
From: K-State turf information [K-STATE_TURF@LISTSERV.KSU.EDU] on behalf of Megan Kennelly [kennelly@KSU.EDU]
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2009 1:19 PM
To: K-STATE_TURF@LISTSERV.KSU.EDU
Subject: [K-STATE_TURF] K-State turf: abiotic issues in turf and landscape

Hello everyone,

*** "Plants get sick, too"

I spent the morning doing two workshops (with the above title) with 6th graders where they had the opportunity to do some hands-on stuff with viruses, bacteria, fungi, and nematodes. Every year, this activity gives me a renewed appreciation for teachers, especially middle-school teachers, as I'm pretty wiped out right now after only 4 hours. Kids love plants, though, and in the end they start to enjoy the pathogens, too. All of you on this list can help get kids interested in plants, too, by pointing out flowers, different kinds of leaves, insect galls on trees, etc. That's my warm & fuzzy thought of the day.

*** Spring rains = summer root problems

A lot of areas are experiencing abundant rainfall. When soils are waterlogged root health can be compromised. This is the case for turf, flowers, trees, and shrubs. The roots lack oxygen and they don't develop well. Then, once the heat and drought of summer kick in the plants can seemingly collapse overnight.

So, keep an eye on areas with drainage problems. We can't control the rain, but sometimes it is possible to change the site to make it less prone to drainage problems. When installing new plantings be sure to keep drainage in mind. In turf, aeration can relieve compaction which in turn will promote drainage and healthier roots.

For those of you in golf course management, how are your rooting depths looking in those putting greens? Okay? Or are overly-wet conditions causing noticeably shorter roots?

*** Stress and Trees

When trees appear to die "suddenly", often there is a long, convoluted history of different stresses. For a great explanation, check out the article by Ward Upham on page 4 of the KSU Horticulture Newsletter:

<http://www.hfrr.ksu.edu/DesktopModules/ViewDocument.aspx?DocumentID=2483>

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