

# Sports Turf Maintenance Guide

The Sports Turf Maintenance Guide has been developed and produced in partnership with the Sports Turf Association of South Australia, in conjunction with TAFE SA Urrbrae Campus.

This guide is designed to provide you with a yearly calendar of tasks and activities to help you get the best out of your turf. Individual sites will have their own variations due to different conditions including climate, soil type, nature and volume of use and therefore the information provided in the calendar is to be used as a guideline only.

July	August
Carry out maintenance and repairs to equipment and machinery. Some urgent repair may be required in football and soccer goal areas.	Start locating and checking the irrigation system, pop-up sprinklers can get trodden down in muddy conditions and may need attention including bringing back to the correct level. Include valve boxes, solenoid valves and pumps in your system check.
September	October
Collect a random selection of soil samples from the sports area and send them away to an authorised testing laboratory for a 'Soil Nutrient Analysis', the cost will be reclaimed by the correct choice of fertiliser. Information regarding soil nutrient analysis can be sourced from the Sports Turf Association of South Australia. Please visit the STA website <a href="http://www.sportsturfsa.com">www.sportsturfsa.com</a>	During the September/October school holidays aerate the sports areas; if as a result of the soil nutrient analysis there is the need to apply gypsum, sand or an organic carbon product, then if possible use hollow coring tines. However should the need be to only reduce compaction and aid the entry of a fertiliser, then normal spike tines are suitable. The choice of fertiliser should be based on a scientific approach via the soil nutrient analysis, not guess work. The school holidays are an ideal time to re-sod goal areas, or over sow other areas of sparse growth.
November	December
If possible carryout a precipitation on selected areas of the irrigation system, even if an assessment has been done, because pressures in the SA Water mains may have varied since the time of year the assessment was done. From this time on you may need to adjust irrigation run times based on climatic conditions and soil infiltration rate. As the weather warms up, program the mowing for the early hours of the day so the turf grasses are not under heat stress when mown. If possible, schedule irrigation events within the immediate 24 hours before the programmed mowing as this puts the turf grasses in a healthier condition prior to mowing, enabling it to recover more rapidly.	<p>If your sports area has received a large amount of pedestrian or other traffic, the summer school holidays an ideal time to again aerate the turf. Take this opportunity also to top dress any low areas as the turf grass will quickly cover these during January.</p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Continued overleaf</i></p>

<p><b>January</b></p> <p>Take the time during this month to checking both the grass root depth and water infiltration by digging a small patch, the width and depth of an average garden spade. A supplementary application of a liquid fertiliser may be beneficial at this time and may also enable you to adjust the irrigation run time.</p>	<p><b>February</b></p> <p>Routine mowing continues, however watch the weather and adjust the irrigation run times as necessary.</p>
<p><b>March</b></p> <p>Adjust irrigation run times as necessary.</p> 	<p><b>April</b></p> <p>Adjust irrigation run times as necessary. If aeration was not done in December/January, then school holidays are another ideal opportunity, plus based on the soil nutrient analysis, apply a suitable fertiliser. If the budget allows, you may wish to over sow goal areas in order to help reduce wear and tear.</p>
<p><b>May</b></p> <p>Broadleaf weeds may start to be a problem, therefore assess the scale of the problem, identify the types of weed and use the correct herbicide – not just glyphosate. Spraying of any pesticide on sports turf areas should be done outside of normal school hours, having first advised the Principal of the need and method and checking any standard school operating procedures. If in doubt there are qualified horticultural (turf) spraying contractors who can provide advice and carry out the work.</p>	<p><b>June</b></p> <p>Your main task at this time of year will most likely be line marking for various sports. Most turf grasses are going into dormancy.</p> 

For help or further information on turf and irrigation maintenance visit the SportsTurf Association's website at [www.sportsturfsa.com](http://www.sportsturfsa.com).

For information on the IPOS Program contact Business Technical Support at SA Water on (08) 7424 3753 or via email [iposadmin@sawater.com.au](mailto:iposadmin@sawater.com.au) or visit the SA Water website: [www.sawater.com.au](http://www.sawater.com.au)

**Disclaimer:**

*SA Water, the Sports Turf Association of SA and TAFE SA Urrbrae Campus take no responsibility for decline in turf quality as a result of a poorly designed or scheduled irrigation system or poor horticultural maintenance of the site.*

