

National Mall & Memorial Parks

Partners In Action Soil and Turf Improvement Project

- Who:** SafeLawns.org
- What:** Employees of SafeLawns.org and their subcontractor will work to improve the soil and turf viability through aeration and incorporation of solid and liquid compost.
- Where:** The work area will be the 2 center panels (turf only panels) on the National Mall between 4th and 7th Streets.
- The National Park Service closes half of the National Mall each year – between 3rd and 7th one year and between 7th and 14th the next year. The two panels maintained by SafeLawn.org are among the nine between 3rd and 7th Streets that are currently closed to public use as part of this regular turf renovation and maintenance schedule. Of the nine panels, six have both trees and turf and three have turf only.
 - The two panels being maintained by SafeLawn.org comprise 4.3 acres. This is approximately 11.0 % of the area between 3rd and 14th Streets. It is approximately 0.01 % of the lawn area within the National Mall.
- When:** Sept. 21, 2007 – August 31, 2009.
- SafeLawns.org originally contacted the National Mall & Memorial Parks in Spring of 2007 offering to maintain at no cost to the NPS some portion of the National Mall using proactive environmentally friendly techniques and procedures.
 - Initial work period was Sept 21 through October, 2007.
 - After initial work period, application of compost teas will take place through the end of the project, August 31, 2009.
- Why:** This is a pilot project to demonstrate whether environmentally friendly soil treatments such as compost tea can improve the viability of the soil enough to make grass more viable under the extreme compaction conditions of the National Mall.
- How:**
- This work is to be coordinated so as not to interfere with any special events permitted through the National Park Service for this site.
 - SafeLawns applied for and received a Special Use Short Term Construction Permit, and has applied for a research permit through the NPS.

- The work follows Department of the Interior Integrated Pest Management (IPM) procedures.
- Soil data and economic data will be measured and compiled into a report by the Environmental Stewardship Branch of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This data will include soil compaction, moisture, organisms, and fertility, as well as hours worked and type and amount of all machinery and products used. This report as well as a complete photographic record of the project will be shared with the NPS.
- The two SafeLawn maintained panels will be re-opened for public use in April, 2008, just like the other seven panels in the current closure. Compost tea treatments between April 1, 2008 and August 31, 2009 will be coordinated with NPS due to the many events that will take place on these panels.
- The work began with 8" deep tilling for reduction of compaction and aeration in Panel 3 (see last paragraph for description of the panels). Then 450 cubic yards of solid plant material compost were tilled into the soil. The site was re-graded, seeds were applied and a liquid compost mulch applied over the seeds. It will be watered through October, 2007. Panel 2 received core aeration, liquid compost and seeds but, like the NPS maintained panels, will not be irrigated.
- The panel closer to 7th St. (#3) is receiving the most intensive treatment. The panel closer to 4th St. (#2), is receiving compost tea. The panel between 4th and 3rd (#1), is being maintained by the NPS and will provide comparison with the other two panels.