

CITY OF APPLETON POLICY		TITLE: TURF MANAGEMENT PLAN
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I. **Purpose**

It is the purpose of this policy to define acceptable policies and procedures for the management of turf in parks and other City of Appleton property maintained by the Parks and Recreation Department.

II. **Policy**

It is the policy of the City of Appleton Parks and Recreation Department to provide turf management practices and procedures for City parks and other City properties that meet the needs of users and current DNR regulation NR 151 requirements for stormwater management.

III. **Definitions**

1. Pesticides - chemicals used to manage pests such as insects, rodents and turf diseases.
2. Herbicides - chemicals used to eradicate plants such as weeds and grasses.
3. Selective Herbicides - chemicals designed to eradicate specific plants, such as broad leaf weeds, while not harming the other plant species that share common turf areas.
4. Non-selective herbicides -chemicals designed to eradicate all "green" plant life.
5. Slow-release fertilizer – fertilizer formulated to release its nutrients over a 2-3 month period of time.
6. Fast-release fertilizer - formulated to release its nutrients quickly. This quick release of nutrients provides immediate nutrients to the turf.
7. Category A Areas - parks, recreation facilities and other city properties that will have a 15% or less tolerance for weeds. These areas include athletic fields where quality turf is critical to player safety and fair play or turf areas around facilities that receive high public use or visibility.

8. Category B Areas - parks, recreation facilities and other city properties that will have a 16-40% tolerance for weeds. Included in this category are areas where turf quality and appearance is important, but not critical. Examples of these areas include boulevards and triangles that serve as entrances to the City, along major streets and arterials, etc.
9. Category C areas - parks, recreation facilities and other city properties that will have a tolerance for weeds of greater than 40%.
10. Hard Surface Areas - sidewalks/walkways, trails, parking lots, tennis courts, basketball courts, etc. in parks or on other City property the Parks and Recreation Department maintains.
11. Properly trained staff - employee who has obtained a Pesticide Application Certification.

IV. Discussion

This plan attempts to set standards for turf quality and establish acceptable policies and procedures that will maintain turf quality and control and/or reduce the need for chemical treatment of turf areas. This can be accomplished primarily by:

1. Giving preference to non-chemical means of trimming or controlling weeds.
2. Placing mulching rings around trees to lessen the need for string trimming and herbicide use.
3. Utilizing spot application method of herbicides versus broadcast application.
4. Applying selective herbicides on an as needed basis instead of yearly.
5. Reducing the number of areas that have received occasional herbicide application in the past.
6. Proper mowing and fertilization techniques.
7. Better education of maintenance staff that used herbicides.
8. Exploring, testing, and implementing alternative methods of turf management particularly methods designed to reduce the use of herbicides.

IV. Policies and Procedures

1. The Parks and Recreation Department shall only provide managed turf areas in those areas and locations that ~~require that level of service~~ are identified in **Categories A, B and C.**
2. Natural areas shall be developed and maintained wherever that level of service is appropriate.
3. All NR 151 requirements shall be followed before the application of any fertilizer, including soil testing, development of a comprehensive turf management plan for each park, facility and/or property.
4. The controlled use of selective and non-selective herbicides shall be applied using the following policies and procedures.
 - A. The application of herbicides will only be considered when the quality of turf for an area does not meet the established standards and all other methods to improve the turf quality are ineffective or cost prohibitive.

- B. ~~Only properly trained staff shall apply any herbicide.~~ **Only properly trained staff or someone under their direction shall apply any herbicide.**
ATCP 29.26(2)(a)
- C. The application of any herbicide will follow the directions on the product label.
- D. Spray patterns for non-selective herbicides will not exceed 6” around any object or on either side of a fence line when using non-selective herbicides (exception for softball/baseball warning track area).
- ~~E.~~ Herbicide applications for broadleaf control will be applied in **early** fall with a systemic herbicide which will be absorbed into the plant within 24 hours. ~~Spring applications are discouraged because of the public use of parks and other City properties.~~
- F. The application of herbicides on athletic fields will be scheduled when the fields are not scheduled for use for a minimum of 24 hours.
- G. Herbicides will not be used on hard surfaces in close proximity to storm sewers.
- ~~H.~~ ~~Herbicides will not be used near any park playground equipment.~~ **Only a solution of vinegar, soap and water will be used near playground equipment.**
- I. Spot application as opposed to broadcast application will be used whenever feasible.
- J. Caution will be used when applying herbicides along waterways, rivers, etc.
- ~~K.~~ ~~A plan for applying herbicides in parks will be presented to the Parks and Recreation Committee as an information item before the plan is implemented.~~
5. The controlled use of fertilizers shall be applied using the following policies and procedures.
- A. Fertilizers will be used when establishing or re-establishing new turf areas (sodding may be suggested more frequently).
- B. The amount of fertilizer applied to parks, athletic fields or other City properties will be determined by soil testing results and standards identified in Wisconsin DNR Technical Standard #1100 and other accepted turf management practices.
- C. Fertilizers will be swept off or removed from paved areas.
- D. A mixture of slow and fast release types of fertilizer will generally be used (slow release only may have a greater tendency to run-off in late fall or early spring and needs a higher ground temperature to be most effective).
- E. Fertilizers will usually be applied in the fall ~~only (late August through mid-September, slow/fast mixture; late October, fast release preferred).~~
- F. If necessary, only fast release fertilizers will be used in close proximity to water (less chance of run-off).
6. Other general turf management policies and procedures will include:

- A. Preference will be given to non-chemical means of controlling turf growth around trees, posts, under fences, etc.
 - B. As time permits, park maintenance crews will place mulch rings around trees thus reducing the need for string trimming or herbicide use.
 - C. Mower heights will be set at 2-1/2" – 3".
 - D. A frequent mowing schedule is preferred, ideally never trimming more than 1/3 off the grass plant. Proper mowing will eliminate 60-70% of potential weed problems.
 - E. Whenever possible, mulching mowers will be used.
7. All hard surface areas will have a Category A classification if the following conditions exist:
- A. Undesirable weeds that grow in cracks can create an unsafe surface for users.
 - B. Untreated weeds in hard surface cracks can lead to surface damage and follow- up repair.
 - C. ~~Public exposure to spot herbicide treatment is typically very minimal, usually limited to footwear.~~ Application of herbicides on hard surface areas is scheduled to minimize public contact. If contact were to occur it would be limited to footwear of those walking over the sprayed area.**

City of Appleton
Parks and Recreation Department
Classifications of Parks and Other City Properties

Category A

- Appleton Parks and Recreation Department Office
- Athletic Fields in City Parks
- College Avenue and Memorial Drive Triangle
- **Erb Pool**
- ~~Fire Station #6~~ **Fire Stations**
- Hadzi Square
- Houdini Plaza
- **Library**
- Mead Pool
- Municipal Service Building
- Police Department
- Reid Golf Course
- **Scheig Center**
- Valley Transit Operations Facility
- Wastewater Treatment Plant Office Area
- Water Treatment Plant Office Area

Category B

- Highview Trail
- **Lake Park Rd.**
- Meadow Grove Boulevard
- Memorial Drive
- Midway Road
- Northland Avenue Boulevards
- Park Hill Drive
- Providence Trail
- Richmond and Glendale Triangle
- S. Oneida Street
- S. Richmond and W. College Avenue Boulevard
- Wastewater Treatment Plant (Excluding office area)
- Water Treatment Plant (Excluding office area)
- Woodward Way Segment of Newberry Trail

Category C

- All Parks
- Other City properties not mentioned above