

TURFGRASS FACT SHEET

The following represent a variety of optional statements that you can record on your business phone system that will keep customers (who are “on-hold”) informed about the many benefits of turfgrass.

- **Did you know** that lawn areas in the United States store up to 37 billion tons of carbon that would otherwise be in the atmosphere and contribute to global warming? Turfgrass actually serves as a sink for storing carbon dioxide in the soil.
- **Did you know** turfgrass helps prevent air pollution? Dr. Thomas Watschke (watch-kee) of Pennsylvania State University estimates that in the United States alone, turfgrass traps approximately 12 million tons of the dust and dirt that’s released into the atmosphere every year.
- **Did you know** the environmental benefits of turfgrass are numerous, yet often overlooked by the media?” Consider for example the ability of turfgrass to prevent soil erosion. Dr. James Beard, Professor Emeritus of Texas A&M University, a leading authority of turfgrass, has stated that, “turfgrasses are relatively inexpensive, durable groundcovers that protect our valuable, nonrenewable soil resource from water and wind erosion.”
- **Did you know** that turfgrass has the ability to substantially reduce storm water runoff? Professor, Dr. John Stier (sty-er) of the University of Wisconsin – Madison reported that preliminary results indicate that while the roots of turfgrasses aren’t as deep as prairie plants and other native species, turfgrass has a higher plant density which affects infiltration, decreases water runoff and increases water percolation.
- **Did you know** turfgrass helps ground water recharge? Not only does increased water infiltration help protect surface water quality; it also helps recharge ground-water aquifers. The dense network of turfgrass roots help to trap nutrients and remove pollutants from water moving through the soil. This filtering effect through the turfgrass root zone improves water quality.
- **Did you know** turfgrass promotes soil restoration through organic matter additions derived from the turnover of roots and other plant tissues? Grass roots are continually developing, dying off and decomposing adding organic materials and nutrients to the soil. During this process organic matter keeps soil microbes active and improves the soil’s chemical and physical properties.
- **Did you know** nearly a ton of carbon, per acre, per year, is stored in the soil of fairways and greens on golf courses?

- **Did you know** if people recycle the grass clippings, leaving them to decompose on the lawn, they can substantially reduce the need to fertilize their lawns because grass clippings are rich in nutrients?
- **Did you know** that lawn areas produce a considerable amount of oxygen? Dr. Thomas Watschke (watch-kee) of Pennsylvania State University estimates that as little as 55 square feet of turfgrass provides enough oxygen for one person for an entire day.
- **Did you know** that turfgrass lawns cool our atmosphere and in turn, reduce home energy costs? It's estimated that the front lawn on a block of eight average houses has the cooling effect of about 70 tons of air conditioning.
- **Did you know** that turfgrass not only cools, it also dissipates heat? Dr. James Beard, Professor Emeritus of Texas A&M University, a leading authority of turfgrass, reports that urban areas tend to be 10 to 12 degrees warmer than adjacent rural areas.
- **Did you know** that well planned green areas with turfgrass, shrubs and trees, such as golf courses and parks, can maintain and promote plant and animal diversity? A study of golf courses and parks in Cincinnati, Ohio showed that perching songbirds, which include more than half of all bird species, benefit from golf courses, even to the extent that golf courses may be described as bird sanctuaries. Nearly two times more area on a golf course is used for natural habitats (such as roughs, woodlands and water features) than the combined area for greens, tees, and fairways.
- **Did you know** that the University of California, Riverside Turfgrass Research Program, reported that psychologists who studied "people-plant" interactions observed that hospital patients who were provided with an outdoor view of nature (turfgrass, trees and green space) recovered more quickly than patients whose rooms viewed a hospital wing?
- **Did you know** that closely mowed residential lawns reduce the number of nuisance pests such as snakes, rodents, mosquitoes, ticks and chiggers?
- **Did you know** turfgrass minimizes allergy-related pollens that can cause human discomfort and potentially serious health concerns to some individuals?
- **Did you know** that a study by the University of Nebraska indicated that as little as a 4 inch high grassed area reduced vehicle noise levels by as much as 40% at a distance of 70 feet?
- **Did you know** that turfgrass serves as a fire barrier? So much so that in January 2005 a new California state law became effective that extended the defensible space around homes and

structures from 30 to 100 feet. Turfgrass can increase the chance of a house surviving a wildfire and the defensible space it provides serves as a safety zone for firefighters.

- **Did you know** that turfgrass serves as a means of crime prevention? The high visibility provided by low growing turfgrass actually discourages intruders and vandals.
- **Did you know** that turfgrass, trees and shrubs have been shown to add from 6 to 12 percent to the base value of a home according to a study conducted by Bridget Behe (bay-hee), Professor of Horticulture at Michigan State University?
- **Did you know** that the strategic use of turfgrass is the most sensible and economically feasible approach to countering the greenhouse effect in urban areas according to Dr. Thomas L. Watschke (watch-kee) of Pennsylvania State University?

REQUIREMENTS:

- **Highly recommend a clean 3 to 5 second pause between each cut.**
- **Speak clearly and at a moderate pace.**
- **Be sure to record these facts in a quiet area, background noise can be recorded.**

If you have any questions please contact the TPI office at 847-649-5555 or email info@TurfGrassSod.org