost. But I think there is just more of a seedbank for winter annuals now compared to 10 or 20 years ago. The result is a significant increase in cover of winter annual weeds such as common chickweed, henbit, purple deadnettle and hairy bittercress (See Figure 1).

Properly maintaining cool season turf this fall will help to combat winter annual broadleaf weeds. Since they are annuals they are coming from seed and do not establish as effectively when there is a dense cover of turfgrass to compete. But, along with proper turf cultural management

practices, there are selective herbicides to deal with winter annuals. The key is to choose the right product and apply it at the right time.

As far as product selection, generally speaking a 3 or 4 way combination product will be your best choice. However, you will want to make sure that whatever you select contains at least one phenoxy (2,4-D, 2,4-DP, MCP, MCPA) or pyridinoxy (triclopyr, clopyralid, fluroxypyr) that is in an ester form. You can determine this by looking at the list of ingredients on the label. It is important to select an ester, because that formulation is more likely to penetrate the weed leaf tissue and therefore more effectively control the weed when making applications in cooler weather. Amine formulations are used more in spring time because they have lower volatility and therefore are less likely to injure nearby ornamentals when applied in warmer temperatures. However, amine formulations do not work as well in cool weather. Because of this, and the fact that most ornamentals lose their leaves in the fall (decreasing but not eliminating their susceptibility to spray drift) ester formulations are by far the better choice for an autumn application. Another herbicide that can be effective on winter annual weeds as well as dandelion and white clover is florasulam, sold as Defendor®. This herbicide also can be used late in fall and early in spring so long as the temperature is above 40 degrees.

When to apply is just as important as what to apply. You should make sure that the target winter annuals are germinated, which is usually by the start of November. Ideally, air temperatures will be consistently in the 40's and soil temperatures will still be in the 50's. Another indicator for proper timing is that the grass is no longer growing and being mowed but is still green. By applying the right herbicide at the right time you should significantly reduce the likelihood that winter annuals will be an issue for you the next spring. The other benefit is that fall is also the best time of year to treat perennial broadleaf weeds such as dandelion, white clover and creeping Charlie. While a springtime application may provide 8 weeks of control, a properly timed and applied herbicide in fall may control perennial broadleaf weeds for up to one year.

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Another product to consider for difficult summer and winter annual broadleaf weeds is chelated iron. I do not yet have trials with replicated data (this is on my to-do list). But I have observed very good success with spring-applied chelated iron for the control of winter annuals such as veronica, chickweed, and henbit as well as in the late summer for the control of spurge and knotweed.

Annual Grassy Weeds

If you had a significant issue with crabgrass or other summer annual grasses such as foxtail this year, the weather may have partly contributed. But the summer temperatures were pretty normal and after 5 wetter than normal years it was slightly drier than normal in many parts of the state. What may have also contributed to the problem is if you applied a preemergence herbicide too early in the spring and the residues dissipated below a level necessary for effective control before weed seed stopped germinating for the year.

Now is the time to track where crabgrass was a problem. All of the brown dead tissue in October and November marks where the crabgrass will germinate next year. There are a couple of strategies to deal with severe summer annual grass infestations. One is to wait and apply both a pre and postemergence herbicide in May.

The postemergence herbicide will control the seedling crabgrass and the late application of the preemergence herbicide will increase the likelihood that residues remain effective for the entire season. You can either tank mix or there are products on the market which combine pre and postemergence herbicides or that have both pre and postemergence activity, such as dithiopyr, Cavalcade PQ® and Echelon®. If you apply just a postemergence herbicide to leaf stage crabgrass, be aware that more may germinate in those areas. The other strategy is to try a ½ label rate of either topramezone mesotrione combined with a ½ label rate of quinclorac and a non-ionic surfactant per the label on mid-late tillering crabgrass during mid to late July.

Figure 1. Common winter annual broadleaf weeds. An application of the ester form of a broadleaf herbicide in November is generally the most effective control strategy against these weeds.



Common Chickweed – *Stellaria media*



Common Groundsel – *Senecio vulgaris*



Henbit – *Lamium amplexicaule*



Purple Deadnettle – *Lamium purpureum*



Hairy Bittercress – *Cardamine hirsuta*



Spiny Sowthistle – *Sonchus oleraceus*

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WINTER CONDITIONS AND TURFGRASS

David Gardner,
The Ohio State University

Winter, especially in the northern part of the country, can be a welcome down time where the day to day stress of maintaining adequate turfgrass cover for sporting events is reduced. But, weather conditions during winter can put stress on the turf. Fortunately, careful attention to management practices can help to reduce or eliminate this damage. To phrase this in a different way, most athletic fields will be in the same condition or worse off in the spring compared to what they were at the end of fall. Most of our practices aimed at improving field conditions, such as topdressing, aerifying, or overseeding, do not benefit the turf as much when conducted in winter due to the poor growing conditions that are encountered either in winter or even into early spring. However, practices that are scheduled for late fall or even around fall sports schedules are important to ensure that next season's fields will be in good condition. This month's article discusses the damage to the turf caused by winter conditions, some differences amongst the grasses in cold tolerance, some turfgrass diseases seen during the winter and finally how management practices can help or hurt turfgrass tolerance to winter conditions.

Damage to the turf that occurs during winter

For the most part, the cool season turfgrasses are more capable of withstanding low temperatures than the warm season grasses. However, the grasses that we manage as athletic turf vary in their tolerance to cold temperatures. Kentucky bluegrass is the most cold tolerant of the species and rarely is any lost due to low temperatures in winter. Tall fescue and perennial ryegrass, on the other hand, are not as tolerant of extreme cold and some loss can occur in the northern parts of the country. While there are differences among cultivars, we generally start to see winter-kill on these two species when temperatures reach -20 to -25 degrees Fahrenheit. This is important to consider because

if, for example, you live in a cold part of the country and were considering overseeding with ryegrass, you may wish to ensure that the cultivars you are using are tolerant of the typical temperatures observed in your region and/or that its use is standard practice where you live.

Damage to turfgrass during winter can also occur due to desiccation, where drying winds cause water loss from the leaf faster than it can be replaced. Or, in warmer parts of the region where cool season grasses are grown we do see periods in winter where there is turfgrass growth but soil conditions are excessively dry. Our cool season grasses are adapted to survive these conditions. However, in situations where the turf is mowed short or if it is being grown on a sandy medium (ie a typical athletic field) it might be a good idea to intervene. Though it may seem counter-intuitive, we do see occasionally in winter the need to irrigate turf in order to prevent damage or loss from desiccation or excessive drying. While you should winterize your irrigation system in December, it may be better to irrigate as needed or if needed at some point during the winter months and then re-winterize the irrigation system.

When turfgrass is under ice and snow for an extended period we can also see an increase in tissue loss. However, turf under snow and ice for long enough periods of time to cause extensive loss of cover is typically observed only in the northern tier of states (and this does not occur every year). What is maybe more common is to see damage occur on fields that are used during freezing conditions or when frost is present. At these times, traffic causes cellular damage that result in browning of the leaf blades that is sometimes visible until the following spring. Therefore, care should be taken to avoid the use of fields during frost or freezing conditions. In addition, mowing should be delayed until after the frost dissipated and the leaf blades have dried.

Management Strategies to reduce winter damage

Overseeding is important because grass that germinates in the fall has a stronger root system the following spring. The optimal time to seed in fall is between August 15 and September 15. However, research conducted by Frank Rossi at Cornell and Dave Minner at Iowa State University

showed that frequent applications (weekly or every other week) of high rates of seed throughout fall can significantly improve cover on heavily trafficked areas. The idea is that some of the seedlings will germinate. While many of them may be damaged or killed by foot traffic some will persist. In addition, by doing this a “seed bank” allows for some of the seed to remain dormant and germinate at a later time. The soil heaves and forms cracks due to the temperature fluctuations, and some of the seed will fall into these, which will increase germination when temperatures warm. A lot of dormant seed and germinated seedlings may succumb to diseases or desiccation during winter.

However, this approach has been shown to be quite successful. It is more successful with rapidly germinating species such as perennial ryegrass and tall fescue. Even with Kentucky bluegrass the strategy is usually successful. What happens is that much of the bluegrass seed might not germinate until spring, which greatly increases the chance the seedlings will be killed by spring traffic. However, the surviving seedlings will be able to spread via rhizome during the spring.

Mowing is typically not done during winter time. When the grass begins to grow enough to justify mowing in late winter is usually when you will want to resume your fertility program. During the fall cool season turfgrass in heavily trafficked areas should receive up to one pound of nitrogen per thousand square feet per month. Ideally the nitrogen applied at this time will be quickly available. The late fall nitrogen application has been shown to be the most important for growth of cool season turfgrass. This should be timed so that the grass is green but no longer growing. A quickly available source of nitrogen should be used. Late fall nitrogen applications have the potential to contaminate surface water so you should not apply if the soil is frozen. Soil tests should ensure that potassium and phosphorus levels are adequate. On cool season turfgrass, the benefits of late fall applications of phosphorus related to improved winter hardiness are unclear. Generally you should only apply phosphorus at establishment or based on soil test results. One of the functions of potassium in the plant, however, is to improve winter tolerance. Therefore there is a benefit to applying potassium with nitrogen during the late fall application.

Aeration and topdressing are normally done during times ideal for the growth of grass. However, there is benefit to aerating the most heavily trafficked areas of the field after the last event in the fall and should be conducted on areas where traffic will restrict recovery of the turfgrass. Topdressing can then be applied to help level the surface and even provide some insulation to the turfgrass crowns against winter conditions. What to topdress with is dependent on the physical properties of the soil under the field. In general, you want to match the particle sizes

as closely as possible. But, sand can be applied even to a clay soil and over many years will gradually bring about improvements in drainage. Another option for native soil fields is the use of compost. Compost applied to a depth of ¼ to ½”, especially in conjunction with core aeration, can produce an early spring green-up effect similar to an application of fertilizer.

Covers that are breathable are used frequently both to extend greening in the fall and also to promote early spring greenup. The effect can be substantial, with dormancy delayed by 4 to 6 weeks in the fall and spring greenup being pushed 1 to 2 months earlier compared to uncovered turf. The covers do a variety of things in addition to just warming the turf and soil. They can protect the turf against damage caused by frosts or freezes. They deter traffic on the field, which reduces wear and tear on seedlings. One final note about the use of covers is that, in general, you will want to keep the height of the turf at 1” or less under them in order to avoid the grasses blades laying over, which can promote conditions for diseases such as snow mold that are prevalent in winter.

Pests of Turfgrass in Winter

If proper management practices are being followed then hopefully turfgrass pests such as weeds and diseases will be kept to a minimum during winter. However, in addition to the stress that the environment puts on the turfgrass during winter, there are a couple of diseases which can also cause damage. On cool season grasses, there are two diseases referred to as snow molds, though the causal pathogens are in different genera, and therefore unrelated to each other. There are some slight differences in the conditions that favor their development. However, in both cases the disease is most severe if there is snow cover over unfrozen soil. The causal pathogen of pink snow mold is *Microdochium nivale*. Conditions that favor development of this disease include cold fogs, persistent drizzle, low light (common in winter time), soil pH around 6.5 and excessive thatch. Air temperature requirements are variable with the disease affecting turf in temperatures as low as 32 degrees and as high as 75 degrees. It is most severe when the temperature is between 32 and 45 degrees. While not always present, fluffy pink mycelium is a good sign of pink snow mold (Figure 1).

Grey snow mold is caused by a couple of pathogens, (*Typhula incarnata* or *T. ishikariensis*). Conditions favoring its development include the presence of excessive thatch and frost injured tissue. Like pink snow mold, it is most severe with snow cover over unfrozen soil (with *T. ishikariensis*, snow cover is required). Following a spring thaw is a very common time to notice this disease.

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Minimum air temperature required for activity is 19 to 23 degrees and the optimum temperature for activity ranges from 32 to 59 degrees (*T. incarnata*) or 44 to 59% (*T. ishikariensis*). It usually manifests as circular areas of yellow or brown turf with matted down leaf blades that may or may not be covered with grayish mycelium. Sclerotia, which are hardened pink, orangish brown or black resting bodies about the size of a pencil eraser are a tell-tale sign of this disease (Figure 2).

If you have a history of either of these diseases then you should reduce your fertilizer applications in late fall and keep the turf height low enough so that the leaves do not lay down and matt together. You can also take steps to remove snow cover and provide some air circulation to make the environment less favorable for disease formation. Finally, on fields with a history of damage due to snow mold, there are fungicide labelled for control. Follow the label carefully. But, given that the most severe damage is done under snow, preventative, rather than curative applications of the fungicide are recommended.

Weeds can occasionally be an issue as well, especially the winter annuals, such as common chickweed or annual bluegrass. The best strategy to reduce encroachment by these weeds is to ensure adequate turfgrass coverage. If a herbicide application is necessary, check the label carefully. Most herbicides negatively impact seedling turfgrass.

Once again, winter is a welcome down time for most turfgrass managers. But, there are some issues that should be attended to. There are also some opportunities to maintain, or perhaps even improve slightly, field conditions going into the following spring, with attention to proper details like overseeding, fertility, aeration, and pest control.

Figure 1. Pink snow mold may have a reddish band at the edges of the patch. Patches may be as large as one foot in diameter. When under snow, white or pink hypha covers the leaf blades. When not under snow we see blighting only and no lesions. There may be dull pink hyphae around edges and mycelia may be visible in patch center.



Figure 2. Grey snow mold hyphae has a grey, white or even pinkish cast. There may be a 1" band at the outer edge of the patch if not under snow, or it may completely cover the patch under snow. Sclerotia are up to 5 mm in size and are pink to brown and gelatinous (if *T. incarnata*) or brown, 2 mm, and not gelatinous (if *T. ishikariensis*).



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We also have a number of short videos from Ohio State's turf faculty speaking on subjects such as rust disease, effective use of fungicide, fertilizer programs, crabgrass control and more! Visit the website or call the office for additional information on any of these member benefits. Taking advantage of these benefits can significantly boost your company's bottom line.

OLCA continues to promote the legislative interests of its membership through its lobbying team of Troy Judy, Chad Hawley and Jack Brubaker at The Bachelder Group as well as its active participation in the Ohio Professional Applicators for Responsible Regulation (OPARR). This year, OLCA has worked in conjunction with the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation to start the Ohio Turfgrass Political Action Committee. This allows OLCA and OTF members to make donation and amplify the voice of the turfgrass, lawn care, sports turf and golf course maintenance professionals at the Statehouse. You can give online at <https://ohioturfgrass.org/page/PACDonations> and add your name to the growing list of donors. This ensures your ability to effectively service your customers with the appropriate fertilizers and pesticides. In the past year, we successfully lobbied the Ohio Department of Agriculture to allow for our members to receive their pesticide recertification credits online.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at 800-510-5296 or mark@bennett-management-llc.com.



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SAFETY NEWS FROM SEDGWICK

Safety Starts at the Top

Successful organizations establish safety as a core value of their operations. Senior leadership, including the top executive on site, must be role models to all employees for creating a safe work environment. Active leadership includes, at a minimum:

- Authorizing the necessary resources for accident prevention.
- Discussing safety processes and improvements regularly during staff or employee meetings.
- Ensuring that all members of management are held accountable for accident prevention activities and processes.
- Annually assessing the success of the safety process by utilizing perception surveys, personal interviews, and behavior sampling strategies.
- Encouraging employees to take an active part in maintaining a safe workplace.

Implementation

Senior leadership must assume the leadership role in establishing the importance of safety in all operations. By taking the lead, leadership can effectively use its safety process to contribute to the bottom line and better service to customers by reducing losses due to accidents. The full support and active commitment of senior management is vitally important because it encourages supervisors at all levels to make the safety process a success through accountability. This requires measuring actual performance against pre-established objectives and goals through the organization's performance appraisal system. There are many ways senior leadership can participate to show active leadership in safety processes:

- Issue a written Safety Policy, affirming safety as a core value to the organization.
- Establish both annual and long-term safety goals.
- Establish safety responsibilities and a system of accountability for all levels.
- Regularly include safety topics in meetings.
- Regularly review progress of the safety process with department heads, supervisors, and employees.
- Accompany supervisors or safety team members during their periodic safety inspections.

- Review copies of all completed accident investigation reports.
- Openly discuss safety with employees during periodic tours.
- Participate, as a student, in employee safety training programs, such as first-aid training.
- Participate in meetings with loss control consultants.
- Use accident loss reports to analyze and develop solutions.
- Review minutes of safety team meetings.
- Review safety survey reports.

As noted above, a written safety policy is a sign of your organization's commitment to providing a safe working environment. Essentially, this policy should be a mission statement to foster a culture conducive to a safe work environment. The requirements include:

- Top executive's philosophy on safety and well-being of employees and commitment to compliance with all applicable governing agencies.
- Manager, supervisor, team facilitator and employees' responsibilities regarding the organization's commitment to workplace safety.
- Commitment to returning injured or ill employees to work at the earliest and safest opportunity.
- Signed and dated by the top executive.
- Communicate to new and existing employees verbally, on bulletin board(s), and in employee handbook.
- Review the policy on an annual basis with all employees.

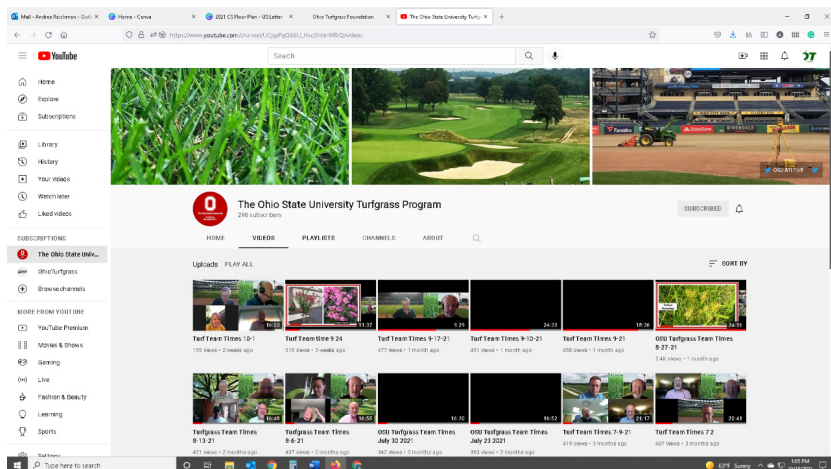
Although this seems like a minor step, it is the foundational step in implementing an effective safety process. It expresses the commitment of your organization, its ownership, management, and employees to maintaining a safe work environment for all employees. This communication of intent should be just as important as the organization's statement of quality of product or service.

If you have questions or would like to review in more detail, please contact Jim Wirth at 614.546.7331 or jim.wirth@sedgwick.com.

GOOD NEWS!

In case you missed an Ohio State Turf video you can find them here:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjqcPqQ66U_Hvc3hhinWRiQ



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*A reduced risk pesticide is defined as one which may reasonably be expected to accomplish one or more of the following: (1) reduces pesticide risks to human health; (2) reduces pesticide risks to non-target organisms; (3) reduces the potential for contamination of valued, environmental resources, or (4) broadens adoption of IPM or makes it more effective. Acelepryn qualifies under one or more of the above criteria.
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