

Field Maintenance

A couple of yearly reminders to all (from the "grizzly" field veterans):

1. We have **15** baseball fields available for use within Mt. Lebanon. **4** are on township property, Dixon, Middle, Wildcat & Brafferton. **11** are on school properties. I want to emphasize to all that these fields are "permitted" for use to MLBA yearly on our authorized days & times. Requirements of all these permits are to keep the playing fields and surrounding areas free of trash & litter. Please pick up after all games & practices, and leave the premises in better shape than when you arrived. We constantly receive complaints from neighbors, the school district and the township especially about litter at the fields. It is incumbent upon all of us to make sure we comply with the conditions of our permits. This is easy to do, and if all cooperate, will not be a hardship on any.
2. For those fields that have the pop-up bases (and there are quite a few these days that do), please remember to replace the plugs into the inserts after you are done playing. This is a safety issue so someone does not fall into the holes & break a leg. If you cannot find the plugs, please let us know and our equipment guys will get some there quickly. Just so all know - if the inserts are free of dirt, the plug can stay in the ground & the pop-up base fits over the plug. That is how these bases are intended to function. Regardless - please remember to put the plugs in after you are done.
3. The weather will always give us fits this time of year. Please make sure you visit the website & become familiar with the MLBA Weather Policy, and all other policies for that fact. Field turf agent & lime will be stored in the field boxes with supplies replenished frequently. Additional bags of each are stored in the mudroom at the concession stand. **(Note – this is field agent, not drying agent. It's a clay based infield mix conditioner & needs to be mixed into soft / wet areas.)**

Golden Rule - If you need more than 3-4 bags of turf agent to prepare a little league field - it's probably too wet to play in the 1st place!

4. The following represents a primer on how to make a messy field playable. It assumes you have a couple hours of sun and wind: To prep a field with standing water, assuming the rest of the field is not soft mud, gently sweep the water around to have it spread over a wider area so it can absorb down. **Do not sweep to the outfield!** All this will do is create a bigger edge to the "lip" of the infield / outfield. Push it towards the natural drainage of the field. **Once the area dries, refill the holes!** If this is not done, it will leave a larger hole than existed previously. I see this most often at the home plate areas. Any mud taken out needs to go back in the hole to level out the area. **Never remove & throw around the backstop! This prevents the area from draining next time it rains!** (Plus, it drives me nuts when I see it happening or done! And, I will let you know about it!) Some fields have puddle pillows that can absorb water so make use of them also.

Once most standing water is gone, use a rake to turn over any wet or soft spots. Spread out field agent like grass seed, doesn't need to be thick, and then use the rake again to mix the agent in the wet area. Give this an hour of sun and wind, drag the field with a hand drag and the field will be playable. Simply throwing the field agent on top really does not accomplish anything. In fact, it will draw the water up to the surface. It needs to be raked in!

If a field is hard enough to hold the tractor, the teeth can be used to skim the surface to turn up wet dirt and dry it out. (Do not use the tractor on a field that you can't walk upon.) The tractor can also be used to eliminate low spots to ease future field prep. To get the tractor to elementary fields, we have a trailer that fits on the truck. Isler or Kerr can train managers on loading the tractor on the trailer.

5. We are responsible for maintaining the fields once yearly prep is completed by the township / school district. **Very Important - when dragging a field, especially with a vehicle, drag from the outer perimeter in towards the mound! And, keep the infield mix / dirt on the infield! Do not pull the drag into the grass / outfield area's to shake off & wrap up!** Keep it on the field to do this! This helps maintain the slope for drainage, and helps eliminate buildup of infield mix at the perimeters of the grass.

6. **Once your game is completed**, level out & fill in holes at the mound, home plate and around all bases. You will be surprised what a help this will be in maintaining the fields for the next day especially if it rains overnight! **This should be done after any field use, game or practice!**

Thanks for your cooperation & efforts on these, and all issues.
Good raking!

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