

## **PLUMSTEAD TOWNSHIP FIELD GUIDELINES**

Plumstead Township works closely with area sports programs to provide the best and safest playing fields for everyone. Plumstead Township has specific guidelines that need to be followed. Based on local weather patterns, field conditions do not typically allow for usage between November 30 and April 1 in our area. Unless otherwise notified, Township fields are closed during this time period. It is important to remember that while preparing a field for a game, we do not want to create damage that will make the field more susceptible to rain in the future. These guidelines apply to all sports teams and residents using the athletic facilities.

1. Any Township park or park facility that becomes hazardous for public use due to weather, water, fire or other conditions may be closed at the full discretion of Plumstead Township. It is also the responsibility of the organization to work with the Township to prohibit the use of fields during inclement weather or directly after. Use good judgment when using the fields as to not cause serious damage to the premises and to keep the fields in good shape and safe for everyone to use.
2. Plumstead Township will schedule the use of facilities for groups. When not scheduled, these facilities are available to all park users.
3. All teams and spectators should comply with the Carry In/ Carry Out ordinance which is in place for all Township parks. Please pick up all litter in the field/dugout/bench areas before leaving the field.
4. Use or possession of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs is prohibited in all parks, including the parking lot areas.
5. Never under any circumstances drive your personal vehicle (car/truck/SUV/lawn mower) off parking lots onto any Township grass areas.
6. Anyone using a Township field is required to notify Plumstead Township in writing within 24 hours of usage if any hazardous conditions or damages were observed or created during that usage.

## **BALLFIELD MAINTENANCE GUIDELINES**

Following these simple guidelines will only improve field conditions making and keeping the fields safe and enjoyable for players, parents and residents.

1. Three things dry water from a field – sun, wind and time. At least two of these are needed to make a field quickly playable. The key is to remove any standing water as soon as possible. If puddles are on the field 60 minutes before game time, the field should be deemed unplayable and should not be used.

2. If the field is too wet, don't play. Using the ballfield when it is too wet ruins the grade of the infield, makes "bad hop" holes and ankle twisters, compacts the soil in the turf areas, and most importantly – leads to unsafe playing conditions.

3. Never use kitty litter to dry up wet spots.

4. Rake grooves in the wet areas to increase surface area and speed evaporation. Score the infield mix with small rakes. This will allow the air to help dry the infield much quicker.

5. Approximately 20 minutes before game time, apply Turface to the wet areas as needed. After 10 minutes, rake it in.

6. Turface should never be left on the surface of the infield. This will just cause more trouble the next time it rains. ALWAYS rake Turface into the wet area of infield mix that needs to be dried out. If wood shavings are used instead, the wood shavings need to be removed following the game. If left on the field, they will also cause the area to be more of a problem the next time it rains. Do not use Turface or pine shavings on the turf.

7. Never push, sweep or shovel mud or infield mix into the grass. This will kill and choke off the grass and create a "lip" where the infield meets the grass. If you find a "birdbath" or puddle after a rain, please take care not to sweep or remove infield material. This will only worsen the problem the next rain. Carefully sweep, broom or rake the water to an adjacent drier skinned area and rake it in with drier material.

8. Rake loose infield mix back into batters box holes, base slide areas, pitchers' rubber push off and landing area and dug out infield areas. If a hole or depression is present, what came out of it is usually there right next to the hole – rake it back in! If you rake a little at a time and tamp it in one small layer at a time (1/2" or less), it will pack in just fine. Trying to do it all at once will not allow it to be packed tight enough. If there is a long dry spell, it may be necessary to add a little water. Mix it in a little at a time. This will help the soil to pack more firmly. If players are "digging in" at home plate, they have to run out of that same hole. They also have to run over or slide into it to reach home plate.

9. The pitchers' mound, home plate and the base paths should only be raked. Never use a drag on these areas. Rake the mound, home plate and base paths carefully. Rake infield mix away from the grass. Rake the home plate area from the catcher's area toward the pitcher's mound. This area is sloped so water drains toward the backstop.

10. Areas in front of the pitchers' mound, 1<sup>st</sup> base and 3<sup>rd</sup> base can accumulate infield mix in the bordering grass areas. Use a leaf rake or stiff bristled push broom to clean the infield mix out of the grass areas onto the infield area where it belongs. This will help to keep "lips" from forming and the turf from being killed due to an accumulation of infield mix.

11. Never drag up to the edge of the grass. Some fields have hand drags available to do some light dragging after your practice/game. If you drag the field, please pull the drag up to about 12" – 24" before the grass edge. If you drag right up to and into the grass edges, you create an unsafe "lip". The areas not cleaned up with the drag should be hand raked. Always rake away from the edge of the grass into the infield area.

12. Never drag the drag off the infield and into the grass. This will kill and choke off the grass and create a "lip" in the grass. Pick it up and lift it off the infield. Rake the remnants back out into the infield areas.

13. Do not use lime to line the outfield lines. This creates a build up causing dead grass and unsafe "lip" conditions. If you require lines, use white paint.

***If you have any questions about the use and care of the fields please contact the Township Public Works Department. Thank you!***