



POLICY NAME: TURF MANAGEMENT PLAN

Policy Revised: March 27, 2023

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define turf management procedures and processes for cultivating turf in village parks and other village properties maintained by the Department of Public Works (DPW).

POLICY

It is the policy of the Village of Mount Pleasant to responsibly manage the turf for all village properties based on their type of use, environmental factors, and, most notably, the health and safety of our users. In addition, village staff shall utilize Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques to manage the turf in all parks and properties the Village maintains.

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Category "A" Areas

Parks, recreation facilities, and other village properties that will have a 15% or less tolerance for weeds. These areas include athletic fields where quality turf is critical to player safety or turf areas around facilities that receive high public use or visibility. The village maintains these areas with a finish mower.

Category "B" Areas

Parks, recreation facilities, and other village properties having a 16 – 30% tolerance for weeds. This category includes areas where turf quality and appearance are important, but not critical. The village maintains these areas with a wide area mower or finish mower.

Category "C" Areas

Natural or native areas that will have a tolerance for weeds not greater than 50%. This category includes prairies, woodlands, wetlands, and other native areas. The village may use exceptions to the 50% tolerance when performing a restoration project or managing invasive species.

Fertilizer (Fast-release)

Fertilizers formulated to release their nutrients quickly. This quick release of nutrients provides immediate nutrients to the turf.

Fertilizer (Slow-release)

Fertilizers formulated to release their nutrients over a two to three-month period of time.

Hard Surface Areas

Sidewalks, walkways, trails, parking lots, tennis courts, basketball courts, and other paved, finished surfaces in parks or on other property owned and maintained by the village.

Herbicides

Chemicals used to eradicate plants such as weeds and grasses.

Herbicides (Non-selective)

Chemicals designed to eradicate all "green" plant life.

Herbicides (Selective)

Chemicals designed to eradicate specific plants, such as broad leaf weeds, while not harming the other plant species that share common turf areas.

Integrated Pest Management

Terms and Definitions Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a science-based decision-making process that identifies and reduces risks from pests and pest management-related strategies. IPM coordinates using pest

biology, environmental information, and available technology to prevent unacceptable levels of pest damage by the most economical means while minimizing risk to people, property, resources, and the environment. IPM provides an effective strategy for managing pests in all arenas, from developed agricultural, residential, and public lands to natural and wilderness areas. IPM provides an effective, all-encompassing, low-risk approach to protect resources and people from pests. (NATIONAL IPM ROADMAP – 2013)

Pesticides

Chemicals used to control pests, including weeds (epa.gov). The term pesticides include, but is not limited to, the following: herbicide, insecticide, animal repellent, fungicide, and sanitizer.

Pesticide Free Park(s)

To provide pesticide-free areas to the public, the village will make ongoing efforts to designate and maintain at least one or more parks or park areas free of pesticides. Even though the designated park is deemed pesticide-free, village staff will still make every effort to keep the park within the designated weed tolerance within the category for which the village places the park by using alternative methods other than pesticides.

Properly Trained Staff

Village employee(s) or contractor(s) who obtained the proper application certification or license where applicable and have training on the proper use of the products according to the manufacturer and the product Safety Data Sheet (SDS).

Weeds

A plant species the village determines to be undesirable for various reasons, including but not limited to: safety, human health hazards, ecological integrity, invasive species, and aesthetic value.

DISCUSSION

This plan sets standards for turf quality; establish acceptable policies and procedures to maintain turf quality; and control the need for chemical treatment of turf areas. The village will accomplish this plan by:

1. Giving preference to non-chemical means of trimming or controlling weeds.
2. Placing greater than five-inch mulching rings around trees two years after the village plants a tree to lessen the need for string trimming and herbicide use.
3. Utilizing the spot application method of herbicides versus the 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.
6. Proper mowing and fertilization techniques.
7. Better education of maintenance staff that use herbicides or deal with contractor negotiations.
8. Exploring, testing, and implementing alternative methods of turf management, particularly methods designed to reduce the use of herbicides.

PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

Record Keeping

The village shall document all weed assessment results, pesticide application data, non-pesticide treatment data, complaints received, and make this information available to the public.

Turf Management Categories

Village staff shall provide turf management practices to each village green space based on the level of service required to meet the weed pressure threshold indicated in **APPENDIX A: CLASSIFICATIONS OF PARKS AND OTHER VILLAGE PROPERTIES**. The village will give preference to alternative methods to turf treatment, other than the use of pesticides, in all categories. For example, the village shall use aeration, over-seeding, or mowing techniques instead of pesticide treatment. The Parks and Recreation Department shall only provide managed turf areas in locations requiring that level of service. The village shall develop and maintain natural areas wherever that level of service is appropriate.

NR 151 Requirements

The village shall follow all NR 151 requirements before applying any fertilizer, including soil testing, during the development of a comprehensive turf management plan for each park, facility, and property.

Pesticide Application

The controlled use of selective and non-selective pesticides shall be applied using the following practices and procedures:

1. Whenever pesticides are necessary, the village staff shall make every effort to select a pesticide that provides the least risk to human health, local ecosystems, and the environment while factoring in cost and effectiveness.
2. In collaboration with the Parks and Recreation Manager, the Director of Public Works or their designee shall inform the public of all pesticide treatment dates utilizing the Village of Mount Pleasant website. They shall email the recreation user groups (if applicable) 14 days before application. If inclement weather forces treatment rescheduling, the village staff will repost the new dates on the village website, social media, and/or notify direct user groups of rescheduled treatment dates. If possible, the village staff shall accommodate user groups' practice and game schedules.
3. The village will only consider the application of pesticides 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.
4. Only licensed staff or contractors shall apply any herbicide.
5. The applicator shall follow all application rates and wear all personal protective equipment required by the product label.
6. Spray patterns for non-selective herbicides will not exceed six inches around any object or on either side of a fence line except for softball/baseball field warning tracks.
7. The village will apply herbicide applications for broadleaf control in early spring and early fall with a systemic herbicide that absorbs into plants within 24 hours.
8. The village will not permit any athletic field use for at least 48 hours, unless otherwise stated by the product manufacturer, post turf treatment with any pesticide.
9. The village will not use pesticides on hard surfaces near storm sewer systems.
10. The village shall use a spot application, instead of a broadcast application, whenever feasible based on weed assessment data.
11. According to the product label or manufacturer's recommended setback or buffer zone requirements, the village shall use caution when applying pesticides along waterways, playgrounds, sports courts, and other similar areas.

Fertilizer Application

The village shall apply controlled use of selected fertilizers using the following practices and procedures.

1. The village shall use fertilizers when establishing or re-establishing new turf areas.
2. The village shall not apply fertilizers within the required setback or buffer zone of any waterway or water conveyance system as indicated on the product label.
3. The amount of fertilizer applied to parks, athletic fields or other village properties will be determined by soil testing results and standards identified in Wisconsin DNR Technical Standard #1100 and other accepted turf management practices.
4. The village shall remove fertilizers from paved areas.
5. The village shall apply fertilizers in the spring and fall depending on turf conditions unless additional fertilizer treatments are required when rehabbing an existing turf area or initiating a grow-in program for new turf.
6. If necessary, the village shall only use fast-release fertilizers near water.

Other General Turf Management Practices and Procedures:

1. The village will prefer non-chemical means of controlling turf growth around all village trees, posts, fences, or structures by utilizing mulch or other landscape bedding material.
2. The village shall calibrate all mowing equipment to avoid cutting the grass below three inches. The Parks and Recreation manager may reduce this threshold as determined by the type of use.
3. The village shall over-seed green spaces as needed in the spring or early fall.
4. As time permits, park maintenance crews will place mulch rings around trees, thus reducing the need for string trimming or herbicide use.
5. The village shall seek collaboration with other local turf managers to provide a more cohesive community-wide approach to turf management and to look at ways to share resources if possible.
6. The contractor will post application notification signs, village staff will also post application warning signs in strategic locations throughout parks that are visible to potential users.
7. The village shall provide all contracted applicators a copy of this policy and shall schedule a pre-spray meeting to review the policies and procedures of this document.

Hard Surface Areas

All hard surface areas will have a Category A classification if the following conditions exist:

1. Undesirable weeds that grow in cracks can create an unsafe surface for users.
2. Untreated weeds in hard surface cracks can lead to surface damage and follow-up repair.
3. Public exposure to spot herbicide treatment is minimal, usually limited to footwear.

APPROVAL

Approved and effective by the Village Board on March 27, 2023.

APPENDIX A: CLASSIFICATIONS OF PARKS AND OTHER VILLAGE PROPERTIES

Category A (15% or Less Weed Pressure)

- Athletic Fields in Village Parks
- Campus Park – Turf and Athletic Seed
- Lakeside COP House
- Parks and Recreation Building
- Public Works Building
- Smolenski Park (I) – See Map
- South Shore Fire Department
- Stewart-McBride Park
- Village Hall

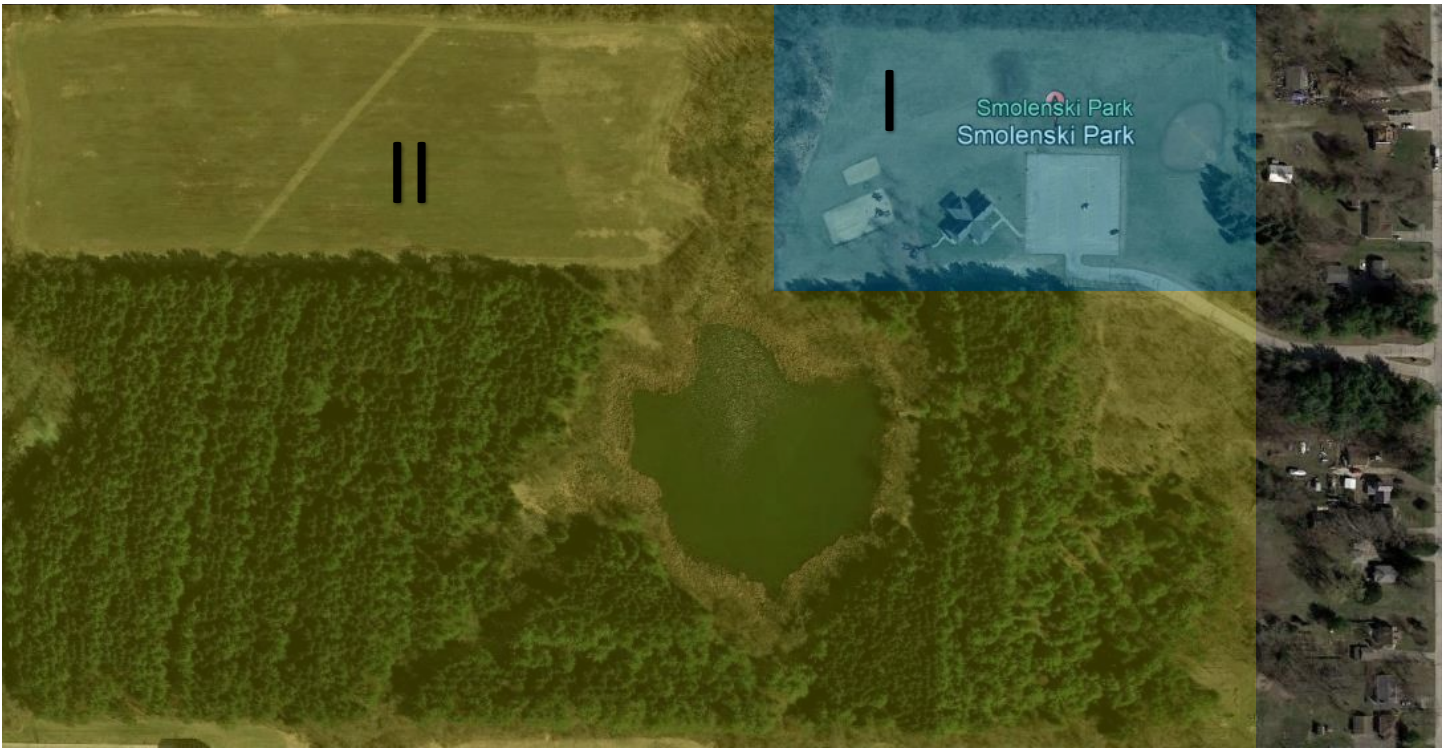
Category B (16-30% Weed Pressure)

- Dirkse Park
- Drozd Park
- James Turek Park
- Lake Park
- Pheasant Creek Park
- Polzin Park
- Sheridan Woods Park

Category C (Weed Pressure Not Greater than 50%)

- Biex-Ramcke Homestead Park
- Compost Site
- Cozy Acres Park
- Greenways and Stormwater Passages
- K-9 Commons Dog Park
- Lathrop Manor Subdivision Park
- Pike River Pathway
- Smolenski Park (II) – See Map
- Campus Park – Native Seed

Smolenski Park Map



Campus Park Map

PLANTING NOTES

1. Seed/Sod limit line is approximate. Seed/Sod to limits of grading and disturbance. Contractor responsible for restoration of any unauthorized disruption outside of designated construction area.
2. Contractor responsible for erosion control in all seeded/sodded areas.
3. Tree mulch rings in turf areas are 5 foot diameter, typical. Contractor shall provide a mulch ring around all existing trees within the limit of work. Remove all existing grass from area to be mulched and provide a typical v-notch edge.
4. Sodlines are to be spade out to a minimum depth of 3 inches unless otherwise shown on the plans. Curved sodlines are to be smooth and not segmented.
5. Do not locate plants within 10' of utility structures, or within 5' horizontally of underground utility lines unless otherwise shown on the plans. Consult with Landscape Architect if these conditions exist.
6. Plants and other materials are quantified and summarized for the convenience of the Owner and jurisdictional agencies only. Confirm and install sufficient quantities to complete the work as drawn and specified. No additional payments will be made for materials required to complete the work as drawn and specified.
7. Refer to specifications for additional conditions, standards and notes.

PLANTING LEGEND

- Turf Seed
- Adriatic Turf Seed Mix
- Native Seed Mix

