



ListNotes

Recent APPAinfo Discussions

COMPILED BY STEVE GLAZNER

WATERING ARTIFICIAL TURF

Q: We are building two artificial surface football and soccer fields. My engineer does not want sprinkler heads on the playing surface. I would like to have the heads on the playing surface so I don't have to have the high pressure and volume required to water from the sidelines. Do any of you have heads on the playing surface and if so, have you experienced any problems?

Darrell D. Victory
Kansas Wesleyan University

A: The engineer seems to recognize that artificial turf needs to be watered for health and safety reasons. There are at least two important design issues that must be balanced against the engineer's desire to keep the sprinkler heads out of the center of the field. What is the rationale? Is there a trip hazard? What other installations in the area have sprinkler heads configured as desired?


Theodore J. Weidner, Ph.D., P.E., AIA, CEFP
Noblesville, IN

A: Aside from the issue that Ted raises, I recently observed a webinar where the academicians presented a rather compelling case based upon actual research that there is not much worthiness in watering synthetic turf fields at all.

Bill Elvey, APPA Fellow
University of Wisconsin Madison

A: One of the reasons to do turf is player safety. I've never been able to understand how any sprinkler head in any field is safe, and that's speaking as former player. We do have two sprinkled grass turf fields because of the insistence of our coaches. I think they like to have a recruit and family looking out over the field when they come on. In my opinion, we could water as well, less expensively, and more safely, using the crawling water cannons we have for our non-sprinkled fields. When/if we go to turf we'll place hose hydrants in boxes outside the safety zone. I guess I'd look at all the reasons you are going to turf, and rank them. If safety is up there then I am with your engineer.

Pete Sandberg, LEED AP
Saint Olaf College



A: The only reason we have sprinklers on ours was because of the potential heat of the field in the summer, we were told by our engineers. We have never ever used them, not once, in ten years. A completely wasted expense in my opinion.

*R. Jeff Grimm, P.E.
Kutztown University of PA*

A: I've never seen sprinkler heads installed in an artificial turf field. That may be due to the geographical climate here in West Virginia. Apparently it may be more common in southern climates where the turf may need to be cooled on hot days. If the sprinklers are being considered for sanitizing the surface, I suggest a tow-behind sprayer be used to apply a sanitizing/disinfectant agent. That is how we do it, and it works. As for watering the turf to cool it, that seems like an extreme waste of water. One of the advantages of going to an artificial surface is to reduce or eliminate maintenance efforts, i.e., watering. Seems counter-productive to me.

*Jeffrey A. Turner
Ohio County Schools*



ABSENTEEISM

Q: Does anyone know of a reliable source where I can get some idea of what is “normal” in terms of absenteeism on an annual basis for facilities workers? This wouldn't include vacation time, just sick leave. Several years ago the average was seven days per year, but I'm trying to get an update to that data.

*Susie Reid
University of Richmond*

A: Our absenteeism rate (excluding vacation and holidays) has ranged over the last eight years from 2.57 percent up to as high as 9 percent a few years ago. Employees are allowed to accrue 12 days per year of sick leave—roughly

A: We installed an infill field for football, lacrosse, and soccer two years ago with no irrigation, and it is fine. We did run water into the field sidelines with recessed hose bibs into which the teams hook the water cows for drinking water. This line does run under the field so we were careful to use a single piece of poly line with NO splices. We installed an Astroturf carpet field in 2005 for field hockey with sideline water cannons. The goal with the wet turf for that field is less about heat and more about friction reduction for the fastest play. It's quite wasteful. It uses about 250,000 gallons of water each fall that passes right through the carpet and into the drainage system. We have had MANY maintenance issues with the cannons, some of which have required excavation of the irrigation lines. The lines are, thankfully, outside the playing surface since it's a perimeter system. I wouldn't have wanted to go through the turf to access those lines.

*Andrew B. Feick
Ursinus College*

4.6 percent of an FTE's annual hours. We have targeted KPIs for most people to maintain a balance of 80 hours of available combined sick and vacation leave, and we have previously targeted a KPI goal of an absenteeism rate no more than 4 percent for all departments. Absenteeism rate includes workers comp and all forms of sick leave. The goal is difficult to achieve and the experience of any organization will vary greatly depending on the organizational culture, HR policies and practices, union contracts, etc. Interestingly, though, we have now stopped tracking and calculating the absenteeism rate and focus our KPIs on “wrench time” as opposed to non-wrench time. We are finding this to be a more productive mindset.

*Al Stoverink
Arkansas State University*

A: While with a prior employer—which had a very generous sick/personal/bereavement policy—about half the

staff would take every opportunity for a day off. In one case I could fill in the calendar ahead of time predicting that Monday morning “sick call.” Since the bereavement policy included cousins, aunts, uncles, and in-laws, another employee with huge family connections was out for three days every couple of months over a few years. Now, in my current position I have the opposite problem. My management staff and I have to coax people to take the vacation time they’ve earned. With two months left in the fiscal year, the person who has the smallest amount of vacation still has 40 unused hours. One guy has over three weeks to use up. My staff routinely leave vacation hours unused, and unused vacation time doesn’t carry over. It’s use it or lose it.

Brian Kelly
Dean College

A: I currently have both of the situations that Brian referenced. There is one thing that I would add. Each of the employees in my area receives two, three, or four weeks of paid

vacation and three personal days per year—use it or lose it. In addition, they receive seven sick days per year that can carry over to a maximum of 160 hours (and they are paid one-half value of all hours over 160 each year). They receive unlimited qualified bereavement in three-day increments per event. Oh, and 18 paid holidays per year. Although it is most frequently a first-year employee whose lost time is prorated, if any employee misses even one hour of work unpaid after expending all lost time, there is no circumstance that is justifiable that will not warrant an immediate written warning and written documentation on the annual employee evaluation.

Rob Hurlburt
St. Bonaventure University

A: Our people earn nine sick days per year, and there is no limit on how much they can accumulate. They can take sick leave for their own illness or to care for a sick immediate family member. (Employees with young children and working spouses can use quite a bit in this manner.) We also



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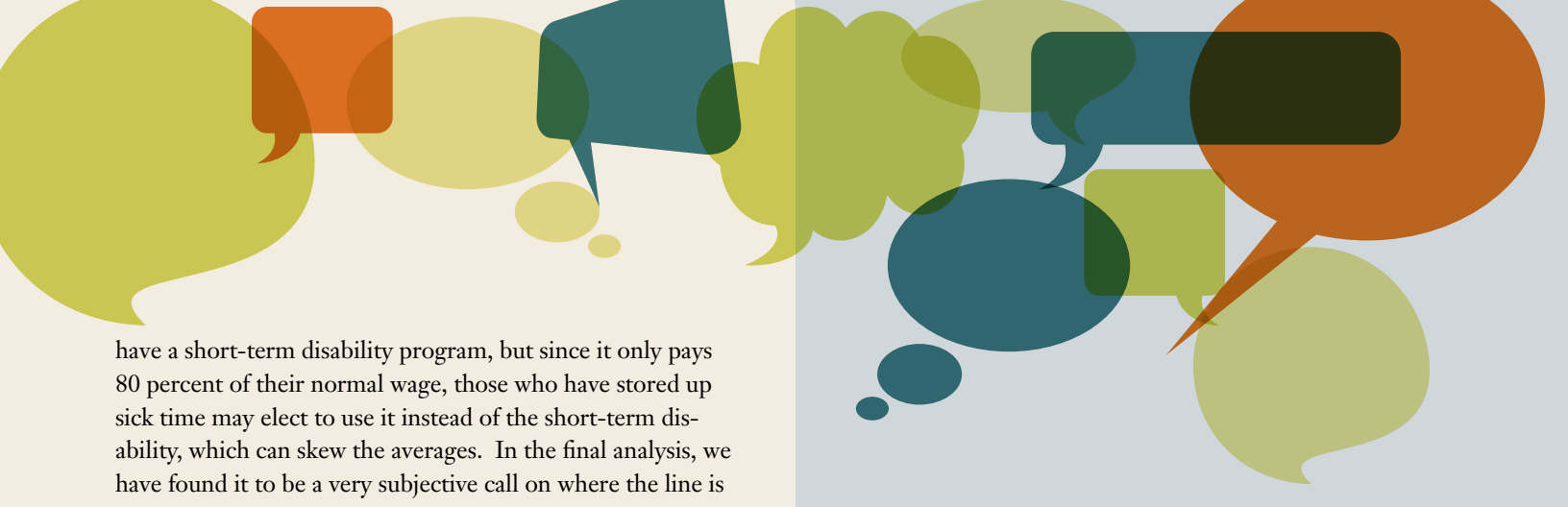
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have a short-term disability program, but since it only pays 80 percent of their normal wage, those who have stored up sick time may elect to use it instead of the short-term disability, which can skew the averages. In the final analysis, we have found it to be a very subjective call on where the line is drawn on abuse of sick leave. When suspected, we start with counseling, which usually works for a while.

*Glenn Smith
Bryn Mawr College*

TELECOM INFRASTRUCTURE FOR RESIDENCE HALLS

Q: For years we have been building residence halls with dedicated voice, data, and CATV lines to each resident (the old pillow-and-a-port model). Now with the increase in the use of cellphones and the improvements in the reliability/speed of wireless connectivity, our experience is that two of these lines frequently remain unused. Has your institution modified your infrastructure requirements to address this new reality? Are you eliminating some/most/all of these lines? What do telecom connections/options do you provide for emergencies in these “wireless” residence halls?

*Robert L. Cornero
Monmouth University*

A: Our housing department agrees with your assessment; however, the university’s IT department remains committed to keeping things hardwired as an option (especially for Internet speed) in addition to our wireless. We utilize VOIP, so our data/voice are combined, but virtually no students opt for a telephone (additional cost to them) in their room. Our new construction also is a data line converted to a CATV plug end (Z-Bob). We have built five new residence halls and renovating five others with this standard. Bottom line, our IT department’s confidence is just not there yet to rely 100 percent on the wireless network.

*Matt Frericks, EFP
Miami University*

A: We pulled out our phone lines in our apartments a few years ago. We received a handful of complaints, but no major issues. Most students were using the phone lines to “work from home.” When we built our new housing, we did not install hard-wire phone lines in the rooms or suites. The new generation does not know the difference! We did install an emergency phone line in each hallway near the elevator.

*Tara Adams
Southern Polytechnic State University*

A: We disconnected the hard-wired phone service in all residence halls and do not install it in new construction (exceptions - elevators, emergency hall phone on each floor, fire alarm, etc.). In buildings that still have the hard wire we do provide a phone for residence life staff (although, that may go away too). We did have to add some cellphone repeaters in a couple buildings to make sure all of the rooms have service (parent complaints about safety). We provide hard wire data and cable TV to each “bed” as well as wireless throughout all buildings. No complaints at this time. We will be migrating over the VOIP over the next few years, so it may change.

*Art Chonko, P.E., C.E.M.
Denison University*

A: Our institution’s IT department has implemented a 4-cable CAT6 standard on new construction and renovations. This gives us the option for data/phone with VOIP. The construction cost is not so much to cause budgetary concerns, 2 lines are used, 2 spares. In the past we have had students with medical devices that require a hardwired phone line. Whereas this is not always the case, it has happened. I would suggest keeping you options open, during a power outage hardwired phones will most likely continue to work. For this reason we have all our emergency phones hardwired. In addition our data center has standby power. It’s always good to have options.

*Beville Lloyd
Pitzer College*

LAMP POST BANNERS

Q: We are planning to install a number of 18" X 36" banners on our lamp posts throughout campus.... each requiring an upper/lower bracket/pole. My challenge is finding a way to keep the

banners from being easily removed (stolen).....given the lamp posts are only 14' tall. I would appreciate any recommendations if you have a bit of a tamper-proof solution for your campus banners.

*Dan Haslag
Westminster College*

A: We too have jumped on the banner bandwagon. However, we do not use lights poles, but install a custom made banner pole which solves the structural issues and lets us increase the height of the banner and avoid some vandalism. In addition we only use a top bar and have a grommet installed two-thirds of the way down the banner. Then we zip tie that to the pole. In a normal breeze the banners wave nicely, and in a hard wind the zip ties break.

*Tom Flood, ASLA, EFP
Elon University*

A: I have used 100 lb. zip ties on the top and bottoms through grommets. This has worked in my experience.

*Todd Efke
Ohio State University*

A: At a previous institution, we used the zip ties as well and, surprisingly, very few were ever stolen. The light poles were of similar height too.

*Phil Lopes
University of the Incarnate Word*

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