SECTION 612 SODDING

I. GENERAL.
Sod is used to quickly establish turf and prevent soil erosion. Sod is much more expensive than seeding, and is frequently used when roadsides in urban/suburban areas are residential or commercial lawns, public spaces, etc. Supplemental landscape development requirements may be specified in the contract proposal.

II. INSTALLATION.
Sources of sod must be made known to the Engineer at least 5 days before cutting and are subject to inspection and approval by the Engineer before cutting. Shipments of sod that arriving at a contract site must be accompanied by a certificate indicating compliance with the regulations of the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets. The Contractor must exercise care to retain the soil existing on the roots of the sod during transporting, handling and transplanting operations.

Sod should be a mixture of permanent grasses; such as blends of bluegrasses, perennial ryegrasses and fescues. Monocultures are not acceptable unless so specified.

Sod installation begins with fine grading of the surfaces and scarification, if necessary, to loosen and aerate the soil. A minimum of 2 inches (50 mm) of topsoil under all sod is required unless otherwise specified. Verify that the soil on which sod will be laid is moist to a depth of 2 - 3 inches (50 - 75 mm). If the soil is not moist, the soil must be watered prior to placing sod, which is included in the cost of the sod item. Fertilizer must be applied at the stated rate. Refer to the fertilizer labels for percentage of nitrogen or other elements in order to determine the amount of fertilizer that should be applied.

Ensure that the sod which is not immediately planted is tightly rolled, or stored roots-to-roots. All sod in stacks must be kept moist and protected from the sun and from freezing. The maximum period of time from harvesting to planting shall not exceed 48 hours. Sod that is stored prior to planting shall meet the moisture requirements of §713-14 at the time of planting. Sod must not be placed if the sod is frozen, or if the topsoil under it is frozen.

After placement, sod must be pressed into the soil to ensure firm contact with the topsoil and eliminate air pockets, typically performed with a roller weighted with water. Sod placed on steep slopes must be anchored, typically with metal or plastic stakes. Ensure that stakes are driven flush to prevent damage to mowing equipment.

Ensure that the sod is watered after planting and remains watered until it is well established. Watering rate may be verified by measuring the total amount of water applied to a given area, or if water is applied uniformly via a static application or sprinkler, by placing and anchoring a plastic cup or rain gauge in the center of an area and measuring the depth in the cup. Lawn areas typically need approximately 1 inch (25 mm) of water per week, preferably in a single application. Overwatering is unnecessary, and potentially expensive.

Watering weekly for a minimum of 4 weeks after installation is included in the sod item. When the contract quantity exceeds 500 sq yds (400 sq m) watering, other than at the initial installation, is paid for separately. If contract quantities do not include the watering item, or the quantities are insufficient, additional watering should be considered extra work, in order to prevent expensive sod from dying out and having to be replaced. Once sod has become well established, additional watering should be unnecessary.