



Newsletter Fall 2012

1. Super-Soil Performance Mulch Provides a Solution
2. State Restrictions on Phosphorus
3. Lightweight Soil helps to achieve Sustainability Goal
4. Former Town Eyesore to become New Sports Fields
5. Agresource Welcomes Dave Harding

### **Super-Soil & Performance Mulch Provide a Solution**



The Merrimack Valley Transportation Authority constructed a new bus depot this past year in Amesbury, MA in the near the lower mill yard. Landscape construction was on schedule last spring when the Green Company's Bruce Borassa saw that on-site soil was severely deficient. Hundreds of expensive trees and shrubs were delivered and ready for installation. Knowing that the new plant material would not do well, Bruce got approval for additional funds to import good quality soil that was used as backfill for all trees and shrubs.

In order to help improve the soil where small plants were installed, Agresource's Performance Mulch was used to help feed the soil with nutrients and organic matter over time. This filtering down with an organic layer that has a balanced carbon to nitrogen ratio has proven to be very helpful on many projects. Since amending on-site soil was not included in the original specifications, no budget was established. In this case the mulch budget was utilized allowing for some soil improvement.

### **Restrictions on the Use of Phosphorus Containing Fertilizers on Established Turf**

A number of states have passed legislation that limits the use of phosphorus containing fertilizers on turf in response to concerns about the potential impact on surface water quality. Phosphorus, in addition to nitrogen, can cause water pollution if over applied.

Rules established by various states vary as to what turf areas are affected and what types of products are considered as fertilizers. For the most part, composts are exempted and can be used on established turf with little or no restriction. However recent legislation in CT applies to composts as well as traditional fertilizers. Nevertheless in the majority of cases, compost can continue to be used to top dress lawns and turf areas in conformance with the new rules.

Turf managers and landscapers need to be aware of the CT rules when using compost to make sure that compost applications are performed properly. Compost and phosphorus containing fertilizers can be used when soil testing shows that there is a need for phosphorus. Also compost applications are allowed for "establishing new grass or repairing such lawn with seed or sod."

Thus applying compost when over seeding or when making repairs to worn turf areas would be allowed regardless of the soil phosphorus levels. Applications of composts and phosphorus containing fertilizers is not allowed from December 1st through March 15th, not allowed on impervious surfaces and prohibited within 15 feet of surface water bodies.

Whenever compost is being used we recommend that you follow good management practices.

1. Soil testing should be performed to make sure the application rate is appropriate for the situation.
2. Compost does contain nutrients and should not be spread on frozen ground or immediately before heavy rain is forecasted.
3. Compost should be incorporated into the soil as soon as possible after application. Core aerate when topdressing lawns.
4. Do not store the compost near surface water bodies.
5. Sweep compost from driveways and sidewalks after top dressing.

Remember that compost can be safely used in accordance with the new rules and that the proper use of compost can reduce risks that nutrients will enter vulnerable surface water bodies. Compost amendments increase turf density and improve soil physical properties reducing erosion and increasing water infiltration.

**Lightweight Soil helps to achieve Sustainability Goal**



Located in Stamford, CT and Developed by Building and Land Technology, Harbor Point is one of the largest redevelopment projects in the nation. A mix of residential, retail, office and hotel space, Harbor Point is LEED-ND certified which stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighborhood Developments. This special recognition was awarded because of the 80-acre project's environmentally sound design, planning, and construction.

A considerable amount of green space was included in the design in order to reduce the “heat island” effect of such a development. This included designing planting beds over a garage and on other roofs throughout the development. Lightweight soils made by Agresource were a key component of this design to ensure that plant material that would thrive in such an environment where extreme temperatures are unavoidable. Made to very high standards for water holding and bulk-density, Agresource is pleased to be part of the solution in helping to create a comfortable and attractive environment as well as contribute towards the Building and Land Technology’s goal of sustainability.

### **Town Landfill will become Sports Fields**



The Town of Amesbury, MA has long had an eyesore, a former landfill visible from I-495 along Hunt Road. Phase one of a transformation towards sports fields will be completed this fall. Charter Environmental was contracted to create a 2% grade on which sports fields will be built in phase two as well as cap the landfill and establish a lush stand of vegetation. This required

making a high organic soil that allowed for quick germination of grass seed and continued support of vegetation on top of a synthetic liner.

Agresource supplied about 24,000 cubic yards of vegetative support layer (soil) that met specification requirements and was consistent from beginning to end. With this project the Town of Amesbury has begun the transformation of what was a problem into what will be a town asset visible from the interstate for all to see.

### **Agresource Welcomes Dave Harding**

We would like to introduce the newest member of the Agresource team Dave Harding. Dave will take on the bulk product sales position as Guy Travers enjoys his retirement. You will see Dave on the road working with Tim Gould to cover Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Eastern Connecticut. Continuing our efforts to provide quality compost, soil, and mulch products with reliable customer service we are excited to have Dave apart of our team.

Dave has ten years of experience in the green industry, a passion for golf course turf management, and independent landscape construction. Dave served as the account manager for Vetelino Landscape. A premier landscape construction company on the South Shore of Massachusetts, Vetelino landscape entrusted Dave in the planning and management of large scale construction and maintenance projects. Harding brings to Agresource a history of meticulous workmanship, a keen eye for detail, and lots of energy. Using his experiences in the field, Dave will help our customers complete projects efficiently and in a cost effective manner.

As the leaves begin to turn Dave will be traveling these next couple months to introduce himself and help supply fall projects. When it comes to turf in the fall Dave believes the two most important tools for any contractor, superintendent or grounds manager is aeration and topdressing. Core aeration provides improvements in air and water infiltration and healthier root systems. Turf that has become compacted and dormant due to high foot traffic or extreme temperatures needs to be revitalized this fall. Topdressing with *Agresoil Compost* after aerating will provide key nutrients and organic matter that will insure healthier stronger turf next spring. Improving soil structure with *Agresoil Compost* will help reduce irrigation and improve performance of fertilizer applications.