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Inside:

Mower
Market Review

Profitable Grub
Control Programs

Water Auditing

Selling Design/
Build Services

Growing from Within



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Cover photo

Bob Perzel
Eagan, Minn.



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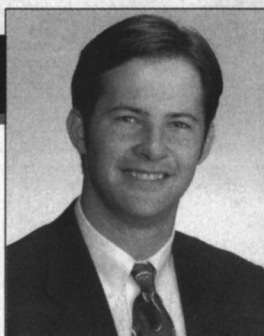
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Bob West
Editor

Hopefully, you are reading this with as high hopes for 1998 as the Lawn & Landscape Media Group is and you feel as good about your 1997 as we do.

This past year proved to be one of tremendous change in the green industry, which has to be viewed as a positive sign for the future. As unsettling as change may be, it is a natural function of growth for any entity. The change 1997 brought showed us all how dynamically the green industry is growing and how bullish many major corporations are about its future. The industry, like any growing and developing organism, must experience such potentially painful phases in order to reach its full maturity.

And in all likelihood, we have only seen the beginning of this change, but with the continuing change the industry moves closer to realizing its potential.

We, too, have continued to grow this year, and while we are proud of a number of our accomplishments from the past 12 months, one department in particular has raised its level of performance considerably. Our circulation department, led by Heidi Senecoff, was honored with the 1997 Circulation Direct Marketing Award from *Folio* magazine, a highly-respected publication serving the magazine publishing industry. The CDMA Award caps a year in which our circulation department has made tremendous strides to ensure our readers receive the service they deserve.

As we turn our attention to the next 12 months and beyond, it is our pleasure to announce a number of recent additions to our staff.

Denyse Fissel comes to *Lawn & Landscape* with a strong background in news writing and reporting, which will serve her well as our associate editor.

In addition, Steve Carpenter joined our staff as the Account Manager for the Northeast region of the United States.

As the moniker Lawn & Landscape Media Group indicates, we view ourselves as much more than one magazine. Just as contractors realize the importance of offering a wide range of services in order to meet their customers' needs, we realize the same when it comes to serving you. Hence, the development of *Lawn & Landscape* Online, a website that has been developed to provide immediate green industry news, informational links, access to technical and professional experts, and, most importantly, a forum for contractors to discuss the challenges and issues facing their businesses. Stop by <http://www.lawnandlandscape.com> and check it out.

In order to build and maintain this dynamic website, we have hired Bill Cox and Sydney Work. Both Bill and Sydney approach the Internet with a passion and skill set that we're confident will allow us to deliver yet another invaluable product to the green industry. If you encounter any problems with the site or have any suggestions, e-mail Bill at bcox@gie.net. — Bob West

Lawn & Landscape

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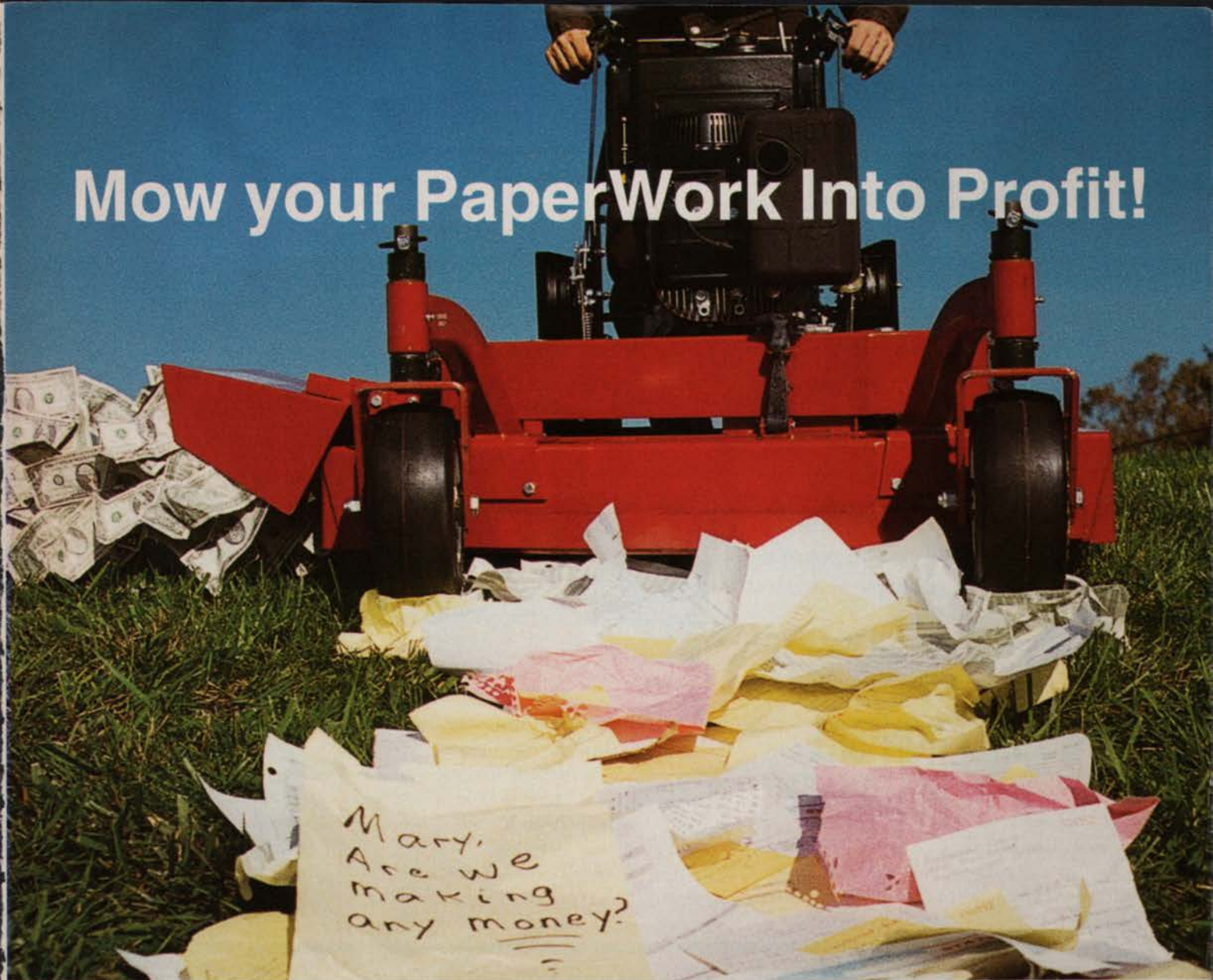
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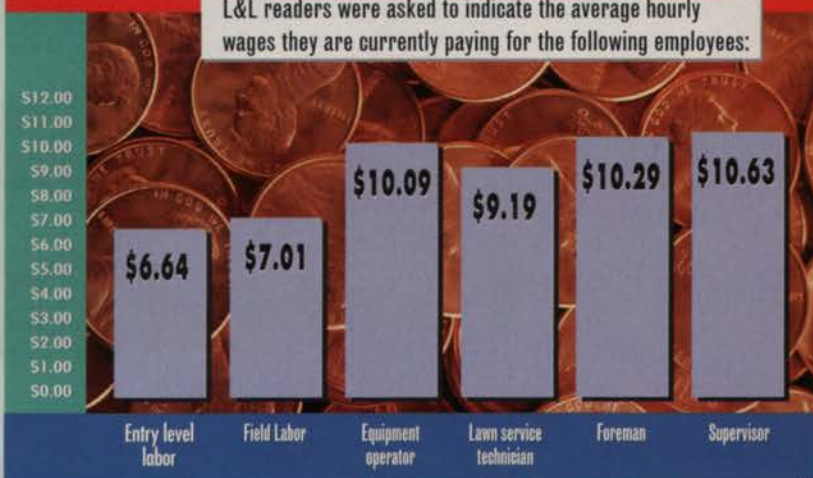
SURVEY SHOWS WAGES FALLING

An old adage says, "You have to spend money to make money." As green industry contractors lament the continuing labor shortage, one would expect that phrase could be adapted to, "You have to spend more money on labor to make money."

Ironically, though, a *Lawn & Landscape* survey found that, if anything, contractors have cut wages they're offering in the last two years. Entry-level laborers are being paid 5 cents more an hour now than in our 1995 survey, and equipment operators have enjoyed a \$1.09 hourly raise. Field laborers, foremen and supervisors have all seen their hourly wages drop, however, by 73 cents, 41 cents and \$2.69, respectively.

THE PRICE OF LABOR

L&L readers were asked to indicate the average hourly wages they are currently paying for the following employees:



(Credit: L&L Reader Survey)

N.Y. NOTIFICATION BILL EXPECTED TO RESURFACE

Pesticide applicators in the lawn and tree care industries in New York will be banding together with state and national organizations this year with hopes of fending off a notification bill working its way through the state senate.

The bill, which emerged from an environmental committee of the state senate but never made it to the floor for debate in 1997, should be a hot topic in an important election year for New York legislators, according to Fred Langely, manager, state government relations, Responsible Industry for a Sound

Environment.

According to Langely, the environmental activists are

taking the stance that citizens have the right to know when any application of pesticides is being performed on a property abutting their home. The bill calls for a 48-hour written prenotification before an application takes place.

The state legislature was back in session the second week of January, and Langely expects the bill to resurface for debate in the environmental committee between now and April.

(continued on page 10)

T&O Service Tech Gains AAPSE Recommendation

Lawn & Landscape magazine announced that its sister publication, *T&O Service Tech*, has been designated a recommended training resource by the American Association of Pesticide Safety Educators.

"This prestigious designation has been awarded to *T&O Service Tech* because of the publication's commitment to training professional applicators in the safe and effective use of pesticide products in the professional lawn care market," explained Barry Brennan, president of AAPSE. "We feel that *T&O Service Tech* is a highly effective training tool, and we are pleased to recommend it to lawn and landscape pesticide applicators."

AAPSE is an association of state-based environmental and pesticide safety educators providing science-based education programs to the public through the Cooperative Extension and the Land-Grant University System.

"The safe and effective use of pesticides is at the heart of professional lawn and landscape care," explained Cindy Code, group publisher of *T&O Service Tech* magazine. "We feel that this relationship will help both organizations to fulfill an important element of their missions — to educate professional pesticide applicators on the best methods, products and safety procedures."





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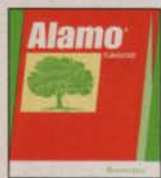
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MARKET TRENDS

(continued from page 6)

LESCO, MTD PRODUCTS HIT THE MARKET

The highly competitive commercial mower market picked up another player recently, as Valley City, Ohio-based MTD Products, introduced a range of turf maintenance equipment stemming from its joint venture agreement with LESCO Inc.

The new line of commercial equipment, marketed under the name MTD Pro, includes six mowers, two models of dual hydro walk-behind landscape tractors, and new models of blowers, overseeders, aerators and

PEOPLE

Plant Health Care, Inc. promoted **Randall McDonald** to vice president, sales. PHC also added five new people to their sales team: **Joseph Broyles**, **Nina Jioio**, **Jay Sutton**, **Dave Young** and **Lisa Love-Meyer**.

L.R. Nelson named **Rob Nytko** marketing manager for its turf division. It also appointed **Charles Putnam** national sales manager.

Mike Thurlow was named head of the western division of United Horticultural Supply. **Exmark Manufacturing Co.** announced that **Lou Caputo** was hired as territory sales representative for Florida and several New England states.

Bill Dunn has joined **Lofts Seed** as the vice president, East Coast operations. **Valent U.S.A.** named **Donnie Taylor** supply chain director, **Mike Borel** vice president of technology and **Anita Dale** director of marketing.

McCulloch Corp. promoted **Doug Baxter** to product manager for the gas product line. **Thomas Doyle** is the technical sales representative for 11 Midwest states for **W.A. Cleary Chemical**. **Seed Research of Oregon** hired **Mike Hills** as coordinator of southern research and production programs.



Randall McDonald



Rob Nytko



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- Designed for 56" C.A. single rear wheel trucks – Ford, Chevy, Dodge and GMC.

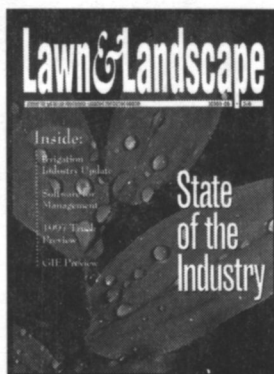


- Manufactured from heavy gauge galvanized steel.
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☐ Entomologist, Plant Pathologist
☐ Serviceman, Technician, Crew member
☐ Scientist, Researcher
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ASSOCIATION NEWS

The American Society of Landscape Architects reported a record 4,766 people attended the annual meeting and expo Nov. 7-10 in Atlanta. Newly-elected officers include: Thomas Dunbar, president; Barry Starke, president-elect; Van Cox, vice president for education; and Kathleen Fox, vice president for finance.

The California Landscape Contractors Association elected the following officers for its 1998 executive board: Dave Penry, board chair; Charles Nunley, president; and Richard Angelo, president-elect.

The American Society of Irrigation Consultants presented awards during an annual membership meeting at the society's 14th annual conference. Richard Choate was given the ASIC Lifetime Achievement

Award and Dave Davis was elevated to the society's Fellow Member status.

The Professional Lawn Care Association of America and LESCO presented a \$2,500 James I. FitzGibbon Scholarship to Mississippi State University student David Fulgham. The student, a major in turfgrass management, works for his parents' company, Fulgham Spraying Service, Tupelo, Miss.

The Associated Landscape Contractors of America released a study guide for the certified landscape professional exterior and interior exams. The guide prepares test takers with a series of sample questions for both exams, descriptions of content areas and background information. Call 800/395-3522.

The Professional Grounds Management Society elected Tom Riccardi, president, Randall Willis, first vice president, Kevin O'Donnell, second vice president, and George Van Haasteren, treasurer.

spreaders.

The products are expected to be available in the beginning of 1998 and will be marketed through a network of independent dealers including Cub Cadet or White Outdoor dealers, said Jeff Hallgren, MTD vice president of dealer sales.

For the past 40 years, MTD has concentrated on residential lawn and garden equipment, but recent shifts in market trends and the need for strengthened dealer support forced it to develop a new professional product line, Hallgren remarked.

"We see it as a business opportunity we have to react to," Hallgren added.

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MARKET TRENDS

manufactured in Aurora, Ohio, by Commercial Turf Products, the joint venture company developed this summer.

"We felt to do it right it needed to be totally dedicated, under one organization and under one roof," Hallgren added.

Hallgren continued to say that MTD made several enhancements to the products introduced last summer by LESCO, such as paint quality and a vari-touch control system for the belt drive models of walk-behind mowers.

This is not the first time Lesco and MTD have worked to develop green industry products. Five years ago,

CALENDAR

To ensure that your meeting date is published, send an announcement at least 10 to 12 weeks in advance to *Lawn & Landscape*, 4012 Bridge Ave., Cleveland, OH 44113.

JAN. 20-21 Midwest Turf Expo, Indianapolis. Contact: 765-494-8039.

JAN. 22-24 New England Grows, Boston. Contact: 508/653-3009.

JAN. 26-28 Central Environmental Nursery Trade Show, Columbus, Ohio. Contact: 800/825-5062.

JAN. 26-30 ProGreen Expo, Denver. Contact: 303/756-8028.

JAN. 28-29 Professional Landscape Management School, Evansville, Ind. Contact: 812/435-5287.

JAN. 28-31 PLCAA Management Conference, La Jolla, Calif. Contact: 800/458-3466.

JAN. 30-31 Alabama Nurserymen's Association Trade Show, Mobile.

Contact: 334/821-5148.

FEB. 2 Lawn & Landscape School of Management, San Diego. Contact: 800/456-0707.

FEB. 2-9 International Golf Course Conference & Show, Anaheim, Calif. Contact: 913/832-4444.

FEB. 4-5 Landscape Sales Master Class, Louisville. Contact: 202/789-2900.

FEB. 5-7 AAN Management Clinic, Louisville. Contact: 202/789-2900.

FEB. 14-18 ALCA Executive Forum, St. Petersburg. Contact: 800/395-2522.

FEB. 16-20 International Erosion Control Association conference, Reno, Nev. Contact: 800/455-4322.

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MTD manufactured attachments for LESCO's sulky stand-up mowers, Hallgren said.

"This probably led to us coming together," he added.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To the editor:

In general, I find the tone of your magazine resistant to change in the industry that would favor environmental protection. I believe this is a misplaced attitude. Our industry should be a leader in creating environmental sensitivity. This will lead to more business for us.

We can resist the change in public opinion like the tobacco industry, or get out in front and help lead. As business people, we need only two things from the public and governments in order to have the opportunity to be successful: desire for our product and a level playing field for competition. Why not, therefore, focus on increasing desirability by promoting the manufacture and regulation of quieter, less polluting equipment that will moderate the undesirable aspects of our operations? The public wants quieter, less polluting, services — let's give it to them!

Why suggest that increased costs might result in lower profitability for contractors? Realistically, I know the manufacturers are your customers, but new regulations would mean a windfall sales opportunity for them. Why not find the progressives and give them some space? Why not highlight progress and the better products? This situation is a great opportunity for us as business people and as stewards of this planet. Mike Walsh, President Horticultural Concepts, Plymouth, Mass.

MINOR'S LANDSCAPE ACQUIRES COMPANY

Minor's Landscape Services, Fort Worth, Texas, announced the acquisition of Graeber & Associates, a \$3.2 million contractor located in Dallas.

The addition of Graeber & Associates

marks the fourth acquisition for Minor's, and president and CEO David Minor sees more acquisitions on the horizon.

Minor's will use the purchase to open its third branch in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex. All of Graeber's 80 employees will stay on board, bringing the total number of employees at Minor's to approximately 300.

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BREAKING NEWS

AGRIBIOTECH-LOFTS AGREEMENT CAPS A YEAR OF CHANGE

LAS VEGAS – Yet another long-established name in turf seed is changing, punctuating a year marked by significant shifts in the ranks of turf seed producers.

Owners of 74-year-old Lofts Seed Inc. have signed a binding

definitive purchase agreement to merge with Las Vegas-based AgriBioTech Inc. The merger will also include Loft's operating division Great Western and its affiliated companies Sunbelt Seed and Budd Seed. The agreement is scheduled to close in early January where rapidly expanding ABT will acquire Lofts effective Jan. 1, according to a recent press release.

ABT reportedly paid

The AgriBioTech-Lofts agreement is one of several seed industry deals in 1997.



The Deal

HO: AgriBioTech, Las Vegas, Nev.
Lofts Seed, Winston-Salem, N. C.

HAT: AgriBioTech purchased Lofts Seed. AgriBioTech paid 2 million shares of common stock and \$17 million in cash.

2 million shares of their common stock (valued at \$8.50 per share when the letter of intent was signed) and approximately \$17 million in cash for the proposed merger with the North Carolina-based Lofts, which had annualized net sales in 1996 of \$75 million, the release said.

John C. Francis, vice president of the \$280 million ABT, said Lofts was acquired because of its quality management and

impressive reputation in the seed market.

Lofts fits nicely into ABT's plans, he said, to converge the fragmented forage and turfgrass sector. ABT has acquired 15 other seed companies since its aggressive plan began in 1995, with a goal of achieving 45 percent market share or \$500 million in revenues by 2000. — *Denyse Fissel*

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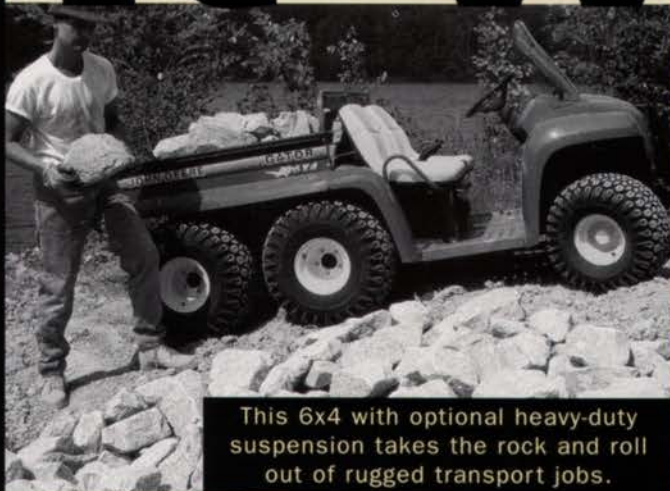
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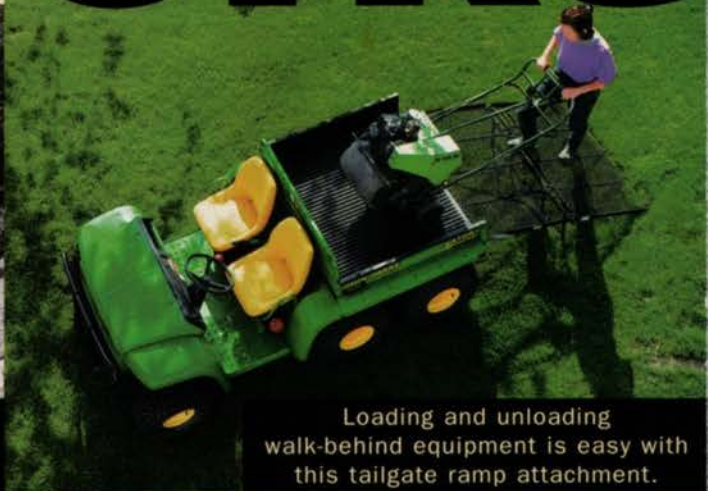
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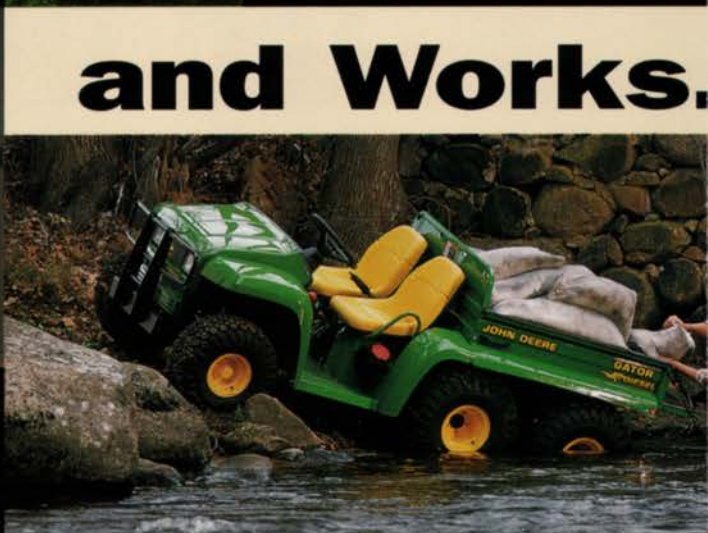
This 6x4 with optional heavy-duty suspension takes the rock and roll out of rugged transport jobs.



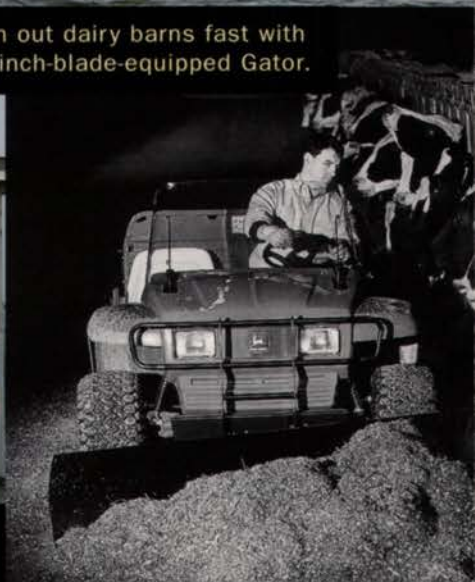
Loading and unloading walk-behind equipment is easy with this tailgate ramp attachment.



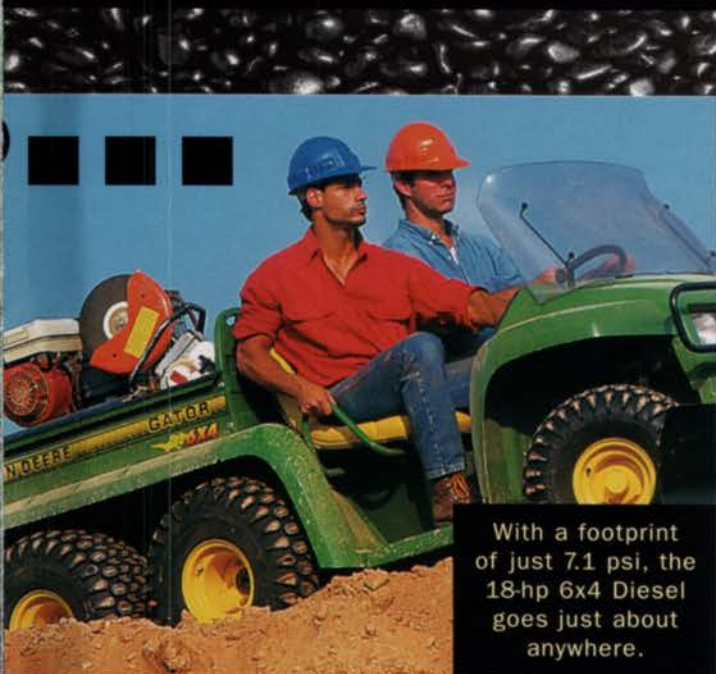
The LP Gas kit on the 4x2 helps take care of in-plant maintenance.



Even the 10-hp 2-wheel-drive Gator 4x2 has plenty of pulling power.



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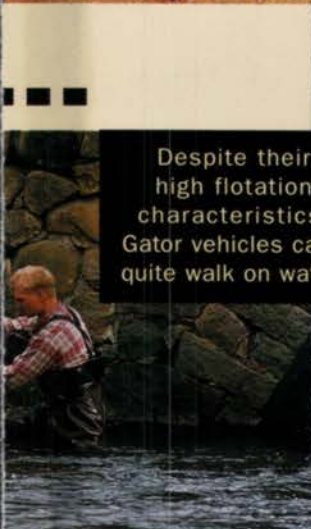


With a footprint of just 7.1 psi, the 18-hp 6x4 Diesel goes just about anywhere.



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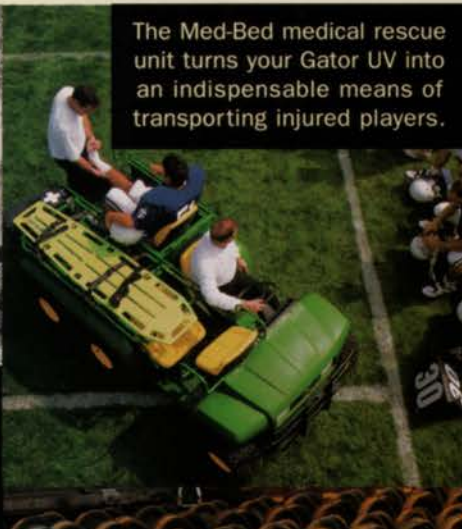
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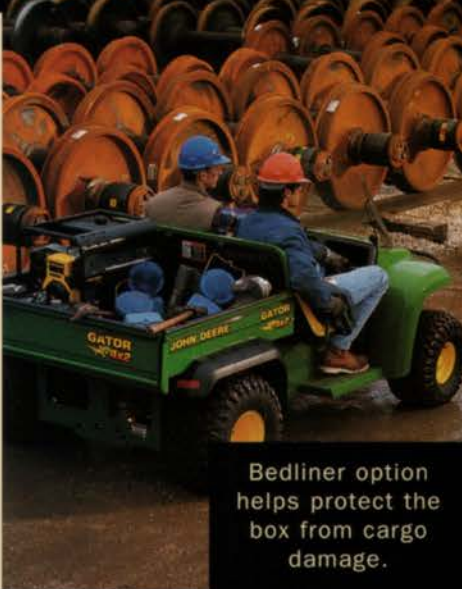
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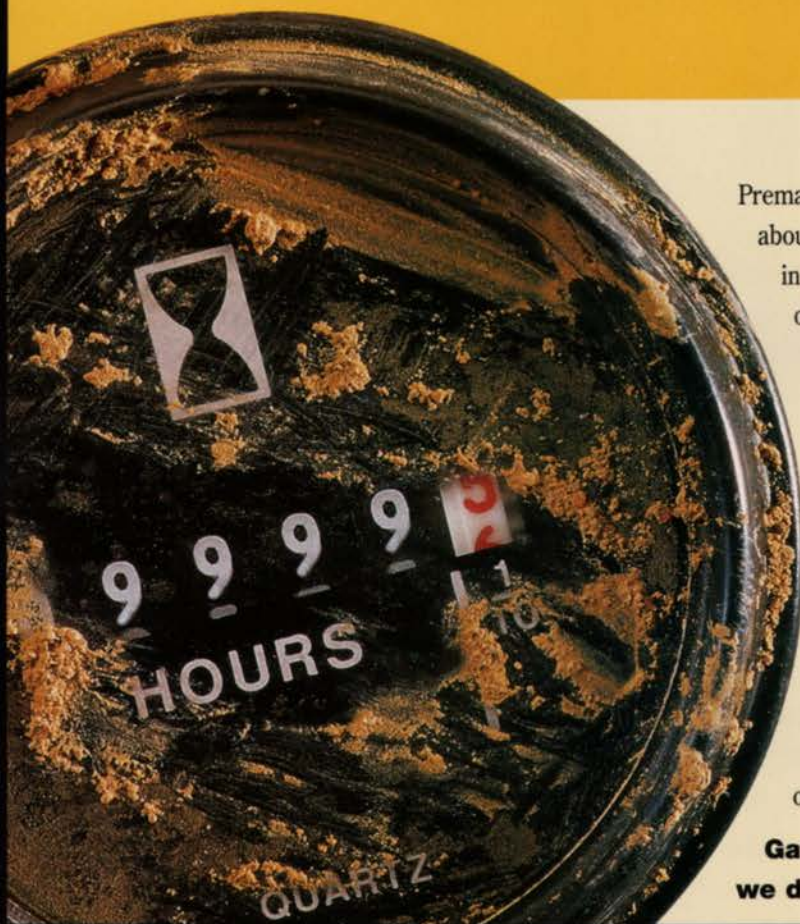
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LANDSCAPE BEDS ARE COLOR STATEMENT

For many landscape contractors, the landscape bed isn't merely a collection of flowers and plants but the punctuation mark on an outstanding project. At the entrance of an office park, mall or housing complex, beds command the attention of passing motorists, quizzical pedestrians or possible customers.

"You want to create something that captures the eye, creates excitement and isn't too busy," suggests Bill Killmer, chief executive officer of Atlanta-based Lifescapes. A good rule of thumb is to arrange plants in groups, yet don't dilute their colors or make the arrange-

ment too distracting, he added.

The specifics are difficult because it depends mainly on the design, but when working with larger flowers with multiple or showy blooms, such as black-eyed susans, try to arrange them into smaller groups of three, five, nine or 15 plants, Killmer recommended. But, of

course, if the design entails large sweeps of color, as many as 25 plants can be installed in a group, he said.

When using smaller flowering and less showy blooms such as *Achillea*, Killmer suggested arranging the plants in larger groups in order to accomplish the same bold statement. A

Key areas on a property, such as the location of a sign, are prime candidates for mixing annuals and perennials in a bed.

completed bed should make an impact by offering movement, flow and color, he explained.

Using annuals for their bold masses of color could be the difference between

a ho-hum landscape and one that is outstanding. A mix of annuals and perennials can be used if the plants are located in strategic areas, such as around signs or near entranceways. Annuals should be in groups and located near focal points such as a front door, according to Killmer.

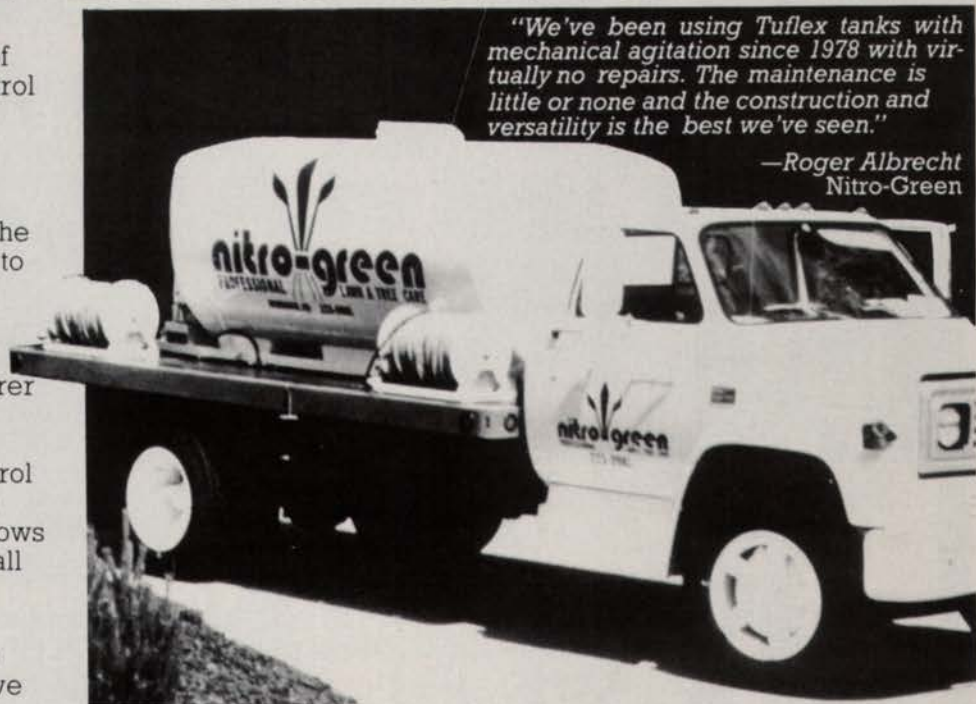


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HORTICULTURE FORUM

Perennials can then be utilized in the bed as an interesting contrast of color or border to the annuals. Perennials can also be mixed in the bed to add dynamic elements as they change throughout the year, accenting the bed, he said.

Some people believe that planting a bed of perennials requires less maintenance and is less expensive, but that is a "tale that isn't totally true," said Rick Doesburg, vice president of Thornton Gardens, Cincinnati, Ohio.

People tend to think planting perennials is cheaper than annuals because perennials do not have to be replaced each year. But Doesburg reminded contractors not to forget the labor involved in weeding the bed in order to keep it

looking well maintained.

Perennials also have a short enjoyable blooming period and a limited palette of colors in comparison to annuals, he said. They get too tall after flowering and must be routinely cut. Perennial beds can become labor intensive and must be maintained with regular pulling and spraying of weeds.

Doesburg said he favors using annuals, which offer a bold splash of color, but also including color and a contrast of green grass and dark mulch from a well-defined bed. "Flowers become the wrapping paper on the package," he said.

LOCATION COUNTS. Heather Mann, vice president of Color

Burst, Birmingham, Ala., said she takes the location of the bed into consideration when designing it. If the bed is going to be near a roadway, she recommended the bed comprise about 100 to 150 square feet and be installed with plants of solid color. The plants should also be placed in groups or a patchwork form, she said, using the same colors throughout the bed and developing a repetitious pattern through the entire bed.


"That helps create a nice effect on a bed where people are driving as fast as they are," Mann said.

For a bed located near a walkway, the size is dependent on where the bed is located and the customer's preference. These beds are generally

smaller, and Mann said they can be made more interesting by adding unique plants that may pique the curiosity of passers-by.

"When you aren't trying to catch people going 60 to 70 miles per hour, you can throw in a more unique plant that complements the colors that you used," Mann said.

Her landscape beds are installed only for their seasonal color. She mixes perennials and annuals, but changes the entire bed twice a year, explaining that she treats every plant as if it were an annual, pulling it out after its flowering is through.

"It's difficult to get a low maintenance bed if you want to keep it looking good," Mann said. — *Denyse Fissel* 

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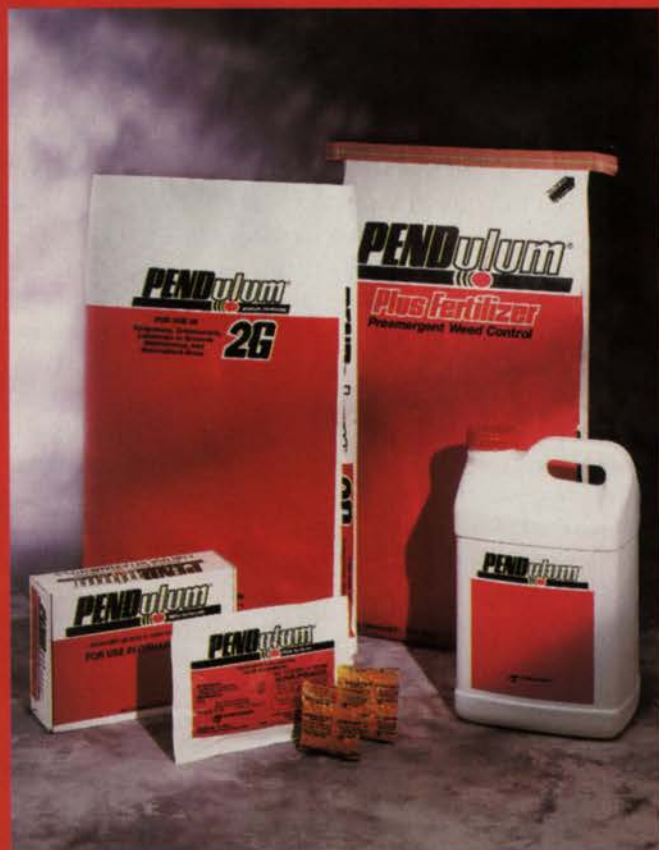
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MEANS BUSINESS

THIS 29,000-square-foot Beverly Hills mansion is owned by one of the most successful clothing designers in the world. We provided interiorscaping for this residence in 1993 when it was 24,000 square feet, and when the owners added a 5,000-square-foot addition we were also contracted to add more plants.

DESIGN CHALLENGES: The design motifs utilized are widely diverse by area. The styles include Classical French, Transitional, Mediterranean, and Stark Modern. The appropriate choice of foliage and flowering plants was critical to tie these variations together.

We worked with the interior designer on the selection of the custom containers, which he supplied to the client. Because many of these pieces were one-of-a-kind, we were not able to verify their interior dimensions until they arrived on the day of installation. In this case we had not only a demanding interior designer to please, but a very discriminating client who was heavily involved in the design

and architecture of his home.

DESIGN SOLUTION: In the more formal areas, we used Kentia palm, Algerian ivies, Dendrobium and Phalenopsis orchids. In darker areas, preserved topiary trees were used for a good effect. Together, they softened and gave a humanizing scale to the large rooms with their imposing furnishings. The quiet white, gold and green coloring gently contributed to the quiet and harmonious atmosphere.

The average first-floor ceiling was 12 feet high, so large specimens were used throughout this level. In the transitional rooms, we placed double Veitchia merillii, planted directly with a Mona subirrigation system to mitigate its propensity to tip burning and Spathiphyllum 'Starlite' and Algerian ivies to tie in with the earth tones and simple lines of the furniture and fabrics.

The home features rollback doors between various living ar-

DESIGN NOTES

PROJECT:	Beverly Hills Residence
LANDSCAPE COMPANY:	Landscape Images, Lake Forest, Calif.
DESIGNER:	Steve McCurdy
SIZE OF PROPERTY:	29,000 square feet residence
MAN-HOURS TO CONSTRUCT:	Approximately 95
PLANTS INSTALLED:	319

reas. To bridge these areas, 10-gallon, 10-foot-tall Rhapis were positioned at the connecting corners. The design flowed from formal to relaxed as the public rooms transitioned into private areas.

Accordingly, plant selections changed from the graceful lines of the Kentia and Chamaedorea palms, monochromatic phalenopsis, dendrobiums and small foliage plants to the more textured fronds of the Veitchii, Rhapis and more vibrant colors of vresias, tillandsias and other varieties of bromeliads. In hallways and entries, arrangements face mirrors to create an illusion of a much larger arrangement and add dimension to the generally bare walls. In this way, the arrange-

ment becomes a living, changing art piece.

In good design, every part contributes to the whole effect. Some containers were too small to accommodate multiple growing pots. This became a problem as most of the flowering plants required the direct planting of color. This was no small task as more than 100 orchids and 36 bromeliads were used to augment the foliage.

Each time any of the orchids needs changing, it is an ongoing challenge requiring that the entire arrangement be reworked. To keep within the client's \$2,500 monthly color rotation budget, we massed Spathiphyllum 'Petites' for tabletop plantings in several areas. There are 30 arrangements from a single orchid/bromeliad to multiple color plantings in decorative containers.

Having a good understanding of the client's hopes for the project and offering maximum flexibility with his input established us, in his eyes, as competent and professional. The project was a "Grand Award" winner from the Associated Landscape Contractors of America and a "Merit Award" recipient from the California Interior Plantscape Association.

— Steve McCurdy



The author is president of Landscape Images, Lake Forest, Calif.



The 12-foot high ceilings allowed for the use of large specimens throughout the first floor of the house.

Credit: Landscape Images

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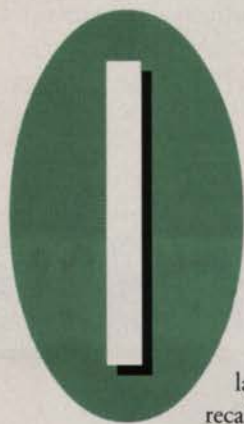
Cindy Peterson (left), vice president of sales, and McRae Anderson (right), president, have seen McCaren Designs grow into a \$2 million company due to projects like Camp Snoopy at the Mall of America in Minneapolis. Credit: Bob Perzel

Ctro from Within

McCaren Designs has established itself as a respected interiorscape company, and now it's looking at exterior maintenance as one avenue of future growth.

By Bob West

winning



In 1977, McRae Anderson was two years removed from the University of Minnesota. He was working at a nursery/garden center that offered exterior landscape services in the Twin Cities area when the interior landscape industry was getting established.

"In the retail trade, I saw more people wanting large plants to use as decorative items," Anderson recalled. "Large plants were quite expensive then, perhaps more expensive than today, so people wanted someone to tell them if they were using those plants correctly."

From this trend grew Anderson's belief that interior landscaping was a market ready to break loose into its own industry. "The problem was that I didn't have any idea how to market this service," he said. "Then, a retail customer asked me to speak with her interior designer, and it clicked in my head that the way to sell interior landscape service was to the design community."

"I tried to convince my employer that interior landscaping was something we should get into, but he thought it was just a flash in the pan," Anderson recalled. "So I went to do it myself."

Twenty years later, Anderson's instincts have proven accurate, as the company he went off to start by himself with just \$322 is now a \$2 million firm.

GETTING STARTED. One year later, Anderson's previous employer that had decided against offering interior services found itself in need of someone to do just that in order to submit a proposal to the Granada Royale Hotel. It turned to Anderson. Their proposal won the job, and Anderson found himself traveling the

McCaren Designs

Headquarters: St. Paul, Minn.

Founded: 1977

Primary Services: Interior landscape installations comprise 40 percent of the company's business, with the remaining 60 percent from interior landscape maintenance. 98 percent of the clients are commercial customers, with 2 percent residential.

Employees: 39 year round; 8-10 seasonal.

1996 revenues: \$1,836,000

Projected 1997 revenues: \$2,056,320

Executive Summary:

The concept: McCaren Designs is a growth oriented interior landscape company focused on meeting the increasing needs of its customer base.

Mission Statement: We pledge to ourselves, each other and our customers: to give respect and recognition, to act with integrity, to ask, listen and respond, to seek and share knowledge, to apply environmentally aware technologies, and to attend to financial needs.

President:

McRAE ANDERSON

Age: 46

Background: Grew up on a dairy farm and graduated with a degree in agricultural economics. Went to work for a nursery/garden center for two years after college before developing an interior landscape company.

country with a group of developers handling other hotels in the chain.

Aside from the magnitude of the job for a fledgling company, the contract proved instrumental in its future because it exposed Anderson to the potential in atrium-style interior landscapes.

• • • • •

One of the company's biggest assets as it pursues future growth will be . . . its 'inability to say no.'

• • • • •

These jobs also contributed to the company's design orientation. "With these initial atrium jobs, I spent a lot of time around the architects learning the architectural vernacular and how to present ideas and concepts, drawings, vinettes, etc.," said Anderson, a self-taught landscape designer.

LEAPS & BOUNDS. Anderson's timing for entering the interior landscape industry was excellent, as the industry enjoyed tremendous growth in the late 1970s.

McCaren Designs enjoyed this growth as well, jumping 627 percent over three years. The growth was substantial enough to earn the company inclusion on *Inc.* magazine's list of the 500 fastest growing companies in the country in 1987 and 1988. "That was a wildly explosive period" Anderson affirmed, and it created a number of challenges.

"During those years of growth we would hit pinch points of when do we add on another manager," related Peterson. "We were also challenged because we had to go back and try to develop processes for things we used to do by the seat of our pants, such as handling out of town installations."

AN OWNERSHIP TEAM. Anderson credits some key employees with the successful position the company was in after this period.

"There are key people in an organization who directly influence how a company grows and how it prospers," he explained.

So he found himself in the difficult position of wanting to reward the commitment of these employees but having reservations about increasing their salaries. "In a growing business, cash is king. You'd like to reward people with money, but that might not be best for the company," he observed.

Instead, Anderson gifted Peterson and Mary Wilbanks, vice president of operations, stock in the company. "I felt I would want to have a part of the company if I was them," he explained. "I suppose you choke a little when you give away a piece of your company, but it can also ensure their continued commitment to the company."

Peterson, who owns 9 percent of the company, appreciates the ownership oppor-

(continued on page 33)

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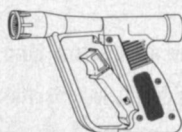
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A tale of a Grub

Once upon a time, there was an old man who spent his entire life caring for his turf. Day in and day out he spent hours fertilizing, mowing and maintaining his beautiful, green grass.

Then one day he opened his door to find patches of brown, dead grass—grass that pulled up so easily he could roll it back like a carpet. What could be devouring his beautiful turf?

It was grubs—beinous grubs destroying the turf he had so endlessly toiled over. “My poor turf!” cried the old man. “It was ever so pretty this summer! And now it’s plagued with hungry little grubs!”



He relentlessly searched high and low, trying one grub control product after another, but to no avail. The old man watched his turf suffer from costly damage caused by these dreadful grubs.

Little did the old man know, his problems could have been avoided had he used the right preventative grub control product. His turf was infested with more than one grub species and the products he had been using simply could not control them all . . .

And the moral of this story is: Make sure your grub control product controls all major grub species.

Grubs are often difficult to detect, and usually go unnoticed until serious damage has already occurred. But they can be even more difficult to control. It is important to know what species you're dealing with. Some treatment methods are unsuccessful unless you know what species are invading your turf.

Broad-spectrum grub control isn't a fairy tale

There really is a product that offers successful control of a broad spectrum of grubs. It's Merit® Insecticide, a product of Bayer Corporation.

With Merit, you don't have to worry about what kind of grub you have—it provides excellent control of all major species, including the larvae of Asiatic garden beetles, black turfgrass ataenius, European chafers, Japanese beetles, May or June beetles, northern and southern masked chafers and oriental beetles.

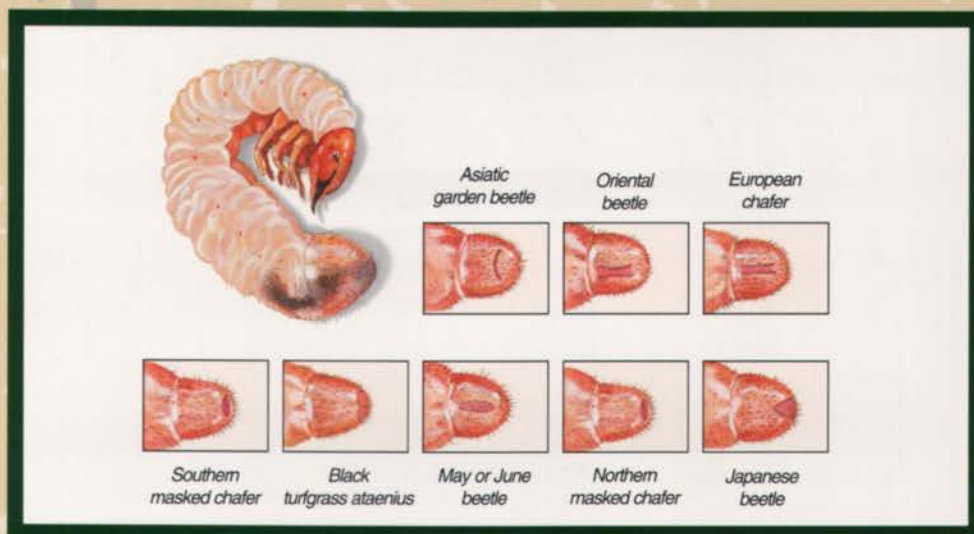
And it's easy to use. Just one application will protect your turf throughout the season.

Merit is also effective at much lower application rates than most other grub control products currently available. It results in less exposure to people and wildlife.

Plus, the preventative control of Merit is effective when applied anytime from May to mid-August. Its wide window of application takes the guesswork out of grub control.



Tails of a grub



To identify larvae, use a 10X hand lens and examine the spines on the underside of the abdomen tip, called the raster. This raster pattern chart will help distinguish between the different species of larvae, *but remember that an infested area may have mixed populations.* Therefore, examine several grubs to determine the species composition appropriate to your particular problem. **Regardless of type, Merit provides excellent control of all major grub species.**

The story of preventative versus curative control

As you know, when choosing a chemical insecticide to control grubs, you have many options. The first to consider is using a preventative or curative insecticide application.

Preventative applications in areas with a history of grub problems can save time and money, as they stop grub damage before it starts. And grub damage can be costly, often requiring repeated applications to control active grubs and even the repair of turf, depending on the severity of the problem. Plus, other insecticides often require accurately timed applications for effective control of grubs.

And if protection from damage is what you're looking for, Merit can protect your turf no matter what grub species you may have.

But if you didn't use a preventative treatment, you still have options. Curative chemical control such as Dylox® Insecticide, also a product of Bayer Corporation, may be used late in the season for fast, effective control of actively feeding grubs.

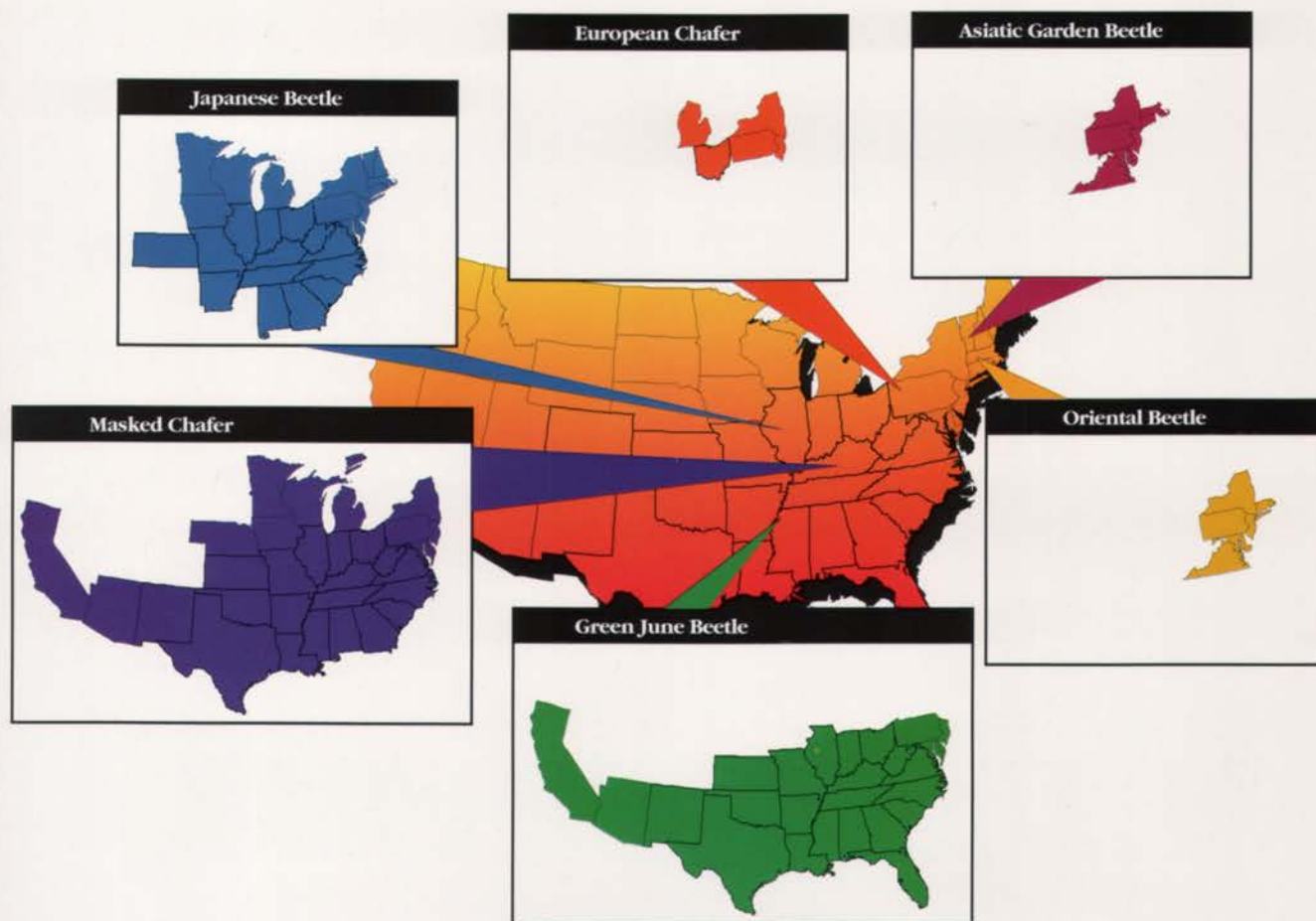
Merit wrote the book on broad-spectrum grub control

And this book is no fairy tale. Merit is THE broad-spectrum grub control for all major grub species.

For more information on grub control with Merit, call the Bayer Product Information Line, (800) 842-8020.



What grub species are in your area?



This map of the United States illustrates the distribution of the major grub species.
Which species are located where you live?

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cover story

(continued from page 28)

tunity. "I understand that other owners might get scared and say, 'Why would I want to give some of this away?'" she acknowledged. "But instead of one owner, a company can have four or five. Now, it's our company instead of just McRae's company, and we try to make the best decisions because it will certainly affect us."

TAKE A LOOK OUTSIDE. As exterior landscape grows increasingly competitive, more contractors look at the interior market as an avenue for future growth. Anderson figures the opposite can work for his company as it expands into exterior maintenance work — a move that failed for the company in 1988.

"There's always at least as much work outside the buildings as there is inside," Anderson explained. "We already have a client base, and what we sell is a service based on relationships and trust. These are clients that we can provide an additional service to, especially with commercial building managers who have already been stretched so far."

Associating with Success

In February, McCaren Design's Cindy Peterson, vice president of sales, will be installed as president of the Associated Landscape Contractors of America. Her involvement with the association over the last 10 years has required a considerable time investment on her part, but involvement in any association is an investment she thinks offers a profitable return. "Sometimes it's a challenge because of the time that can be involved with an association," admitted Peterson, who will be the first female president in ALCA's 38-year history. "But it's been easy for me to spend the extra time in the office because of the benefits of membership." Peterson recommends all contractors get involved in any associations which suit their business. "And beyond membership, I encourage volunteering within the association to be on committees or task forces to get involved developing new programs and ideas," she said. "I've gotten more out of associations than I've given. There's no doubt about it."

Anderson also noted that the usual difference between revenue from an interior and an exterior job makes this move appealing. "Our average job is between \$2,000 and \$3,000 for interior work, but that's nothing for an exterior job," he said. "If we can get even just the little exterior jobs, that will represent big sales for us dollar-wise."

He's quick to point out, however, that

exterior maintenance has a clear role as a supplemental service for McCaren Designs.

"The interior business is our focus, and the cash flow from it lets us be somewhat selective in what exterior jobs we pursue," Anderson noted, adding that he doesn't see exterior maintenance revenues comprising more than 30 percent of the company's sales.

(continued on page 36)

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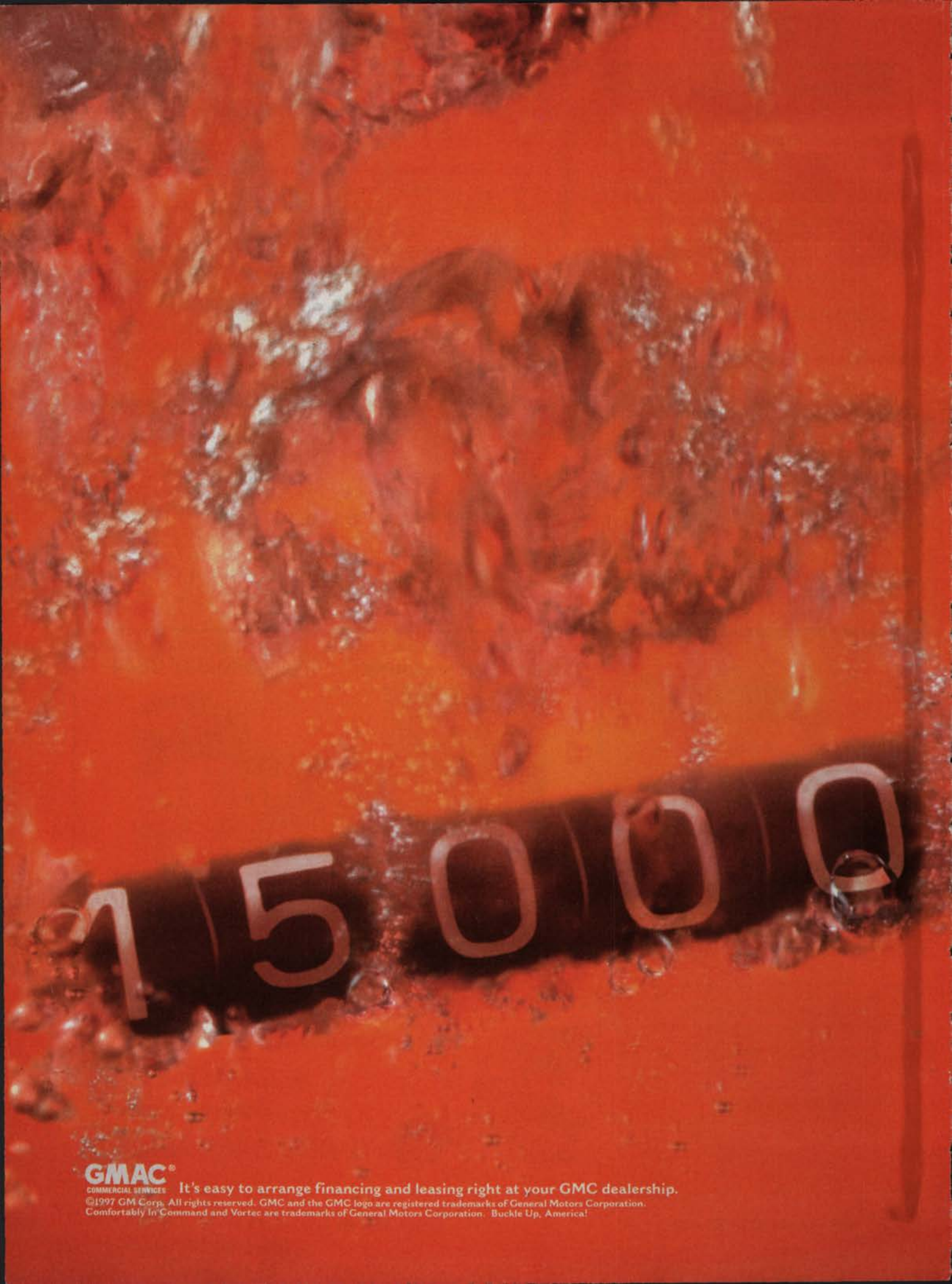
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*Maintenance needs vary with different uses and driving conditions. See owner's manual for details.

GMC

COMFORTABLY IN COMMAND



USE READER SERVICE #36

(continued from page 33)

"But, primarily, we're going outside to serve the needs of our interior customers. We're not looking to develop new customers from exterior work. This will be a supplemental service, similar to how the holiday decorating service works."

Peterson observed that McCaren Designs has learned from its first foray into exterior maintenance. "We realized the importance of being able to do high quality work outside," she said. "We shut [exterior maintenance] down the first time because we weren't doing it to the level we wanted and we didn't want to jeopardize our relationships with those customers."

"That is the real danger in this type of move," recognized Anderson. "But this can be a real advantage for us. Handling the interior and exterior is a niche that no one really seems to be filling right now."

LOOKING AHEAD. Anderson maintains an optimistic view of the future.

"If we can get the message out about the

value of plants inside buildings, I'd guess the industry could increase business by 10 times," he asserted. "We probably only have 10 percent market penetration of the offices where plants are professionally maintained."

Anderson believes this message is sinking in with some people, while others realize different benefits to interior landscapes.

"I see a real opportunity for this industry in 'internally-focused atriums' — landscapes being integrated more into the workplace than the traditional view of landscapes for public areas," he said. "Everybody is looking to attract and retain people without raising wages. I think plants have a real role there."

That trend suits Anderson just fine, as the atrium-style jobs remain their focus. "Our niche is the complete landscape indoors," he said. "The high-end market is where we're most successful."

That's not to say, however, that McCaren Designs can continue to grow by holding a steady course. "Right now, we're very much a large project oriented company," Ander-

son recognized. "I'd like to see us develop a larger customer base by developing a multi-tiered service approach to our customers."

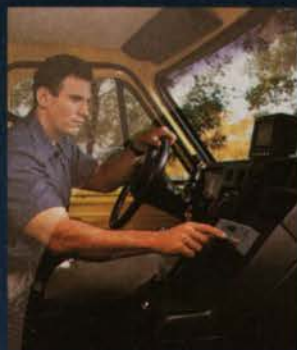
"That way, we could have various types of customers who pay different amounts for different levels of service," he continued. "We need to penetrate the market of smaller projects and customers who don't exist as interior customers right now, and we need to offer lower price points to do that."

One of the company's greatest assets as it looks for future growth will be what Peterson calls its "inability to say no."

"We may sell a job and then try to figure out how to do it," she explained, pointing to the Shed A Little Light holiday communications program they developed for a chain of banks that involved displays, posters, and clothing. "We just say, 'Why not?' That's the type of challenge that we strive for, and that's when we're at our best." **ll**

The author is Editor of Lawn & Landscape magazine.

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MTD PRO

Coming off an incredible year, manufacturers are looking forward to booming sales and service opportunities in 1998.

By Barbara G. Howell

Mower Markets Keep

GROWING

“U

nbelievable.” “Growth year.” “Outstanding,” echoed the manufacturers of commercial mowing equipment. Of course, makers of zero-turning radius mowers praised 1997 as another year of robust sales. Manufacturers of other models, even walk-behinds, however, found strong niche markets to shore up sales.

Generally, the key to higher mower sales was the ever present market demand for higher productivity.

Bob Walker, president of Walker Manufacturing Co., Fort Collins, Colo., noted that recent mower sales trends have now flip flopped.

“In the recent past, the percentages of walk-behinds to riding units has always been about 60 to 40. With the zero-turning radius models,



Manufacturers see continued demand for walk-behind units.

Credit: Deere & Co.

those numbers have turned around and, I think, will stabilize with the more flexible riding mowers getting up to maybe 70 percent of the market.

“The cross over from walk-behinds to riding mowers has been a result of two pressures,” Walker continued. “First is the demand for greater productivity that all operators face. Second is the labor issue. There is the ability of riders to utilize a broader work force. The ideal operator for a walk-behind is a well-conditioned, 20-year-old male. Put a few years on him, or if he gets any physical problems, he can’t operate the unit as efficiently. With a rider, the operator can be retired or have some physical limitations and still be productive.”

(continued on page 40)



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mower market

(continued from page 38)

Dixie Chopper Sales Manager Warren Evans noted that, while zero-turning radius models were "an awful hard sell at first, as you get a greater percentage of the market with that type of mower – no matter who brings one out – it will do well. Zero-turn mowers are now more readily accepted now."

Evans said Dixie, Coatesville, Ind., had an "unbelievable" 1997. "Everyone was out of mowers. The pipeline was empty. We will produce 1,200 units next year. All but 400 of them have already been spoken for," he said.

Dick Tegtmeier, president of Encore Manufacturing Co., Beatrice, Neb., said his company also had a good year, but he cautioned that "the big bubble has gone through on the zero-turning radius models."

Jeff Alfaro, marketing manager for Excel, Hesston, Kan., said unique mowers like his company's new Shortcut are targeted for the landscape contractor who must "address labor challenges and still be productive." He noted that the H-bar steering on the Short-



Manufacturers have seen tremendous growth in the zero-turn radius mower category, with some estimating the machines will grab 70 percent of the market.

cut, for example, eliminates much of the operator's exposure to conditions which produce carpal tunnel syndrome.

The Shortcut, introduced at the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute's show in July, is versatile and can be used to pull a sully or work as a riding machine.

"We were excited that transmission-steer

models like ours saw some tremendous increases in popularity. We are as optimistic as OPEI for 1998. We expect to see double digits for the transmission-steer units for the year," he said.

WALKING THE WALK.

Manufacturers agree, however, that there still is a place for the walk-behind mower in the commercial market. They cited the need for this type mower

on hillsides and in smaller turf areas. In addition, as Tegtmeier noted, smaller landscape contractors will still be using the walk-behinds because they cannot afford the expense of buying a rider.

One trend in the mower market seems to be turning. Although mulching mowers have

(continued on page 43)

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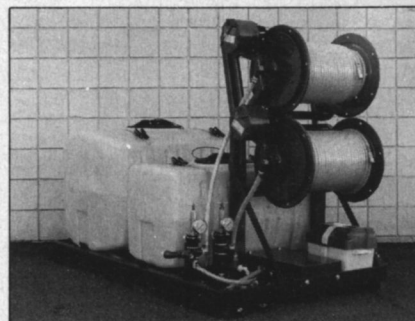
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The Formulation Innovators

(continued from page 40)

been popular in most areas, Walker said his company has targeted a different market.

"We are selling a high percentage of grass catching machines. Some areas are going to mulching, but some people know how much mulching was oversold," Walker observed.

"The collecting of clippings and leaves hasn't gone away. Many mowing companies in cool-season turfgrass regions are collecting heavy clippings in the spring when grass is coming out of dormancy. They switch to mulching when grass is slower growing in the summer, and switch back to collecting again with leaves in the fall."

Another way to grow commercial mower sales is the method Fred Goode, national sales manager of Bunton Company, saw with Bunton's growth this year. As the acquisition and merger tendency continued to grow among manufacturers, some companies grew because of additional parent company support.

Bunton, now a division of Textron, "had

(continued on page 46)

OPEI Predictions

The outlook for commercial mower manufacturers appears good for the next two years, according to the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute, Olde Town Alexandria, Va. This is especially true for riding equipment. In its most recent commercial turf equipment forecast, the group predicted that "shipments of all types of commercial riding rotary turf mowers will continue to grow in 1998 reaching 53,396 units, a gain of 5.4 percent over 1997. In 1999, riding units will gain another 4.3 percent."

The forecast went on to predict that the sales of walk-behinds would be relatively flat and continue to fall further behind riding mowers.

"In the model year 1998, shipments of commercial intermediate size walk-behind rotary mowers will be about the same as compared to model year 1997. In 1998, shipments will reach 49,341 units and in 1999, gain 1.5 percent to 50,081 units," OPEI estimated.

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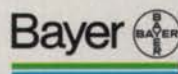
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mowers

(continued from page 43)

a real good year," said Goode. "In commercial mowing equipment, we had an increase of 25 percent. Of course, we added new distribution with Textron. We expanded our market into the West and penetrated some markets we hadn't been in before.

Goode said, "Bunton's Twister, a mid-mount zero-turning-radius model introduced in September 1996, exceeded expectations with its 20-, 22- and 25-horsepower models."

In 1998, Goode said, the company will offer a derivative of the Twister with a liquid-cooled 31-horsepower engine and 72-inch deck size.

Productivity, again, is given as the key to better mower sales. "The largest expense for



Contractors' need to maximize productivity realized from each crew has placed greater demands on mower performance in the last few years. Credit: L&L staff.

any contractor is labor. You increase productivity without increasing labor and you increase profit dollars," Goode observed.

Acquisition also played a role in Toro's growth this year. Brian Masterson, marketing manager for The Toro Co., Bloomington, Minn., said Toro's outstanding year was

fueled by three joint ventures and the acquisition of Exmark. He emphasized that Exmark will continue to operate as an independent company.

Masterson noted that Toro introduced 27 new products last year and premiered a mid-mount rider, the Z250 with a low center of gravity, at the GIE show in November 1997. He said any improvements which can help productivity are good for the contractor and for the manufacturer.

"We want to help the contractors manage and grow their business. That's what we're here for," he said.

Masterson predicted that regulatory issues such as noise and emissions will be major concerns in the coming year.

Pete Officer, marketing manager for turf and grounds products at Woods Equipment Co., Oregon, Ill., agreed about the importance of these issues, especially as his company works with both the commercial

(continued on page 48)



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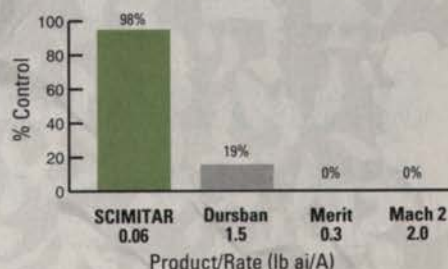
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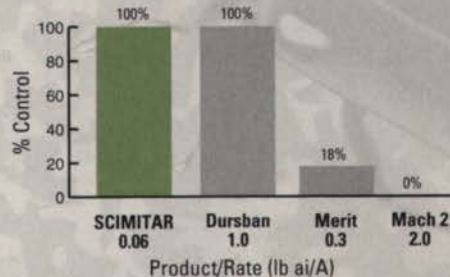
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Control of Annual Bluegrass Weevil



Source: S. R. Alm, et al, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI, 1997.

Control of Adult Black Turfgrass *Ataenius* Weevil



Source: H.D. Niemczyk, Ohio State University, 1996.

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USE READER SERVICE #48

mowers

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and homeowner markets.

This concern for the broader industry picture is mirrored in the emphasis on support for dealers and operators by various companies, such as the John Deere Co., Raleigh, N.C.

Gary Lindquist, manager of market development for commercial mowing and util-

Generally, the key to higher mower sales was the ever present market demand for higher productivity.

ity vehicles at Deere, said the slow, weather-related start in spring 1997 allowed his company to get dealers very involved in

training, programs and sales activities.

"The industry seemed to recover, maybe not as fast as we expected, but it was a good year for us," he said.

The company introduced two new models of its Z-Trak zero-turning radius mower at dealer meetings in August. While these new models have greater maneuverability and increased serviceability with flip-up decks, Lindquist is quick to point out that Deere is developing more than just its product line.

"John Deere's focused on providing the product, financing, parts and after-market support. We have a strong commitment to grow. Our objective is to continue to be a major player and a leader in this industry with manufacturing, product development and support to our dealers."

Lindquist said the company's objective is to double its amount of business from 1996 by the year 2000.

"The majority of this growth will come from within John Deere. That's very visible in our \$30 million factory in Raleigh," said Lindquist.

When asked about the possibility of a John Deere acquisition to further move into the commercial turf market, Lindquist said, "It is possible that something could come from the outside." He said it is too soon to say more.

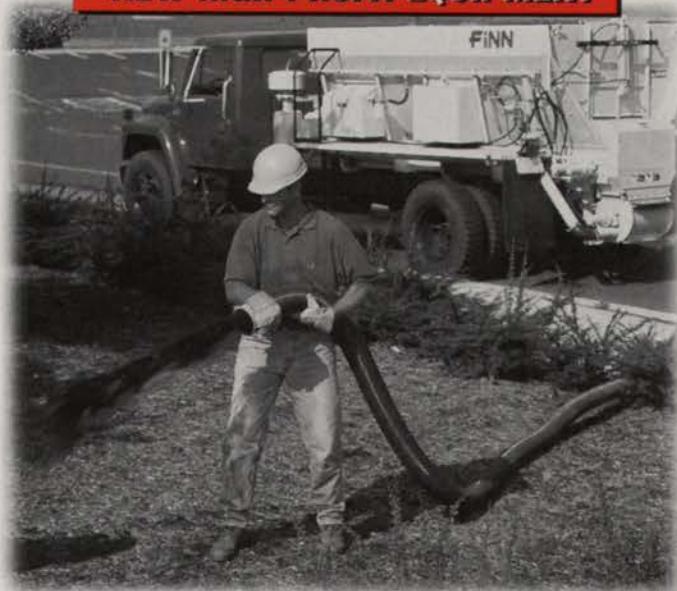
What about the number of players in the commercial mower market in the future? Many observers expect more acquisitions to be made to take advantage of economies of scale and to get product lines and distribution channels.

"It's almost a thing of hysteria," Walker said. "It's almost expected that all the small, independent companies will be swallowed up by the consolidated companies. We're an independent company and we are determined to continue to operate that way."

"The pendulum swings and forces action in the other direction," he continued. "The desire to gobble up doesn't always produce better progress. Sometimes it just doesn't work as well as a company expects it to. Sometimes it produces stagnation in the industry." ■

The author is co-owner of Key Solutions Inc., a division of Iris Sales and Solutions Inc., Rocky River, Ohio.

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Profiting from Grub Control

New products and treatment strategies are helping lawn care companies profit from controlling this highly elusive turf pest.

*By
Paul Schrimpf*



Controlling white grubs in customers' lawns has always been among the toughest challenges for lawn care professionals. While crabgrass and nutsedge emergence has been as predictable as the Super Bowl outcomes of late, white grub populations are fickle.

Grub outbreaks have varied widely, from the veritable grub explosion of 1995 to the relatively "quiet" grub season of 1997. This lack of consistency has sent lawn care technicians into a frenzy trying to explain summer brown patches and skunk and raccoon damage resulting from the presence of grubs — and why they weren't able to catch it sooner.

In recent years, however, more products have been introduced that operators can purchase to combat grubs. Imidacloprid (Merit®) and, coming to most states this year, halofenozide (MACH 2™), provide the option of preventive treatments for grubs to apply in late spring. These products, combined with a host of curative options, are allowing lawn care companies to successfully treat for grubs.

PREVENTIVE ALTERNATIVES. Some lawn care companies claiming success in grub management have come to rely heavily on early season preventive treatments. In order to be able to apply a preventive product to a significant percentage of customers and still show a profit, however, successful companies have had to overcome the higher cost of application per 1,000 square feet that these new chemistries carry. To do so, they have developed some creative solutions.

For some companies, it comes down to charging more for the application. David Murphy, president of Green Valley Lawn Care, Kansas City, Mo., said the application that features the preventive product is priced 20 percent higher than the company's typical application cost.

Green Valley customers who want grub control are required to take at least five applications. The second application contains the preventive product on fertilizer.

(continued on page 52)



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(continued from page 50)

Murphy noted that the majority of customers have bought into the grub treatment as part of the seasonal application program. "Grubs are our most destructive insect pest in turf," he explained. "They're a big concern with customers, and the damage they do is common knowledge. We sell based on the quality of the product, and people are not averse to buying based on the use of a

quality product. It's far more expensive to lose turf than to spend a little extra for an effective program."

For the remainder of the season, technicians will be on the property from three to five times. Murphy said that, along with monitoring weeds and other insects, technicians will keep an eye out for potential grub populations and damage.

"If the preventive application fails for any reason, we'll retreat at no additional cost," noted Murphy.

Les Wilshusen is also a believer in preventive treatments, but his use of the product is selective. Customers of his company, Mike's Lawn Service, Storm Lake, Iowa, get grub control as a part of any four- or five-application program at no additional charge.

The product is applied in granular form as part of the second treatment, along with a fertilizer plus postemergence weed control and a 1/3 rate "booster" of crabgrass preventive. To keep costs down, the grub product is only applied to sunny areas that are likely "hot spots" for grub activity, rather than an entire lawn. Technicians use a dual spreader and simply switch on the second hopper when passing over the hot spots.

Wilshusen has also addressed the potential for a customer quitting the service after receiving the expensive grub control treatment. "Customers who take one or two applications after the grub treatment get the preventive grub application free," explained Wilshusen. "If they quit during the summer, we send out a bill for the application." The company also stands behind the application and will retreat if grubs break through later in the season.

For Crowley's Lawn Service, Cleveland, Ohio, the terminology given to customers at the time of sale is "insurance policy."

"Customers who purchase grub control service from us are essentially getting our guarantee of no grub-related problems in the turf," said Phil Fogarty, president. The service, which is treated as an add-on service purchased separately, generated a few thousand dollars in business two years ago but this year will bring in about \$45,000 from the 40 percent of the customers who have bought the treatment.

Customers are charged on a per square foot basis rather than a flat rate so Fogarty can avoid inconsistency in profitability from the service. His guarantee of satisfaction includes retreatments with curative products if grubs do appear, and if it's too late, complete replacement of the lawn.

ALL THE STOPS. Many companies are also successfully and profitably managing grubs using a variety of control products on a "use

(continued on page 54)

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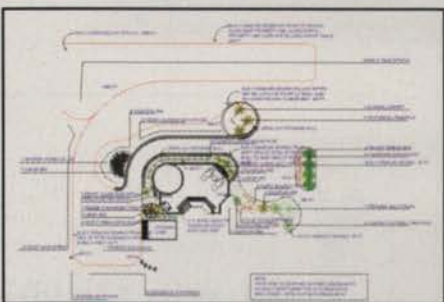


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USE READER SERVICE #33

insect control

(continued from page 52)

as needed" basis. John Carson, general manager of Ehrlich Green Team, Reading, Pa., said the company uses an IPM-based treat-only-when-necessary approach to grubs.

"We don't treat grub control as an add-on service," explained Carson. All customers get the same guarantee of no grub-related problems, but not all lawns are treated with the same amounts or types of products.

The key to making this kind of a program work for the company has been strong record keeping, Carson noted. Long time customers have from three to four years worth of treatment summaries that are at the technician's fingertips on the site. The technician knows what types of applications were necessary in the past and can make an on-site determination of what will be needed, if anything, in the way of an application.

Technicians also will scout for grubs during the historically high-pressure times in mid-August. Pockets of high grub activity that the record keeping has revealed are given more attention.



Scouting can reveal grub hot spots. Photo: David Shetlar

Preventive applications are made in instances where damaging populations are nearly inevitable, but this is very infrequently. "Less than 10 percent of the lawns we service are treated on a preemergence basis, and it's usually due to customer demand," Carson noted. "In a bad year, maybe 15 or 20 percent."

Along with extensive customer records, Ehrlich Green Team technicians also have several product options available. "We keep them stocked with a variety of products for grub control that work best in different situations." For example, he noted that in-

festations discovered before vs. after Labor Day are best handled by products with different levels of activity.

Another key is knowledgeable, well-trained technicians who understand when and where to apply control products. Money saved in doing fewer broadcast-type applica-

tions is invested to some degree in technician time on the site, so technician efficiency and expertise is a large part of staying profitable, noted Carson.

Another company that has adopted a "use as needed" philosophy in its treatment of grubs is Broccolo Tree & Lawn Care, Rochester, N.Y.

In fact, Laurie Broccolo, owner, doesn't put any pesticide treatments down for any turf problem unless the technician on the site determines that it's necessary. To make this kind of program work, four factors are

(continued on page 56)

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insect control

(continued from page 54)

important: trained technicians, educated customers, scouting and record keeping.

Broccolo generally hires individuals with a two-year degree who are serious about the industry as a career. She also provides regular training through state and university seminars.

Customers are educated on her company's philosophy from the start. "We tell them that we're not a treatment company," said Broccolo. "They are hiring us for professional advice and consulting on their landscape." To aid technicians, Broccolo maintains a map of high grub incidence areas that the technicians give extra attention. They also scout at times when damage is most

likely to occur from mid-August into the fall. Curative treatments are used on a spot-treat basis.

Broccolo estimated that in 1997, only about 2 percent of customer acreage was treated. The highest percentage she's experienced was in 1995, when 25 percent of the acreage was treated for grubs. The savings vs. performing blanket applications is partially eaten up by the extra time technicians spend on the property. Savings above and beyond this are earmarked for technician training and benefits. **LL**

The author is Managing Editor of Lawn & Landscape magazine.

Pesticides that Control Grubs

CHEMISTRY	TRADE NAME(S)	WHAT IT DOES	WHEN TO APPLY
Imidacloprid	Merit	Ceases feeding process	April to mid-August
Halofenozide*	MACH 2	Accelerates molting	May to August
Trichlorfon	Dylox, Proxol	Ingested insecticide	Late April to mid-May, mid-August to October
Bendiocarb	Ficam, Turcam	Ingested insecticide	Late April to mid-May, mid-August to mid-September
Carbaryl	Sevin	Ingested insecticide	Mid-August to mid-September
Isofenphos	Oftanol	Ingested insecticide	Mid-July to early September
Ethoprop	Mocap	Ingested insecticide	Late April to mid-May, mid-August to October
Clorpyrifos	Dursban	Ingested insecticide	Late July to mid-August, but excessive thatch may hinder performance
Fonofos	Crusade, Mainstay	Ingested insecticide	Late July to mid-September, but excessive thatch may hinder performance
Diazinon	Diazinon	Ingested insecticide	Late April to mid-May, mid-August to October

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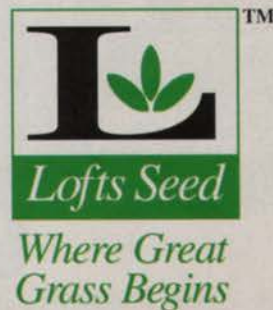
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USE READER SERVICE #105





uccess in all aspects of the lawn and landscape industry involves the ability to communicate with people, but few areas of work rival the communication demands of residential design/build projects.

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That process needs to begin with establishing trust, beginning with the initial meeting.

Some successful residential design/build firms provided a some tips on qualifying clients and handling the initial meetings in ways that put contractors in a position to close the sale.

CONTENDER OR PRETENDER? One of the most important aspects of successfully moving through the design/build process is selecting the potential customer. Setting appointments with prospects that are unwilling or unable to afford the kind of services your company provides is an enormous waste of time. The process of qualifying the potential customer starts from the first phone call.

Jud Griggs, senior landscape architect, Lied's Nursery & Landscape, Sussex, Wis., noted that the first impression made on the prospect is critical.

"It is of primary importance to have a receptionist with a pleasant voice and a helpful manner," stressed Griggs. "Using a series of key questions, the

(continued on page 60)

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landscape needs
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that sell.*

*By Paul
Schrumpf*



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USE READER SERVICE #57

design report

(continued from page 58)

receptionist should be very well versed in directing the first time caller to the division (or person) that will best help them with their landscape needs."

Once a prospect is set in the proper direction, Greg Pyles, residential division manager, The Pagura Group, Dublin, Ohio, said that it's a challenge to identify the customers that best match his company's services and capabilities. "We tend to want to jump on every call," Pyles confessed. "But, we can usually tell by the tone of someone's voice whether a caller is just price shopping or wants some advice on plants."

But what about prospects that fall into the gray area? This takes a bit more probing to determine what the prospect is looking for in landscape services, how serious the customer is about hiring a full-service landscape contractor.

"We'll give people a quick overview of the company," said Pyles. "We tell them about the type of work we do and impress upon them the depth of service we provide.

Be Unforgettable

Jud Griggs, Lied's Nursery & Landscape, Sussex, Wis., stressed that people tend to buy from people they feel they know and can trust. "Eighty percent of the people who change salespeople do it because they forgot who came out to see them," warned Griggs.

Whether your firm is big or small, you can leave a large impression. To add power to your total package, Griggs recommended good follow-up. Send a letter to the prospect thanking them for the meeting and letting them know you're excited to get started on their project.

Also, begin a client file and accumulate newspaper clippings or other information about the prospect. If you see a recognition or honor for a family member, send it to them and congratulate them on the award. It builds the bond between client and contractor, Griggs emphasized.

We'll also let them know we have a \$2,000 minimum for any job we do."

If people are looking for a free design or a plant replacement, Pyles recommends a garden center or a smaller landscape firm that is better equipped to handle the work.

"We really have the best interests of the client in mind," Pyles said.

Robert Pyeatt, owner of Adsit Landscape and Design Firm, Memphis, Tenn., tells people up front that he charges a consulta-

(continued on page 62)

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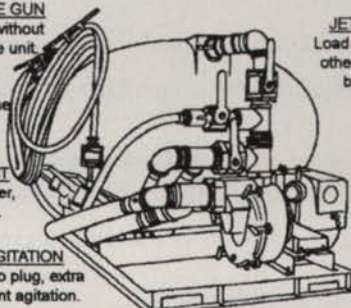
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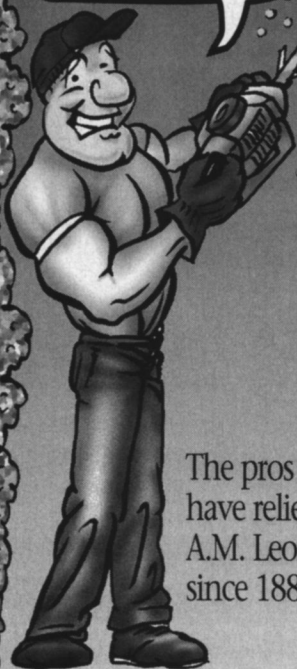
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design report

(continued from page 60)

tion fee for a first visit, and that developing a plan generally runs from \$150 to \$500. The \$45 consultation fee is waived if the prospect has Adsit go ahead and develop the plan.

Steve Pattie, president, The Pattie Group, Chesterland, Ohio, is highly selective in what type of client he wants his company to service. To determine whether the prospect is a good fit, the individual is given a complete rundown of all the services and fees that will be involved in the process including hourly rates for designers and minimum plan fees.

"We provide a lot of specific information, and that weeds out the prospects that

had no idea what kinds of services our company provides," stressed Pattie.

FACE TO FACE. The initial meeting is arguably the most critical step, because so many tangible and intangible factors come into play. Proper dress, a positive attitude, good listening skills, and preparation are all important.

Griggs advocates using the drive time to the prospect's house to get psyched up for the meeting. First, he recommends, try to shake off any previously negative experiences from the day and arrive with a clean mental slate. Clients can sense a lack of confidence.

(continued on page 64)

Customer Q&A

If putting the customer's landscape dreams on paper is the goal, then it takes good questioning to get the customer to express his or her dreams during the initial meeting.

In gathering information from potential clients, designers with The Pattie Group, Chesterland, Ohio, have a set list of questions prospects must answer before a design is started. Below are the questions asked:

General questions: What are the areas of the property we are to design? Are accurate survey/building plans available? Do you plan any additions? Do you plan to change the color of your house? How long do you plan to live here?

Design Considerations: Is the present drive and parking adequate? Is the present circulation and access of walks adequate? Are there any property drainage problems, including the basement, and where are they? Are there any underground utilities? Is there an existing sprinkler system? Is there a septic system? Is there a well? Are your storage facilities adequate? Do you store firewood? Is privacy needed? Are there any important views from the house or on the property? How many people are in your family? Are recreation or play areas needed? Are you interested in landscape lighting? Where is the electrical box located? Is the basement finished? Do you have pets now, or do you plan to have pets in the future?

Outdoor Living Area: Do you entertain often, and if so, what is the average number of guests? Are you interested in creating a deck or patio, and if so, what would be the preferred building material? Will you want special outdoor electrical appliances, such as a stereo system, phone or outlets? Will you be preparing food on a gas grill requiring a gas hookup, or a firepit? Are you interested in garden structures such as gazebos or arbors? Are you interested in an above ground, in-ground or lap pool, or a hot tub? If so how large? Would you want a pool cabana?

Planting Considerations: What preferences do you have in terms of garden style? Any color preferences? Would you like to include garden art, sculptures, waterfalls, fountains, ponds, lakes, or a vegetable or perennial garden? Are you interested in attracting wildlife? What is your favorite season? Do you have any favorite plants? Who will maintain the landscape?

Finally, it's time to ask about the construction budget and the prospect's list of priorities.

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design report

(continued from page 62)

Then, review the questions you want to ask in your mind, and think about what will set you and the company apart from potential competition in the customer's mind.

Once in the meeting, the focus should stay on the client and their needs. "Avoid phrases such as, 'If this was my house, I would...,'" said Griggs. "Never talk in terms of what's important to you. Listen twice as much as you talk."

"When I come out to see a potential client, they're talking and I'm listening," concurred Pyles. "I try to pick up non-verbal cues on things they like or don't like."

To avoid potential misunderstandings, Pattie insists that married couples meet with him or his staff together. "More often than not, you'll get two different points of view on the landscape, and that first meeting is the time to get those issues resolved," he explained.

During the discussion, contractors have found that keeping a set of questions handy is a good way to make sure that all the information is covered and gathered. (The

If people are looking for a free design or plant replacement, Pyles recommends a garden center or a smaller landscape firm better equipped to handle the work.

questions from Pattie's form, which the sales person fills out as he or she talks to the potential client, are in the sidebar on page 62). Pyles will leave a questionnaire with the client after the first meeting for them to complete and fax or mail back.

Once all the information is gathered, Griggs noted that it's a good idea to summarize your perception of what was discussed and have the potential client confirm that it is accurate. Griggs will then tell the prospects what the timetable of events will be in the coming weeks. If the next step will be a landscape plan, then a contract to draw up the plans should be presented. "Be sure you can meet their schedule — always under-promise and over-deliver," he cautioned.

Pattie will discuss the client's budget to get an idea of whether their expectations are realistic for what they are willing to spend. In addition, the idea of completing the project in phases rather than in one chunk can be discussed, which spreads a larger total cost over a longer period of time. "We commonly have projects that extend from three to five years in a series of phases," noted Pattie.

Follow the preliminary steps properly, and many times the plan presentation and follow-up is a formality to the sale. It all comes down to giving the client what he or she wants. **LL**

The author is Managing Editor of Lawn & Landscape magazine.

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USE READER SERVICE #52

It's Time for an Audit

Irrigation professionals all speak highly of the benefits of irrigation audits, but it's a challenge to find a contractor who's performing them regularly.

By Bob West



B

elieve it or not, some landscape and irrigation contractors actually welcome and solicit audits. Of course, these audits are of the irrigation system variety and are performed by the contractor, as opposed to the tax audits performed by the Internal Revenue Service.

Irrigation audits are designed to provide contractors with extensive insight into an irrigation system they maintain in order to increase its efficiency and eliminate wasted water and money.

"A lot of people call it auditing, but it's really just trying to irrigate properly," explained Mike Barry, a water conservation specialist with the city of Chandler, Ariz.

Based upon a successful audit, contractors should find themselves armed with the necessary information to develop an irrigation schedule for a property that will im-

prove system efficiency and save the customer money. "Scheduling is the most important factor for budgeting," recognized Barry. "Troubleshooting is good, but the time you spend watering is the bottom line."

PICKING YOUR SPOTS. Not every system is a suitable candidate for an irrigation audit. Contractors generally consider certain variables such as the overall application of the system and its present condition before performing an audit.

"The first thing to do is to make sure you're working with a decent system," warned Charles Evans, vice president and certified landscape irrigation auditor for Evergreen Landscape, Austin, Texas. "Otherwise, you end up doing the audit only to

(continued on page 68)

Contractors note that systems irrigating large areas of turf are most important to audit due to the amount of water they use.

irrigation

(continued from page 66)

learn there's such unequal distribution that the system needs an overhaul."

"Systems irrigating large turf areas are the most important to audit because of the amount of water they put down," commented Ron Kirkpatrick, supervisor of the southern region and a certified landscape irrigation auditor, Landtrends Inc., San Diego, Calif. "More targeted systems, such as drip systems, deliver water more directly to the plant material, so it's easier to measure their efficiencies and they won't waste as much water."

And, as long as the audit and subsequent system maintenance are performed correctly, the system shouldn't require another audit for quite a while.

"Once the system mechanics are set up, an audit is performed, and the necessary improvements are made, another audit shouldn't be necessary," Kirkpatrick said. "That should get the system operating within 60 to 80 percent application efficiency unless the landscape changes significantly."

(continued on page 70)

Getting Certified

While any irrigation contractor can offer services called "irrigation system audits," the Irrigation Association offers a Certified Landscape Irrigation Auditor program that trains and educates contractors about the auditing process. In addition, a formal certification such as this allows contractors to differentiate themselves as offering customers the most professional level of service.

The IA doesn't require any specific amount of field experience for contractors to be certified, although such experience is recommended.

The certification process contains two steps: successfully completing a landscape irrigation auditor training course sanctioned by the IA and passing a written certification exam offered by the IA. In addition, contractors desiring the CLIA certification must agree to operate by the IA Code of Ethics.

"I think it's really important for any company offering irrigation services to have someone in the company certified," asserted Ron Kirkpatrick, supervisor of the southern region, Landtrends Inc., San Diego, Calif. "Becoming certified really opened up my eyes to what was going on in the field other than just punching in times on the controllers."

Contractors are then required to obtain a minimum of 20 continuing educational units in order to maintain their certification. For more information regarding the CLIA certification, contact the IA at 703/573-3551.

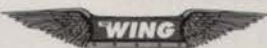
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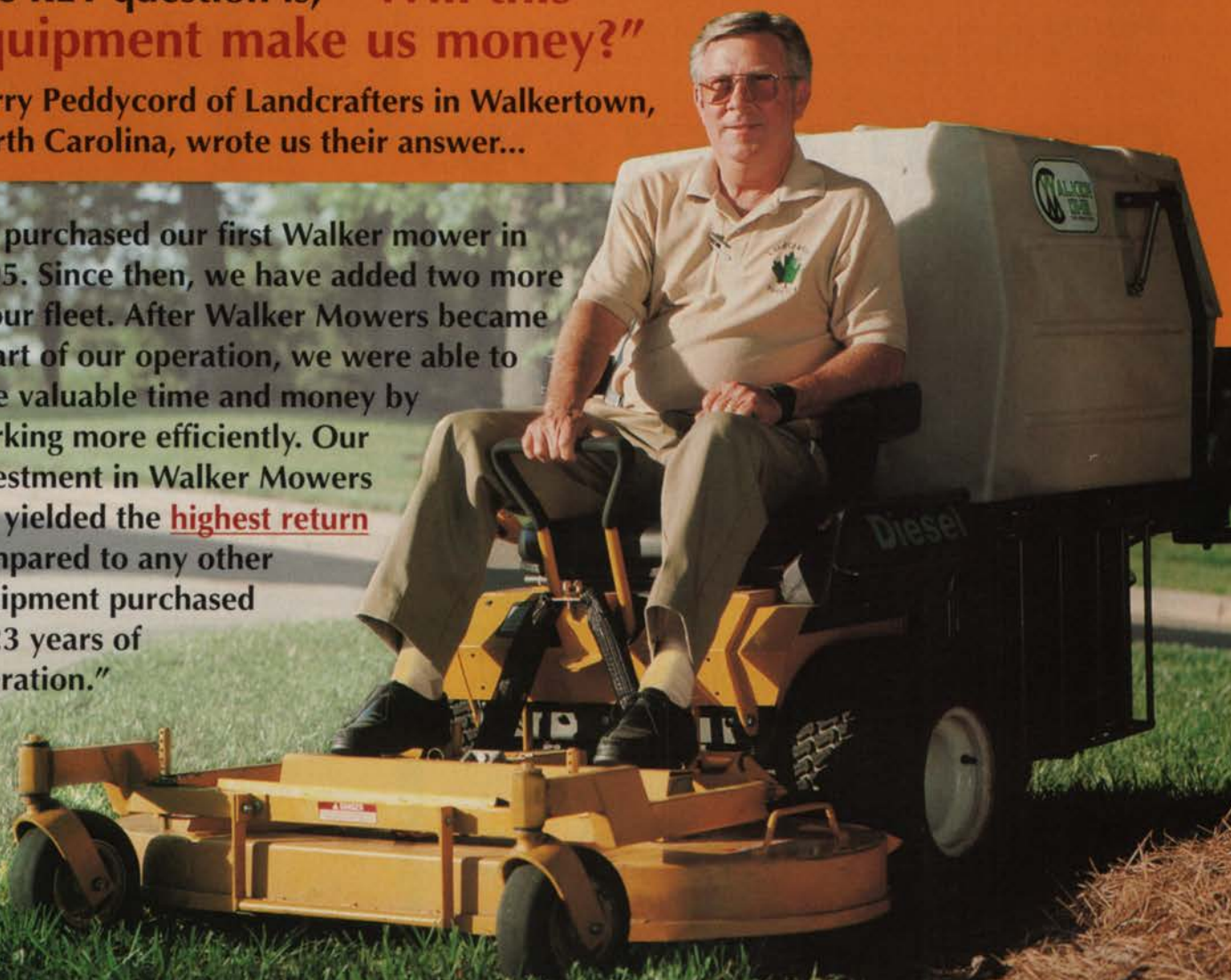
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(continued from page 68)

Just because a system has been professionally maintained for a couple of years doesn't mean it can't benefit from an audit. "A lot of irrigation maintenance practices are followed because that's the way things have been done for years, and contractors think they always know what they're doing," noted David Schultz, water conservation coordinator and certified landscape irriga-

tion auditor, City of Glendale Water Conservation Office, Glendale, Ariz. "These audits validate whether or not we do know what we're doing."

SYSTEM ANALYSIS. The process for executing a water audit may not be the cost complex process for an irrigation contractor to employ, but it certainly is thorough.

"The process involves checking all of the mechanics of a system," explained Kirkpatrick. "I try to get a site map and I go through the system mechanically starting with the point of connection. I check to make sure all of the heads are on straight and not leaking, check the backflows, get the flow rates and pressure — all of the system's vital information."

After checking the system's mechanics, a key part of the audit is the catch can test. "The catch can test lets me get a good idea of how good the coverage is in terms of mean coverage so I can make sure the same amount of water is falling near the head as further away from the head," Kirkpatrick pointed out. For this part of the audit, Kirkpatrick recommended testing all of the same type of heads together, although he said another popular method is to group heads based on the area of the landscape they irrigate, such as testing all of the turf heads together.

Toby Wigmore, a certified landscape irrigation auditor and owner of Greensleeves Landscaping, San Diego, Calif., pointed out that the irrigation system isn't necessarily the only part of the property worth auditing.

"Contractors should also look at the water requirements of the plants on the site," Wigmore recommended. "Sometimes, the system works fine, but there might be a big area of turf that has the greatest water requirements that could be changed to shrubs to save water."

MONEY MACHINES? For many contractors, becoming certified in water auditing represents an opportunity to generate new revenues. Very few contractors who have obtained the certification, however, have found that to be the case.

"One of our intentions was to increase revenues through water auditing," recalled Kirkpatrick. "But that didn't work out for us."

"We thought it would be a selling tool for us," admitted Evans. "Water is a real concern in our area, and we went through water rationing until some processing plants were installed."

But Evans encountered two problems in attempting to charge clients for an audit. "The city of Austin is doing water audits for free for anyone," Evans noted, encountering the same obstacle Kirkpatrick found in Southern County, Calif.

(continued on page 72)

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irrigation

(continued from page 70)

In addition, there is always the challenge of educating consumers about the monetary value of wasted water. "Customers don't know how much money they're spending on irrigation because they don't have submeters for irrigation," Evans added. "Those people that have the meters, want audits, but then they think the dollar amounts we say we can save them are too high until we convert their applications to inches per week and compare them to the recommended rates."

Even so, the time consuming nature of performing audits has led Evergreen to find a simpler solution. "We have the city do audits for us," Evans said.

Evans added that although he wasn't aware of any contractors making money through water auditing, he has heard of a couple of unique approaches toward pricing this service. "Some contractors charge a fee to perform an audit and guarantee they'll save the customer that much money in water savings," he related. "Also, some contractors will do the audit for free if the customer will

Just because a system has been professionally maintained for a couple of years doesn't mean that it can't benefit from an irrigation audit.

agree to let the contractor have a certain percentage of the money saved."

SEEING THE BENEFITS. Although water auditing hasn't provided much financial benefit to Landtrends, Kirkpatrick remains a proponent of the certification and recommends it for other contractors.

"Financially, it didn't pan out like we had hoped it would," he said, adding that he has performed four system audits this year. "But, it has proven educational for us and allows us to better protect our clients' water rights when we do perform an audit or whenever we're maintaining a system."

Evans noted that the CLIA certification

could always be used to the company's advantage. "Any credential you possess can be of use as a selling tool as long as the customer understands what it means," he said.

Wigmore is confident that the true value of a CLIA certification won't be fully appreciated for a few years yet, and his reasoning echoed the thoughts of other contractors. "There is definitely going to be more of a demand for this service in the future, with some people predicting that water prices will double within 10 years," Wigmore commented. "The problem we have now is trying to prove to customers that they can save money over time because of a water audit, but I think people are going to start excluding contractors from bidding a job if they can't perform a water audit."

The author is Editor of Lawn & Landscape magazine.

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By Paul Schrimpf

The Green Industry Expo was a hit with exhibitors and attendees alike, thanks to a strong economy and a revamped show format.


Below, the outdoor equipment demonstration, moved up to Sunday, drew a record 1,700 attendees. Photo credits: L&L staff.



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The total attendee and exhibitor registration exceeded 5,000, according to GIE show officials. Registration for the Associated Landscape Contractors of America programs increased 38 percent, totaling more than 1,300 registrants. The Professional Lawn Care Association of America drew 595 attendees, up from 542 in 1996, and the Professional Grounds Management Society hosted 292 members, besting the 1996 registration of 240.

The 1998 GIE Show is scheduled for Nov. 13-17, at the Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tenn. 

The roundtable breakfast meetings are among the most popular attractions of the show, where contractors share ideas.



Above, contractors took advantage of the opportunity to try before they buy. Bottom left, Dale Elkins, vice chairperson, exterior landscape division of the Associated Landscape Contractors of America, addresses members at an organization function. Below, the GIE Show filled the Charlotte Convention Center with 70,700 square feet of exhibits, a show record.

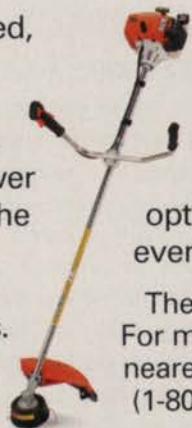


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More Than Good Looks

Uniforms aren't just for looking sharp. They can boost employee morale, upgrade company image and improve teamwork.

By Paul Schrimpf

Contractors say that uniformed employees present a professional appearance to clients and onlookers, improve morale and create a sense of teamwork. Credit: Ruppert Landscape



W

hen uniforms were first becoming popular for service workers and manufacturers, their function was more about safety than anything else. Today, while the safety aspect is still a concern for many industries, the uniform concept has been adapted to serve other purposes. Terms such as "team wear" have taken the idea of the uniform to a higher level.

There are many ways that contractors in the lawn and landscape industry have found to get their employees in uniform without breaking the bank. And the uniform and garment industries have responded to the demand by offering

contractors a number of product, purchase and lease options.

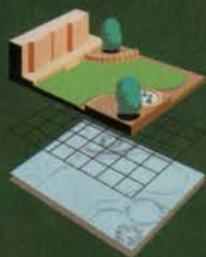
USING A SERVICE. A number of industries trying to portray a professional image have moved toward the use of uniforms, and, consequently, there is no shortage of suppliers of work wear in endless styles and colors.

There are also several companies that offer laundry services that pick up dirty uniforms, clean them, repair them, and return them ready for use by service crews. For many lawn and landscape contractors, this option is appealing because it can reduce some of the variables involved in keeping crews in matching outfits.

G&K Services, Minnetonka, Minn., is one of several full-service uniform providers. They work with contractors to create the design, purchase and embroider the garments, and provide the laundry and uniform maintenance services. Jeff Hartman, marketing communications manager with G&K, noted that contractors can either purchase the uniforms outright or lease the uniforms from his company. Various services can be negotiated as part of the service contract, including replacement of destroyed clothing and damage repair.

Jon Cundiff, president, Turf's Up Lawn Service, Lee's Summit, Mo., has been using a uniform cleaning service to

(continued on page 78)



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USE READER SERVICE #24

uniforms

(continued from page 76)

keep his crews looking professional and consistent every day.

"We used to purchase uniforms for the crews, but over time they got worn and torn and the applicators just weren't looking professional," noted Cundiff. "That perception is critical to us."

The service Turf's Up uses provides 11 sets of uniforms for each crew person. Five

clean uniforms are provided at the beginning of each week, and after five working days the service picks up the dirty uniforms, and brings back the other five ready to wear. The service Cundiff uses also will repair damaged uniforms before returning them. The eleventh uniform allows the employee to have one to wear on uniform pick-up day, allowing for schedule flexibility.

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What can a uniform do for the individual and company? In 1996, G&K Services, Minnetonka, Minn., surveyed 2,500 clients to find out what impact wearing uniforms have on their businesses. Here's a summary of what they discovered:

88% of respondents said the uniform made them feel like they were part of a team.

75% of respondents said there is a connection between wearing uniforms and high employee morale.

50% of businesses with a uniform program grew more than 10%.

Along with ensuring consistency, having a uniform provides the added employee benefit of not having to launder work clothing, Cundiff pointed out.

In terms of cost, he said that employees share about half the cost of the uniform and laundry service. He estimated that it costs \$26 per new employee to start up the service, and about \$6 per employee per week to maintain the service. Turf's Up uniforms are pinstriped, and feature the technician's name, company logo and logo of the Professional Lawn Care Association of America.

To reduce the impact of employees who decide to leave the company soon after starting, Cundiff keeps a few extra sets of uniforms in-house for new hires. "They get their own uniform once they've become licensed and can go out on their own," said Cundiff. "It's a sort of probationary period."

There can be some disadvantages to the system, however. Michael Scian, president, Scian's Landscaping, West Berlin, N.J., said that after three years of dealing with a uniform company, he's made the decision to return to purchasing uniforms and having his employees be responsible for their own laundering.

The biggest issue has been employee turn-

(continued on page 80)

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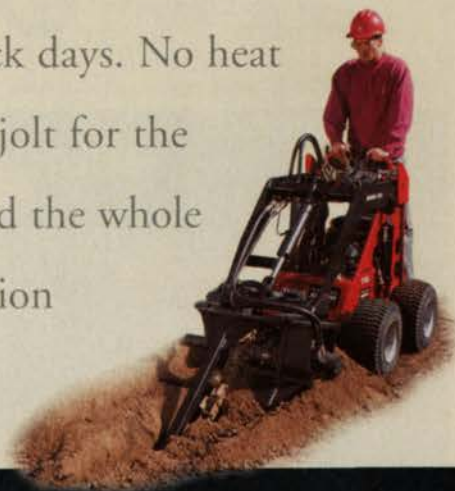


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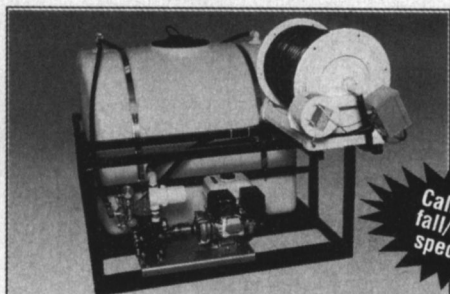
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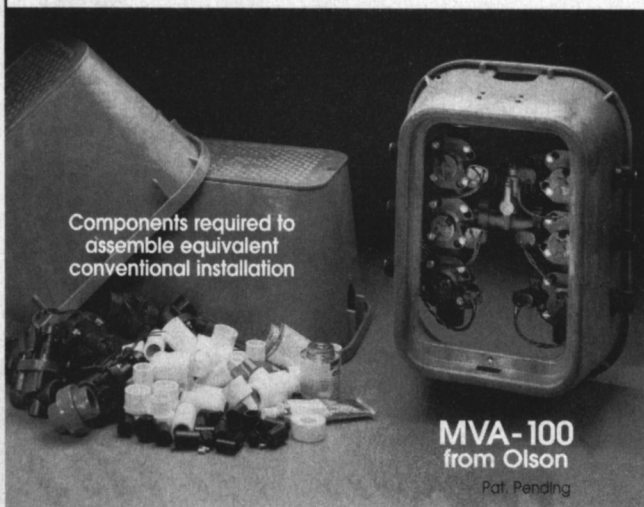
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USE READER SERVICE #75

uniforms

(continued from page 78)

over in the ranks of his 90 field employees. "There's always lag time between the time you hire an employee and when we can get them a uniform," Scian explained. "In general, it takes two weeks to get the uniform cycle going for a new employee, and we always have one or two new employees coming in. And I really hate to ever have anyone out of uniform."

The other problem has been unaccounted for uniforms, which neither the employee nor the uniform company takes the blame for losing. "There's so much administration involved in checking the lots to make sure the system is working properly," explained Scian. "I

(continued on page 82)

Apples to Apples

Comparing garment quality can be very confusing, especially with some of the comparative terms that are used to differentiate one type of garment from another. Julianne Perrigo, marketing manager, Corporate Style, Panama Beach, Fla., noted some things to keep in mind.

First, be sure that the fabrics chosen are pre-shrunk. Ask the manufacturer if the fabric will shrink over time, which could hinder the longevity of the garment's use.

Second, be sure you understand the meaning of the fabric weight numbers used by manufacturers. The fabric used to construct garments is measured in two ways: ounces per square yard and ounces per linear yard. And each measurement represents a different scale of thickness and durability. For example, a 7-ounce per linear yard garment would feel significantly different than a 7-ounce per square yard garment. Get samples of the fabric, Perrigo recommended, and feel the quality for yourself. It's also a good idea to get a sample of the garment to check the quality of the inside finish of the fabric, especially the seams.

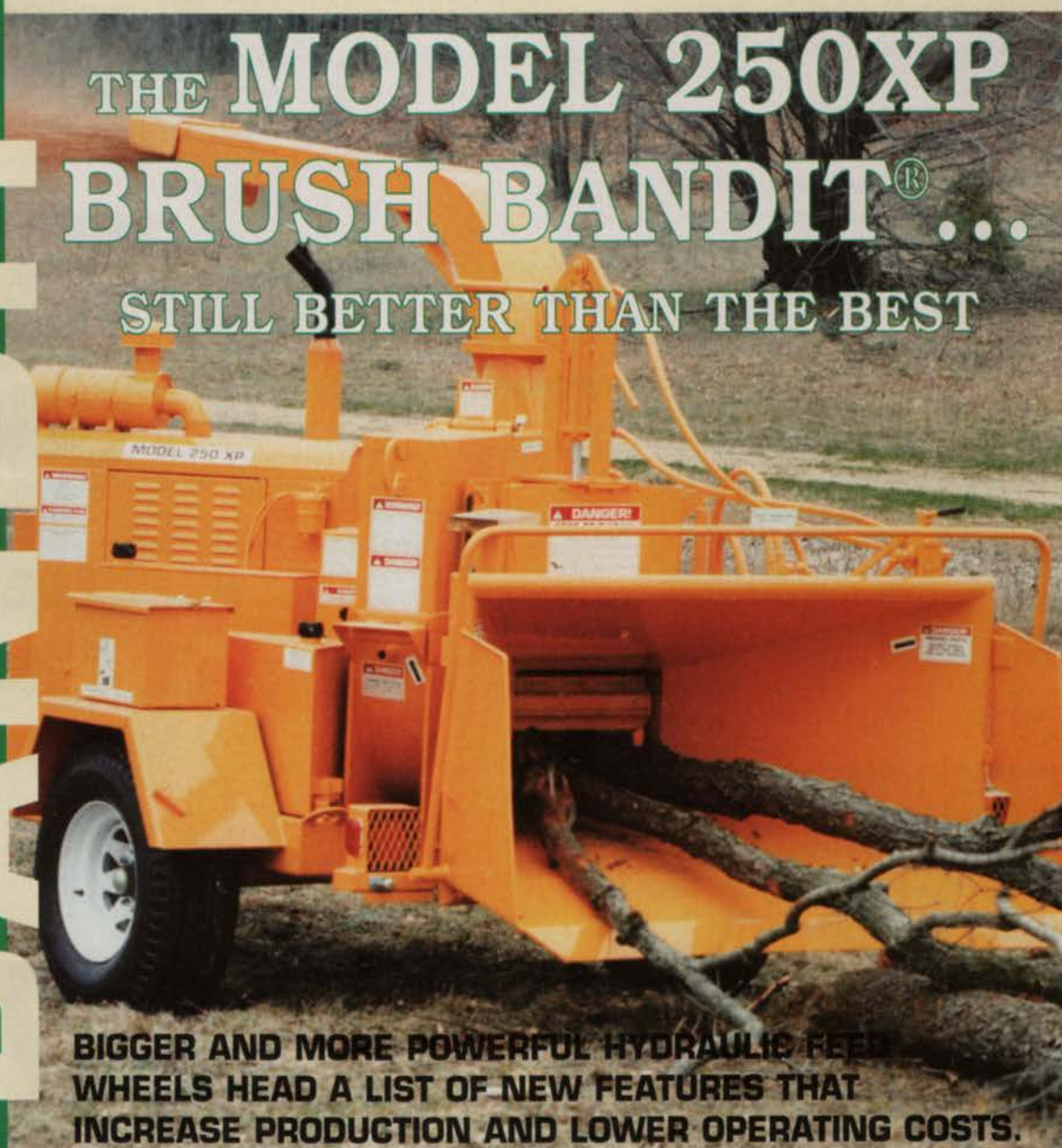
Another fabric consideration is the type of stain protection built into the fabric, according to Allen Crane, senior marketing manager, garment marketing, G&K Services, Minnetonka, Minn. Different chemical treatments provide one of two features for stain prevention: soil repellent and soil release. Repellants actually keep soil from entering the fabric, whereas releases allow the fabric to release soil that enters the fibers when detergents and water contact it.

Next, be sure you're purchasing the correct size. For the last five or 10 years, the garment industry has gotten away from standard sizing, so the S-M-L-XL sizes can be deceiving.

Finally, don't be afraid to get several bids. The uniform and custom garment business has grown more and more sophisticated, and many manufacturers and uniform service companies offer in-house designers to help you create the corporate image you want. — Paul Schrimpf

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uniforms

(continued from page 80)

have one person that spends two hours a week on this, and it isn't something I want to spend a lot of time on."

ON THEIR OWN. Many contractors have opted to purchase uniforms and give employees the responsibility of cleaning them. In these cases, the employee usually pays for part or all of the garments, at least in the first year. For most companies, the "uniform" is actually from the waist up, but contractors in general require a certain type or color of pants, such as khakis or jeans.

Northwest Landscape Industries, Hillsboro, Ore., gives employees a \$60 allowance two times each year to purchase clothing, according to Bob Grover, vice president, landscape management.

A variety of clothing is available from t-shirts to sweatshirts, golf shirts and jackets, while pants and footwear are the employees' responsibility. Employees can choose the clothing they wish to purchase. The allowances are broken up to give employees a

What's Hot

Julianne Perrigo, marketing manager, Corporate Style, Panama Beach, Fla., said that the hot color trend in corporate fashion is forest green, khaki and maroon, overtaking the former color rage, jade and raisin.

However, to avoid getting clothing that quickly gets dated, and to ensure that the colors you order will be available for years to come, Perrigo often recommends the basic four: navy, white, royal blue and black.

chance to order light clothes for the summer months and heavier clothes for wintertime.

The Groundskeeper, Tucson, Ariz., supplies crew people with three shirts for free when they start working there, which costs \$6 for short sleeve and \$7 for long sleeve styles. Thereafter, employees can purchase additional clothing through payroll deduction. "We'll spread the cost out over a few

checks for them so the impact isn't as great," noted Jay Strauss, human resource assistant. Hats are usually supplied, because they fade so quickly in the hot Arizona sun.

At Ruppert Landscape, Ashton, Md., new employees receive hats and t-shirts, and the company pays for half of the cost of jackets and sweatshirts in the first year, said Kathleen Sheetz, director of employee communications. After that, employees are on their own.

No matter how a uniform program is implemented, contractors who insist on a consistently uniformed work force believe it's the best way to express professionalism to clients and onlookers, and to instill pride in crew people for the work they do. **LL**

The author is Managing Editor of Lawn & Landscape magazine.

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Right Plant, Right Place



Maintainable landscapes depend on having the proper plants in locations suited to their specific needs.

By Carol Sutton



Many factors influence the design, installation and ongoing maintenance of landscaping, in both public and private green spaces. Not surprisingly, the purpose or function of the site is a major determinant in the choice of plant material.

However, the costs of purchasing and upkeep are scrutinized very closely today. Inexpensive plant materials often seem like the most logical choice. Despite the initial economy of the purchase, they are not necessarily the most cost-efficient choices in the long run because, ironically, it is hard to justify expensive maintenance for a low-cost planting. The result is an area that is over-grown all too soon.

Another possible means of meeting budgetary restraints is the use of low maintenance plants. Indigenous materials are often the choice. Yet, even indigenous plants must be sited in locations that meet their specific requirements — especially in rural areas and parks — to be truly successful. It is the natural range of distribution and the genetic quality of the plant material that determines whether the plant or shrub will thrive under any given circumstances, whatever its original habitat.

The least amount of care is generally required for those perennials that still retain many of the characteristics of their wild forebears. *Aster divaricatus*, *Viola* (Violet), *Geranium macrorrhizum*, *Ligularia* (Golden-ray), *Aruncus dioicus* (Sylvan Goat's-beard), *Lysimachia* (Loosestrife), and many ferns are just a few examples of these hardy plants.



Similarly, ground covers do not have to be limited to *Hedera* (ivy) or *Vinca* (periwinkle). There are many other varieties that accomplish the same purpose yet provide a more interesting visual effect, e.g. *Alchemilla mollis* (Lady's Mantle), *Geranium*, *Lamiasatrum* (Dead Nettle), *Symphytum* (Comfrey), and *Waldsteinia* (Barren Strawberry).

In short, the truly economical choice is the plant that is viable in the long-term, taking into consideration the cost of herbicides, pesticides, and the resulting impact on maintenance costs.

(continued on page 86)

Above, the *Viburnum* 'Eskimo,' like most viburnums, whether used in mixed plantings or in a hedge, may attract and shelter birds. Below and left, the butterflybush, *Buddleja davidii* 'Pink Delight,' is well named for its ability to attract these graceful insects.

Credit: CJS Communications

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proper planting

(continued from page 84)

A MIX IS BEST. Herbaceous vegetation, combined with shrubs and trees, creates landscapes like those designed by Mother Nature, giving a natural feel to public spaces. By contrast, borders composed of just one variety of shrub appear artificial and cannot be kept free of weeds without herbicides.

Also, a combination of plants that have vegetative force will suppress unwanted weeds. That's not all; other beneficial effects include the following:

- **Climatic**—Plantings can act as a wind-break, also protecting against noise and sun. For example, *Tilia cordata* 'Roelvo' (Littleleaf Linden), planted in a group, provides a welcome, shady spot in which to sit.

- **Perceptual**—Color, scent and the sound of wind in the leaves adds a special dimension to any landscape; consider *Potentilla fruticosa* (Bush Cinquefoil), *Acer negundo* 'Flamingo' (Box Elder), *Amelanchier lamarkii* (Serviceberry), or *Cotoneaster praecox* 'Boer'.

- **Architectural**—Trees and shrubs can

emphasize the spatial effects of a particular site or define a location (i.e. the street with the red-flowered trees); e.g. *Acer platanoides* 'Columnare' and 'Autumn Blaze' (Norway Maple), *Corylus avellana* 'Contorta' (European Hazel) and *Aesculus carnea* (Red Horse Chestnut) 'Briotii'.

- **Ecological**—Many plants invite birds, bees and butterflies into urban neighborhoods; e.g. *Buddleja davidii* 'Pink Delight' and 'Summer Beauty' (Butterfly-bush), *Hippophae rhamnoides* 'Leikora' (Common Sea-buckthorn), and *Cornus alba* 'Siberian Pearls' (Siberian Dogwood) are just a few of the possibilities.

- **Cultural/historic**—Some trees and shrubs carry traditional values and habits; e.g. *Syringa meyeri* 'Palibin' (Meyer's lilac), *Hydrangea serrata* (a.k.a. *H. macrophylla*



Mixing herbaceous vegetation with shrubs and trees creates a natural feel.

Credit: CJS Communications

serrata 'Benigaku', and *Viburnum opulus* 'Sterile' (European Cranberry-bush).

- **Economic**—Although difficult to quantify, significant use of green space can help attract individuals, industries and companies to an area, thanks to the quality of life imparted by harmonious surroundings.

Thus, the most cost effective approach

(continued on page 97)



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USE READER SERVICE #78

Handling Overhead

By Charles Vander Kooi

Equate the running of a contracting business to the flying of an F-14 jet fighter through the Grand Canyon. You drop into the canyon at Point A, which is Jan. 2 of any business year. You fly 300 feet above the canyon floor with the walls of the canyon 1,000 feet off each wing. You have to fly in a perfectly straight line to Point B, which is Dec. 31 of that business year. You want to arrive with a profit — preferably a hefty one.

On the floorboard of your plane are two pedals. You must keep the pedals even with each other. If one pedal gets out of line, the plane will begin to “yaw” and turn into one of the canyon walls.

“So, what are these two pedals in the jet fighter called in my business?” you ask.

One is the amount of overhead you must recover in a business year. The other pedal is the amount of business you must do in a fiscal year to have enough money to recover that overhead and to make a profit besides. Let’s say that your overhead is \$100,000. You have determined that you must do \$400,000 in sales to recover that overhead and make a profit.

You drop into the canyon on Jan. 2, but by May 15 you see that you are behind your sales goal and that you are not going to do \$400,000 in sales. You will be lucky to do \$350,000. Your pedals are now out of line. What is your plane doing? It is yawing. And, if it continues to yaw, you will crash your business into one of the walls of the Grand Canyon.

Now, if you were really in the Grand Canyon, and your F-14 plane began to yaw, what would you do in a hurry? You would either push the left pedal forward or let off the right pedal until the pedals lined up perfectly. Do the same with your business. Push the sales pedal forward, or let up on the overhead pedal.

Overhead is a fixed cost. It does not rise and fall based on what you charge for a certain job. You do not need to find out

Making a profit doesn't count until you've recovered your overhead costs.

By the Numbers

what others charge for overhead and charge the same. Overhead is not charged, it is recovered. And you do not make any profit until you recover your overhead. To do this you must budget overhead, spend on overhead within that budget, allocate overhead properly and recover it.

I know a landscape construction company that has an accountant who is very nice, except on Jan. 2. She comes in half an hour before everyone else on this day and, with a wicked grin on her face, she turns on her computer and puts an invoice into the printer. She prints out a bill to the management of that company for the amount of overhead the company must recover in that business

year and leaves a copy on each person's desk.

When the staff comes in reeling from New Year's Eve festivities and football, they are faced with that invoice. They must realize quickly that their plane has taken off and is descending into the Grand Canyon. They know they'd better keep their pedals even so they can arrive safely at the other end of the canyon on Dec. 31 — with a profit. The staff knows where they stand and that they had better go out that year and get enough work with enough overhead allocated on it to recover that overhead and to make a profit.

I recommend that contractors keep track of the number of overhead dollars that must be recovered in a year in a computer spread-

sheet program or on a piece of paper. Every time you sign a contract for a new job, subtract the amount of overhead you have built into that bid from the year's total. Make sure that within a business year, you do enough work to bring the overhead dollar figure down to zero.

The staff of the landscape construction company with the good accountant does not even talk about profit from January through mid-November because they consider that there is none. Any money collected above what it costs to do a job goes to pay overhead. The accountant keeps track and when the overhead is recovered, she puts a copy of the original invoice on everyone's desk stamped

Inside Overhead

A key part of recovering a company's overhead is first being able to identify what specific costs comprise the overall corporate overhead. Vander Kooi & Associates, Littleton, Colo., recommends companies classify the following costs as overhead items:

Advertising	\$ _____	Small tools and supplies	\$ _____
Depreciation (office equipment & furniture)	\$ _____	Taxes — business	\$ _____
Donations	\$ _____	Telephone	\$ _____
Dues and subscriptions	\$ _____	Travel and entertainment	\$ _____
Insurance (office items, health/life)	\$ _____	Utilities	\$ _____
Interest and bank charges	\$ _____	Yard expense	\$ _____
Downtime	\$ _____	Overhead vehicles	\$ _____
Labor burden (downtime)	\$ _____	Radio systems	\$ _____
Office supplies	\$ _____	Miscellaneous	\$ _____
Professional fees	\$ _____	Licenses, bonds	\$ _____
Rent	\$ _____	Education	\$ _____
Salaries — office	\$ _____	Uniforms	\$ _____
Salaries — officers	\$ _____	Computer system	\$ _____
Labor burden (office)	\$ _____	Bad debts	\$ _____

Once overhead is paid off, any dollars collected above costs for the remainder of the year can be applied directly to profit. Profitable companies reach this break-even point by November.



"Paid in Full." At that point, they have a party — A Break-Even Party. Right after the party, they put the pedal to the metal, because everything else they collect over costs for the rest of the year will be the company's profit for the year.

PROFITABLE LOSSES. Here is a point contractors must understand: You can make money on every job you perform, but lose money as a contractor for that year. Some contractors do not understand what job costing really is. Job costing takes the original estimate of costs to do a job and compares it with the actual costs to do the job. This is done at the level of costs: This is why it's called job costing. Some contractors take their job costing to another level. They add overhead to costs and subtract costs with overhead from the contract amount to see if they have made a profit. That is no longer job costing, it is generating a financial statement or a profit-and-loss statement on each job.

Now, I don't mind if a contractor does that, but he or she must understand the basic principle of job costing. You see, each of those financial statements on individual jobs

is a just snapshot. The company and its profitability are a mural made up of those pictures. Individual pictures may look pretty good, but the company mural can look real ugly. Why would it look ugly? Because there are not enough pictures in that mural with enough overhead allocated in them to cover the company's entire overhead. This is why you can make money on every job you perform, but still lose money as a contractor.

Why not just add more overhead to the work the company is getting? Because there is a fine line of the right amount of overhead that can be charged on a job depending on the kind of company doing certain kinds of work in certain areas. The goal for each company is to find the fine line that both gets you work and recovers your overhead.

For now, think of it this way: Contractors actually make all of their profit in four to six weeks. From January through mid-November, they are just recovering overhead. Sometime in mid-November, they start making profit — everything they do in the last four to six weeks of the year is their profit for that year.

I had a contractor call me just before

Christmas one year. I think he waited until then on purpose. His company had broken even the first of October, which left them eight weeks into their business year. He said that they billed more work during those eight weeks than any other eight-week period the whole year and drove the profit into the high six figures.

I always get a sick feeling in autumn and around the holidays — and it's not because of the holiday goodies. First, there is hunting season. Then they are playing Christmas music down at the mall. It's the holiday season and contractors put their planes on autopilot. At the very time they are making a profit, they slow their efforts. I get sick when I think of all the tens of thousands of contractors who have worked very hard to recover their overhead and are finally making a profit, but who coast out the business year just when they could be getting ahead. Remember this next year when you're flying through October toward Dec. 31! **LL**

The author is president of Vander Kooi & Associates, Littleton, Colo. He can be reached at 303/697-6467.

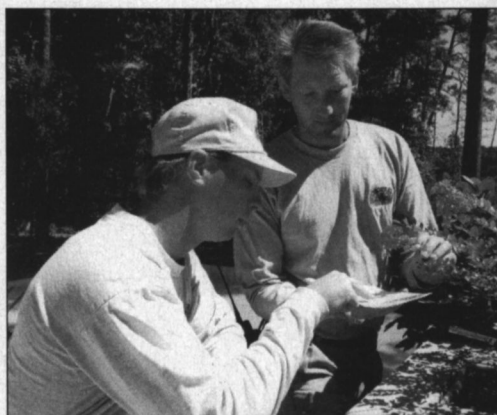
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"We've found that when this stuff is applied four times,



Scott Gallagher, left, and Kevin Cooper check for spider mites at a Cooper's Lawn Service residential property. Credit: Greg Cooper

it quadruples the root mass of what you're growing in a one-year period," he said.

"They call the tidewater area the fungus capital of Virginia," continued Cooper. "If you go on any lawn at any time during the summer, you'll find brown patch. We also have problems with dollar

spot, fusarium and Pythium. So we offer fungus control on a 30-day basis during the summer. We've used a host of products, but the problem with most of them is that they only last two weeks."

Last year, Cooper used ProStar® Fungicide for the first time. His crews applied

the AgrEvo product at the lowest labeled rate, using a hand-held, double-wand sprayer at a pressure of 45 psi. Cooper found the treatment gave him extended control for up to 30 days at 90 percent effectiveness.

"We felt ProStar gave us the best control of brown patch we've ever found," Cooper noted. "Labor savings were tremendous because we sprayed monthly instead of every two weeks. We feel confident applying the material up to 30 minutes before it rains and resuming spraying as soon as the rain passes. Plus, the water-soluble packaging is excellent."

— Debbie Clayton



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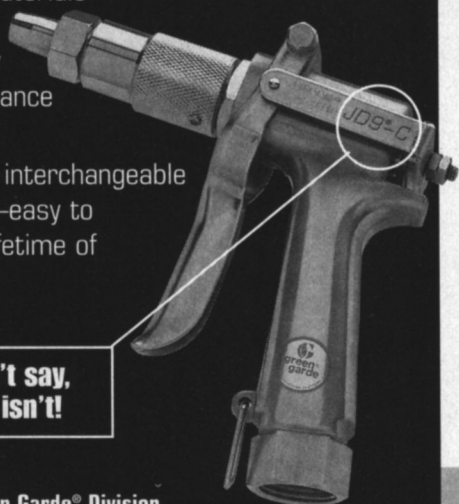
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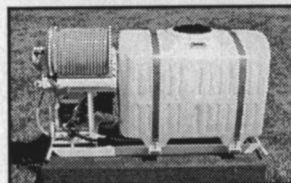
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USE READER SERVICE #82

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im-i-ta-tion (im/i ta/shen), *n.* 1. a counter-
feit; copy. 2. bogus; phony. 3. fraud. 4.
artificial; fake; false. 5. impersonation. —
adj. 6. designed to imitate a genuine or
superior article or thing.



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is it really made of? Does it
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NEW PRODUCTS



John Deere's Z Trak mowers

- Two gas models include 20-hp F620 and 25-hp F625
- Zero turning radius
- Body flips up for access to engine compartment
- Mower deck flips up 90 degrees for ease of maintenance and transport
- Available with 48-, 54- and 60-inch decks
- Material collection system mounts over hood
- 9-bushel capacity

Circle 201 on reader service card

Echo SRS-2400 Aggressor®

- Extended reach of up to 16½ feet and cuts up to 4½ inches in diameter
- Optional 2½ foot extension
- Heavy-duty 71-inch shaft for extended reach
- 23.6-cc engine
- Reinforced nylon/fiberglass engine hosing
- See-through fuel tank

Circle 202 on reader service card



PSB Co.® PrizeLAWN® CBR III commercial rotary spreader

- 13-inch pneumatic tires
- Rate settings match the company's Bigfoot® model
- Spring loaded on/off lever
- 1.3-cubic-foot hopper capacity
- Nylatron GS gear material
- Gear ratio set for 1½ mph application speed

- All fasteners and metal components touching fertilizer are stainless steel
- Circle 203 on reader service card**

Eagle Point Software Visual Landscaping

- New module to its

LANDCADD product series

- Integrates 2-D and 3-D photo rendering and estimating
- Designs site terrain dimensions and shape
- Select from preconstructed structures or build your own
- Database features more than 1,000 plants including photo image, 2-D symbol, cost, planning size, scientific name and description
- Once completed, user can render project and have photo realistic view in seconds

Circle 204 on reader service card

Loftness Snowblower Attachments

- Two new 200-hp models have 8-foot and 9-foot double augers
- Heavier 5/16-inch end plates with gussets and braces
- Unibody design
- New design has 2-inch, 200-hp Prairie gearbox

Circle 205 on reader service card

Plant Health Care Mycor™ Flower Saver™

- Easy to use Vesicular Arbuscular Mycorrhizal fungi inoculant
- Makes flowers more resistant to soil-borne disease pathogens requiring less use of fertilizer, irrigation and fungicides
- Ideal pre-plant oil treatment for both spring planting and fall flower bed changeouts
- Packaged in a 1½-pound

hand-held shakers, 6-pound open-and-pour bags or 30-pound pails

Circle 206 on reader service card

Lumenyte's fiber optic lighting fixtures

- Available for applications such as functional and decorative accent lighting, landscape lighting
- Fixtures can accommodate a variety of optic sizes

Circle 207 on reader service card

Encore Prowler mower

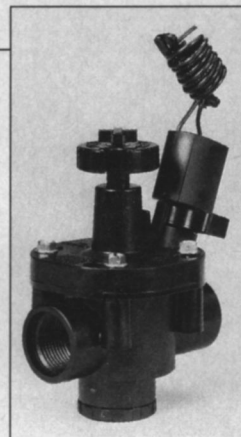
- Front cut riding mower
- 52- or 61-inch decks
- 20-hp water-cooled Kawasaki or 22-hp air-cooled Kohler engines
- Single or dual path tail



- wheels
 - Dual path hydrostatic drive
 - Zero-turning radius capabilities
 - 10-gauge steel top plates and 7-gauge skirts on cutting decks for durability
 - Cutting speed of 8 mph
- Circle 208 on reader service card**

Olson Irrigation Systems' Angle/Globe Valve

- New 1-inch angle/globe valve
- Complements the MVA-100 multi-valve assembly line of irrigation valves
- Bonnet can be easily removed and replaced
- Constructed of glass-filled nylon



- Heavy-duty AGV is rated at 200 psi (14 bars)
- Normally closed valve utilizes 24-vac, 50/60 cycle solenoid with .4 amp inrush

current and .22 holding current

- Available in 1-inch NPT or 1-inch BSP

Circle 209 on reader service card

NO-CHEM fertilizer

- 100 percent organic fertilizer
- Low odor
- Reduces thatch buildup
- No sewage sludge or added synthetic chemicals
- Non-burning, slow release for eight to 12 weeks
- Safe near pets, animals and water supplies
- Buffers against changes in soil pH
- Rich in micronutrients, humic acids and nine valuable trace elements

Circle 210 on reader service card

Little Wonder commercial blowers

- Centrifugal blower design works with a backward-inclined blade impeller
- Six models from the 5-hp model 9500HO to the 11-hp model 911HO
- Patent pending deflector splits the airstream
- 12-gauge steel housing with arc-welded seams
- Three 10-inch



NEW PRODUCTS

- diameter steel-hubbed wheels
- Optional 6-inch diameter, 10-foot long intake hose
- Disposal bag or a 6-inch diameter, 20-foot long discharge hose

Circle 211 on reader service card

Royal Seeds Penguin Perennial Ryegrass

- Endophyte enhanced to fight surface feeding insects
- Fast establishment and quick recovery
- Excellent seedling vigor
- Fine bladed and richly dense
- Deep dark green color

Circle 212 on reader service card

Alpan® Solar SunDown Light™

- Powered by the sun
- Provides 8 hours of running time on every charge
- Outer shell made from rugged



UV stabilizer plastic

- Nickel cadmium batteries for daytime use
- Lights turn on automatically at night

Circle 213 on reader service card

Ryobi 4-stroke hand-held engine

- 4-stroke engine
- Powers commercial trimmers, brushcutters, blowers and other hand-held equipment
- 26cc, 1.1-hp @ 7500 rpm
- Weighs 7.1 pounds
- Fixed jet carburetor
- Max. torque 9.8 inch-pounds @ 5500 rpm

- Outboard starter
- Electronic solid state ignition
- Low noise, large capacity muffler
- Forged full heat-treated crankshaft

Circle 214 on reader service card

Weather-Matic SL Controller

- 12- to 42-station models
- Selectable four-program master control or independent station programming
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- Five watering schedules including specific calendar dates for injection of fertilizer
- 3-second safety delay for master valve/pump shutdown
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- Heavy gauge steel housing for wall or pedestal mount

Circle 215 on reader service card

Swinger Model 3000 Loader

- Lifts 3,000 pounds
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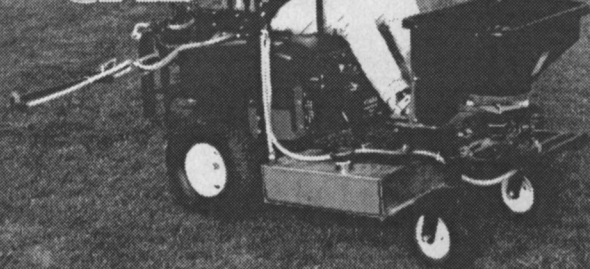
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USE READER SERVICE #84

LAWN & LANDSCAPE • JANUARY 1998 93

NEW PRODUCTS

(continued from page 92)

- 80-hp John Deere engine
- Tech diesel engine
- 2-speed transmission

Circle 216 on reader service card

LasTec's Model 325E Articulator®

- Three independent 25-inch decks
- 25-hp Kohler engine
- Hand or foot control acces-



sible from seat

- Widened drive-wheel stance

Circle 217 on reader service card

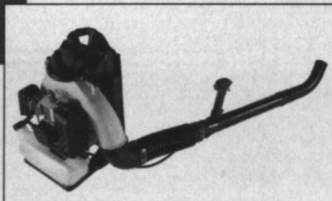
Burkeen Mfg. Co. plow blades

- Use with most 30-hp class vibratory plows
- Replaceable tip blades reduce replacement costs
- Blades available in digging depths of 12, 14, 18 and 24 inches
- Chute sizes range from 0.375 inches on the thinline drop-wire blade to 1 inch on the CATV blade

Circle 218 on reader service card

McCulloch's ProMac BP4300 backpack blower

- 43-cc Mitsubishi industrial engine
- 644 CFM air volume with 70 dba at 7,000 rpm
- Blowpipe mounted throttle
- Weighs 12.7 pounds
- See-through 64.2-ounce fuel tank



- Anti-vibration system

Circle 219 on reader service card

STIHL® professional trimmers

- FS 350 Model has 36.3cc displacement
- 2.15-hp engine
- Weighs 15.4 pounds without the cutting head
- Quad port engine
- Air filter system
- Adjustable, soft grip handles
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- 4-point anti-vibration system harness

Circle 220 on reader service card

Classen TA-15 Turf Aerator

- 4-cycle 4.0-hp Honda

O.H.V. or 3.5-hp I.C. Briggs & Stratton engine with 6:1 gear reduction box

- 49½ inches high
- Coring depth adjustable up to 3 inches
- Aerating width of 15 inches at nine holes per square foot

Circle 221 on reader service card

Dixon® ZTR® 5022 mid-mount riding mower

- Hydro Gear® hydrostatic transmissions with separate fans and charge pump
- 22-hp Kohler Command engine
- 42-, 50- and 60-inch deck options
- 1½- to 4½-inch cutting heights
- Tilt up body
- Mulching, catching and snow blade accessory options

Circle 222 on reader service card

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proper planting

(continued from page 86)

might be summed up as "the right plant — shrub, tree, perennial, etc. — in the right place."

PRIME LOCATIONS. There are perennials for virtually every location, providing the plant and location are well matched; i.e. that the plant's soil, light, moisture, and other needs can be accommodated in the site chosen. Here are a few examples, classified by habitat.

✓ **Woodlands:** These are shady to semi-shady areas where the soil is fairly constantly moist, with a top layer rich in humus. Plant choices include *Aquilegia* (Columbine), *Hosta*, *Dryopteris*, *Matteuccia* and other ferns, and ground covers such as *Pulmonaria* (Lungwort), *Asarum* (Wild Ginger), and *Tiarella* (Foamflower).

✓ **Woodland Margins:** Sunny (for only part of the day) or semi-shady conditions prevail here, with sheltering trees and/or shrubs. The soil is humid and rich in nutrients. Choose vigorous and competitive plants; such as *Waldsteinia* (Barren Strawberry), *Aruncus*

• • • • •
...the truly economical choice is the plant that is viable in the long-term, taking into consideration the cost of herbicides, pesticides, and the resulting impact on maintenance cost.
• • • • •

dioicus (Sylvan Goat's-beard), *Geranium macrorrhizum*, and *Doronicum* (Leopardsbane).

✓ **Open Terrains:** These dynamic areas feature extremes in light and soil moisture and are often grassy. Newly-planted perennials must be able to compete, be suitable for mass planting, and be able to withstand late summer mowing. Examples include *Rudbeckia* (especially *R. fulgida* 'Goldsturm') (Coneflower), *Centranthus ruber* (Valerian), *Nepeta* (Catmint), and *Achillea*, especially *A.*

millefolium (Yarrow).

✓ **Wet Sites:** These are the areas along streams and ponds with generally sunny to semi-shady conditions by virtue of scattered trees and shrubs. The soil is wet to moist, depending on the season and the location's height above the water level. Plant choices include: *Trollius* (Globe-flower), *Polygonum*, *Eupatorium* (especially *E. cannabinum* and *E. maculatum*) (Joe-Pye-Weed), and

Acorus calamus (Sweet Flag).

SHRUB AND TREE SITES. An important consideration for the selection of trees and shrubs is whether they will be planted in rural, suburban or urban areas, or even in solitary settings such as parks.

In rural areas, a large selection of shrubs and trees that suit the character of the landscape, prevailing weather, and soil conditions may be planted. The availability of

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proper planting

growing space generally is not a problem in rural areas.

• **SHRUBS:** There are many suitable for rural areas, a few examples are: *Cornus mas* (Dogwood), *Acer campestre* (Field or Hedge Maple), *Betula pendula* (White Birch), *Euonymus europaeus* (Spindle Tree or Prickwood), *Amelanchier* (Serviceberry), *Fraxinus excelsior* (Common Ash), *Ilex aquifolium* (Common Holly), *Castanea sativa* (Sweet Chestnut), *Lonicera xylosteum* (Honeysuckle), *Populus tremula* (Aspen or Trembling Poplar), *Ligustrum vulgare* (Privet), and *Salix caprea* (Goat Willow).

• **TREES** for rural areas include *Populus nigra* (Black Poplar), *Prunus avium* (Wild or Black Cherry), *Alnus glutinosa* or *A. incana* (Black or Grey Alder), *Robinia pseudoacacia* (Black Locust), *Acer platanoides* (Norway Maple), *Salix alba* (White Willow), *Quercus robur* (English Oak), *Sorbus aucuparia* (Mountain Ash), *Tilia cordata* and *T. platyphyllos* (Small- or Large-leafed Linden).

In outlying areas such as suburban resi-

How-to For Hedges

Here are four categories of hedges to consider for various purposes.

1. Hedges that grow denser with trimming (although these can be expensive to use because they require frequent trimming): *Acer campestre* (Maple), *Mahonia*, *Carpinus betulus* (Hornbeam), *Cotoneaster lucidus*, *C. dielsianus*, *G. monogyna*, *Fagus sylvatica* (Beech), *Chaenomeles japonica* (Quince), *Prunus laurocerasus* (Cherry), *Deutzia purpurascens* 'Kalmiiflora', *Cornus mas* (Dogwood), *Ilex aquifolium* (Holly), *Buxus sempervirens* (Common Box), *Berberis buxifolia* 'Nana', *B. Candidula* (Barberry), *Lonicera nitida* 'Elegant' (Honeysuckle), and *Pyracantha* (Firethorn).

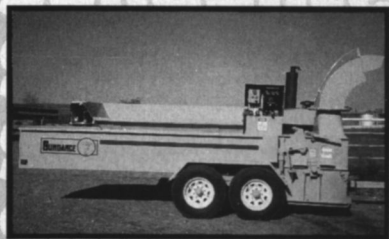
2. Hedges that flower, offering a decorative effect around homes and offices: *Amelanchier* (Serviceberry), *Weigela*, *Chaenomeles* (Quince), *Pyracantha* (Firethorn), *Deutzia*,

Spiraea, *Kerria*, *Berberis julianae*, *B. wilsoniae* (Barberry), *Hypericum* (St.-John's-Wort), *Cotoneaster bullatus*, *Forsythia*, *Mahonia*, *Philadelphus* (Mock-orange), and *Ribes* (Currant).

3. Hedges that can't be seen through, and so offer a visual barrier along dangerous roadsides: *Robinia* (Black Locust), *Crataegus* (Hawthorne), *Ulex europaeus* (Common Gorse), *Berberis* (Barberry), *Ilex aquifolium* (Holly), *Pyracantha* (Firethorn), *Elaeagnus*, *Rubus* (Raspberry/Blackberry), and *Chaenomeles* (Quince).

4. Hedges that grow freely, offering a flowing transition among sections of park land, between park and lawn and between private gardens and public roads: *Acer campestre* (Maple), *Amelanchier* (Serviceberry), *Berberis* (Barberry), *Chaenomeles* (Quince), *Crataegus* (Hawthorne), *Deutzia*, *Elaeagnus*, *Euonymus* ((Spindle Tree or Prickwood)), *Forsythia*, *Hippophae* (Common Sea-buckthorn), *Hypericum* (St.-John's-Wort), *Kerria*, *Lonicera* (Honeysuckle), *Mahonia*, *Philadelphus* (Mock-orange), *Physocarpus* (Niniebark), *Pyracantha* (Firethorn), *Ribes* (Currant), *Rubus* (Raspberry/Blackberry), and *Salix* (Willow).

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dential areas, industrial sections, and major roadways are in this category. Although outlying areas may be used for virtually all types of shrubs and trees, small and delicate varieties are not particularly suitable.

- **SHRUBS** for outlying areas may include *Chaenomeles japonica* (Quince), *Cotoneaster*, *Hypericum* 'Hidcote' (St.-John's-Wort), *Mahonia x wagneri* 'Pinnacle', *Kolkwitzia* (Beautybush), *Berberis aggregata* and *B. julianae* (Barberry), *Viburnum rhytidophyllum* (Leatherleaf Viburnum), *Cornus alba* 'Siberica' and *C. stolonifera* 'Flaviramea' (Dogwood), *Lonicera pileata* and *L. tatarica* 'Arnold Red' (Honeysuckle), *Ribes sanguineum* 'Atrorubens Select' (Currant), *Philadelphus* 'Virginal' (Mock-orange), and *Weigela* 'Bristol Ruby' (Weigela).

- **TREES** for outlying areas may include these specific cultivars: *Sorbus aucuparia* 'Edulis', *S. intermedia* 'Brouwers' or *S. latifolia* 'Atrovirens' (Mountain Ash), *Acer saccharinum* 'Pyramidale' (Silver Maple), *Ulmus* 'Dodoens', 'Lobel' or 'Plantijn' (Elm), *Corylus colurna* (Hazel), *Malus* 'Evereste' or 'Rudolph' (Apple), *Prunus avium* 'Plena' or *P. sargentii* 'Charles Sargent' (Ornamental Cherry), *Acer platanoides* 'Deborah' or 'Emerald Queen', or *Betula ermanii* 'Holland' or *B. utilis* 'Doorenbos' (Birch).

Residential and urban areas are comprised of built-up residential areas, shopping centers and business districts — anywhere there is a concentration of buildings. Space is a major consideration.

- **SHRUBS:** Some suitable types would be *Buddleja* 'White Ball' (Butterflybush), *Ligustrum obtusifolium* var. *regelianum* (Regal Privet), *Deutzia purpurascens* 'Kalmiflora', *Ilex x meserveae* 'Blue Angel' (Holly), *Diervilla sessilifolia* 'Butterfly' (Southern Bush-honeysuckle), *Caryopteris x clandonensis* 'Heavenly Blue' (Hybrid Bluebeard), *Perovskia atriplicifolia* 'Blue Spire', *Spiraea japonica* 'Dart's Red' or 'Little Princess', *Potentilla fruticosa* 'Abbotswood' and 'Goldfinger' (Cinquefoil), *Clethra alnifolia* (Summersweet), *Stephanandra* 'Oro Verde'.

- **TREES** include *Amelanchier arborea* 'Robin Hill' (Serviceberry), *Sorbus aria* 'Magnifica', *Prunus hillieri* 'Spire' (Cherry) or *P. maackii* 'Amber Beauty' (Chokecherry), *Crataegus laevigata* 'Paul's Scarlet' or *C. prunifolia* 'Splendens' (Hawthorne), *Acer pseudoplatanus* 'Atropurpureum', 'Leopol-

dii' or 'Rotterdam' (Maple), *Acer rubrum* 'Red Sunset' or 'Scanlon' (Red Maple), *Catalpa bignonioides* 'Nana' (Southern Catalpa), and *Carpinus betulus* 'Fastigiata' (Hornbeam).

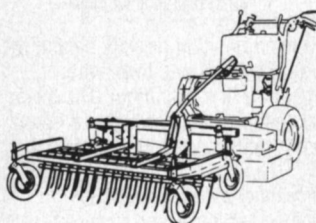
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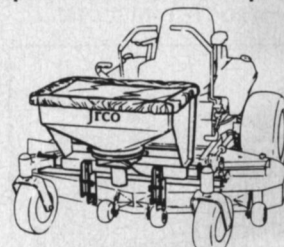


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Statement required by the Act of October 23, 1962. Section 4369, Title 39, United States Code, showing the ownership of Lawn & Landscape published monthly at 4012 Bridge Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44113-3399 Cuyahoga County.

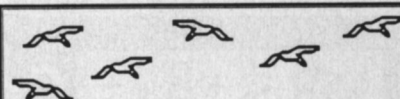
The name of the publisher is: Cindy Code, 4012 Bridge Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44113-3399. The name of the editor is: Bob West, 4012 Bridge Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44113-3399. The name of the managing editor is: Paul Schrimpf, 4012 Bridge Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44113-3399.

The owners are: Richard J.W. Foster, 4012 Bridge Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44113-3399 and Maureen Mertz 4012 Bridge Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44113-3399.

Average number of copies of each issue during preceding 12 months, and of single issue nearest to filing date, respectively, are as follow: Total number of copies printed (net press run) 61,161/60,075; paid circulation sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales 0; mail subscriptions 44,024 (72.0%)/44,332 (73.8%); total paid and/or requested circulation 44,024/44,332; free distribution (office use, carrier or other means (samples, complimentary or other free copies) 15,609/15,314; total distribution 61,161/60,075; copies not distributed (office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing) 0; and return from news agents 0.

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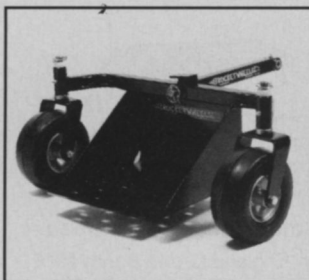
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Join Century Rain Aid, America's leading irrigation and landscape lighting distributor, as we continue to grow. Century is now accepting applications for branch management positions. Irrigation experience and a college education are preferred. Century offers industry competitive wage and benefit programs. Please send your resume and salary requirements to: Century Rain Aid, 31691 Dequindre Rd., Madison Heights, MI 48071, Attn: Wayne Miller. Pre-employment drug screening required. Century is an Equal Opportunity Employer. E-mail: briday@rainaid.com Web site: www.rainaid.com

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Full-service design/build, landscape, and maintenance company, the sixth largest in the state, is looking for positive and energetic candidates in all areas: design/sales, production, and maintenance. Projects/accounts include some of the most prestigious residential and commercial sites in two major metropolitan areas. Expansion into other market areas is occurring as you read this. Compensation, including benefit packages, vacation, and 401k is very competitive with the industry. Applicants must demonstrate proven history of leadership and ability to manage projects and people. Please send/fax resume and cover letter to: Yardmaster, Inc., 1447 North Ridge Road, Painesville, OH 44077. Fax 216/357-1624.

SALES MANAGER WANTED

Kapp's Lawn Specialists, an established, fast growing company, is seeking experienced sales manager for our Cleveland branch. Lawn care experience or college credits helpful. Excellent benefits and bonuses. Possible company vehicle. Come work for a company that cares about its employees! Send resume to Michael Markovich, Kapp's Lawn Specialists, Inc., 4124 Clubview Dr., Fort Wayne, IN 46804 or fax resume to 219/432-7892.

BRANCH MANAGER

Industry leader, award winning, full-service firm in Chicago's western suburbs seeks aggressive sales and client-oriented individual to be accountable for a multi-million dollar growing branch operation and be part of the senior management team. Responsibilities include sales growth, budgets, estimating, bidding contracts, quality control, training and staff development, motivating sales staff, client interaction, operations management and branch profitability. Horticultural/business degree or similar a must, along with working knowledge of all grounds maintenance operations and proven leadership and sales record. This is an excellent career opportunity for an energetic, goals oriented, proven leader with three to five years experience as a branch manager and excellent interpersonal and communication skills. Send resumes with salary requirements and references to: Tandem Landscape Company, 33w480 Fabyan Parkway, Suite 101, West Chicago, IL 60185 or fax to 630/232-6370, Attn: Mark Sorrentino.

MAINTENANCE SUPERVISORS

The Brickman Group, Ltd., one of the nation's largest and fastest growing full-service landscape companies, has an immediate need in principal cities east of the Mississippi for maintenance supervisors with two to five years experience. Brickman seeks energetic, team-oriented college graduates with proven leadership, communication and interpersonal skills. Brickman offers full-time positions, excellent advancement opportunities and exceptional compensation and benefits with an industry leader building on a 56-year tradition of uncompromising customer service. For immediate confidential consideration, please send or fax your resume with an indication of your geographic preferences and willingness to relocate to: The Brickman Group, Ltd., Corporate Office, 375 S. Flowers Mill Road, Langhorne, PA 19047, 215/757-9630, EOE.

REGIONAL MANAGER

Due to nationwide expansion, NaturaLawn of America, a national franchise lawn care firm based in Frederick, Maryland, seeks an individual to fill a regional manager position. Responsibilities include training, agronomic program development, budgeting, market analysis, and support of franchise locations. Qualified applicants must display strong agronomic/technical abilities, excellent oral and written skills, previous new business start-up experience, as well as troubleshooting operational issues. We offer:

- A competitive salary
- Paid vacations
- Benefits package
- Company vehicle

Qualified applicants may fax their resume to 301/846-0320, call 301/694-5440, or obtain additional info on our web site: <http://www.nl-amer.com>, or e-mail: natlawn@erols.com

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L&L Classifieds.

GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

Q: Tired of unkept promises and no growth potential?

A:



If you want a sales or field position where you can grow in earnings & responsibility...

Nature's Trees, Inc., an industry leader and innovator, is rapidly expanding its SavaLawn division. *Sales Representative & Lawn Specialist* positions are opening in New York, Connecticut and New Jersey. Both positions offer a competitive salary & benefits package. Sales Representatives also receive a generous auto allowance. Please forward your resume to:

SavaLawn
Attn: Human Resources
205 Adams Street, Bedford Hills, NY 10507
Phone: (914) 241-4999 Fax: (914) 666-5843
E-mail: SavaLawn@msn.com

COME GROW WITH US.

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

Leading Massachusetts Lawn and Tree Company is looking for individuals with five years of successful industry experience and leadership ability. Explore the advantages of working for The Lawn Company, established in 1979. We are an owner operated company with three branches in Eastern Massachusetts and on Cape Cod, offering year round employment and a full benefit package to every employee. Qualified candidates should send resumes to Colleen Kilfoil, Human Resources Manager, The Lawn Company, P.O. Box 1430, South Dennis, MA 02660.

GRADING DIVISION MANAGER

Professional commercial landscape company in Richmond, Virginia, is looking for an experienced individual to manage and run the Grading Division. We offer excellent benefits, performance bonuses, and salary commensurate with experience. Please fax your resume to Human Resources 804/550-1869 or mail to: JRGM, 11008 Washington Hwy., Glen Allen, VA 23059, Attn: Human Resources, or call 800/813-0003.

SALES PERSON



LOOKING TO HIRE aggressive Sales Person who can do the work of 3 people. See Greg at Mid Am Show in Chicago - Booth # 1326 (1/15-1/17/98) or send resume to: DANIELS PULL PLOW, 15N365 Old Sutton Rd., E. Dundee, IL 60118

EXCITING CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR VEGETATION MANAGERS

Rapidly growing Vegetation Management Company is looking for experienced Division Managers to work out of our regional and branch locations throughout the U.S. Must have a minimum of two (2) years experience in Vegetation Management and/or a degree in horticulture/arboriculture/urban forestry or related field. Must be self-motivated, decisive, creative and have strong organizational skills.

WE OFFER:

- Excellent starting salary
- Company paid health insurance
- Excellent working environment
- Bonuses
- Vacations
- 401k Program

For career opportunity and confidential consideration, send or fax resume, including geographic preferences and willingness to relocate to:

DeANGELO BROTHERS, INC.

Attention: Paul D. DeAngelo
100 North Conahan Drive
Hazleton, PA 18201
Phone: 800/360-9333
Fax: 717/459-5500
EOE/AAP/M-F

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Montgomery County, Maryland, lawn care company is seeking reliable, goal-oriented individual for operational management position. Must be self-motivated and experienced. Job description includes sales, customer and personnel management. Benefits and salary based on experience. Send resume to: SuperLawns of Gaithersburg, Inc., 14115 Seneca Road, Darnes-town, MD 20874 or e-mail at sl@aws.com

DESIGN/BUILD/MAINTENANCE ESTIMATOR

MAINTENANCE FIELD & OFFICE
MANAGEMENT POSITIONS

MARKETING & SALES REPRESENTATIVES

Smallwood Design Group/Smallwood Landscape, Inc. is looking for qualified individuals to fill the above positions who are experienced in horticultural maintenance and/or landscape construction:

- Are you driven by a desire to service the customer?
- Do you have the ability to move people to action?
- Do you possess the initiative to take charge, make decisions and see things through to completion?
- Are you a TEAM player?

If you answer "Yes" to all of these questions, join the winning TEAM!

We offer:

- Excellent wages and benefits
- 401(k) Retirement Plan
- Advancement from within our organization
- A secure future in this well-established organization

Apply at:
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Smallwood Landscape, Inc.
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Naples, Florida 34109
941/597-8136/FAX 941/597-4384
Drug Free Workplace/EOE

WANTED FOR THE ISLAND OF BERMUDA

Qualified Landscape Crew Leaders & Gardeners We are looking for young energetic team players who have experience with hardscaping, softscaping, maintenance and irrigation. Applicants should hold an Associate or a Bachelor degree in Landscape Architecture, Horticulture or Landscape Management. Send resume by fax, e-mail or mail.

Sousa's Lawn Care and Design
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P.O. Box PG 130
Paget PG BX Bermuda

LANDSCAPE FOREPERSONS

A fast growing, full-service landscape contractor in Vail, Colorado, is seeking qualified individuals to fill maintenance and installation positions in the spring of 1998. A minimum of two years experience and/or a related college degree. Salary commensurate to experience. Benefits available. Bilingual a plus. Please mail or fax resume to: Johnnie's Garden, Inc., P.O. Box 5115, Vail, CO 81658, fax 970/827-5696, phone 970/827-9200. E.O.E.

MANAGEMENT POSITION

Colorado full-service landscape and tree maintenance company in business since 1959 has a management position for our arbor and plant health care departments. Must have a two- or four-year related degree, three to five years of work experience, good communications skills and ability to manage and motivate people. Excellent compensation and benefits for this year round position. Contact Lee at RB Landscape and Tree Service Co., 1970 S. Valentia St., Denver, CO 80231, 303/745-8286 or fax 303/745-8180.

INDUSTRY EVENTS

TURF & LANDSCAPE CONFERENCE

THE CONNECTICUT GROUNDSKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

announces its
ANNUAL TURF AND LANDSCAPE CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW
Wednesday, February 18, 1998
at the Hartford Civic Center in Hartford, CT

For information write:
CGKA, P.O. Box 954
Cheshire, CT 06410
or call or fax the office 203/699-9912

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To grow a business in today's competitive marketplace you need to watch both sides of the ledger. . . costs as well as sales. That's where Scag commercial mowers can really add to your balance sheet. Take the exciting new Turf Tiger for example. No other mower in its class offers the awesome power and performance of our newest zero turn rider. And like all Scag mowers, it's made to run day after day, season after season, with easy field serviceability, high productivity and consistent quality. And that cuts costs.

If you're looking for better bottom line performance, then you need a mower that offers better maneuverability, precision cutting and faster speeds. A mower you can count on every time you put it on a job. From walk behind and 3-wheel riders to the awesome Turf Tiger, the mower you're looking for is Scag.

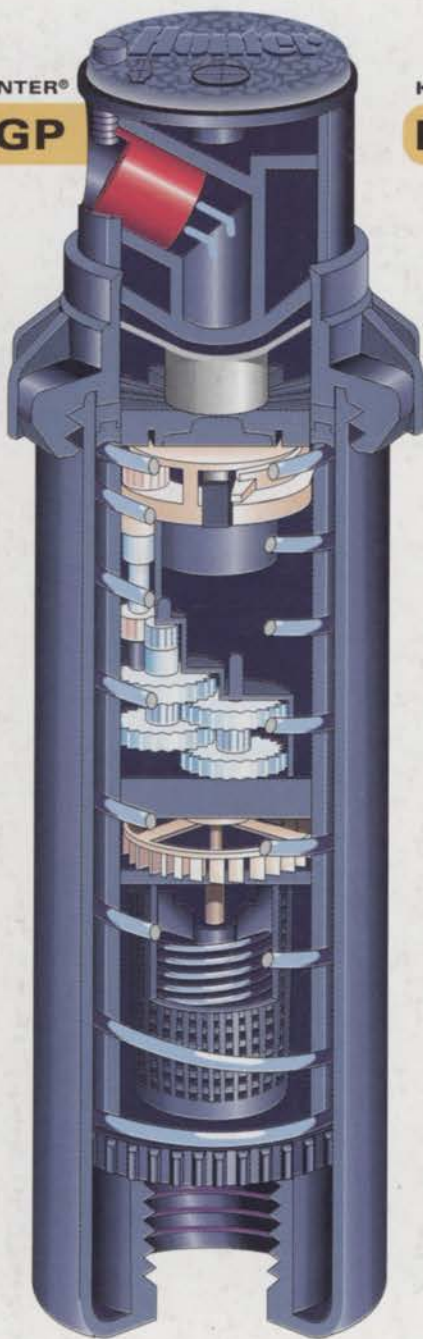
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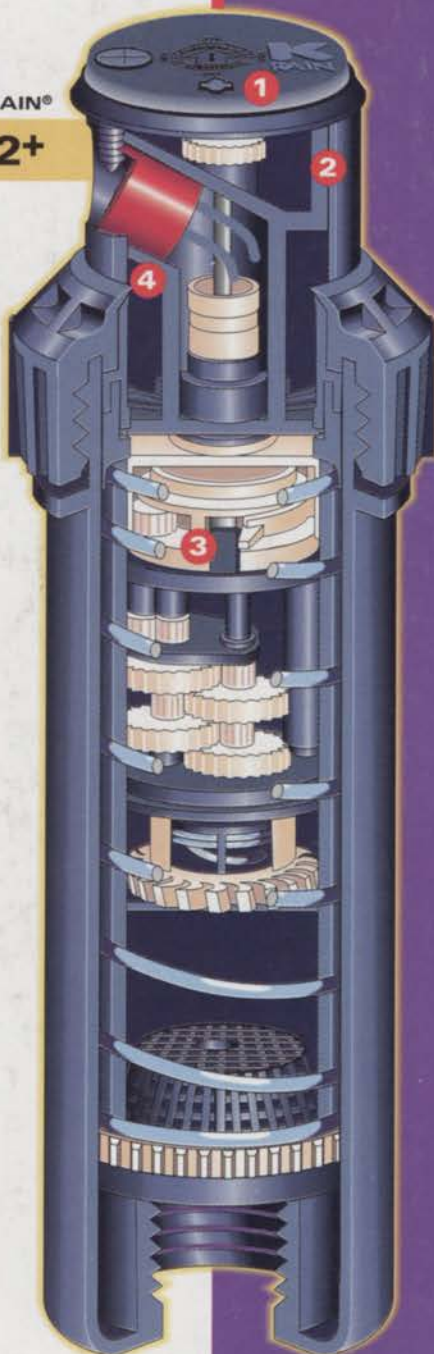
HEAD TO HEAD

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K2+



1 PATENTED ARC SET

A K-Rain exclusive. Arc of rotation is clearly indicated on top. Adjustable from 30° to 360° with riser in up or down position. Turret may be rotated or "ratcheted" to determine arc setting.

2 5 INCH POP-UP

The only gear drive on the market with a full 5" riser that pops up through even the tallest turf. The can height is virtually equal in size to most other gear drives, yet K-Rain pops up an *extra inch*.

3 PATENTED REVERSING MECHANISM

Provides instantaneous start from previous stopping position. (This Patented* mechanism licensed to Hunter.) *U.S. Patent No. 5,417,370 Carl L.C. Kah, Jr.

4 EXCELLENT NOZZLE PERFORMANCE

Nozzles deliver a superior fall out pattern. #3 nozzle tested by C.I.T. at 180° pattern, 30 PSI, gave up to 98% coefficient of uniformity. (Complete test data available upon request.)

K-RAIN QUALITY AND FEATURES ARE SUPERIOR! JUST ASK OUR CONTRACTORS AND DISTRIBUTORS. (Send for list of references)

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