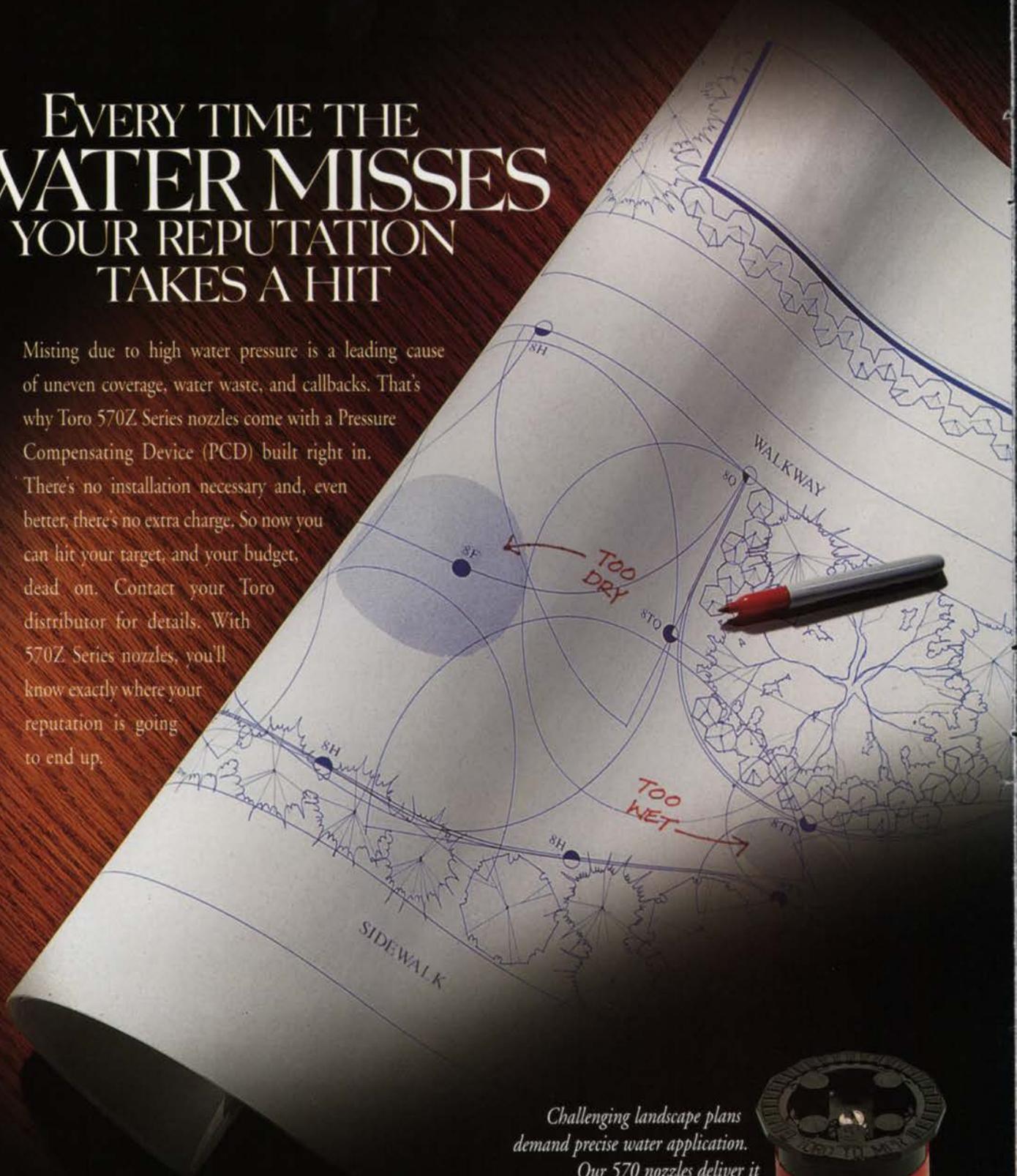


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Cover Photo

by Mary L. Buck,
Duluth, Ga.



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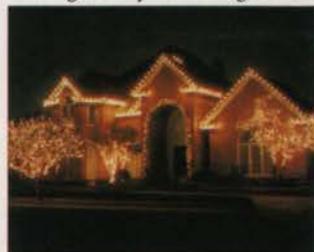
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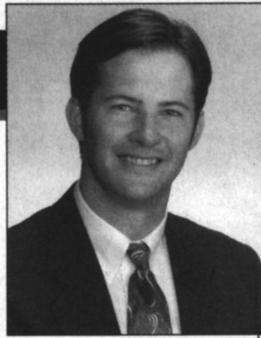
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Bob West
Editor

hear the stories all of the time about companies that practice poor business skills and, in turn, treat customers or prospective customers so poorly that the entire industry suffers a blow to its image. And call me naïve, but I never really thought such contractors existed.

Now, I know differently, and what truly concerns me is that the contractor who opened my eyes to this reality did so only after sneaking past a consumer's natural defenses and securing trust, a contract and a deposit.

Naming the offending contractor serves no purpose, but I think it is important to relay how this contractor treated two customers.

These customers solicited proposals from three area contractors for a \$4,000 installation job.

The contractor they hired for the job impressed them with its professionalism, friendliness and qualifications. This contractor was in a perfect position to do a quality installation and secure a source of positive referrals.

So the contract was signed, a check for one-third the price of the job was written and a date for the project's installation was agreed upon. The customers took the day off from work to be available at home in the event a problem or question would arise. And, a problem did arise – the contractor never showed up to do the job on the scheduled day. Or the next day. Or the day after. And, for three days, repeated phone calls by the customers – customers who have already paid \$1,300 – were not returned.

Finally, the contractor called his customers and said a big job had come up, which prevented their installation from taking place.

Now, don't get me wrong. I understand that sometimes unexpected circumstances arise that wreak havoc with schedules. And, certainly, \$4,000 jobs do not make or break a business. But the second that a contractor adopts the opinion that customer phone calls don't need to be returned or the contractor loses sight of the magnitude of any \$4,000 expenditure for a homeowner, that contractor has lost sight of what a service industry is all about.

The customers ultimately got their landscape installed, albeit 11 days after the scheduled installation. And they are pleased with the work that was done. But they certainly have no plans to refer this contractor to their friends, and this experience has done nothing to improve their image of the landscape profession.

Instead, I wish these customers would have helped better our industry. I wish they would've cancelled their deposit check and fired this contractor. I wish they would have sent the message that customers, whether they're spending \$400, \$4,000 or \$4 million deserved to be treated with the utmost care.

Bob West

Lawn & Landscape

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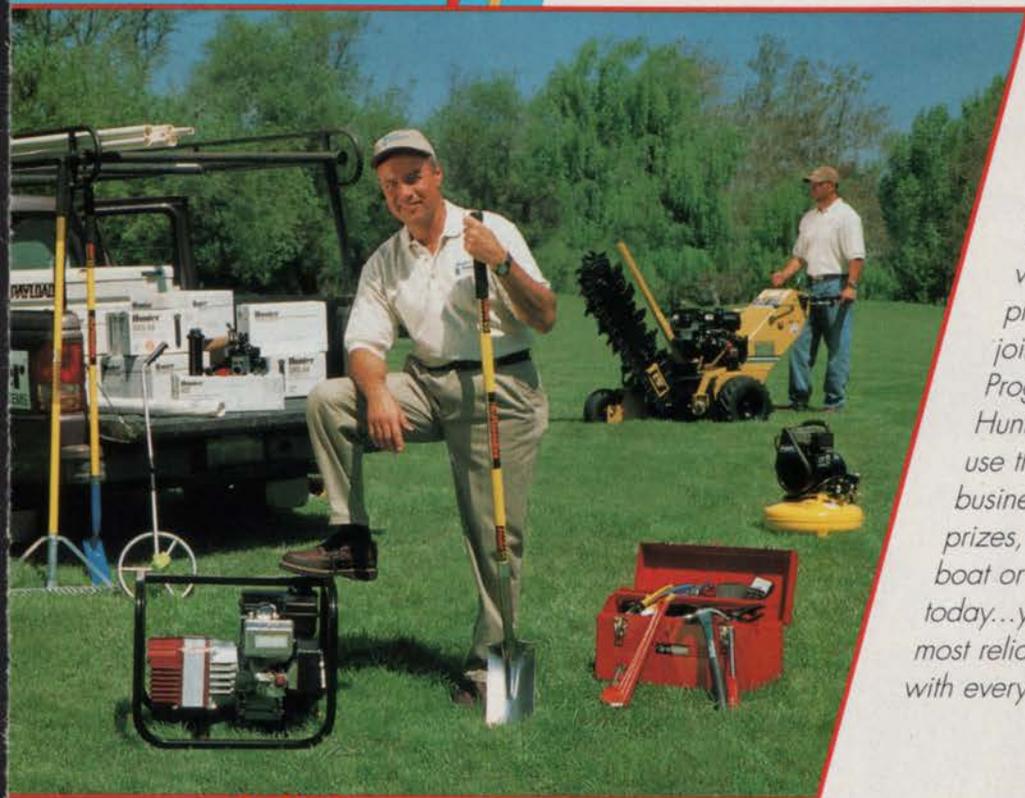
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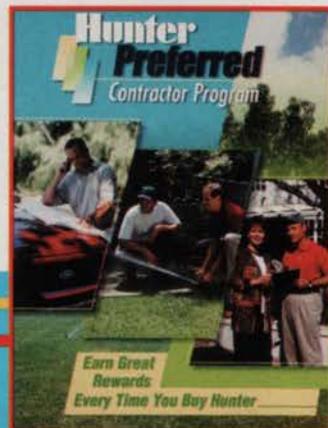
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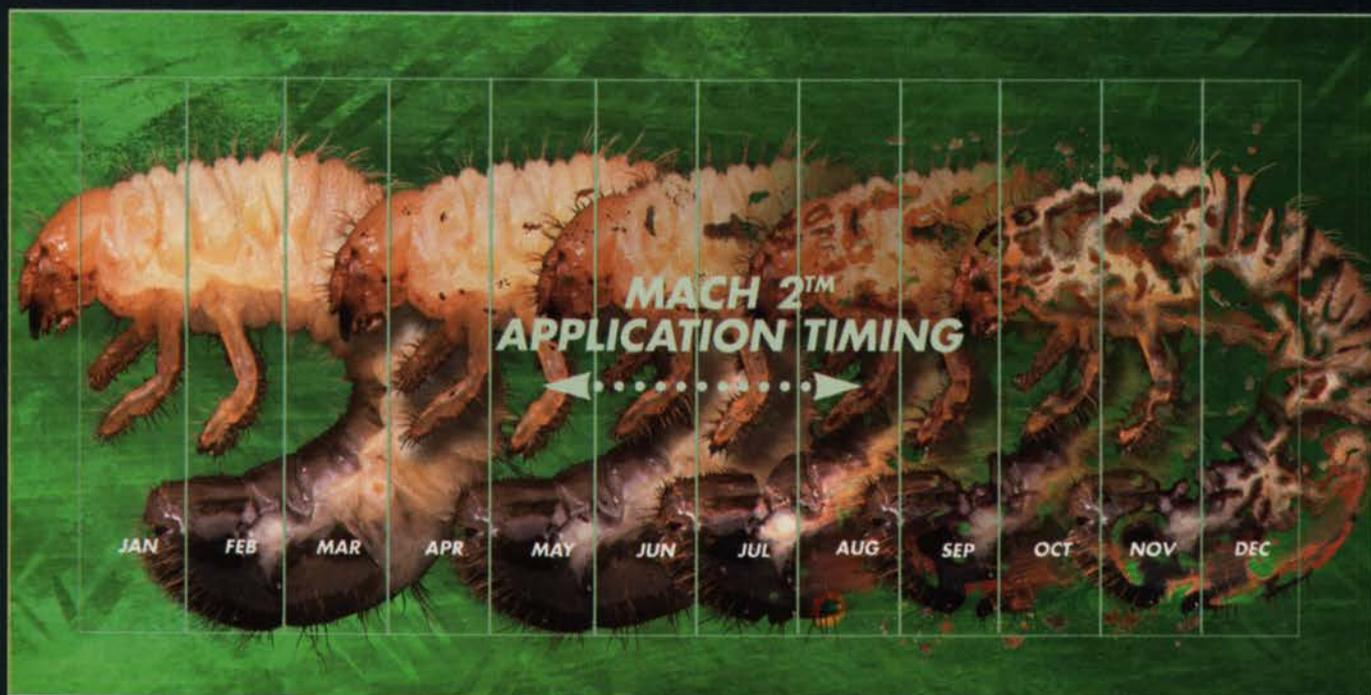
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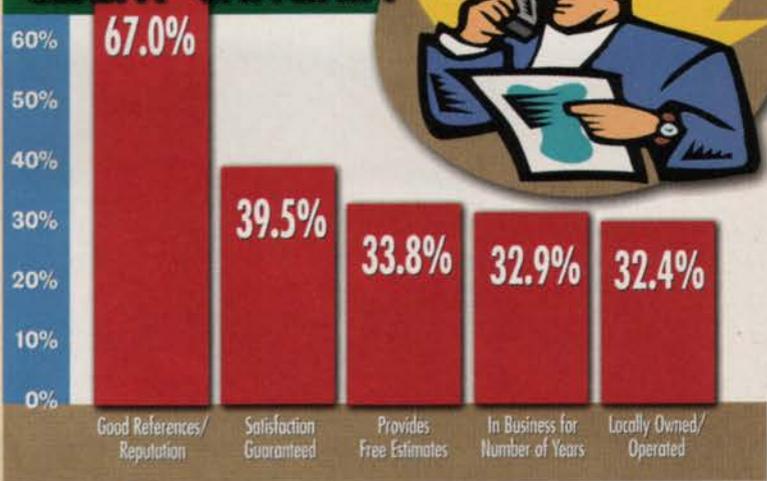
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GETTING THE JOB

When it comes to earning a contract from a prospective client, knowing what matters to that client is crucial because each client's needs are different. A Gallup poll surveyed clients of landscape companies to identify their most important reasons for hiring a landscape company.

The value of a quality referral was never more evident than in this survey, where 67 percent of landscape customers ranked it the most important reason for selecting a landscape company. A satisfaction guarantee, receiving a free estimate, a company's long-term history and it being locally owned and operated were also key criteria, although none were cited by more than 40 percent of the respondents.

CLIENT CRITERIA



(Source: Gallup)

TRUGREEN-LANDCARE CONTINUES BUYING

MEMPHIS, TENN. — The next wave has begun.

TruGreen-LandCare announced seven more acquisitions: Landscape Resource, Charlotte, N.C.; Environmental Landscape Services, Tucker, Ga.; GLM Landscaping, Tampa, Fla.; The Green Company, Lewisville, Texas; Stanford Landscape, Simi Valley, Calif.; J.C. Vallee Landscape, Encinitas, Calif., and Pacific Environments, Cotati, Calif.

The seven acquisitions represent nearly \$15 million in

contracts for TruGreen-LandCare, but they are probably just the start of a busy second quarter for the company.

At the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute annual meeting, Paul Anderegg, executive vice president/chief operating officer, said TruGreen-LandCare's parent company, ServiceMaster, directed him to acquire \$80 million worth of landscape companies in the third quarter of 1999.

Anderegg said ServiceMaster's demands are driven

by the fact that TruGreen-Chem-Lawn and TruGreen-LandCare represent 30 percent of its parent company's revenues and approximately 50 percent of its profits.

"We estimate that we have captured 35 to 40 percent of the professional lawn care market, so landscape services are clearly where we see our growth opportunities," Anderegg added.

SEED RESEARCH, ADVANTA JOIN FORCES

CORVALLIS, ORE. — The turf seed industry saw another step in its continued consolidation when Seed Research of Oregon and Advanta Seeds Pacific announced a marketing and research agreement that essentially represents an acquisition by SRO of Advanta's products.

Under terms of the deal,

SRO acquired Advanta's turfgrass marketing group and assumed responsibility for Advanta's turf and forage seed production. SRO will then

'Landscape services are clearly where we see our growth opportunities.'
— Anderegg

pay a royalty on sales of these products to Advanta.

Regarding the research, Advanta will focus its efforts on tall fescues, bluegrasses and perennial ryegrasses, while SRO will focus on bentgrasses and fine fescues.

Scott Harer, who has moved from Advanta to SRO as part of the deal, said this arrangement allows the two companies to avoid duplicating research efforts and resources as the turf seed suppliers see their margins continue to decrease.

(continued on page 10)



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MARKET TRENDS

(continued from page 8)

Proceeds from the sale of the products available through the arrangement will be split between the two companies although the exact share for each company was not available.

"Advanta is highly respected in the turf seed industry and the company has made a significant investment in biotechnology research, which opens up some exciting possibilities," noted Tom Pape, vice president and general manager, SRO.

GOV. VENTURA VEToes RAIN SENSOR BILL

ST. PAUL, MINN. — A bill that would have made Minne-

sota a pioneer in irrigation was body slammed by the new governor. The bill, proposed by the Minnesota Nursery and Landscape Association, would have required all new landscape irrigation systems be installed with a rain sensor, but it was vetoed by Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura.

"MNLA appreciates the governor's concern for government intrusion into the marketplace," noted Bob Fitch, MNLA executive director. "However, our members believe the great environmental benefits of this bill outweigh concern about government intrusion."

The bill had passed the state senate by a vote of 58-4 and the state House 112-19.

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.

AUG. 14 ILCA Certified Landscape Technician Examination, Joliet Junior College, Ill. Contact: 630/472-2851.

AUG. 17 Cornell Field Day, Ithaca, N.Y. Contact: 607/255-1792.

AUG. 18 OTF/OSU Research Field Day, Columbus, Ohio. Contact: 740/452-4541.

AUG. 18 Michigan Turfgrass Field Day, East Lansing, Mich. Contact: 517/321-1660.

AUG. 24, 31 "Building with Trees" seminars, Lincoln, Neb. Contact: 402/474-5655.

AUG. 25 Michigan Nursery and Landscape Association's Golf Classic, Bath, Mich. Contact: 800/879-6652.

AUG. 25 Ohio Landscapers Association Hands-on National Certification Test, Wooster, Ohio. Contact: 440/717-0002.

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AUG. 25-29 ANLA Landscape Operations Tour, Baltimore. 202/789-2900.

AUG. 26 Indiana State Lawn Care Association Summer Field Day, Carmel, Ind. Contact: 317/575-9010.

AUG. 27-29 ALCA's Human Resources Symposium, Dallas, Texas. Contact: 800/395-2522.

AUG. 27-29 1999 Farwest Show and Ornamentals Northwest Seminars, Portland, Ore. Contact: 800/342-6401.

AUG. 31-SEPT. 3 Building Cities of Green 1999, Seattle, Wash. Contact: 202/955-4500.

SEPT. 1-4 California Interior Plantscape Association's Annual Conference and

Exhibitor Showcase, Long Beach, Calif. Contact: 707/462-2276.

SEPT. 8-12 RISE Ninth Annual Meeting, Avon, Colo. Contact: 202/872-3860.

SEPT. 9-10 Arizona Nursery Association and Arizona Municipal Water Users Association Education Conference, Phoenix, Ariz. Contact: 602/966-1610.

SEPT. 10-11 Tennessee Nurserymen's Association Annual Conference & Trade Show, Nashville, Tenn. Contact: 615/726-4001.

SEPT. 12-16 ASLA Annual Meeting & Expo, Boston, Mass. Contact: 202/898-2444.

SEPT. 13-17 Intensive Turfgrass Management Program, Riverside, Calif. Contact: 800/442-4990.

SEPT. 14-15 Turfgrass and Landscape Research Conferences and Field Days, Riverside, Calif. Contact: 909/787-3575.

SEPT. 14-16 Northern Plant Symposium, East Lansing, Mich. Contact: 800/879-6652.

SEPT. 15 Virginia Tech's Hampton Roads Agricultural Research and Extension Center's Annual Field Day, Virginia Beach, Va. Contact: 757/363-3906.

SEPT. 16-18 Florida Nursery & Allied Trade Show, Orlando. Contact: 407/295-7994.

SEPT. 16-19 Lighting for Landscapes, Troy, N.Y. Contact: 518/276-8716.

SEPT. 29-OCT. 2 American Society of Consulting Arborists Annual Conference, San Antonio. Contact: 301/947-0483.

SEPT. 30-DEC. 16 Arborists' and Tree Workers' Certification Preparation Courses, Brea, Calif. Contact: 909/656-3431.

OCT. 2 New Jersey Landscape Contractors Association Certified Landscape Technicians Exam, HoHoKus, N.J. Contact: 201/703-3600.

OCT. 3-5 American Nursery & Landscape Association 1999 Legislative Leadership Conference, Washington, D.C. Contact: 202/789-2900.

OCT. 6-7 Southern California Turfgrass Council's Turfgrass, Landscape and Equipment Expo, Costa Mesa, Calif. Contact: 800/650-9596.

OCT. 6-7 The National Landscape & Nursery Expo, Baltimore, Md. Contact: 800/252-4757.

AG CENSUS SHOWS JUMP IN NURSERY SALES

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Americans continue to boost their spending on plants, according to the 1997 Census of Agriculture just released.

The study reported that nursery, greenhouse and floriculture crop sales totaled \$10.9 billion in 1997, up 43.4 percent from 1992.

These plants were produced by nearly 34,000 farm locations nationwide that produce nursery products as their primary crop.

GRIFFIN, NATION'S AG TEAM UP

VALDOSTA, GA. — Griffin L.L.C. hopes to expand its current fungicide lineup and continue its active pursuit of

the turf and ornamental markets by entering the chlorothalonil fungicide market through a joint venture with Nation's Ag. The venture includes the sourcing, development, registration and marketing of chlorothalonil-based fungicides in flowable, dry flowable, combination and technical product formulations.

The first products are expected to be available globally in the fourth quarter of 1999 with additional products coming to market as registrations are received.

"The addition of chlorothalonil to Griffin's existing fungicide line will help us offer complete disease control solutions, particularly in the turf market," noted Owen Towne, global business director for specialty products.

DEMAND GROWS FOR LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Employment at U.S. landscape architecture firms will increase more than 21 percent through the year 2006 due to an anticipated growth in construction, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor's 1998-99 Occupation Outlook Handbook.

According to the handbook, new graduates can expect to face competition for jobs in large landscape archi-

ture firms. The best opportunities will be for landscape architects who develop strong technical and communication skills and knowledge of environmental codes and regulations.

"It's exciting to see hard statistics validating what we're hearing anecdotally all of the time — our members just can't hire enough new staff to keep up with the demand," said Peter Kirsch, executive vice president, American Society of Landscape Architects, Washington, D.C. The ASLA 1998 Salary Survey reported that job offers for new hires are abundant with 20 percent of all re-

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LAWN & LANDSCAPE magazine delivers superior, total coverage of the continually evolving professional lawn and landscape contractor market, from in-depth business trends and technical research reports to market analysis and new product introductions. For 19 years, L&L has provided industry presidents, business owners and top-level managers the most up-to-date information needed to effectively run their businesses.

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WALKER Dealer, Everette Schultz, H & B Equipment and Rental, Saginaw, Michigan, delivers the 7th Walker to Jonny and Cindy Heinz, Jonny Heinz Landscaping, spring 1999.

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MARKET TRENDS

spondents reporting that they are out to hire more landscape architects.

In recent years, only 1,200 to 1,300 students graduate annually with a degree in landscape architecture – a number that has held steady in the last few years, despite the strong job market. The average offer to recent graduates is \$22,775 from the private sector and

\$25,730 from the public sector. Survey results show the average salary of a landscape architect in America today at \$52,886.

Supporting the handbook's claim, last fall, landscape architecture was also named a runner-up hot track profession by *U.S. News & World Report* in its Oct. 26, 1998, issue.

(continued on page 16)

ASSOCIATION NEWS

The **Associated Landscape Contractors of America** announced its 1999 Environmental Improvement Awards Program. The program is designed to reward independent landscape contracting professionals who execute quality landscape projects. Deadlines for entries are Aug. 20, 1999, for exterior projects and Sept. 21, 1999, for interior projects. For more information, call: 800/395-2522.

The *Operating Efficiency Study* is offered by the **Professional Lawn Care Association of America**. The study gives lawn and landscape professionals benchmarks against which they can match their performance. For more information, call: 800/458-3466.

The **Ohio Turfgrass Foundation** named Eugene Mayer the 1998 Professional of the Year. Mayer is a turfgrass consultant for The Scotts Company, Marysville, Ohio, and has been with the company since 1961. This annual award is the foundation's highest honor.

Six scholarships were issued at the **Sports Turf Managers Association's** 10th Annual Conference and Exhibition. The recipients included: Chad Follis, University of Missouri-Columbia; Sarah Martin, Colorado State University; Stacy Bonos, Rutgers University; John Sorochoan, Michigan State University; Marshall Jennings, Mississippi State University; Jeffrey Limburg, Michigan State University.

Nitroform®...In a Class By Itself



for the life of the soil!

There is a difference in nitrogen sources and there are none that compare to **NITROFORM®**. "**NITROFORM®** is the most capable nitrogen source ever made. University research shows a 40% increase in roots when using **NITROFORM®**," says Jim King, President and CEO, Regal Chemical Company, Alpharetta, GA.

We have been using **NITROFORM®** in our RegalStar® II because it feeds the microbes to increase microbial activity and gives an immediate response for root development. No other N source can promote:

- Season-Long Feeding
- Increased Microbial Populations
- Vigorous Rooting
- Reduction of Thatch
- Production of Humus
- Protection of Groundwater



The proof is in the picture. Location: Dunwoody Country Club, Dunwoody, GA. The plug on the left was taken out of the rough where urea-based fertilizers were applied. There was very little build-up of humus and an excessive amount of thatch, versus the plug on the right, where RegalStar® II with Nitroform® was used, which shows a build-up of humus, vigorous roots, no thatch and greener healthier turf.

Microbial activity and root growth are the foundations of building healthier plants. If you would like more information on RegalStar® II and **NITROFORM®**, give me a call, Jim King at 770-475-4837.



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Jim King
President and CEO
Regal Chemical
Company

Bill Womac
CGCS
Dunwoody
Country Club

"We're now in our 18th season using RegalStar® II with Nitroform® and we use this fertilizer combination because we get excellent results and value. Our members expect and get the best playing conditions possible."

— Bill Womac
CGCS Dunwoody Country Club
Dunwoody, GA





G-750 Leaf Vacuum



- Order with the axle kit (shown) for safe towing or without the axle kit for mounting on an existing trailer with mowers, blowers, etc.
 - Heavy-duty impeller breaks up yard waste to reduce trips to the dumpsite.
- Other standard features:*
- Heavy-duty hood protects engine and easily opens for service.
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 - Garden hose hook-up washes debris from the impeller and housing.
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Model P Deicing Spreader



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USE READER SERVICE #16

MARKET TRENDS

(continued from page 14)

IN BUSINESS...

Forest City Tree received the Excellence in Arboriculture Award of Distinction and President's Award from the National Arborist Association... **Melroe Company** began an \$18-million, 138,000-square-foot expansion of two manufacturing facilities... **The Care of Trees** opened an office

in Chicago... **Horizon** purchased Kay's Lawnmower and Kal Distributing of Mesa, Ariz... **CPS Distributors**, Denver, Colo., acquired Western Pipe Supply... **Thomas Brothers Grass, Milberger Turfgrass, Elsberry Greenhouse and C&D Turfgrass** merged to form **Turfgrass America** in Granbury, Texas... **Pursell Technologies** will expand its Sylacauga, Ala., plant... **K-Rain** opened a warehouse in Sacramento. **LL**

PEOPLE

Zeneca Professional Products named **Buddy Camors** business director of the pest control, turf and ornamental business.

American Cyanamid named **Rich Kalik** national accounts manager and **John Thomas** senior sales manager for its Turf & Ornamental Products Group.

Jenny Lee has joined Ball Horticultural Co. as account executive for all Ball plant product marketing communications and photography coordinator for the corporation.

Griffin L.L.C. hired **David Warman** as U.S. sales manager of the turf, nursery and ornamentals for the specialty products group.

Becker-Underwood announced the following: **Cozette Hadley-Rosburg** was promoted to vice president of sales and marketing; **Dan Foor** was appointed western sales territory manager; **Mike Sherman** assumed the responsibility of northeast sales territory manager; **Kurt Winkler** took the responsibility of mid-south sales territory manager; **Todd Schnathorst** was appointed to the position of midwestern sales territory manager and **Larry Butler** was added to the staff as research biologist to the research and development department.

Matt Schiller was named sales manager for Northern California, Nevada and Hawaii at L.R. Nelson Corp.

Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products named **Harold Pinto** managing director of Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products — Europe.



Buddy Camors



Matt Schiller



Team Turfco



Aerate Zero to 33,000 sq. feet in 3,600 seconds!

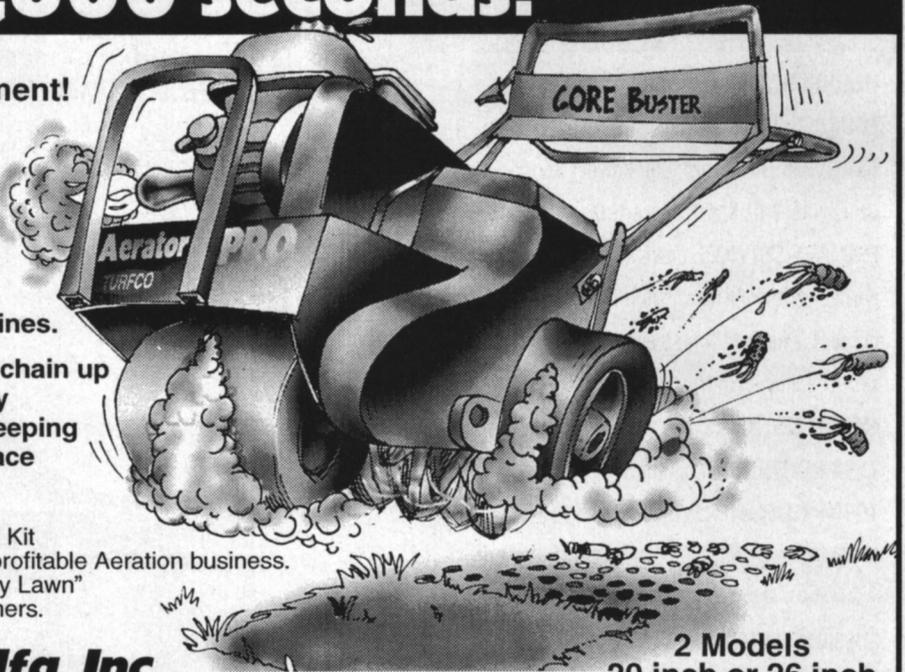
**No More Daily Chain Service!
End Annual Bearing Replacement!**

Speeding down the track will only pay off when you keep the pit-stop time to a minimum.

Competitive machines require daily chain service because they put the drive chain and bearings right down in the dirt between the tines.

The Turfco Aerator design gets the chain up out of that gritty torture chamber by enclosing it in a durable housing keeping it clean all season. Win the profit race with an aerator from Turfco!

Call Now for your **FREE** Getting Started Kit
Step-by-step instructions for starting a profitable Aeration business.
FREE start-up supply of "Why Aerate My Lawn"
brochures for you to mail to your customers.



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Arbor-Nomics Turf, Inc.

HEADQUARTERS: Norcross, Ga.

FOUNDED: 1980

BRANCHES: Jonesboro, Ga., Powder Springs, Ga., Greenville, S.C., Spartanburg, S.C.

PRIMARY SERVICES: Lawn care accounts for 60 percent of the business, while the remaining 40 percent is derived from tree and ornamental services, including tree removal.

EMPLOYEES: 20 - 25

1998 REVENUES: \$1 million

1999 PROJECTED REVENUES: \$1.5 to \$1.6 million

The Company

MISSION STATEMENT: Arbor-Nomics is a customer-driven company, offering superior service to its clients. The goal of this organization is to provide the best customer service in the industry.

FUTURE CHALLENGES: The future for Arbor-Nomics lies in developing its ancillary businesses and developing its employees for future management positions.

Owner/President:

Dick Bare

BACKGROUND: Studied horticulture and arboriculture at The Ohio State University. Started his own business in 1970, then sold it to and worked for Karl Keummerling Associates Inc., a tree trimming business, from 1973-1977. Worked at ChemLawn from 1977-1980, and then founded Arbor-Nomics Inc. in 1980 and Arbor-Nomics Turf, Inc. in 1986.

Dick Bare (right), with Doug Cash (left), steers the company into the future with their high-level of customer service. Photo: Mary Buck

Attention to Details



on. 1
ail

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One irate client was all it took to make Dick Bare realize the importance of superior customer service. During his earlier days as a tree and shrub technician, Bare made a routine stop to do some landscape work for a customer and accidentally pulled a hose through a bed of begonias and ruined several dozen plants. As the client was yelling about the incident, Bare realized that he needed to care more about the details and concentrate on customer service.

"If I was going to go anywhere in this industry, I needed to listen to what customers said," stressed Bare, president of Arbor-Nomics, Norcross, Ga. "From that moment on I started working smarter and my life just turned around."

With several lawn care experiences behind him, Bare began building his business from the ground up, while continually focusing on providing excellent service to his clients. Today, for Bare, it's the little things that count most.

A ROCKY BEGINNING. Growing up in Youngstown, Ohio, Bare used to spend a good deal of his time working at his family's nursery because it kept him from doing chores around the house.

With the experience Bare took away from working at the nursery, he enrolled at The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, where he majored in horticulture and arboriculture and took a handful of business courses.

Once he graduated from college, Bare decided to go into business for himself in the Columbus area. Unfortunately, that only lasted for three years until the company was bought out by Karl Keummerling Associates, a tree trimming business.

"After all of my debts were paid, I cleared \$7,000 from selling the business," Bare noted. "Then I stayed and worked for Karl Keummerling for a few more years."

He stayed with Keummerling until he received a call from ChemLawn, which was starting a tree and shrub spraying division. This was exactly the kind of work Bare had been wanting to do so when ChemLawn made him an offer he couldn't refuse he moved to Chicago, Ill. to become one of the first ChemScape Tree & Shrub managers.

"Unfortunately, the three new branches ChemLawn created lost around \$250,000 each in the first year," Bare lamented. "So they closed us down and we lost our jobs. Somehow I managed to stay onboard with ChemLawn and they transferred me down to Atlanta to become a spray technician."

Bare remained a technician for a couple of years, but he still wanted to work his way into a management position. Finally, after finding success with a new route he had been given, he received an offer from ChemLawn to take a management job in Pittsburgh.

But, after already moving several times, Bare decided that he

Dick Bare's focus on providing great customer service speaks for his company's success.

By Angela Dyer

would rather stay in Atlanta. So he opened Arbor-Nomics and went out on his own once again.

THE BARE PHILOSOPHY. "Arbor-Nomics is about a concentration on the customer," Bare remarked. "ChemLawn was more

growth driven and I felt the focus should be on the customer. But, for a large corporation, I have a lot of respect for ChemLawn."

Arbor-Nomics relies on old-fashioned customer service to keep the business strong. Bare said that it isn't uncommon for him, along with Doug Cash, turf general man-

ager, and Hugh Tyer, tree service manager, to give out their home phone numbers to customers. Their goal is to be as accessible as possible.

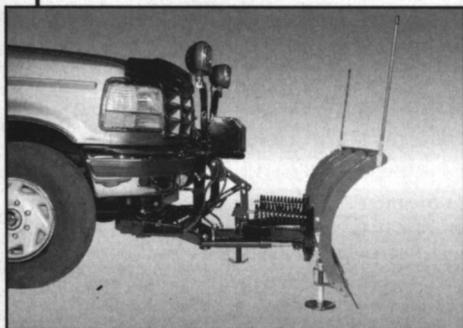
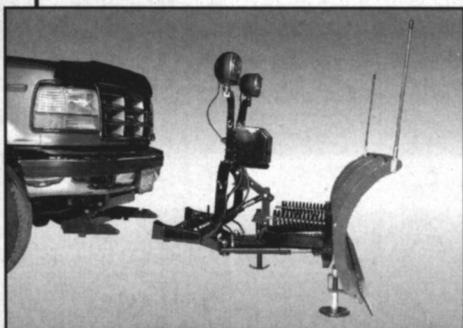
"Technicians need to think like the customer and worry about the things the customer would worry about," Bare added.

This customer concern prompted Bare to create a newsletter that he calls "The Buggette," which is sent out to all of his clients. He publishes the newsletter six times per year to coincide with the six lawn care

(continued on page 27)

Superior Snow & Ice Control

Hiniker Quick Hitch Snow Plow Mounting System



Fast & Easy!

Be ready to move snow in seconds with the Hiniker Quick-Hitch plow mount system. Self-aligning drive-in receivers and lever lock retaining pins make mounting easier than ever. When you're done plowing, lights and power pack come off with the plow.

1. Drive truck forks into plow receiver.
2. Pull locking lever & raise stand.
3. Plug-in 2 connections, & you're ready to roll!

Provide complete snow and ice control with a Hiniker Salt & Sand Spreader. It's completely self-contained for quick & easy installation. Engine & hydraulic powered units available.



The Extracurricular Advantage

One might think that running a million-dollar organization would keep someone busy enough. But Dick Bare, president of Arbor-Nomics Inc., Norcross, Ga., doesn't let that interfere with his other activities in the lawn care industry.

When Bare moved to the Atlanta area from Columbus, Ohio, he was disappointed to find that there were no local green industry organizations to join. He had been involved in the Columbus group and it benefitted him.

"You learn a lot about running a business just from talking to other people in the industry," Bare stated. "There was no organization like this in Atlanta when I got there so I made some calls and we started to hold meetings."

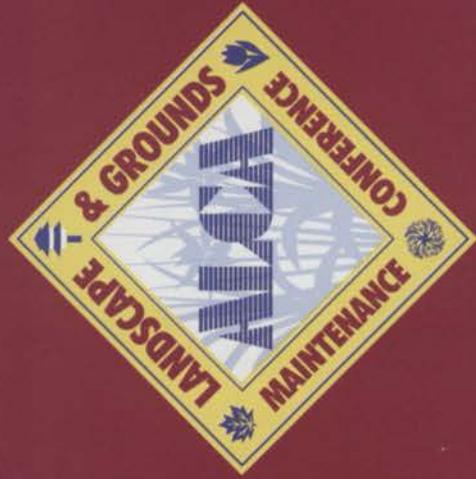
From there, the group — now known as the Metro Atlanta Landscape and Turf Association — just started growing on its own, according to Bare. Now, the group, with more than 500 member companies, has expanded to the point of needing a full-time executive administrator.

"I've learned more from MALTA about running a business than I did in all of my college classes," Bare stressed. — Angela Dyer

ALCA's Landscape & Grounds Maintenance Conference

Held in conjunction with the

GIE Green Industry EXPO



**Renaissance
Harborplace Hotel
and Baltimore
Convention Center
Baltimore, MD
November 13-16, 1999**

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See Registration Form Inside*



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Dynamic speakers and vital seminars built for the business needs of landscape contractors are exactly what the LGM conference will unfurl in Baltimore.



PHOTOS: RICK LIPPENHOLZ

ALCA is in business to help landscape professionals succeed in the Green Industry. That's why we've put together an extraordinary conference — providing answers to your business needs.

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- Learn from exceptional business sessions and acquire new skills for your business's growth and success.
- Gain incredible insight from dynamic speakers known for their expertise, training and leadership.
- Participate in unparalleled networking — one of the most powerful tools offered at the conference.
- Gain free admission to the Green Industry EXPO — one of the largest Green Industry trade shows.

"SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE"

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1999

1:00PM - 5:30PM TOUR LEADING LANDSCAPE COMPANIES
6:00PM - 7:00PM PRE-CONFERENCE RECEPTION

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1999

7:30AM - 1:30PM ALCA CERTIFICATION EXAM
8:30AM - 12:00NOON STRATEGIC PLANNING SEMINAR
8:30AM - 12:00NOON DESIGN/BUILD SEMINAR
8:30AM - 12:00NOON HUMAN RESOURCES SEMINAR
8:30AM - 12:00NOON HISPANIC WORKFORCE SEMINAR
1:00PM - 1:30PM CONFERENCE ORIENTATION
1:30PM - 3:30PM GENERAL SESSION
3:45PM - 5:30PM 4 EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS
6:30PM - 7:30PM ALCA WELCOME RECEPTION

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1999

6:30AM - 8:00AM OPTIONAL BREAKFAST WITH CHAMPIONS
8:30AM - 10:00AM 5 EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS
10:15AM - 12:00PM 5 EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS

12:30PM - 2:30PM LUNCH AT THE GIE OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT DEMO

1:00PM - 5:00PM GIE OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT DEMONSTRATION
1:00PM - 7:00PM CERTIFICATION TEST
7:00PM - 11:00PM MONTE CARLO PARTY

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1999

6:30AM - 8:00AM OPTIONAL BREAKFAST WITH CHAMPIONS
8:30AM - 10:00AM 5 EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS
10:30AM - 12:00NOON GIE KEYNOTE: "PLAYING TO WIN"
12:00NOON - 6:00PM GREEN INDUSTRY EXPO
6:30PM - 7:30PM ALCA AWARDS RECEPTION
7:30PM - 11:00PM ALCA AWARDS BANQUET

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1999 GREEN TEAM DAY

6:30AM - 8:00AM OPTIONAL BREAKFAST WITH CHAMPIONS
8:30AM - 10:00AM 5 EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS
9:00AM - 3:00PM GREEN INDUSTRY EXPO
2:00PM - 3:30PM GIE GENERAL SESSION

"Attending the annual ALCA conference has played a critical role in the success of our business. We bring as many key personnel as possible for exposure to the networking, educational sessions, and industry enthusiasm. Meeting with successful business leaders outside our own market has ultimately reshaped the day-to-day operations of our company."

BILL GORDON
SIGNATURE LANDSCAPE



1999 Landscape & Grounds Maintenance Conference

held in conjunction with Green Industry EXPO

November 13-16, 1999 • Baltimore, MD
Renaissance Harborplace Hotel and Baltimore Convention Center

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1999

1:00pm – 5:30pm
OPTIONAL TOURS OF LEADING LANDSCAPE COMPANIES

Limited Participation — Register early to ensure attendance!

6:00pm – 7:00pm
PRE-CONFERENCE RECEPTION

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1999

7:30am – 1:30pm
ALCA CERTIFICATION EXAM

Due to a high demand of requests, the certification exam will be given on Saturday and Sunday at the Renaissance Hotel.

8:30am – 12:00noon
HISPANIC WORKFORCE SEMINAR

"Labor Solutions for the New Millennium"
 Angelo Mimo, Summit

8:30am – 12:00noon
OPTIONAL DESIGN/BUILD SEMINAR

"Limitations Are the Result of Our Unbeliefs — Believe!"
 Gary Kinman, Kinman Associates, Inc.

8:30am – 12:00noon
OPTIONAL HUMAN RESOURCES SEMINAR

"Critical Ingredients for Survival & Growth — Talented People"
 Ed Ryan, MPR Incorporated

8:30am – 12:00noon

OPTIONAL STRATEGIC PLANNING SEMINAR

"How to Build A Sure-Fire Business Strategy"
 Kevin Kehoe, Kevin Kehoe and Company

1:00pm – 1:30pm

CONFERENCE ORIENTATION

1:30pm – 3:30pm

ALCA GENERAL SESSION

"Entrepreneurial Teambuilding for Strategic Success"
 Lawrence Wayne King, Ph.D., Lawrence King and Associates

3:45pm – 5:30pm

4 CONCURRENT SESSIONS

1. Business/Financial Management
 ALCA Advantages Panel

2. Sales and Marketing
 "Three Strategies for Building Your Company for the Next Five Years"

3. Human Resources
 "A Critical Managerial Function — Growth & Retention of Talent"

4. Human Resources
 "Entrepreneurial Leadership: The Role of the CEO"

6:30pm – 7:30pm
ALCA WELCOME RECEPTION

8:30am – 10:00am

5 CONCURRENT SESSIONS

1. Business/Financial Management
 "Can You Afford Your Image? Can Your Customer Afford You?" (Part 1)

2. Sales and Marketing
 "Scoring in the Red Zone (Part 1) — How to Generate More Qualified Leads"

3. Human Resources
 "The Tool Kit for Landscape Leaders"

4. Human Resources
 "The Industry is Changing! What Are You Going to Do About It?"

5. Maintenance
 "Improving Efficiency & Profits in a Maintenance Business"

10:15am – 12:00noon

5 CONCURRENT SESSIONS

1. Business/Financial Management
 "Can You Afford Your Image? Can Your Customer Afford You?" (Part 2)

2. Sales and Marketing
 "Scoring in the Red Zone (Part 2) — How to Open More Relationships"

3. Human Resources
 "The Tool Kit for Landscape Leaders" (Part 2)

4. Human Resources
 "The Impact of Clear Values on the Bottom Line"

5. Maintenance
 "Improving Efficiency & Profits in a Maintenance Business" (Part 2)

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1999

6:30am – 8:00am

OPTIONAL BREAKFAST WITH CHAMPIONS

Limited attendance

12:30pm - 2:30pm

LUNCH AT THE GIE OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT DEMONSTRATION

1:00pm - 5:00pm

GIE OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT DEMONSTRATION

1:00pm - 7:00pm

ALCA CERTIFICATION EXAM

7:00pm - 11:00pm

OPTIONAL PARTY — MONTE CARLO NIGHT

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1999

6:30am - 8:00am

OPTIONAL BREAKFAST WITH CHAMPIONS

Limited attendance

8:30am - 10:00am

5 CONCURRENT SESSIONS

1. Business/Financial Management

"Compensation Planning for Independent Businesses"

2. Sales and Marketing

"The SALES MIND: How to Leverage Transactions"

3. Human Resources

"Getting Results — Not Excuses"

4. Design/Build

"Expanding Your Business with Subcontractors"

5. Maintenance

"How to Thrive as an Independent in the Midst of Consolidation"

10:30am - 12:00noon

GIE KEYNOTE: "PLAYING TO WIN"

Featuring Roger Crawford

12:00noon - 6:00pm

GREEN INDUSTRY EXPO

6:30pm - 7:30pm

ALCA AWARDS RECEPTION

7:30pm - 11:00pm

ALCA AWARDS BANQUET

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1999

GREEN TEAM DAY

6:30am - 8:00am

OPTIONAL BREAKFAST WITH CHAMPIONS

Limited attendance

8:30am - 10:00am

5 CONCURRENT SESSIONS

1. "Workforce 2020"

2. "Profitable Project Management — How to Win Once the Project is Sold"

3. "How to Motivate Your Crews"

4. "Profitable Snow Plowing"

5. "Techniques for Employing a Legal Hispanic Workforce"

9:00am - 3:00pm

GREEN INDUSTRY EXPO

2:00pm - 3:30pm

GIE GENERAL SESSION

"Mirthmaking — the role of humor in your work and life"

Mark Mayfield

TRAVEL AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION

HOTEL INFORMATION

To reserve your room at the Renaissance Harborplace Hotel, please call Travel Worldwide Network at 800-631-9675 or online at www.travelworldwidene.com. Be sure to ask for the ALCA rate. Room rates are single \$148 and Double \$168.

Please be sure to make your reservation early to guarantee room availability and your special ALCA room rate.

AIR TRAVEL INFORMATION

Special air discounts are available. Please contact Travel Worldwide Network at 800-631-9675 or visit their website at www.travelworldwidene.com. Be sure to ask for the ALCA LGM Conference rate.

CANCELLATION POLICY

We understand that occasionally events occur that prevent you from attending the conference or event for which you have already registered. If you find that you are unable to attend, you may:

- Send a substitute. Substitutions may be made at any time, even on-site. Please contact ALCA prior to the Conference or go to the ALCA on-site registration desk.
- Should you prefer a refund, we will gladly refund the entire fee, provided cancellation is received on or before November 1, 1999. Cancellations received after November 1, 1999 will incur a \$25 processing fee.

HOW TO REGISTER

ONLINE: Visit our website at www.alca.org and click on "Events" section.

BY FAX: Fax registration form to 703-736-9668 — 24 hours a day. Please include credit card information.

BY MAIL: Mail registration form with payment to: ALCA, 150 Elden Street, Suite 270, Herndon, VA 20170.

BY PHONE: Call 800-395-ALCA(2522) or 703-736-9666 with credit card information.



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Attention Registrants! Registering for the conference has never been easier! ALCA has new, secure and reliable credit card processing (for all events) online at www.alca.org. While in the site, be sure to check out the excellent resources available to you online. Just another way ALCA is leading the way in the information age of the Green Industry!

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Register Early and Save!

See registration form for details

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Choose a learning track matched to your occupation or mix/match and attend various sessions in each of the tracks offered. Information-packed tracks offered this year are:

- Business/Financial Management
- Human Resources/Personnel Management
- Installation, Design/Build and Maintenance
- Sales and Marketing

BREAKFAST WITH CHAMPIONS

Register Soon! Limited Attendance

As a conference favorite, begin your morning by participating in roundtable discussions to exchange ideas, explore new solutions, and build on successful strategies. You won't want to miss this incredibly beneficial event, where the camaraderie doesn't get any better! Enjoy a breakfast buffet while covering one or more of the following topics:

- Time Management Techniques
- Recruiting, Hiring, and Retaining Employees
- Training for Hispanic Workers
- Business Strategies for the Future
- Sales Techniques for Advanced Selling
- Developing a Winning Marketing Plan
- Expanding and Running Branch Offices
- Scheduling and Organizing Crews
- Advertising, PR, and Promotions
- Improving Maintenance Productivity
- Equipment Leasing
- Cost Estimating

ALCA RESOURCE ROOM

Explore innovative new ideas with some of the industry's most progressive firms and find solutions for your business problems. A showcase of sales and marketing pieces, publications, sample award entries, and much more!



PHOTO: RICK LIPPENHOLZ



CERTIFICATION:

Enhance your personal credentials and professionalism by becoming certified. Register now to take the Certified Landscape Technician – Interior or Certified Landscape Professional exams at the Conference. Both exams will be given on Sunday, November 14, 1999, 1:00pm - 7:00pm. For a complete certification package, including application, please call the ALCA office at 1-800-395-2522 or visit www.alca.org.

WIN A FREE REGISTRATION!

Register by the Early Bird Deadline (August 31, 1999) and you're eligible to win a FREE REGISTRATION FOR OUR 2000 CONFERENCE! Winner will be randomly selected September 1.

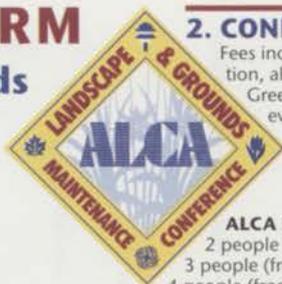
REGISTRATION FORM

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Website: www.alca.org



2. CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEES

Fees include your entire conference participation (Welcome Reception, all Educational Sessions, extensive handout materials and Green Industry Expo admission) with the exception of ticketed events* (see #3 below) which are optional. (Please check appropriate box)

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2 people (from same company)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175 ea	<input type="checkbox"/> \$215 ea
3 people (from same company)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$165 ea	<input type="checkbox"/> \$205 ea
4 people (from same company)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$155 ea	<input type="checkbox"/> \$195 ea
5 or more people (from same company)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$145 ea	<input type="checkbox"/> \$185 ea

NONMEMBER FEE \$285 ea \$325 ea

STUDENT/PROFESSOR (Full-Time) \$55 ea \$70 ea

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Saturday (Member/Nonmember)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$95 ea	<input type="checkbox"/> \$125 ea
Sunday (Member/Nonmember)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$95 ea	<input type="checkbox"/> \$125 ea
Monday (Member/Nonmember)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$95 ea	<input type="checkbox"/> \$125 ea
Tuesday (Green Team Day)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35 ea	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35 ea

Subtotal Registration Fees \$ _____ \$ _____

3. TICKETED EVENTS*

These are optional activities during the conference, with additional charges. Please add to #2 Conference Fee above. (Please check appropriate box)

	Members	Nonmembers	Early Bird (On or before 9/30/99)	Regular (After 9/30/99)
Landscape Facility Tour	<input type="checkbox"/> \$30	<input type="checkbox"/> \$40	<input type="checkbox"/> \$30	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
Saturday Strategic Planning Seminar	<input type="checkbox"/> \$99	<input type="checkbox"/> \$149	<input type="checkbox"/> \$99	<input type="checkbox"/> \$125
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Awards Banquet	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> \$55	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> \$55
Breakfast with Champions (all 3 days)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$60	<input type="checkbox"/> \$70	<input type="checkbox"/> \$60	<input type="checkbox"/> \$65
Outdoor Demo / BBQ Lunch Sunday, 12:30-2:30pm	<input type="checkbox"/> Free	<input type="checkbox"/> Free	<input type="checkbox"/> Free	<input type="checkbox"/> Free

Subtotal Ticketed Events \$ _____ \$ _____

4. JOIN ALCA OR RENEW NOW! (and receive the many benefits of membership, including conference attendance at the low member rate.) Please check appropriate boxes:

CATEGORY	DUES
<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR (Dues are based on annual volume of landscape maintenance/contracting business.)	
<input type="checkbox"/> (Under \$750,000)	\$375
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(as it should appear on badge)

Company _____

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Fax (_____) _____

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1. Owner/President 2. Manager/Supervisor 3. Sales/Marketing
4. Operations 5. Student 6. Other _____

B. Indicate services currently offered by your company or department & services to be expanded: (Check all that apply)

Currently provide:	Plan to expand:	
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	15. <input type="checkbox"/>	Lawn & landscape maintenance
2. <input type="checkbox"/>	16. <input type="checkbox"/>	Landscape installation
3. <input type="checkbox"/>	17. <input type="checkbox"/>	Pest control & fertilization
4. <input type="checkbox"/>	18. <input type="checkbox"/>	Landscape design/build
5. <input type="checkbox"/>	19. <input type="checkbox"/>	Hardscape installation
6. <input type="checkbox"/>	20. <input type="checkbox"/>	Seasonal color installation
7. <input type="checkbox"/>	21. <input type="checkbox"/>	Irrigation installation
8. <input type="checkbox"/>	22. <input type="checkbox"/>	Wildflower plantings
9. <input type="checkbox"/>	23. <input type="checkbox"/>	Outdoor lighting
10. <input type="checkbox"/>	24. <input type="checkbox"/>	Snow removal
11. <input type="checkbox"/>	25. <input type="checkbox"/>	Equipment service/sales
12. <input type="checkbox"/>	26. <input type="checkbox"/>	Nursery/garden center
13. <input type="checkbox"/>	27. <input type="checkbox"/>	Arbor services
14. <input type="checkbox"/>	28. <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please list) _____

C. Your role in purchasing equipment, supplies or services for your company:

1. Final decision 2. Recommend 3. No role

D. Annual volume or budget size:

1. Under \$100,000 5. \$1 million - \$2.9 million
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4. \$500,000 - \$999,999



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(continued from page 20)

visits his customers receive in a year.

The newsletter includes light articles on yard work tips, such as mowing heights and how often to mow. Bare also writes about community events and humorous stories about his life to make his publication entertaining as well as informative.

In keeping with his philosophy of accessibility, Bare also prints his pager number in this newsletter so that his clients can reach him at any time with any emergency.

Bare has a few unique programs in his company — his newsletter being one and educating customers to treat their own lawns between visits is another. This is helpful to cut back on the service calls that are needed for each client.

"I tell them to buy a weed control product and spot treat hard-to-control weeds between our visits," Bare remarked. "Some weeds, like Virginia buttonweed, are tougher and need constant control that we may not be able to provide.

"I compare having customers treating their own lawn to going to the dentist," Bare explained. "The dentist will hit the high points and do the cleaning, but the patients have to do some things on their own between visits to stay healthy. Similarly, there are things our customers should do to keep

• • • • •

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• • • • •

a lawn healthy, then we will hit the high points when we visit."

THE COMPANY. Arbor-Nomics' commitment customer service must be paying off since the company expects to bring in \$1.6 million in revenues for 1999. The turfgrass

division alone is expected to make \$1.2 million, leaving the tree service division to make up the rest. Bare seemed satisfied with the tree service division's performance as it has only been in operation for 1½ years.

"On good years, we've grown by 25 percent, but we go back and forth," Bare stated. "We haven't even done much advertising lately because the news of our business has spread by word of mouth. It's hard enough to keep up with the work we get from that."

The customer base responsible for this profit is a mix of 90 percent residential and 10 percent commercial. The few commercial accounts are made up of hospitals and industrial parks, but Bare doesn't chase these jobs. He explained that he would rather have mostly residential accounts because "if Mrs. Smith cancels her service, we might lose \$180, but if one commercial contract cancels, it could

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mean a big hit for the company. I'd rather not take those risks."

Of these residential contracts, Bare's target and fastest-growing customer is the nouveau riche.

"Extremely wealthy people have their own gardeners so we are not needed. We focus on the nouveau riche," Bare explained. "We target young couples who transferred to the area. They are both working and want their lawn taken care of right away."

Arbor-Nomics also targets customers who are in their second or third home, simply because it's difficult being a customer's first lawn care company. The expectations can be too high.

To target these customers, Bare typically passes out flyers and lets word of mouth do the rest.

"We have found our niche servicing these demanding customers, yet we continue to price ourselves with most other lawn care companies," Bare mentioned.

EXTENDED OUTLOOK. With the growth Arbor-Nomics is expecting this year and in coming years, Bare stressed the importance of continuing education in order to successfully run a large operation.

"Since I expect us to have revenues close to \$2 million next year, I have a lot more to learn about running a big business," Bare admitted. "This is when it's good talk to other companies. It's also important to find the right people to build a company."

Bare's responsibilities now include handling the "big picture" matters. For example, he may spend some time meeting one-on-one with larger clients and work on customer relations with them.

One big-picture project Bare is concentrating on is having better hiring practices. He emphasized the importance of hiring the right people.

"You should do follow-ups with previous employers and background checks," he recommended.

Training is another area that Bare hopes to improve at Arbor-Nomics. "This is one of our shortfalls," he noted. "Training is so important, yet at the same time it is so hard to get the time to do it. We are hoping to start a program here soon."

In addition to these projects, Bare is looking to possibly form more ancillary businesses for the future and keep expanding his current services.

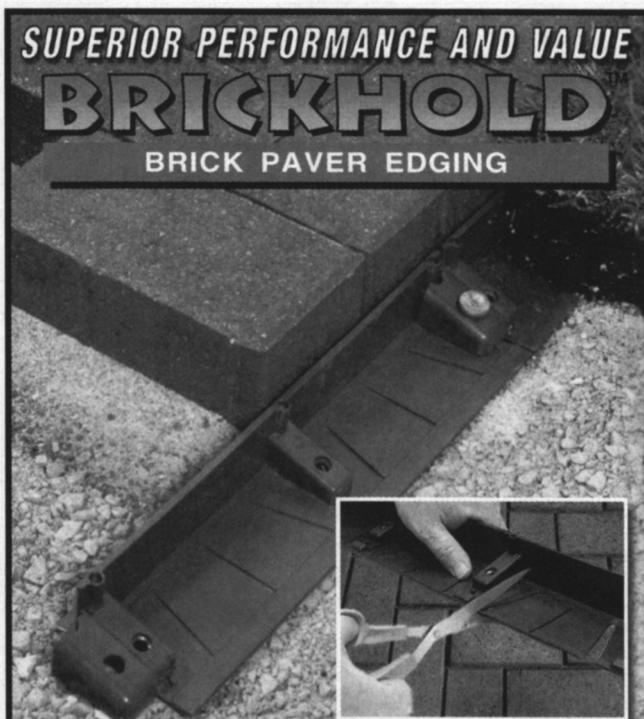
Regardless of the direction Bare takes Arbor-Nomics in, he is sure to keep it moving forward.

"A business is like swimming up a river. You either swim like crazy or you get swept down the river," he said. **LI**

Arbor-Nomics Turf can be contacted at 585 Langford Lane, Norcross, Ga., 30071. Phone: 770/447-6037.

The author is Assistant Editor for Lawn & Landscape magazine.

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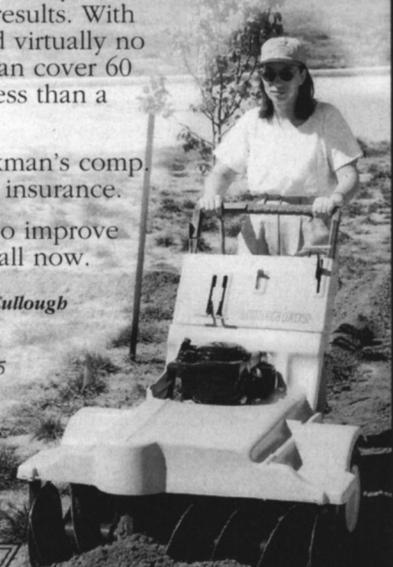
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MONEY CAN GROW ON TREES

More contractors have found profitable sales reside in the trees on their customers' properties.

By Bob West

How many times do lawn care or landscape contractors mow, spray or irrigate around trees, all the while muttering under their breath about how these trees get in their way? Contractors that only see trees as obstacles in their path aren't looking closely enough to realize the true potential for profits these trees offer. Meanwhile, competitors may be building a tree and shrub division that generates highly profitable revenues.

"Contractors are clearly looking to get involved in tree and shrub services because they already have the clients and the clients have additional needs the contractors can service," noted Brian Barnard, division manager, Nu-Arbor Products, Grand Rapids, Mich.

"We see our largest growth sector being "from the ground tree care," or those tree care services that are done on the ground or in ladders only," noted Nate Dodds, general manager, J.J. Mauget, Arcadia, Calif., adding that this is the work contractors generally gravitate toward.

THE MICRO APPROACH. One of the trends driving contractors' interest in tree and shrub services has been the increasing popularity of microinjection products and technologies.

Microinjection allows contractors to apply a small amount of concentrated fertilizer or pesticide product directly into the tree immediately beneath the bark layer.

(continued on page 32)



Applying the product inside of the tree reduces applicator exposure and gives contractors more options for when they're able to make these applications. Photo: J.J. Mauget



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(continued from page 29)

"The benefits to microinjection technology are a dramatically reduced application rate, applying pesticides within the plant to keep it out of the air and minimizing applicator exposure," explained Dodds.

"Traditional tree care has been based around spraying product up into the trees," commented Chip Doolittle, president,

ArborSystems, Omaha, Neb. "I think contractors will always be spraying, especially larger trees, but then contractors have to make sure that they post properly, pre-notify neighbors, barricade and cone during the application. At what point isn't spraying economically worth-



Contractors have enjoyed increased profitability through tree and shrub care as product costs drop to 8 to 12 percent of sales vs. 10 to 15 percent for lawn care services. Photo: ArborSystems

while? This is especially true for some of the more heavily regulated states, such as California."

Microinjection has also benefited from the industry-wide push to taking a more integrated pest management approach to lawn, tree and shrub care.

"We're seeing a big push for lower toxicity materials and more targeted IPM approaches," observed Dodds. "That's where manufacturers are headed with products that have a long, safe residual."

"We're also seeing a greater acceptance of combination products that allow contractors to handle multiple treatments in one application," continued Dodds. "This is particularly important for microinjection since this is an invasive process and contractors want to minimize any tree wounds, no matter how minor they are."

Those minor tree wounds lead to many of the concerns surrounding microinjection, such as whether or not drilling a small hole or pushing a piece of metal into a tree is actually healthy for that tree.

"The wounding of the tree is one of the real bugaboos of microinjection," recognized Doolittle.

"The impact of the microinjection will vary from tree to tree, but contractors should understand that the wound has very little impact on a tree's health when the application is handled properly," noted Dodds. "And, again, the microinjection eliminates the problems, such as with drift, posting and applicator exposure."

"Microinjection also saves contractors time by allowing them to make applications to trees in parking lots even if cars are present or to trees in areas with a lot of

(continued on page 34)

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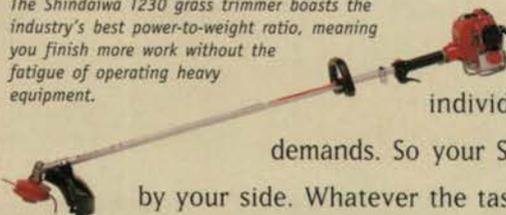
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tree care

(continued from page 32)

pedestrian traffic around," added Doolittle.

"We still spray some trees because sometimes only spraying works," noted Lance Schelhammer, president, Grass Roots, Lenexa, Kan. "But we would always rather microinject than spray. The residual of microinjection products is phenomenal on piercing, sucking pests. Plus, control can be season-long depending on the tree size."

Contractors noted that microinjection systems are less suited for applications to trees less than 3 inches in diameter or larger than 12 inches in diameter, as well as evergreen and needle trees where technicians cannot easily reach the tree's trunk.

Microinjection's affordability offers another key benefit over spraying.

"Now our tree technicians don't have to pull a hose around a yard and they can make applications just as quickly with microinjection," added Schelhammer. "There's no mixing of products or large storage of pesticides, and microinjection is less labor intensive."

(continued on page 36)

Injection Tips

For most trees, you may inject them at a height that is most comfortable for you. This is usually at the belt area. If you are treating for insects that may be working along the trunk area, you may need to treat them at the root flare. If the tree is of light color or has smooth bark, you may inject at the root flare to prevent "bleeding" that may discolor the bark.

Among the easiest trees to inject are elm, ash, oak, cottonwood, linden and birch. On difficult trees, such as hackberry, it may be necessary to inject them at the flare where the bark is more pliable. On trees with deep fissures, such as cottonwood and some oaks, it may be necessary to position the injection at a 45-degree angle. On thin-barked trees, you may find it necessary to reduce the amount of pesticide per injection and increase the number of injection sites.

Timing of the application is very important. Spring through summer is the ideal time for injection. Specifically, each tree needs to be inspected. The bark needs to be pliable and that depends on the weather in your location. Injections too early or too late in the season may cause the pesticide to leak out anywhere around the injection point. This is because the bark is not pliable enough to hold the pesticide. Although some leaking is normal, if excess leaking happens in the spring, wait a few more days and try it again. If this happens in the fall, you will either have to reduce the amount of pesticide to be injected and add more injection sites or wait until spring to inject the tree. —

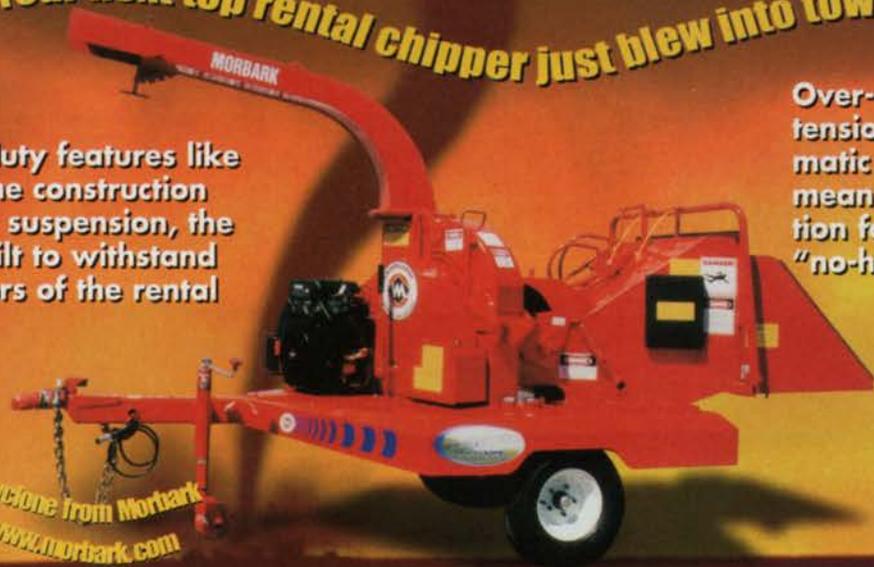
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tree care

(continued from page 34)

Contractors have also found that despite the increased product prices for microinjection products, profits are consistent with spraying services at the same prices because microinjection is less labor intensive and one application often lasts an entire season that would require three spray treatments.

"There will come a time when the federal and state governments and agencies put so much effort into eliminating spraying trees that microinjection will essentially be mandatory," noted Schelhammer. "Contractors should start making the switch now."

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS. Tree care is not just pesticide applications. Avoiding pest and disease attacks can be accomplished by proactively keeping a tree healthy.

"Trees in an urban environment require routine fertilization because they aren't growing in a natural setting with regular plant decomposition into the soil that provides necessary nutrients," according to Barnard.

Options for tree fertilization range from injections via backpack systems or hand-held injectors to 18-inch-long plastic cylinders inserted into the soil to deliver oxygen, water and nutrients into a tree's root system.

"Most liquid or powder products need to be mixed with water and injected under high pressure," noted Barnard. "But using a concentrated form of the product eliminates the mixing, and hand-held or backpack injection units can deliver the fertilizer deep enough into the root system."

"As with microinjection of pesticides, fertilizer injections also eliminate the need and expense for heavy equipment," added Barnard. "Plus, if a tree is 315 feet away from the spray truck and the truck is only carrying 300 feet of hose, the technician on that property has a problem. But that's not the case with

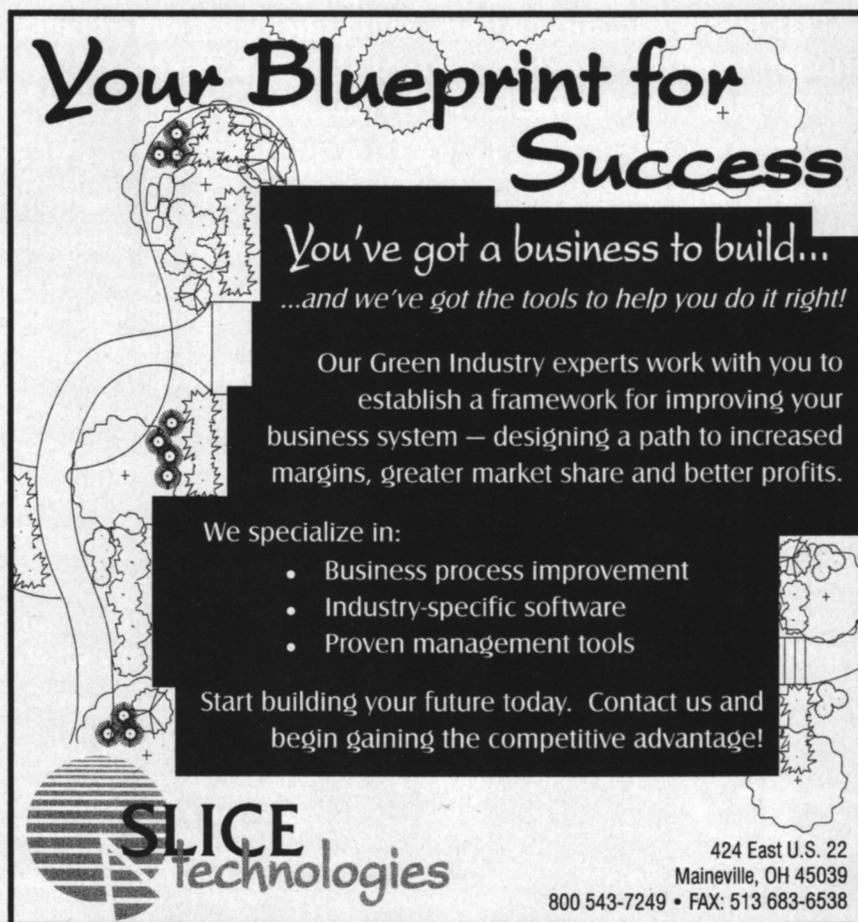
'The impact of the microinjection will vary from tree to tree, but contractors should understand that the wound has very little impact on a tree's health when handled properly.' — Dodds

injection systems that can go anywhere."

Additionally, delivering the necessary nutrients to the root system encourages deeper, healthier root growth for trees.

"When important nutrients can't penetrate overly compacted soils, the roots are forced to come up to the soil where they can get these nutrients," explained Dave Allen, vice president of marketing, RootWell, Waterford, Mich.

Barnard was quick to note, however, that contractors expanding into tree and



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shrub services often err by applying turf management practices to trees.

"A lot of contractors use too much nitrogen with trees, but nitrogen isn't as important to trees and shrubs as it is to turf," he

explained. "Instead, tree applications should feature low levels of nitrogen in a readily usable form that can be delivered over a long period of time when necessary. Otherwise, too much nitrogen promotes excess vegeta-

tive growth and can make the tree or shrub particularly appealing to insects." **LL**

The author is Editor of Lawn & Landscape magazine.

Test Tree Techs

If you're a lawn care or landscape contractor with visions of new profits to be gathered up via new tree care services, be prepared for an extensive and oftentimes frustrating learning curve with your employees.

"Contractors don't want to learn that they have to take care of trees differently than they take care of turf," noted Chip Doolittle, president, ArborSystems, Omaha, Neb. "Lawn care is basically taking care of one

tree — turf. Whereas tree care means oaks and ashes and maples and so many other trees."

"I've always considered trees more difficult to care for than turf," agreed Lance Schelhammer, president, Grass Roots, Lenexa, Kan. "It takes quite a long time to train a good tree care technician who is capable of practicing an integrated pest management approach when some trees are loaded with problems and others only have a few problems."

"Of course, once that dedicated employee learns the ropes and realizes how much money he's making for his boss, he may just go into business for himself," Doolittle added.

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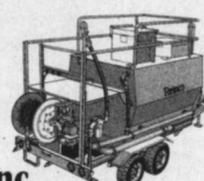
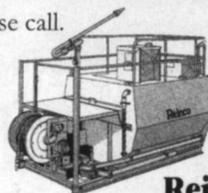
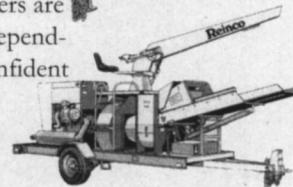
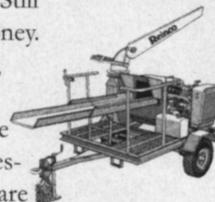
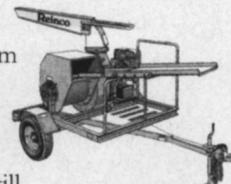
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USE READER SERVICE #30

• Adding holiday
decorating to the
list of services a
contractor offers
can add profit
potential.

• By Angela Dyer

Profitable add-on services are a sought after commodity by many lawn care and landscape professionals. There are dozens to choose from, but the big problem is determining which one will be most beneficial for a business.

The winter months can be a perfect time to find one of these additional services to offer customers. During this season, employees may have very little work, if any, and cash flow slows down. Because of these factors, more and more contractors are looking to holiday decorating to fill this downtime during the year.

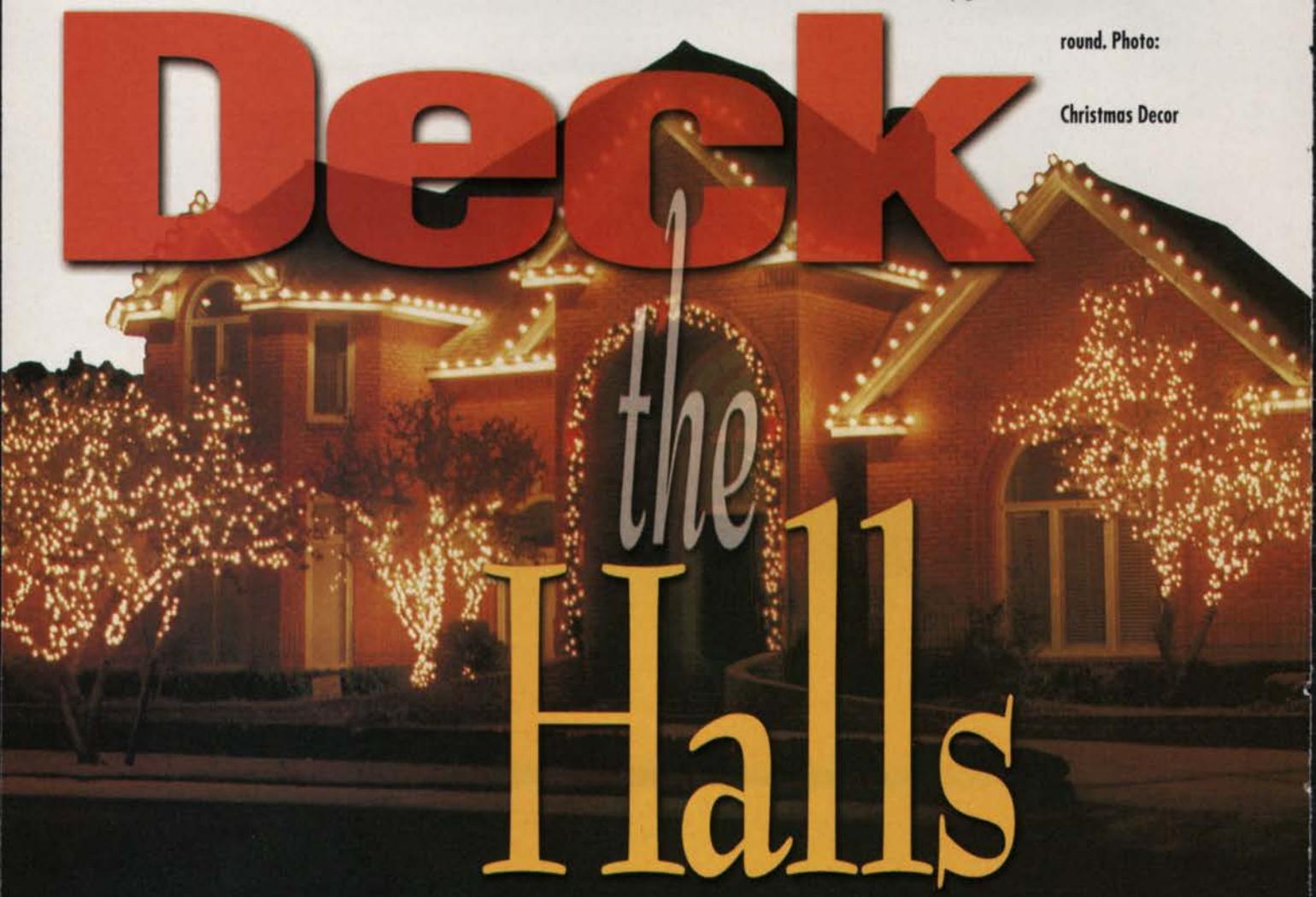
"We have a lawn maintenance company, and we were trying to fill in the winter months with some extra work when we started holiday lighting," stated Kevin Lipscomb, president of Outdoor Décor, San Antonio, Texas.

Contractors who have started this service are singing its praises and telling stories of the satisfying and profitable aspects of this work.

ADD-ON ADVANTAGE. "We looked at starting this service 10 years ago, but getting supplies was difficult so we gave up," commented Ray Wood, owner/operator of Ray Wood Grounds Maintenance/Christmas Décor, Brantford, Ontario. "Then we began looking into holiday decorating again and reading articles about it and we got started. Holiday installations are a great way to keep employees busy. Decorating definitely sells itself."

(continued on page 42)

Starting holiday
decorating can be a
good way for
contractors to keep
their employees year
round. Photo:
Christmas Decor



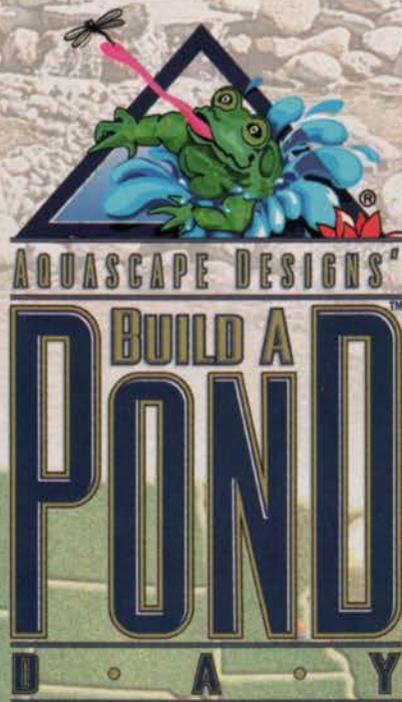
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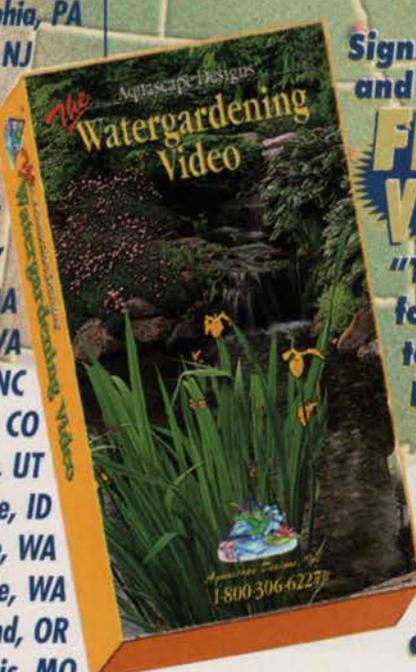
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USE READER SERVICE #31

(continued from page 40)

Echoing Wood, Tom Tolkaez, president of Swingle Tree/Christmas Décor, Denver, Colo., said his primary reasons for starting the service were to gain additional revenue and keep employees onboard all year.

Once contractors determined that this was a profitable service, they had to decide who to target the service to. Surprisingly,

not many of their current lawn care or landscape customers were interested in the new service.

"About 90 percent of our customers were new and we got them by running ads," stated Kendra Wendt, co-owner of Two Guys Landscape and Design/Christmas Décor, Brandon, S.D.

She added that they usually start running advertisements in September and October for residential customers. However, for commercial properties, the ads should start in July as commercial contracts have a more complicated decision-making process.

"When we started, our current customers were informed that we were offering this service, but they weren't really our initial customers," Lipscomb mentioned. "Even now, not many of our lawn customers are holiday customers. Our very first customer was a regular lawn customer, then every neighbor saw his house and grabbed a hold of us. It spread by word of mouth from there."

Wood added that he put out a notice to his current customers but was told by Christmas Décor not to be surprised if the customers didn't want the service. "That was exactly what happened," he said. "We went around to different areas and met a lot of new people. Holiday decorating has also helped grow our core business because some of these new customers became interested in lawn service."

Most contractors are doing a mix of residential and commercial properties and find only a few major differences between the two jobs.

"A residential property is a want. People want lights for their family," said Dave Dolak, president of Renaissance Grounds/Christmas Décor, Vienna, Va. "The commercial property is a need, and the client has to make the service fit in a budget so holiday decorating is a much harder sale."

Todd Risty, co-owner of Two Guys Landscape and Design/Christmas Décor added that there is usually more leg work involved on a commercial property sale

.....

For most contractors, holiday installation is a turn-key operation. The service usually includes everything from design, set up, take down and, occasionally, storage.

.....

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(continued on page 44)

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USE READER SERVICE #76

(continued from page 42)

because the decisions typically go through the corporate headquarters of a company.

Expanding on Risty's comment, Tolkacz said, communication is the difference between the two jobs.

"In a commercial setting, you have more than just one client and it takes a lot more to please the customer," he pointed out. "This

requires a higher degree of communication. And, depending on the commercial setting, you may have additional factors to worry about during the installation such as vehicles and pedestrians."

SELLING STRATEGIES. For most contractors involved, holiday installation is a turn-key

operation. The service usually includes everything from design, set up, take down and, occasionally, storage.

"We include storage on residential properties," Wendt commented. "We box the decorations up and the customer stores it."

"We haven't stored the materials in the past, but this year we plan to store 90 percent of the residential, while the commercial clients prefer to store decorations on their property," Tolkacz remarked. "We are moving toward storing 100 percent of residential materials."

Since this service typically includes all aspects of the installation, one has to wonder how to price holiday decorating.

There are only a few options to choose from when pricing — creating a per-foot price (of lights, materials, etc.) or simply deciding on a price after looking at the what the job will entail.

"We give a per-foot price," explained George Essman Jr., vice president of Essman's Landscaping/Christmas Décor, Portsmouth, Ohio.

Essman added that he follows level one and level two prices and has per-foot prices based on each level. Depending on the challenges involved with the job for which level he chooses to follow. "For example, if the property is more difficult, I will go with our level two price," he stated.

"Our installations are priced per job," countered Allan Davis, vice president of RAR Landscaping/Christmas Décor, Baltimore, Md. "We base the price on different factors such as the degree of difficulty and size. We don't give out a per-foot price because we use those guidelines and prices for ourselves when coming up with a price."

Even though there are different pricing methods, the contractors seem to be satisfied with the profit they are receiving.

"Our profitability for holiday installations is better than the landscaping side of the business because there is less equipment and overhead," Risty commented.

Sales volumes will obviously vary depending on the company size, location and many other market variables. However, contractors included in this article estimated their holiday decorating sales volumes to be between \$30,000 and \$230,000 for 1998.

(continued on page 46)

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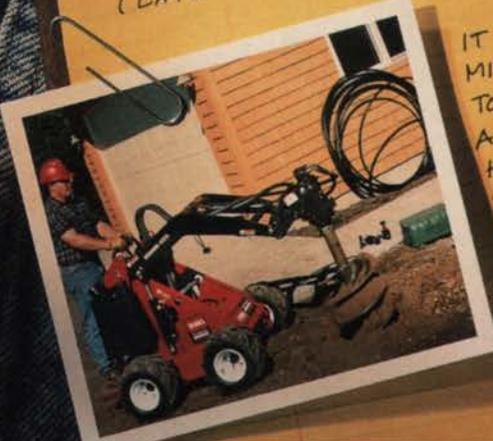


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holiday lighting

(continued from page 44)



A benefit of holiday installations is that training is relatively simple and typically takes two days for the employees to be ready to install decorations on a property. Photo: Swingle Tree

NECESSARY KNOW-HOW. Labor and training issues are typical concerns during the summer months of lawn care and landscaping. Luckily, during the holiday installation season, contractors are usually able to retain their current employees and offer them two-day training sessions to get them up and running.

"We use our current employees, but we may have to hire even more for the holiday decorating side of the business," Tolkacz mentioned. "The workers take two full days of classes and field training. It's an ongoing learning process to ensure quality."

"I use my landscape employees, but we also need to utilize some extra workers too," Wood mentioned. "After two days of training, employees are ready. The first day consists of watching training films and the second day we decorate and let everyone get some hands-on experience."

Risty commented that his employees enjoy the change of pace from lawn work.

Once the training is complete, most holiday lighting contractors begin installing as soon as possible in October.

"We do some installations early and some late," Davis mentioned. "We try to do the re-installations early so that we can have time more towards the actual holidays for the new customers who call us. However, we never put up the day décor early, such as garland and wreaths."

Risty and Wendt explained that they start installations in October, but can't begin take downs until March because of their location. "It's too cold in South Dakota in January to be doing this work," Risty added. "The customers seem to understand this."

Tolkacz said that his timing of installations is primarily based on customer demand. "We have a discount incentive program for the customers if they agree to let us install the materials early," He pointed out. "Besides giving us more time, if the lights are up early, the neighbors have more time to see them and think that they should give us a call."

"Keeping up with the demand is the biggest challenge," explained Travis Freeman, president of Brite Ideas Decorating,

(continued from page 48)

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holiday lighting

(continued from page 46)

Omaha, Neb. "In any seasonal business, everything comes on at once."

"We were busy right away," remarked Risty. "With this service, the work hits at once. You have to be organized and be everywhere at once."

More specifically, scheduling and inventory have to be organized, according to Risty. In addition, tools and labor should be in line and ready to go once the season comes.

Wendt added that the crews have to be running efficiently as soon as the season starts. "The season hits so fast, so you have to be prepared," she noted. **LL**

The author is Assistant Editor of *Lawn & Landscape* magazine.

Franchise Fever

As holiday lighting is becoming a more popular add-on service, so is purchasing a holiday installation franchise. Some contractors believe that a franchise can make the transition into this new offering smooth and seamless.

"Just the installation design help and training that contractors get from buying the franchise is helpful. Having this helps shorten the learning curve," explained Allan Davis, vice president of RAR Landscaping/Christmas Décor, Baltimore, Md. "Franchising is a good way to network, too, because it is like being a member of an organization. When everyone gets together, you can talk to other franchisees who aren't your competition."

Blake Smith, president and founder of Christmas Décor, Lubbock, Texas, said that it offers two programs for buying—a large market and small market program. For a large market program, there has to be a marketable territory population of 100,000

and the franchise costs \$15,900. However, the small market is based on a marketable territory population of 40,000 and costs \$9,500.

Travis Freeman, president of Brite Ideas Decorating, Omaha, Neb., explained that his company sells distributorships for \$14,900.

"We manufacture our own product, plus we have seminars and training for the staff of distributorships," Freeman noted.

According to Kevin Lipscomb, president of Outdoor Décor, San Antonio, Texas, he is selling franchises for \$14,000.

"Our response should be excellent," Lipscomb added. "Holiday decorating is a great add-on service because it offers a spring cash flow and provides a change of pace," Smith stressed.

Smith added that with winter services such as snow removal, the work might vary each season. "But Christmas comes every year," he noted. —Angela Dyer

FRANCHISE CONTACTS:

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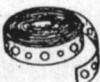
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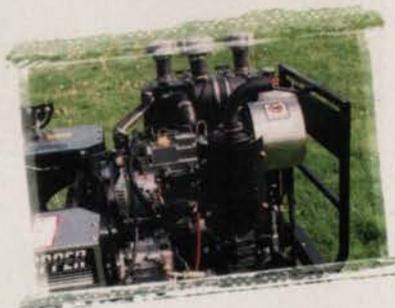


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One mulching deck design features an additional, upper deck located above the middle blade of the mower to hold the grass clippings above the bottom cutting deck longer, giving it another chance to run through the three blades.

Photo: Excel Industries

Constant Battle

Contractors and manufacturers share their views for and against the mulching mower.

By Nicole Wisniewski

Five to 10 years ago, on a mission to save landfill capacity, the Environmental Protection Agency made yard waste its No. 1 target for landfill bans.

Since grass clippings made up 20.1 percent of all solid landfill waste burned by Americans annually, according to the Professional Lawn Care Association of America, grass clippings were an easy target, being second only to paper and paper board products at 35.6 percent. By 1993, eight states had effectively banned grass

and tree trimmings from landfills.

Programs encouraging the recycling of grass clippings began nationwide as PLCAA started *Grasscycling: Today's Turf—Tomorrow's Earth*, a national public awareness campaign encouraging grasscycling, the environmental practice of naturally recycling grass clippings by leaving them on the lawn when mowing.

Commercial mower manufacturers addressed this environmental concern and industry trend by producing machines with mulching decks that would tear up grass blades into tiny pieces and disperse them back into the grass.

"Some people even predicted an end to the production of grass catchers," pronounced Bob Walker, president, Walker Mfg., Fort Collins, Colo. "But that never occurred because mulching mowers didn't work as well as everybody thought they would."

While mulching mowers worked fine for contractors in dry, slow-growing grass conditions, others complained of clumping grass and an unattractive appearance, wasted time spent cleaning out sticky grass from mulching mower decks and how using a mulching mower once each week couldn't keep up with spring's rapidly growing grasses and may have been contributing to an increase in weeds and pests.

(continued on page 52)



Most mulching mowers use multiple blades set apart in individual chambers to tear up the grass blades into tiny pieces and disperse them back into the grass.

Photo: Toro Landscape Contractor Group

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mulching mowers

(continued from page 50)

THE GREEN CULPRIT. To be practical for a landscape contractor, Walker explained, mulching mowers need to work well in all weather conditions, especially during spring's busy season.

"Grass itself is the key obstacle with mulching mowers," Walker explained. "Grass is not a predictable product to mow. In the spring, there is a lot of juice inside the plant and it gets real sticky and can clog up a mower deck. It doesn't matter what methods are used to make the grass dance around repeatedly through the blades of a mower deck. If grass is sticky, it doesn't dance very well and will cling underneath the deck and then the deck will have to be cleaned off, which amounts to extra time and labor for contractors."

The biggest drawback in having a mulching mower is altering how it's used based on the season, said George Kotalic, president, Kotalic Landscaping, Huntington, W.V.

Planning for Growth

According to *Grasscycling: Today's Turf—Tomorrow's Earth*, sponsored by the Professional Lawn Care Association of America, mowing turfgrass at the proper height is as essential to a lawn's health as having good watering and fertilizing plans.

WATERING PLAN. Established lawns need irrigation to supplement natural rainfall. They require more water in hot weather, but may require water in dry, cool periods as well. In hot, dry weather, lawns may need as much as 1 inch of water every five to seven days. Avoid daily watering and watering in evenings as these practices encourage disease. The best time to water is early morning.

FERTILIZE PROPERLY. Lawns need properly timed fertilizer applications to become dense and green. Over fertilization weakens a lawn and causes excess top growth. Fertilizer should be applied 1 pound per 1,000 square feet. For more even growth, use fertilizers containing methylene urea, ureaformaldehyde, sulfur coated urea, IBDU or use other slowly available organic forms of nitrogen.

MOWING HEIGHTS. Proper mowing can increase lawn quality by 30 percent or more. It is important that contractors keep mower blades sharp and set mowers to mow at the proper mowing height. Lawns should be mowed every five days when growing fast, but once every 10 days may be sufficient when turf is growing slowly. Proper mowing heights are as follows: Kentucky bluegrass, fescues and ryegrass, St. Augustine and Bahiagrass — 3 inches; bentgrass — 1 inch; centipedegrass — 1.5 inches; bermudagrass, zoysiagrass — 1 to 1.5 inches. — *The Professional Lawn Care Association of America*

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USE READER SERVICE #41

'On some properties, using a side-discharge mower isn't a disadvantage . . . but if the property has a lot of sidewalks and pedestrian traffic, then a contractor is better off mulching to save time having to use a blower to clean up.' - Walker

For Kotalic, the grass is too high and too wet in March, April and May, but he still thinks mulching mowers + save him catching time.

"I would rather double mow a yard with a mulching mower than pick up grass clippings," Kotalic admitted. "I just keep my mulching blades sharp so I can get the most out of them and mow my clients' yards twice per visit during the spring."

Other contractors, such as Scott Evans, president, Scott & Co., Bay City, Texas, catch grass in the spring and then switch to mulching in the summer because the mowers handle the drier, less sticky and slower growing grass better. Overall, however, Evans still believes that catching provides the highest quality appearance to a customer's lawn.

Mike Ford, maintenance operations manager, BP Landscaping, Grass Valley, Calif., said his company doesn't do much

mulching because in the spring he can't handle the large volumes of grass that pile on top of the lawn.

"Cut grass doesn't decompose fast enough to leave a quality appearance," Ford said. "In some instances, this has even caused thatch layers to build up."

"And last year," Ford continued, "we had rain here into July and mulching mowers don't do well on wet turf. Mulching technology on mowers just isn't to the point yet where we could effectively use and manage the equipment."

Wet grass naturally clumps until sufficient moisture has been removed from it,

pointed out Dane Scag, president of Great Dane Power Equipment, Elm Grove, Wis., and grass moisture is extremely variable from the morning to the afternoon.

"No matter what method is used to disperse grass evenly, when the grass is wet it's always going to clump," Scag noted.

Joe Reynolds, manager of the lawn care division at Black Diamond Lawn Care, Toledo, Ohio, shared his concerns with the mulching mower reintroducing disease pathogens and pest eggs into the grass and soil.

"Over the last decade in this area, I've noticed a big change," Reynolds said, pointing to increases in chickweed, red thread and crabgrass. "And it all points back to the advent of the mulching mower."

"For example," Reynolds continued. "If there are 10 million crabgrass seeds on the ground and you catch 9 million then there's only 1 million seeds left. But if you mulch,

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there are always 10 million seeds left there. And if I'm using a preemergent, which is typically 90 percent effective, I would rather prevent 90 percent of 1 million weed seeds than 90 percent of 10 million weed seeds."

In addition to grass conditions and seasons, location makes a difference in a mulch-

ing mower's performance, recognized Ken Raney, advertising manager, Excel Industries, Hesston, Kan.

"In Florida, contractors cut their grasses at a 4-inch height, which means they have an additional 1- or 1½-inch layer of grass to mulch down into," Raney said.

While Florida contractors generally favor mulching mowers, Walker agreed, those in the Northeast don't get the results they desire with mulching mowers because of their cool-season grasses and heavy leaf fall in the autumn.

"Arizona or places that overseed with ryegrass are also poor locations for mulching mowers," Walker said. "Ryegrass is terrible to work with when it's new because it's so juicy and tender. It's hard to do a good job cutting it and dispersing the clippings when all it does is turn into green mush."

THE ALTERNATIVES. If landscape contractors aren't using mulching mowers, they are either using side discharge mowers or mowers with catching features attached, Walker said.

Approximately 75 percent of Raney's customers are purchasing catching mowers over mulching mowers in certain models.

If used properly, Walker said side discharge mowers are a good alternative to mulching mowers.

"On some properties, using a side discharge mower isn't a disadvantage when done correctly and neatly," he explained. "But if the property has a lot of sidewalks and pedestrian traffic, then a contractor is better off mulching to save time having to use a blower to clean up the grass clippings."

When it comes to catching, Ford and Evans said they don't charge to haul away their customers' grass, and they don't take the clippings to a landfill. Evans' company composts in-house and they mulch the grass clippings themselves and then resell it.

Ford also composts caught grass clippings, but he doesn't charge his customers for the mulch later. He either gives it away to people who are doing composting or he uses it to take care of weed problems.

"Star thistle covers about 10 percent of California," Ford pointed out. "It's a most disturbing and bothersome weed. Mulching over them, it smothers them out as opposed to using an herbicide that hasn't proven as effective."

This saves Ford the cost of taking the grass clippings to a landfill and his environmentally conscious customers like the fact that he recycles.

Tim Suter, sales manager, FloraLandscape, Toledo, Ohio, said his company subcontracts the mulching of excess



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spring grass and fall leaves. The work costs about \$8 per cubic yard. The company then collects the mulch and keeps it in accessible rows on an extra acre of land.

"When you bag clippings and take them to a landfill, it costs \$7 or \$8 per cubic yard in Toledo plus the cost of drive time to and from the landfill," Suter explained. "When we subcontract the grass for mulching, we pay about the same cost as a landfill charges

and the cost of having the additional acreage to take care of the mulch. The difference is that in the end we have a sellable product."

ATTEMPTING A SOLUTION. Some mower manufacturers have attempted different machine designs in an attempt to improve the mulching mower.

Bush Hog developed a tractor-pulled mulching deck with two sets of counter rotating blades – one moving clockwise, the other moving counter-clockwise, which is designed to cut the grass up into finer pieces for mulching, said Bob Moore, vice president of sales and marketing, Bush Hog, Selma, Ala.

And Excel created an upper deck above the middle blade of the mower to hold the grass above the deck longer so that it gets another chance to run through the three

blades and result in tinier pieces, according to Raney.

Yet most mower manufacturers agree that when a contractor uses a mulching mower – no matter what the design, the condition of the grass will always make a difference in its performance.

"Even with our new system, there are still situations where a contractor won't be able to mulch," Raney admitted.

Even though manufacturers are trying to develop something new, most manufacturers have exhausted their current ideas and are still in the stages of research.

"I don't expect any real breakthroughs soon," Walker remarked. "I don't think there is any new mulching mower technology on the horizon – at least nothing that will make sales jump 20 to 50 percent." ■

The author is Assistant Editor of Lawn & Landscape magazine.

.....

Grass clippings were an easy target for environmentalists because they made up 20.1 percent of all solid landfill waste burned by Americans annually, according to PLCAA, second only to paper and paperboard products at 35.6 percent.

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What will be Left?

• Different manufacturers are
• adopting different strategies to deal
• with regulations affecting hand-
• held power equipment.

• By Dave Clancy

Every year, manufacturers look to add new and improved hand-held products to their lines. Increased fuel efficiency, lighter engines, better attachments and new accessories have all been to the forefront of product development.

However, as government agencies focus on air quality and emissions control, hand-held power equipment manufacturers have had to address new issues in their research and development – how to comply with ever-evolving emissions restrictions.

Basically, this means that no matter how many bells and whistles are on the machine, it will not be legal unless it does not pollute.

For most manufacturers, advancements in their equipment have been government influenced. California Air Resource Board Tier II emission standards for small engines are to take effect on Jan. 1, 2000, intending to reduce hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxide emissions 44 percent over CARB Tier I regulations that were implemented in January 1995.

But CARB regulations are not the only regulations manufacturers must pay attention to. Arizona is adopting similar standards, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is proposing regulations that will limit emissions severely as well.

The bottom line is that five years from now outdoor power equipment will be radically different than it was five years ago.

And, as manufacturers update their equipment to meet the evolving regulations, landscape contractors will be facing many new choices

(continued on page 58)

Impending engine regulations

may remove some models of hand-

held power equipment from contractors' equipment lineups

starting Jan. 1. Photo: Echo

There Are More Than **Twelve Major** Design Differences That Make Ours Last Longer Than Their's.

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Cyclone Style Dual Element Air Cleaner	STANDARD	How's That?	Not Today!	Pardon Me?
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Super Silent Muffler	STANDARD	Standard	Yo Mama	What The...
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(continued from page 56)

concerning their equipment purchases. Some product lines will go away, while others will be radically different. And service requirements will differ as well.

OPTIMISTIC ENGINEERING. So what does the future hold? Some manufacturers are tight-lipped, trying not to tip their hands before

final regulations are issued. Others swear by their products, saying their technology is the technology that will survive.

"We think two-stroke technology is here to stay," said Mark Woodling, marketing administrator, Tanaka Power Equipment, Kent, Wash. "And we developed our technology accordingly."

Woodling said the company's engines are simply a redesigned two-cycle engine with one new component — a catalytic muffler. "We were able to cut emissions by 70 percent and increase our fuel efficiency with the redesign, so it worked out rather well," he added.

Tanaka's engines were among the first to receive CARB Tier II certification, along with those from RedMax, Norcross, Ga.

Tanaka's two-cycle engines are currently available in grass trimmers, pole hedge trimmers, portable edgers and pole saws. Woodling said the company is planning on implementing the engine into its entire lineup of equipment. "The next products will be hedge trimmers, sometime in December. Then we will look at other product groups."

RedMax has also cut emissions on its two-cycle engines by redesigning technology. RedMax meets CARB Tier II standards without the catalytic muffler. Its engine evolved from technology used several years ago in the motorcycle industry, according to Dave Vick, national sales manager at RedMax.

"With this engine we are injecting fresh air between the burned gasses and the incoming fresh charge of fuel, which separates the two. Therefore, no unburned gasses can escape," said Vick.

These RedMax engines reduce hydrocarbon emissions by about 73 percent, according to Vick, and use 30 percent less fuel than comparable existing units. "We felt that by working to improve the fuel efficiency we could save contractors money," he noted.

"I really don't think the contractor cares about the emissions. State agencies, however, do care," Vick added. "The contractor wants performance at the best price with the best service. We have to make a compliant engine to satisfy the agencies, while remembering the product must perform at the level contractors expect."

Vick said shipments of products using RedMax's new engines will begin in November. "We will switch over 100 percent of our product line, even though this starts with just California and Arizona. We want to be ready for the entire nation," he added.

TWO VS. FOUR. Not everyone is sold on the long-term future of two-cycle engines, however.

Frank Coats, of Ryobi said, "We still

(continued on page 60)

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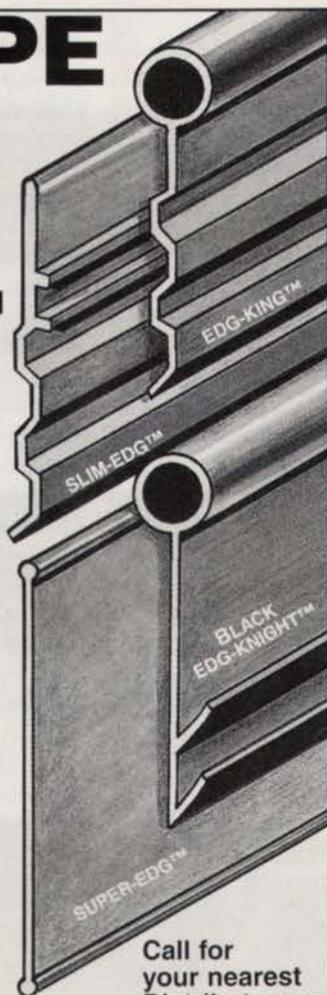


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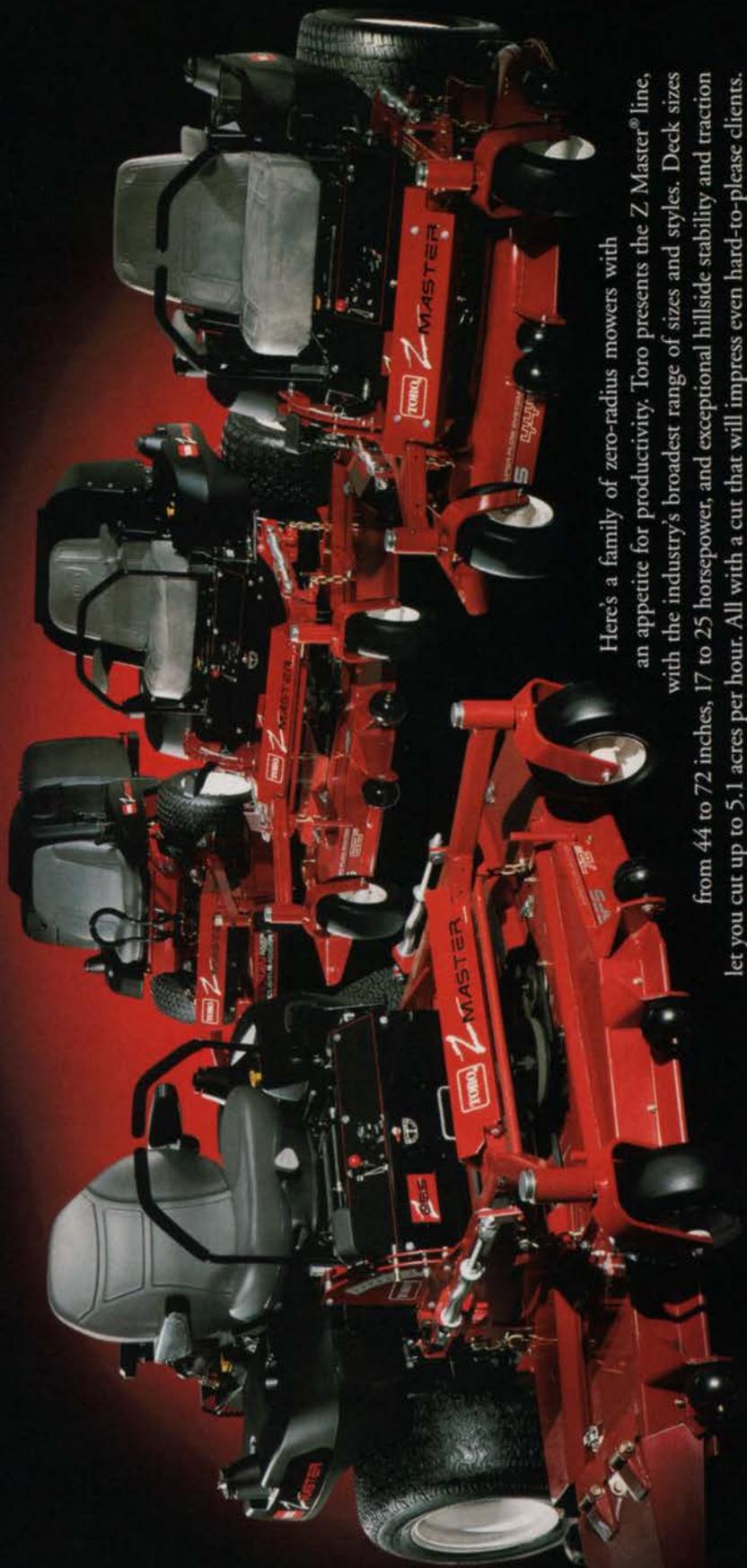


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hand-held power equipment

(continued from page 58)

believe that the four-cycle equipment is the most cost effective and convenient technology to meet the new standards.

"There are just so many advantages of the four-cycle over the two-cycle engine that they cannot be ignored," Coots added. "Most obvious? You don't have to mix the gas and oil. That alone is a big advantage.

"Plus, performance-wise, a four cycle is effective in the lower RPMs. With most two-cycle work, you have to go full throttle on it to be successful."

Ryobi, which introduced the first hand-held, four-cycle engine five years ago, introduced a line of four-cycle engines that meet CARB Tier II standards. "Ryobi made a decision in the early 1990s to embark on this four-cycle development program," said Coots. "We saw that as the answer to the coming regulations."

"We have been focusing the past few years on getting our equipment down to similarly powered two-cycle engines," said

Noise Abatement

Many manufacturers acknowledge that noise issues will be the next ones tackled once emissions issues are sorted out.

"We are looking at options to help us develop a quieter blower," said Nick Jiannes, product manager, Stihl, Virginia Beach, Va. "Some people are looking at restricting noise levels to 65 decibels [at 50 feet]. We think you should go as quiet as possible."

"The noise issue hasn't been fully resolved yet, and it is a challenging one because it involves more than just the engine," said Frank Coots, Ryobi. "The fan makes a lot of noise itself and that has to be taken into account. Noise will definitely be an issue in the future for manufacturers."

Robin Pendergast, spokesperson for Echo, Lake Zurich, Ill., added, "Noise is a big enough issue in California without even getting into emissions. Put them together and there is a major challenge ahead of us." — *Dave Clancy*

Coots. "We don't have to beat them on weight, just get them down to the same weight. And we are at that level now."

But Robin Pendergast, spokesperson for Echo, Lake Zurich, Ill., disagreed.

"Four-cycle engines are heavier than two-

cycle engines and their internal complexity lends itself to performance problems due to carbon buildup," he said. "Four-cycle engines also need extensive maintenance, including a frequent changing of the oil."

(continued on page 64)

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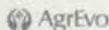
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thing" says awed crew "it was
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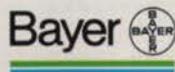


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USE READER SERVICE #52

hand-held power equipment

(continued from page 60)

"This is an evolutionary process," said Dennis Stauch, product development manager, Shindaiwa, Tualatin, Ore. "All manufacturers are working on various engines to meet the regulations. We've had the Phase one and the Tier I regulations - now we

'We have CARB Tier I and CARB Tier II. We foresee CARB Tier III down the road, and we are working to make sure we are ready for that when it happens.' -Woodling

must work to meet the second stages.

"These regulations will change the face of our market," Stauch added.

Stauch said that some manufacturers will opt out of the California market for a brief period while they are developing technologies to meet the requirements. "That

can help them buy some time to get ready for the EPA Phase 2 requirements," he said.

Stauch said that for manufacturers, timing is critical. "This is a mature market and it is very competitive. There is a lot of market share at stake. The restrictions placed upon equipment between the CARB and the EPA regulations will help change the contractors' decisions between company A and company B," he added.

"There seems to be a level of one-upsmanship in the industry," said Pendergast. "But the bottom line is manufacturers have to have products that meet performance standards while following the regulations.

"The EPA will have further regulations down the road, and we have to be prepared for them," Pendergast added. "Some people will do this by making products specifically for California. Some will avoid California altogether. We will have to look at the market

and determine our best strategy from that.

"Obviously, if we have 80 percent of the market in California, that would influence our decisions," Pendergast continued. "But, at the same time, you don't want to have your entire marketing strategy dictated by one state, regardless if it is the 12th largest economy in the world."

California does drive the technology, agreed Woodling. "The California regulatory commissions are the primary movers when it comes to new technologies," he said. "They make the rules and we try and engineer for them.

"And they are not through," he added. "We have CARB Tier I and CARB Tier II. We foresee CARB Tier III down the road, and we are working to make sure we are ready for that when it happens.

"But," Woodling cautioned, "the problem in the industry, both for manufacturers and contractors, is that the big players, the Echos, the Stihls and the Shindaiwas, have

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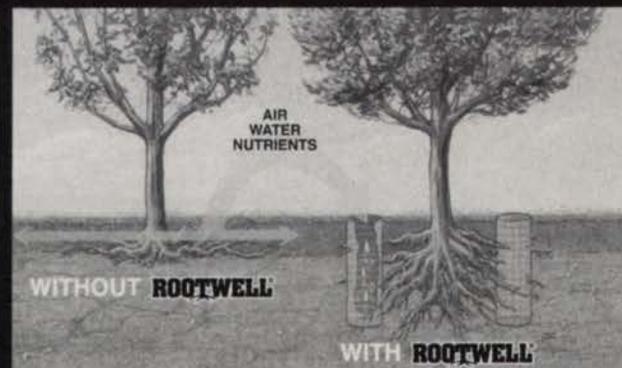
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USE READER SERVICE #53

USE READER SERVICE #54

The first thing contractors look at when purchasing engines is horsepower, followed by the choices between twin-cycle or single-cycle, liquid-cooled or air-cooled and overhead-valve or side-valve engines. Photo: Kohler

expensive, but it is a better product.

"Our products are running leaner and a lot hotter with higher RPMs," Jiannes added. "When an engine does that, it has to have higher tolerances. It has become more of a high tech engine."

But, he cautioned, with that higher technology comes a need for better maintenance. "Even though these are better products, they cannot be neglected," Jiannes commented. "Since the products are cleaner burning and more efficient, mechanics cannot just 'adjust out' problems. They have to diagnose them just as a car mechanic would."

IMMEDIATE REALITY. So what does all this mean to contractors? Many things.

First of all, there will be a plethora of new technologies available in the next few years. RedMax, Tanaka, and Ryobi have already introduced new engines for some of their products. Echo, Stihl and Shindaiwa are in the process of introducing products. Entire product lines will change, almost overnight, with engines designed to be more fuel efficient, and less harmful to the environment. Contractors must be ready to study the new alternatives.

In addition to the variety of products available, there will be a simple choice of two- vs. four-cycle engines. While each has advantages and disadvantages, different

manufacturers swear by different engines. And some are not sold on either one as of yet, taking a wait-and-see approach. Contractors must be ready to make a choice, and live with that choice, as the regulations continue to unfold.

Third, maintenance will become increasingly important. The technology is moving so fast that simple tune-ups might not be so simple anymore. "Mechanics must be able to diagnose the problems. They can't just look at a machine, believe it is running too fast and turn the RPMs down," Jiannes said. "They have to go in, find the problem and be able to remedy it. They must be up to speed on the latest service innovations."

Likewise, contractors must pay attention to what they put into the machine. "The days of using last year's gas, adjusting the burps out of the machine and attacking some weeds are gone," Jiannes said.

"There will be a lot of new technologies that enter the market in the next few years, and many of them might be great short-term solutions," Stauch added. "But there are a lot of long-term questions. The changes that are out there will continue, and no one knows exactly what will happen as the next few years unfold."

"The landscape industry will see many new choices, and it will see a lot of marketing buildup. The landscape contractor must be informed about the technology, and the regulations. We will see some dramatic changes in the next five years and everyone must be prepared." **LL**

The author is a freelance writer based in Westerville, Ohio.



not announced what they are going to do. Their marketing strategies will have a big say in how this industry shakes out over the next few years."

"All manufacturers are working on their answers to these regulations, but doing so quietly," agreed Stauch. "The small companies want to become bigger. The big companies want to become large. And the large companies want to dominate."

"We have to be prepared for whatever the regulators throw at us," said Pendergast. "Some people will create separate lines for California. Some will pull out of that market. And some will rush products to market. But we have to study the market, the regulations and make the best decisions for us and our customers."

"The EPA and CARB have forced manufacturers to invest money in technology to improve their emissions," said Nick Jiannes, product manager, power tools, Stihl, Virginia Beach, Va. "And what has happened in almost all cases is that the manufacturer has developed a much better product. Sure, it is more

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USE READER SERVICE #55

Understanding what goes on beneath the turf layer can help contractors provide the most attractive and healthy turf.

By Bob West

H

ere's a question for you – what defines the “landscape” that contractors are responsible for caring for? For many contractors, the landscape is all of the plant materials they can see growing on a property. While this is certainly an understandable answer, not paying proper attention to what lies beneath these plants can reduce the effectiveness of the work a contractor does.

Indeed, many companies have bolstered their lawn care fertilization programs by incorporating soil analyses into their program. While soil testing services aren't likely to be large profit centers for companies, they can be a key to earning new customers who are impressed by the scientific approach a company employs or retaining current customers by taking the extra step necessary to keep their turf green and their plants healthy.

For other contractors, however, the science involved in soil testing can be intimidating and needlessly confusing. This is exactly the notion that soil testing laboratories want to dispel.

“We're not trying to teach contractors soil chemistry,” noted Dr. Chuck Darrah, general manager and consulting landscape agronomist, CLC Labs, Westerville, Ohio. “We are trying to make contractors feel comfortable with what a soil test tells

(continued on page 68)

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SOIL ANALYSIS

CLIENT JOHN DOE LAWN CENTER 123 STREET HARDINGBURG, KY 40143	GROWER JOHN DOE DATE RECEIVED: 10/04/96	REPORT # 500-0501 DATE 10/04/96 ACCOUNT 99999 PAGE 1 AKL AGRONOMIST RYCHIE SURGE
--	--	---

LAB NUMBER 99999 SAMPLE ID 1 SIGNATURE *Richard Surge*

TEST	RESULTS	SOIL TEST RATINGS					CATION EXCHANGE CAPACITY
		Very Low	Low	Medium	Optimum	Very High	
Soil pH	6.2						15.0 meq/100g
Buffer pH	6.65						
Phosphorus (P)	188 LB/ACRE						
Potassium (K)	462 LB/ACRE						
Calcium (Ca)	5642 LB/ACRE						
Magnesium (Mg)	410 LB/ACRE						
Sulfur (S)							
Boron (B)							
Copper (Cu)							
Iron (Fe)							
Manganese (Mn)							
Zinc (Zn)							
Sodium (Na)							
Soluble Salts							
Organic Matter	5.1 % ENR 146						
NO ₃ -N							

SOIL FERTILITY GUIDELINES

CROP: FESCUE LAWN YIELD GOAL: 1 LB/1000 SQ FT

LIME	N	P ₂ O ₅	K ₂ O	Mg	S	B	Cu	Mn	Zn
40	3-4	0	1	0					

FESCUE LAWN:

00616) MAINTENANCE: Apply 0.75 to 1 lb N/1000 sq ft in March, May, September, and November. Adjust N rate and timing to accommodate climatic conditions and management practices. If lower maintenance is desired, the May application can be eliminated.

00620) Apply recommended phosphate in spring.

00621) Apply half of recommended phosphate in spring and again in fall.

00622) Apply recommended potash in fall. If the soil is sandy, apply 1 lb of potash/1000 sq ft in fall and apply the remaining potash in several smaller applications throughout the growing season.

00650) If the recommended amount of limestone is not incorporated into the soil prior to establishment, surface apply up to 50 lb/1000 sq ft every 4 to 6 months until the recommended amount is applied.

A soil analysis report

offers contractors

direction for producing

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Image: A&L Analytical

Laboratories

Soil TESTING

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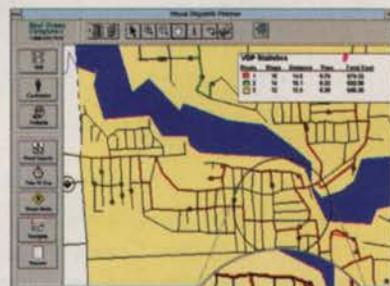
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USE READER SERVICE #73

soil testing

(continued from page 66)

them and how to relate that information to their customer.

"The bottom line is that a soil testing program will help contractors grow better turf and ornamentals," Darrah continued. "The test doesn't give all of the answers all of the time on every property as infrequent users believe it will, but successful soil testing programs have been implemented by a number of contractors."

In an effort to paint a clearer picture of soil testing, Darrah provided additional answers to questions relating to soil testing:

Q. What is a soil test?

A. A soil test is a series of tests done on a soil sample to check the pH and nutrient status of a lawn or landscape. A soil test is like a "physical exam" for a yard. It shows contractors what shape the soil is in and what corrective applications, if any, are needed for the grass, trees and shrubs.

A soil test is a laboratory analysis that extracts the plant available nutrients from the soil sample and measures them. A pH measurement is also done. This information is then converted to lime and fertilizer recommendations for the grass types in the specific lawn or the plants in the landscape.

Q. What are plant available nutrients?

A. Plant available nutrients are the elements necessary for plant growth. Soil testing laboratories routinely test for the nutrients that are most important for plant health.

Q. How do you test for these nutrients?

A. Laboratories use special extracting solutions to remove the available nutrients from the soil sample. The filtered extract is then measured to determine the level of plant nutrients in the soil. The soil pH is also carefully measured to determine its acidity or alkalinity and the need for lime.

Q. What kind of soil tests are available?

A. The series of tests that are available include tests run on the soil samples to measure pH, buffer pH (or lime requirement), available phosphorous, and exchangeable potassium.

Q. Why are soil tests necessary when the lawn, shrubs and trees all look fine?

A. Soils constantly change. The quantity and availability of plant nutrients in the soil, as well as the pH, change as a result of clipping removal and/or the addition of fertilizer, compost, lime or other materials.

(continued on page 70)

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soil testing

(continued from page 68)

Q. If a property suffered from certain insects or diseases in previous years, will a soil test find evidence of those insects or diseases this year?

A. A soil test reveals the nutrient status

and pH of your soil. It does not test for insects or diseases, however. Quite often, insects or diseases are more severe when there is a nutrient deficiency or low pH. Weak plants are more susceptible to insects

and diseases and less able to recover when they do attack the lawn or landscape.

Q. How much soil is necessary for a soil test sample?

A. In a lawn, it is recommended that

Selling Soil Testing

Obtaining a laboratory's analysis of their soil isn't a commonly cited reason on the list of why consumers hire lawn care or landscape companies, but perhaps it would be if more consumers were aware of soil testing services and their benefits, which include:

- Soil testing allows lawn care and maintenance companies to individualize the service to a lawn.
- Most soils aren't perfect for growing good lawns. Many lawns are growing on sub-soil left over after new construction.
- A soil test is environmentally responsible because the over application of some nutrients may not be beneficial.
- Soils constantly undergo change. The quantity of plant nutrients in the soil change as a result of changes in the soil, rainfall, clipping removal and the addition of fertilizer. A maintenance program should account for these changes.
- A soil test is a good way to tell if a soil can supply the nutrients needed for a good lawn. The soil test indicates what treatments should be prescribed for a specific soil and in what quantities the products should

be applied. Lawns have minimum nutrient requirements

below which plant health is sacrificed. Although nitrogen alone can produce a good-looking lawn, long-term plant health cannot be assured unless other nutrients are present in the correct amounts and the soil pH is in the preferred range. Most plants do well in the pH range of 6.0 to 7.0, although certain acid-loving plants do best at a pH between 5.5 and 6.0. While most turf and ornamentals in the landscape cannot tolerate excessively low soil pH values, many are adapted to moderately alkaline pH values in the range of pH 7.8 to 8.3.

• A soil test indicates if a lawn is too acid or too alkaline and shows if levels of phosphorous and potassium are adequate. Otherwise, the benefits of maintenance fertilization programs are often wasted if minimum nutrient and pH needs are not addressed by soil testing and corrective applications. — *CLC Labs*



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USE READER SERVICE #57

contractors take a minimum of eight to 10 core samples, each about 3 inches deep. Also, be sure to take the sample before treating the lawn.

In a landscape bed, contractors should



While soil testing services aren't likely to be large profit centers for companies, they can be a key to earning new customers who are impressed by the scientific approach a company employs or retaining current customers by taking the extra step necessary to keep their turf green and their plants healthy.



take eight to 10 core samples about 5 to 6 inches deep for the sample.

Q. What should contractors do with the information received from the soil test?

A. The laboratory report will show the actual data from the laboratory tests. The report generally indicates the levels (high, medium, low) of pH and nutrients in a bar graph. It also gives contractors an independent recommendation for the lime and fertilizer needs of the sampled property.

Q. Can a soil test confirm whether or not an application of some pesticide product caused problems in a lawn or landscape?

A. A typical soil test determines the amount of nutrients in the soil, not

the presence of pesticides.

Q. Does the soil test diagnose turf or ornamental diseases?

A. Most soil test programs do not diag-

nose turf and ornamental diseases. Soil testing companies recommend contractors contact their county extension agent for diagnostic services.

Q. How long does it take for contractors to receive the results of a soil test?

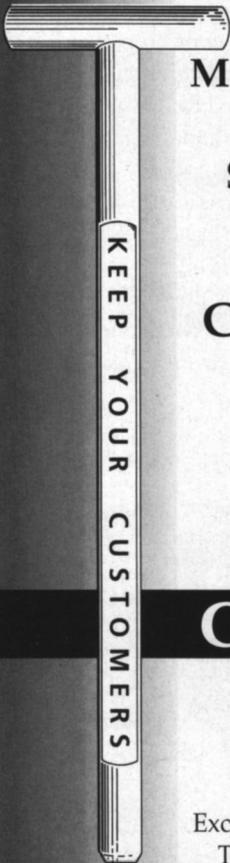
A. Generally, soil testing takes about two weeks for the laboratory to present the results of the test back to the contractor. **LL**

The author is Editor of Lawn & Landscape magazine.

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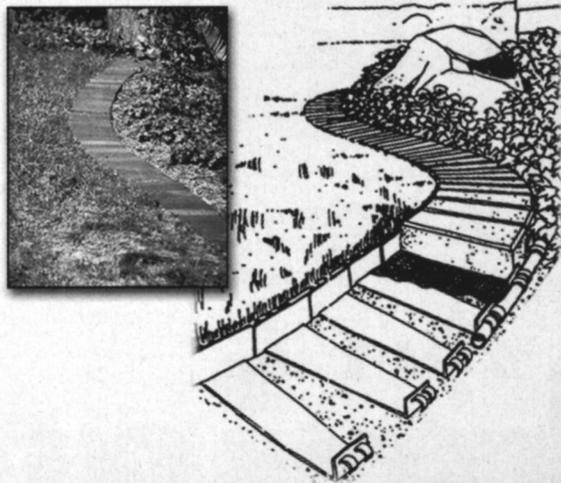
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USE READER SERVICE #59

• Troubleshooting an irrigation system requires a systematic approach.

• By Nicole Wisniewski



Checking all sprinkler heads to ensure that they rise, rotate and spray correctly is a must on irrigation systems. Photo: Buckner by Storm

– checking a patient’s heart rate, blood pressure, reflexes, etc. – each time to diagnose and treat the problem correctly. If he or she misses one of these steps, a misdiagnosis could be made, Dubose said.

“Troubleshooting an irrigation system really isn’t complicated,” Dubose explained. “It’s systematic. Irrigation contractors need to go through the same process each and every time they diagnose and repair an irrigation system. Ninety-nine percent of the time the reason they can’t find the problem the first time around is because they skipped a step and had to start over.”

G

etting an exam at the doctor’s office isn’t much different from repairing an irrigation system, according to John Dubose.

“Most of the time, people go to the doctor’s office for a reason,” pointed out Dubose, regional sales manager, Buckner by Storm, Fresno, Calif. “It’s the same with irrigation contractors and an irrigation system. Nine times out of 10 there is a complaint from the homeowner or property manager first before an examination is made.”

When the check up actually starts, a doctor usually goes through the same methodical means

WHERE TO BEGIN. Some arrangements need to be made with the homeowner or property manager before an irrigation contractor even sets foot on his or her property, warned Rick Walter, partner, Northway Landscaping and Irrigation, Circle Pines, Minn.

“Irrigation contractors need to make sure someone is home and that they have access to the water source and irrigation controller so that they can identify the problems,” Walter said.

This is particularly key with residential customers, stressed Joe Bennett, president, AutoLawn, Fort Gratiot, Mich.

An Irrigation Check-Up

"There is less interaction between the technician and owner of a property when commercial clients are concerned," Bennett explained. "They just want the system fixed and the property managers usually leave the job to us, but we still tell them when we're going to get there, what we're doing and when we're going to leave. With residential customers, make sure they know when you're coming and what you're doing each step of the way and how much they are going to be charged."

If the homeowner can't be around during the inspection, ask him or her to mark the water source, controller and any problematic areas of the irrigation system, suggested Rick Pate, president, Pate Landscape Co., Montgomery, Ala., so that they can be easily found.

The hourly rate for an irrigation service varies from location to location based on what the contractor includes in that rate. In the Texas market, an irrigation contractor will charge an average of \$45 to \$55 an hour with a two-hour minimum charge, Dubose said.

Pate said he charges \$49 per hour with a one-hour minimum charge to send a two-man service crew out. After the first hour, the price drops to \$39 per hour. The rates are different if Pate's crew plans to be on the property all day for a special project. Walter charges \$58 per hour with a one-hour minimum charge. These prices all include drive time, and some contractors noted they charge extra for mileage if the property is outside of their regular service area. Any parts needed to fix the irrigation system are an additional cost to the customer, and Walter said he doesn't charge above the retail cost for parts, yet he admitted some contractors do.

"Determining a price for your service is all about being fair to yourself and your customers," Bennett explained. "It takes a service technician about two to five years to get good at repairing irrigation systems. So, you have to make sure you're sending a knowledgeable person out to service the system to be fair to

the customer even if you have to send a new employee out with an experienced one so they can learn from each other. And, to be fair to yourself, you have to make sure you're bringing in a profit."

AN ORDERLY APPROACH. Troubleshooting an irrigation system requires only common sense, Pate declared.

"Start with the controller and work your way outward," he said.

One of the most common problems irrigation systems face is something as simple as a power outage, Bennett remarked.

"If the power goes out and the backup battery wasn't plugged in or isn't charging and the customers don't reprogram their systems, they call an irrigation contractor," he said. "All we have to do is reset the clock and the system is working fine again."

After a power outage, an irrigation contractor can find irrigation

'You have to make sure you're sending a knowledgeable person out to service the system to be fair to the customer even if you have to send employees out together so that they can learn from each other.'
- Bennett

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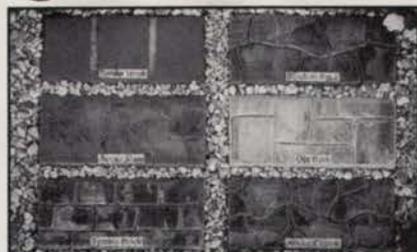
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irrigation

The Technician's Toolbox

To troubleshoot an irrigation system, a contractor needs to have the right tools. John Dubose, regional sales manager, Buckner by Storm, Fresno, Calif., recommended these essentials and explains their uses:

- **Pressure gauge**— Checks the static water pressure.
- **Volt-ohm meter**— Checks the AC voltage, wire resistance and continuity.
- **Remote valve solenoid actuator**— Provides a voltage to actuate the field solenoids when the power of a system is in question.
- **Wire locator**— Helps determine the path of irrigation wiring underground when it is unknown.
- **Wire fault locator**— Can search out the exact location of an underground, shorted wire after the path of irrigation wiring is determined.
- **Wire toning device**— Can help identify a single wire in the field when all wires are the same color.
- **Wire cutters and wire strippers**— Helps with the replacement of wiring.
- **Wire dry splice connector**— Helps with the replacement of wiring.
- **Various PVC pipe and wire types**— Used for repair purposes.
- **PVC slip fixes**— Used to make repairs on irrigation piping without having to dig up the whole pipe.
- **Blue/wet glue**— Used to make repairs in wet conditions, such as to a PVC pipe when the water to the irrigation system cannot be completely turned off or drained.
- **Hand tools, shovels, saws, etc.**— When it comes to tools, Joe Bennett, president, AutoLawn, Fort Gratiot, Mich., recommended a complete set of pipe wrenches— 36-inch being the largest, a ½-inch drive socket set, screwdrivers, nut drivers, hex saws, cable saws, a torch, pipe cutters and a chain wrench. — *Nicole Wisniewski*

system clock problems ranging from blown circuitry and broken power modules to a chassi that needs to be replaced, according to Greg Boyce, East Coast regional manager, K-Rain Manufacturing, West Palm Beach, Fla. These parts are relatively easy to replace, Boyce maintained.

Pate said he laughs at how many times he has to charge his customers for service calls as simple as this.

"They don't want you to explain the problem or how they could have fixed it themselves," Pate admitted. "They just want you to fix it. They feel that they are buying a good-looking landscape from us and they are paying for the convenience of not putting a lot of work or maintenance into it.

"Technology has improved so much over the years and homeowners don't under-

stand what kind of system they have or what it's capable of doing," Pate continued. "They just want it to turn on and turn off."

If there is no power coming from the controller, there are two things that need to be checked, according to Dubose: Make sure the controller is not unplugged and, if there is AC power, be sure to check the output of the controller for sufficient voltage to the field, which is commonly 24 volts.

"Something as simple as a lightning surge could have lowered the voltage," Dubose explained.

In a residential system, another common problem with a poorly operating controller is unclear or poor setting changes made by the homeowner or system operator that have stopped the system temporarily from working, Dubose added.

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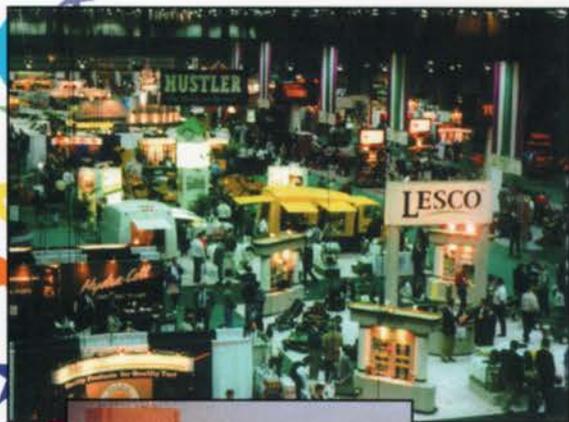
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What Makes This A Super Show?

★ Products & Services Galore.

300 exhibits—80,000 sq. ft. sold-out show—and nearly 2,000 representatives will be on-hand at the GIE trade show, offering you the latest products and expert advice available.

★ Informative Sessions & Roundtables.

Pick and choose from 60-plus sessions featuring expert speakers and hot topics. Enjoy one-on-one Power Breakfast Roundtables where you can save money with innovative ideas and practices.

★ Popular Outdoor Equipment Demo.

Touch it, ride it, operate it...GIE's Outdoor Equipment Demo lets you "try-before-you-buy." A hit with attendees, more than 2,000 showed up for last year's Demo to "test drive" the merchandise.

★ Networking & Fun Events.

It's not all work and no play at the PLCAA Conference and GIE. Unwind on the golf course, mingle at the Friday night Birthday bash, party at the Annual Meeting, Dinner & Casino Night, or jump in the bidding frenzy at PLCAA's Live Auction.

★ Location, Location, Location.

Baltimore is the 12th largest U.S. city and a waterfront treasure. The National Aquarium and Camden Yards are located here, along with an array of world-class museums, historic landmarks and top restaurants. Baltimore's strategic location on the Eastern Seaboard places it within easy driving distance of Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, PA, and New York, NY. The Baltimore/Washington Airport (BWI) is served by 20 domestic and international airlines and is just 10 miles from the city's center—a brief 15-minute ride. Also, AMTRAK serves Baltimore, just 5 minutes from downtown at Pennsylvania Station.

Registration Discounts & Options!

- ★ Save \$40 by registering on or before **September 30**.
- ★ Save \$100 when you register as a PLCAA member—it's easy to join PLCAA on the conference registration form or call PLCAA at (800) 458-3466 for membership sign-ups and specials. Visit our web site: www.plcaa.org.
- ★ **Group rates** available—bring the whole crew and make this a company-wide experience (great employee benefit)!
- ★ Register for the **full-conference**, and attend the **GIE trade show, GIE General & Keynote presentations, and Outdoor Demo & Lunch for free.**
- ★ **Three-for-one!** Register with PLCAA and attend the **GIE sponsoring associations' conference sessions offered by ALCA & PGMS for free** (non-ticketed events only). A list of all available sessions is located on the back of the registration form.
- ★ Daily registrations available.
- ★ GIE-Trade-Show-Only registrations available on-site.
- ★ E-Z PLCAA Registration Process. Register online, by phone, fax or mail!

Conference
November 12-16

Outdoor Equipment Demo
November 14

Trade Show
November 15-16

★★★★★

Baltimore Convention Center
PLCAA's Hotel:
Omni Inner Harbor Hotel
Baltimore, Maryland



"20 Years of Growing Leaders"



DOUGLAS



PORTER



VANDER KOOI



BEARD



COOK



CRAWFORD



MAYFIELD

Star Speakers!

Here are a few of the headliners scheduled to uplift, inform and inspire you at the PLCAA Conference and GIE.

- ★ Opening Speaker: **Dr. Stephen Douglas**—"Managing Your Stress"
- ★ Guest Speaker: **Monroe Porter**—"How to Find, Motivate and Retain Employees"
- ★ Guest Speaker: **Charles Vander Kooi**—"Overhead Allocation...The Good, The Bad, The Ugly"
- ★ Guest Speaker: **Dr. James Beard**—"Turf Trends in the 21st Century"
- ★ Guest Speaker: **Charlie Cook**—"What's New on the Political Scene?"
- ★ GIE Keynote Speaker: **Roger Crawford**—"Playing to Win"
- ★ GIE General Session Speaker: **Mark Mayfield**—"Mirthmaking—The Role of Humor in Your Work and Life"

QUICK-SCAN SHOW SCHEDULE

FRIDAY Nov. 12	SATURDAY Nov. 13	SUNDAY Nov. 14	MONDAY Nov. 15	TUESDAY Nov. 16
<p>Noon - 5 p.m. Bus Departs: 11 a.m. from the Omni Inner Harbor Hotel PLCAA Golf Outing (Ticketed Event/Transportation & Lunch Provided) Location: Turf Valley Resort</p>  <p>6 - 7 p.m. Welcome Reception: PLCAA's Happy 20th Birthday Party Location: Omni Inner Harbor Hotel</p>  	<p>8 - 11 a.m. Bus Departs: 8 a.m. from the Baltimore Convention Center (Coffee/Danish-7:30 a.m.) Stadium Tour of Camden Yards (Ticketed Event/Transportation & Coffee/Danish Provided)</p> <p>8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Concurrent Workshops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pesticide Recertification Workshop • Irrigation Workshop (Ticketed Event) • Tree & Shrub Workshop <p>Location: Baltimore Convention Center</p> <p>1:30 - 5 p.m. Grand Opening Session "Managing Your Stress" Dr. Stephen Douglas Location: Baltimore Convention Center</p> <p>NEW 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Live Auction Now on Saturday! Auction Registration Opens: 5:30 p.m. Live Auction Location: Omni Inner Harbor Hotel</p>	<p>7 - 8:15 a.m. Power Breakfast Roundtables Location: Baltimore Convention Center</p> <p>8:30 a.m. - Noon Concurrent Educational Sessions Location: Baltimore Convention Center</p> <p>9 - 10 a.m. Spouse Get-Acquainted Breakfast Location: Omni Inner Harbor Hotel</p> <p>12:30 - 2:30 p.m. Continuous Shuttle Service Provided—12:30 - 5:30 p.m. from the Baltimore Convention Center and the Omni Inner Harbor Hotel Lunch at the GIE Outdoor Equipment Demo Location: Carroll Park</p> <p>1 - 5 p.m. Continuous Shuttle Service Provided—12:30 - 5:30 p.m. from the Baltimore Convention Center and the Omni Inner Harbor Hotel GIE Outdoor Equipment Demo Location: Carroll Park</p> <p>5:30 - 6:30 p.m. New & Prospective Member Reception Location: Omni Inner Harbor Hotel</p> <p>NEW 6:30 - 11 p.m. Annual Meeting & Dinner Now on Sunday! 20th Anniversary Celebration: Annual Meeting & Dinner NEW! Casino Night Location: Omni Inner Harbor Hotel</p>	<p>7 - 8:15 a.m. Power Breakfast Roundtables Location: Baltimore Convention Center</p> <p>8:30 - 10 a.m. Concurrent Educational Sessions Location: Baltimore Convention Center</p> <p>10:30 a.m. - Noon GIE Keynote Address "Playing to Win" Roger Crawford Location: Baltimore Convention Center</p> <p>Noon - 6 p.m. GIE Trade Show Location: Baltimore Convention Center</p> <p>..... "All seven of us are glad we came [to GIE] and will leave with new ideas to implement." — Laurie Broccoli Broccoli Tree & Lawn Care, Inc. Rochester, N.Y.</p> <p>Tuesday, Nov. 16... Great local/drive-in option for area companies. For \$35, you can enjoy conference sessions—featuring popular business speaker Charles Vander Kooi—take in the trade show and attend the GIE General Session with speaker Mark Mayfield (rumored to have you laughing in the aisles!) for Tuesday only. Bring the employees!</p>	<p>7 - 8:15 a.m. Power Breakfast Roundtables Location: Baltimore Convention Center</p> <p>8:30 - 10 a.m. Concurrent Educational Sessions Location: Baltimore Convention Center</p> <p>9 a.m. - 3 p.m. GIE Trade Show Location: Baltimore Convention Center</p> <p>1:30 p.m. \$500 GIE Grand Prize Drawing Location: Trade Show Floor at Baltimore Convention Center</p> <p>2 - 3:30 p.m. GIE General Session "Mirthmaking—The Role of Humor in Your Work and Life"—Mark Mayfield Location: Baltimore Convention Center</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>GREEN TEAM DAY Dedicated to the Lawn & Landscape Employee</p> </div>



PREVIEW OF EVE

Friday, November 12

Noon - 5 p.m.
Golf Outing Ticketed Event

Swing into the conference and GIE at PLCAA's Annual Pre-Conference Golf Outing. You'll enjoy great networking and fun at the Turf Valley Resort, a championship course nestled in the heart of Maryland's prestigious "hunt country." A spikeless facility, Turf Valley is located 20 minutes from downtown Baltimore and an hour from Washington, D.C. Transportation and lunch are provided. **Bus Departs at 11 a.m. from the Omni Inner Harbor Hotel.** Sign up for golf on your conference registration form.

Closest-to-the-Pin Sponsor:

Tessenderlo
The Specialty Liquid Fertilizer People™

Hole-in-One Sponsor:



Longest Drive Sponsor:



Beverage Cart Sponsor:



Bus Sponsor:



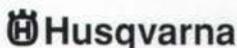
6 - 7 p.m.

Welcome Reception: PLCAA's Happy 20th Birthday Party

Omni Inner Harbor Hotel

The celebration begins. Join us in a party atmosphere for munchies and good times. Golf awards will be presented. Free admission to conference registrants! Sign up for the birthday bash on your conference registration form.

Sponsor:



PLCAA CONFERENCE NOTEBOOKS

Free handy conference notebooks with session information and more for conference registrants. Great resource! Sponsor:



Saturday, November 13

8 - 11 a.m.
Stadium Tour Ticketed Event

PLCAA and PGMS present a grounds tour of Oriole Park at Camden Yards and the PSINet Stadium at Camden Yards. Get a first-hand look at these state-of-the-art facilities where the Baltimore Orioles and Ravens play. Camden Yards, a one-time railroad center, is only two blocks from the birthplace of baseball's legendary hero, Babe Ruth. **Bus Departs at 8 a.m. from the Baltimore Convention Center.** Coffee/Danish provided at 7:30 a.m. Sign up for the tour on your conference registration form.

8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
3 Concurrent Workshops
Baltimore Convention Center

Sign up for workshops on the conference registration form. The Irrigation Workshop is a ticketed event and is limited to 45 people.

▲ Pesticide Recertification Workshop

Pesticide recertification credits have been applied for—call PLCAA for details. A detailed sheet of credits will be available at the show.

- **Pesticide Safety**—Steve Jedrzejek, Lesco, Inc.
- **Grub Control**—Dr. Kevin Mathias, University of Maryland
- **Innovations in Weed Control**—Mike Melichar, Dow AgroSciences
- **10 Diseases Affected by Fertilization**—Dr. Tom Turner, University of Maryland
- **How to Diagnose Turf Problems**—Richard Buckley, Rutgers University

▲ Tree & Shrub Workshop

- **Proper Spraying Techniques**—Dr. Bob Partyka, Plants and Me
- **Major Woody Ornamental Diseases**—Dr. Bob Partyka
- **Use of Systemic Insecticides for Control of Ornamental Landscape Pests**—Dr. V. Bruce Steward, Bayer Corp.
- **New Approaches to Managing Insect Pests of Woody Ornamentals**—Dr. Paula Shrewsbury, Smithsonian Institution
- **Long-Term Impact of Environmental Effects on Trees**—Dr. Mike Raupp, University of Maryland

▲ Irrigation Equipment Hands-On Workshop Ticketed Event

• **Irrigation Equipment Maintenance—Electrical Troubleshooting**—Presented by the Irrigation Association by a Regional Authorized Instructor
Class Size: Limited to 45

1:30 - 5 p.m.
Grand Opening Session
Baltimore Convention Center



DOUGLAS

"Managing Your Stress"

Dr. Stephen Douglas

Dr. Douglas attracts standing-room only crowds, so grab a seat and be prepared to laugh and learn from his humorous approach to the serious subject of stress in the workplace. While avoiding the traditional "tabloid" list of dos and don'ts and using real-life stories, Dr. Douglas will emphasize such things as: "Be where you are when you are there... most of the things we worry about aren't even our problem... most of the worry we allow ourselves to be a part of we can't change, anyway... AND, why worry about the small stuff." He tries to get us to lower expectations of others and ourselves, and reduce perfectionism. You'll never forget the stories and humor of this session!

Grand Opening Sponsor:



5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Live Auction NOW ON SATURDAY!
Omni Inner Harbor Hotel

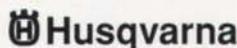
Popular PLCAA event—don't miss it! See Live Auctioneer **Harry Collins** in action and get in the bidding frenzy for top-notch products. **Special auction item up for bid: NASCAR Weekend for two at the Lowes Motor Speedway in Charlotte (a \$2,300 value!) provided by Husqvarna.** Registration opens at 5:30 p.m. Sign up for the auction on your conference registration form.

Sunday, November 14

7 - 8:15 a.m.
Power Breakfast Roundtables

Baltimore Convention Center
Swap success stories and gain valuable advice at the popular, jam-packed Roundtables. Over 30 business and industry hot topics to choose from during three days of morning Roundtables! Free to conference registrants.

Sponsor:



8:30 - 10 a.m.
Concurrent Sessions
Baltimore Convention Center



PORTER

▲ How to Find, Motivate and Retain Employees—Part I

Monroe Porter, Management Consultants

This fact-filled session offers realistic and practical methods on dealing with today's people crisis. It is not 1955. Ozzie and Harriet are gone and today's Green Industry professional must adopt a new personnel strategy. This program is not theory-oriented but rather offers real solutions that the speaker implemented with contractors and other service businesses during his 23 years as a management consultant and professional presenter. Part I of this session will focus on recruiting, interviewing, coaching, and training employees. Part II of this session follows from 10:15 a.m. to Noon. Attendance at Part I of this session is not required for Part II.

Sponsor (Parts I & II):



CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM



**Questions?
call
PLCAA at:**

**1
800
458
3466**

INCLUDED WITH YOUR PLCAA FULL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION:

- * Admission to all non-ticketed conference educational sessions and workshops offered by PLCAA, PGMS and ALCA.
- * Admission to the GIE trade show, GIE Outdoor Demo & Lunch, GIE Keynote & General Session presentations.
- * Admission to PLCAA's Power Breakfast Roundtables.
- * Admission to Friday Night Welcome Reception / PLCAA's Birthday Party.
- * Admission to Live Auction—***now on Saturday!***
- * Admission to Annual Meeting, Dinner & Casino Night—***now on Sunday!***



REGISTRATION FORM

PLCAA's 20th Annual Conference & GIE/99
 November 12-16, 1999
 Baltimore Convention Center
 Baltimore, Maryland

4 Easy Ways to Register:

1. By Mail: PLCAA, 1000 Johnson Ferry Rd., NE, #C-135, Marietta, GA 30068
 2. By Phone: (800) 458-3466 or (770) 977-5222
 3. By FAX: (770) 578-6071
 4. By Internet: www.plcaa.org
- QUESTIONS? Call (800) 458-3466 or E-Mail PLCAA at plcaa@plcaa.org

1. REGISTRANT INFORMATION

Your Name _____
(as it should appear on badge)

Spouse Name (if registering) _____

Company Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Country _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ Fax (____) _____

E-Mail _____ Web Site _____

Please indicate any special needs: _____



In case of emergency during conference, please contact: (Fill out name and phone no.)

Day: _____ Evening: _____

This is my first PLCAA Conference

Please fill out survey questions. Responses are strictly confidential. Your information will be used to benefit our industry.

A. Your primary job function:

1. Owner/President 3. Sales/Marketing 5. Student
 2. Manager/Supervisor 4. Operations 6. Other _____

B. Indicate services currently offered by your company or department & services to be expanded: (check all that apply)

Currently Offer:	Plan to Provide:	
1. <input type="checkbox"/>	15. <input type="checkbox"/>	Lawn & Landscape Maintenance
2. <input type="checkbox"/>	16. <input type="checkbox"/>	Landscape Installation
3. <input type="checkbox"/>	17. <input type="checkbox"/>	Pest Control & Fertilization
4. <input type="checkbox"/>	18. <input type="checkbox"/>	Landscape Design & Build
5. <input type="checkbox"/>	19. <input type="checkbox"/>	Hardscape Installation
6. <input type="checkbox"/>	20. <input type="checkbox"/>	Seasonal Color Installation
7. <input type="checkbox"/>	21. <input type="checkbox"/>	Irrigation Installation
8. <input type="checkbox"/>	22. <input type="checkbox"/>	Wildflower Plantings
9. <input type="checkbox"/>	23. <input type="checkbox"/>	Outdoor Lighting
10. <input type="checkbox"/>	24. <input type="checkbox"/>	Snow Removal
11. <input type="checkbox"/>	25. <input type="checkbox"/>	Equipment Service/Sales
12. <input type="checkbox"/>	26. <input type="checkbox"/>	Nursery/Garden Center
13. <input type="checkbox"/>	27. <input type="checkbox"/>	Arbor Services
14. <input type="checkbox"/>	28. <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____

C. Your role in purchasing equipment, supplies or services for your company:

1. Final Decision 2. Recommend 3. No Role

D. Annual sales volume or budget size:

1. Under \$100,000 5. \$1 million - \$2.9 million
 2. \$100,000 - \$249,999 6. \$3 million - \$6.9 million
 3. \$250,000 - \$499,999 7. \$7 million and above
 4. \$500,000 - \$999,999

2. CONFERENCE & GIE/99 REGISTRATION

Fees include all conference sessions, Friday Night Birthday Party, Live Auction, Networking Roundtables, Annual Meeting & Dinner, and Green Industry Expo, Outdoor Demo & Lunch. *Please check appropriate box.*

	Early-Bird (by 9/30/99)	Regular (after 9/30/99)
PLCAA MEMBER FEE		
1 Person	<input type="checkbox"/> \$185	<input type="checkbox"/> \$225
2 People (same company)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175 each	<input type="checkbox"/> \$215 each
3 People (same company)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$165 each	<input type="checkbox"/> \$205 each
4 People (same company)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$155 each	<input type="checkbox"/> \$195 each
5 People or more (same company)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$145 each	<input type="checkbox"/> \$185 each
NON-MEMBER FEE	<input type="checkbox"/> \$285 each	<input type="checkbox"/> \$325 each
FULL-TIME STUDENT/PROFESSOR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$55	<input type="checkbox"/> \$70
SPOUSE (Member Only)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$85	<input type="checkbox"/> \$105
DAILY FEE (Member & Non-Member)		
Saturday, Sunday and Monday	<input type="checkbox"/> \$95/day	<input type="checkbox"/> \$125/day
Tuesday, GreenTeam Day—for the whole crew!	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
<small>(GreenTeam Day includes: GIE Speaker Presentation, Trade Show & Conference Sessions.)</small>		
Subtotal Registration Fees	\$ _____	\$ _____

3. EVENT SIGN-UP (Please check all appropriate boxes.)

	Member	Non-Member	Early-Bird (by 9/30/99)	Regular (after 9/30/99)
Golf Outing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$85	<input type="checkbox"/> \$95		
Friday, Noon	<input type="checkbox"/> \$110	<input type="checkbox"/> \$120		
PLCAA 20th Birthday Party	<input type="checkbox"/> FREE - Reservations Required			
Friday, 6 - 7 p.m.				
Stadium Tour	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10		<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	
Saturday, 8 - 11 a.m.				
Pesticide Recertification Workshop	Member <input type="checkbox"/> FREE - Reservations Required	Non-Member <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 - workshop only - <input type="checkbox"/> \$50		
Saturday, 8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.				
Tree & Shrub Workshop	Member <input type="checkbox"/> FREE - Reservations Required	Non-Member <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 - workshop only - <input type="checkbox"/> \$50		
Saturday, 8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.				
Irrigation Maintenance Workshop - Reservations Required (Limited to 45 People)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75 - workshop only - <input type="checkbox"/> \$95			
Saturday, 8 a.m. - Noon				
Live Auction	<input type="checkbox"/> FREE			
Saturday, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.				
Spouse "Get Acquainted" Breakfast	<input type="checkbox"/> FREE - Reservations Required			
Sunday, 9 - 10 a.m.				
GIE Lunch at Outdoor Demo	<input type="checkbox"/> FREE			
Sunday, 12:30 - 2:30 p.m.				
New & Prospective Member Reception	<input type="checkbox"/> FREE - Reservations Required			
Sunday, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.				
Annual Meeting, Dinner & Casino Night	<input type="checkbox"/> FREE - Reservations Required			
Sunday, 6:30 - 11 p.m.				
Subtotal Special Events	\$ _____	\$ _____		

4. SAVE BY JOINING PLCAA!

Join PLCAA now and receive immediate member benefits, including conference attendance at the low member rate! *(Please check appropriate box.)*

<input type="checkbox"/> REGULAR/Lawn & landscape company. Dues based on gross sales volume.			
Sales Volume	Dues	Sales Volume	Dues
\$0 - 199,999	.....\$285	\$1 Million - 3,499,999	.....\$1,000
\$200,000 - 599,999	.....\$500	\$3.5 Million - 7,499,999	.....\$1,250
\$600,000 - 999,999	.....\$750	\$7.5 Million +	.....\$1,500
<small>If applicable, add branch/franchise fee - \$40 per branch franchise.</small>			
<input type="checkbox"/> ASSOCIATE/Industry suppliers. Dues based on gross sales volume.			
Under 3 million	.....\$565	3 mil.-10 mil.	.....\$1,185
Over 10 million	.....\$1,445		
<input type="checkbox"/> FRANCHISE (Call to see if your company qualifies.)	.....\$160		
<input type="checkbox"/> AFFILIATE/Govt., univ., non-profit, grounds managers	.....\$65		
<input type="checkbox"/> INTERNATIONAL	.....\$285		
<input type="checkbox"/> STUDENT (proof of full-time student status required)	.....\$35		
Membership Subtotal			\$ _____

5. PAYMENT

Subtotal #2 - Registration Fee \$ _____
 Subtotal #3 - Special Events..... \$ _____
 Subtotal #4 - PLCAA Membership Dues \$ _____
 TOTAL..... \$ _____

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ (U.S. funds) payable to PLCAA.
 Please charge my: VISA MasterCard

Card # _____ Exp. Date _____
 Cardholder's Name _____
 Signature _____

Cancellations: Return Badges with written request prior to 10/31/99. A processing fee of \$25/person will apply. Advance registrants will be acknowledged by mail until 10/31/99.



GIE-ONLY PASS

Sunday, Monday & Tuesday, Nov. 14, 15 & 16
 Register on-site: \$15/day.

AN EDUCATIONAL EXTRAVAGANZA!

Choose From Over 50 Outstanding Sessions!

As a conference participant, you have the opportunity to attend any of the sessions listed below which are sponsored by the Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA), Professional Grounds Management Society (PGMS) and the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA).

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1999

1:30pm - 3:30pm

Team Building

IPM of Ornamental Grasses

Skin Concerns for Grounds Professionals

1:30pm - 5:30pm

Managing Your Stress

3:45pm - 5:30pm

ALCA Advantages Panel

Three Strategies for Building Your Company for the Next Five Years

A Critical Managerial Function – Growth & Retention of Talent

Entrepreneurial Leadership: The Role of the CEO

Maintaining a Positive Attitude

Moving Big Trees

Becoming a Certified Grounds Manager

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1999

8:30am - 10:00am

Can You Afford Your Image? Can Your Customers Afford You? (Part 1)

Scoring in the Red Zone (Part 1) – How to Generate More Qualified Leads

The Tool Kit for Landscape Leaders

The Industry is Changing! What Are You Going to Do About It?

Improving Efficiency & Profits in a Maintenance Business (Part 1)

You Can't Get There From Here Without Help (Athletic Field Construction)

Preserving Trees During Construction

Environmental Stewardship

How to Find, Motivate and Retain Employees (Part1)

Telemarketing: Friend or Foe (Panel)

Mowing and Making Money

10:15am - 12:00pm

Can You Afford Your Image? Can Your Customers Afford You? (Part 2)

Scoring in the Red Zone (Part 2) – How to Open More Relationships

The Tool Kit for Landscape Leaders

The Impact of Clear Values on the Bottom Line

Improving Efficiency & Profits in a Maintenance Business (Part 2)

Diagnosing Site-Related Problems

Use of Topiaries in the Landscape

Control of Canadian Geese

How to Find, Motivate and Retain Employees (Part 2)

Nutrient Management & Water Quality (Panel)

Political Report

12:30pm - 2:30pm

Lunch at the GIE Outdoor Equipment Demonstration (Shuttle services provided)

1:00pm - 5:00pm

GIE Outdoor Equipment Demonstration
Carroll Park

(Shuttle services provided)

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1999

8:30am - 10:00am

Compensation Planning for Independents

The SALESMIND: How to Leverage Transactions

Getting Results – Not Excuses

Expanding Your Business with Subcontractors

How to Thrive as an Independent in the Midst of Consolidation (Panel)

Understanding Landscapes and Herbicide Use

Managing Grounds at a Major League Ballpark
Maintenance of United States Capitol Grounds
Turf Trends in the 21st Century

Risk Communications and the Benefits of Turf
Accurate Job Costing: The Key to Profitability

10:30am - 12:00pm

GIE Keynote

“Playing to Win”

12:00pm - 6:00pm

Green Industry Expo Open

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1999 GREEN TEAM DAY

8:30am - 10:00am

Workforce 2020

Profitable Project Management – How to Win Once
the Project is Sold (Panel)

How to Motivate Your Crews

Profitable Snow Plowing

Techniques for Employing a Legal Hispanic Workforce

Using Native Plants in the Landscape

Sports Turf Care and Trends

Overhead Allocation

Identifying Turf Problems – Insect/Disease ID

9:00am - 3:00pm

Green Industry Expo

1:30pm

\$500 Grand Prize Drawing on the Show Floor

2:00pm - 3:30pm

GIE General Session

Mark Mayfield

“Mirthmaking – The Value of Humor in Your Work
and Life”

GREEN INDUSTRY EXPO • MONDAY 12:00NOON - 6:00PM • TUESDAY 9:00AM - 3:00PM

NETS & SESSIONS

▲ Telemarketing: Friend or Foe?

Panel: Don Nichols, Yes! Marketing, Inc.; Bob Swedo, MAC Telemarketing; Tom Walczyk, Emerald Earth, LLC; Jim Campanella, The Lawn Dawg

Telemarketing is a controversial topic and many states have enacted legislation to limit how companies use it as a sales tool. What are the secrets to making it work for your company? Is there a downside? Find out, as this panel of experts gives you the pros and cons, as well as their own experiences in using the phone to create new business.

▲ Mowing and Making Money

Tom Oyler, U.S. Lawns

Full-service maintenance companies are a growing trend. Many chemical lawn care firms look to mowing to increase business and satisfy customers' one-stop shopping nature. Learn the key factors in determining if this service is right for your company and the steps necessary for implementation. This session will also cover how mowing may affect your business operations and existing services, as well as describe steps you can take to ensure growth and profitability. A must-attend session if you're considering mowing as an add-on service or you're already in the business.

9 - 10 a.m.

Spouse Get-Acquainted Breakfast

Omni Inner Harbor Hotel

Join other spouses for a "get-acquainted" breakfast and welcome to Baltimore. Sign up for this event on your conference registration form.

10:15 a.m. - Noon

Concurrent Sessions

Baltimore Convention Center

▲ How to Find, Motivate and Retain Employees—Part II

Monroe Porter, Management Consultants

OK, you've got a new employee... now what? Porter continues to discuss methods for sustaining productivity and facilitating communication with your new and existing employees, as well as keeping them happy and motivated. It's a fact that every employer will have to deal with employees who are just plain difficult to deal with at one point in their careers. Learn proper conflict resolution policies for lawn and landscape companies. Attendance at Part I of this session is not required for Part II.

▲ Nutrient Management & Water Quality

Panel: Dr. Dave Chalmers, Virginia Polytechnic and State University; Chris Forth, TruGreen-ChemLawn; Dr. Tom Turner, University of Maryland

One of the hottest and most controversial topics in lawn care is the impact applications have on the environment. Communicating the realities of runoff to your customers can help you avoid hassles from misinformation. Attend this session to get the facts and the latest research statistics. You'll learn how your services react with the ecosystems in nearby bodies of water and what you can do to minimize this. Also, you'll learn what local governments are doing to regulate your business.



COOK

▲ What's New on the Political Scene?

Charlie Cook, Cook & Company

A frequent guest on ABC, CBS and NBC evening news programs and morning shows, political analyst Cook takes you through the political scene in Washington today—who's in, who's out. An analyst for CNN, appearing regularly on its daily "Inside Politics" show, Cook will give you the latest scuttlebutt from the Republican party on who will be the front runner to take on Al Gore in 2000. The program will wrap up with a Q&A session so you can get the latest scoop on your senator or congressman.

12:30 - 2:30 p.m.

Lunch at the GIE Outdoor Equipment Demo

Carroll Park

Chow down at Carroll Park, site of the popular Outdoor Demo. Lunch is free to conference registrants. Continuous shuttle service is provided from 12:30 to 5:30 p.m. from the Baltimore Convention Center and the Omni Inner Harbor Hotel.

1 - 5 p.m.

GIE Outdoor Equipment Demo

Carroll Park

Try-before-you-buy at the ever-popular and growing Demo. More than 2,000 attended last year and more are expected to "test-drive" the latest equipment and products. The Demo is free to conference registrants. Continuous shuttle service is provided from 12:30 to 5:30 p.m. from the Baltimore Convention Center and the Omni Inner Harbor Hotel.

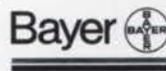
5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

New & Prospective Member Reception

Omni Inner Harbor Hotel

Mix and mingle with PLCAA members, Board and staff while enjoying complimentary snacks and beverages. New and prospective PLCAA members are invited to this free social event. Come join us!

Sponsor:



6:30 - 11 p.m.

ANNUAL MEETING/DINNER NOW ON SUNDAY! NEW-CASINO NIGHT!



20th Anniversary Celebration! Annual Meeting & Dinner + CASINO NIGHT!

Omni Inner Harbor Hotel

Celebrate PLCAA's 20th Anniversary at this gala event—awards presentations, dinner, prizes and fun followed by Casino Night. For pulse-quickening excitement, nothing beats the sights and sounds of a casino floor. So, roll the dice and spend your Fun Money for an evening with Lady Luck. Free admission for full-conference registrants—sign up on your conference registration form.

Sponsor:



Monday, November 15

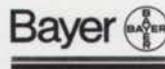
7 - 8:15 a.m.

Power Breakfast Roundtables

Baltimore Convention Center

Swap success stories and gain valuable advice at the popular, jam-packed Roundtables. Free to conference registrants.

Sponsor:



8:30 - 10 a.m.

Concurrent Sessions

Baltimore Convention Center



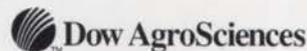
BEARD

▲ Turf Trends in the 21st Century

Dr. James Beard, International Sports Turf Institute

What new technologies will be available to professionals as we approach the year 2000 and beyond? What innovations in pest and disease control can you look forward to integrating into your business? What role will bioengineering play in the Green Industry company of the next century? Find out the answer to these questions and more as industry guru Dr. Beard walks you through the industry of the future.

Sponsor:



More....



NOVEMBER 12 - 16, 1999

5

Monday, November 15

▲ Risk Communication and the Benefits of Turf

Dr. Doug Houseworth & Ron Johnson, Novartis

Customer understanding of the environmental benefits of a healthy turf and landscape is key to creating demand for the environmental services you provide. This "Train the Trainer" workshop will give you the knowledge to teach your employees how to sell your services by communicating the facts about lawn care products and services, and the positive effects they have on the environment.

Sponsor:



▲ Accurate Job Costing: The Key to Profitability

Dave Tucker, CLIP-Sensible Software

Many businesses don't take the time to factor in all the elements of what it takes to be profitable. Determining man-hour rates is a simple yet essential component of a viable and growing business. This session takes participants step-by-step through key questions that need to be considered and factored into the job costing equation. **And, you'll be able to take home a CD-ROM or diskette with spreadsheets used during the presentation to assist you with your job costing.**

Sponsor:



"The Green Industry Expo proved to be the Cadillac of networking within the industry."

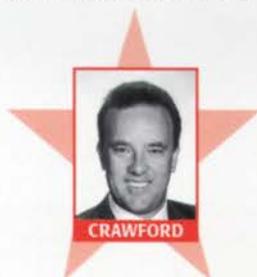
PLCAA's Roundtable discussions were perhaps the greatest way to receive new ideas and to meet others throughout North America in the industry."

— Kevin R. Petrinec
Funk Lawn Care
Tonawanda, N.Y.

10:30 a.m. – Noon

GIE Keynote Address

Baltimore Convention Center



"Playing to Win"

Roger Crawford—the "Energizer" Prepare to be inspired by an extraordinary motivational speaker at the keynote kickoff to the trade show grand opening at noon. Better known as the "Energizer," Crawford's remarkable life story proves that optimism and resilience can triumph over personal and professional obstacles. According to Crawford, "Challenges are inevitable. Defeat is optional." Although physically challenged, Crawford is certified by the U.S. Professional Tennis Association and became the first athlete with a severe handicap to compete in a NCAA Division I college sport. Crawford's exceptional accomplishments have landed him on such shows as *Good Morning America*, *Real People* and *Hour of Power*. NBC earned an Emmy Award for their TV movie *In a New Light* featuring Crawford.

Noon – 6 p.m.

GIE Trade Show

Baltimore Convention Center

OPEN FOR BUSINESS! Shop the more than 80,000 square feet of exhibits for the latest products and services. Call PLCAA at (800) 458-3466 for an updated list of exhibitors and booth numbers.

Tuesday, November 16



Wrap up your conference and trade show experience with top sessions and a funny GIE General Session. This day is for owners, managers and their employees—the whole crew! If you're only coming for one day of the show, this is a great local/drive-in option for area companies. Tuesday only registration is \$35—you can enjoy conference sessions, take in the trade show and attend the GIE General Session speaker **Mark**

Mayfield (rumored to have you laughing in the aisles!) for Tuesday only.

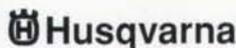
7 – 8:15 a.m.

Power Breakfast Roundtables

Baltimore Convention Center

Swap success stories and gain valuable advice at the popular, jam-packed Roundtables. Free to conference registrants.

Sponsor:



8:30 – 10 a.m.

Concurrent Sessions



▲ Overhead Allocation: The Good, The Bad, The Ugly

Charles Vander Kooi, Vander Kooi & Associates, Inc.

Don't even think of leaving early! **This is a must-attend session for owners and managers!** Recovering overhead costs can mean the difference between profit and loss. Vander Kooi, an in-demand Green Industry speaker, will take you through various methods used to recover these costs and show you which methods are most effective. You'll take home the knowledge necessary to get the most out of the hard work you put into your business.

▲ Identifying Turf Problems—Insect & Disease ID

Gary Custis, PBI Gordon

Diagnosing turf problems early is the key to avoiding a lawn care disaster. **This is a must-attend session for any employee in the field!** This session gives you the knowledge to spot turf disease and pest problems, and communicate these problems to customers to avoid confusion. You'll walk away with solutions to a wide range of potential threats to your customers' turf areas.

▲ Other GreenTeam Day Sessions:

- Workforce 2020
- Profitable Project Management—How to Win Once the Project is Sold
- How to Motivate Your Crews
- Profitable Snow Plowing
- Techniques for Employing a Legal Hispanic Workforce
- Using Native Plants in the Landscape
- Sports Turf Care and Trends

9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

GIE Trade Show

Baltimore Convention Center

Final shopping day! Make sure to stop by the PLCAA's booth in the Association Plaza on the show floor. PLCAA's "store" offers a variety of products and programs to help you grow your business. Conference discounts on many items!

1:30 p.m.

\$500 GIE Grand Prize Drawing

Trade Show Floor, Baltimore Convention Center

2 – 3:30 p.m.

GIE General Session

Baltimore Convention Center



"Mirthmaking—The Role of Humor in Your Work and Life"

Mark Mayfield

You need some comic relief once in awhile. Look no further than this GIE General Session turned Comedy Show for some laughs mixed with important messages about work and life. Funnyman Mayfield will cover the physiological benefits of humor; how humor and creativity are intertwined; how to reduce tension and conflict with humor; and the role humor plays in increasing productivity and morale. According to Mayfield, "It's not just funny business we're talking about—it's money business. Research and data now verify the value of humor."

Travel & Hotel Information

Baltimore...Fun on the Waterfront!

Stroll the Inner Harbor, take a water taxi, or visit historic sites like the birthplace of baseball legend Babe Ruth. There's so much to see and do in this charming city by the Bay that you'll want to leave some time for sightseeing during your busy GIE schedule. Contact the Baltimore Visitors Center for details at (800) 282-6632 or visit www.baltimore.org.



Hotel

Stay at PLCAA's headquarters hotel, the Omni Inner Harbor, the largest hotel in Maryland. The world-class Omni Inner Harbor's high rise twin towers are the centerpiece of Baltimore's business, financial and entertainment districts. You'll be close to the Baltimore Convention Center, and all the attractions of the revitalized Inner Harbor area. Shuttle service will be provided to and from the Baltimore Convention Center. The Omni Inner Harbor is 15 minutes from Baltimore-Washington International airport and 5 minutes from Amtrak Pennsylvania Station.

Centralized Hotel/Travel Number. Reserving your room at the Omni Inner Harbor or making your travel arrangements is easier than ever. This year, contact one centralized number for all your rooming and travel needs.



Hotel & Travel Reservations:

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(800) 631-9675 / (770) 424-8111 (M-F/8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. EST)

www.travelworldwidennetwork.com

Identify yourself as a PLCAA Conference & GIE attendee.

Confirmation of your room will be sent to you.

Rates: Hotel—\$131 single/double Omni Inner Harbor Hotel
101 West Fayette Street
Baltimore, MD 21201



Free Hotel Stay Prize and More Chances to Win from PLCAA!

- ★ First 100 to register with PLCAA are entered in a prize drawing for a **free hotel stay at PLCAA's headquarters—the Omni Inner Harbor Hotel**—in Baltimore during Conference-GIE/99 dates.
- ★ Second 100 to register with PLCAA are entered in a prize drawing for a **free PLCAA conference registration for the Conference-GIE/99 show in Baltimore.**
- ★ All PLCAA early-bird registrants on or before September 30 are entered in a prize drawing for a **free registration and hotel stay at the Embassy Suites in Tampa, Florida, for PLCAA's 2000 Management Conference, February 3-5.**

At the Show:

- ★ Register to win the **\$500 GIE Grand Prize Drawing** (won last year by a PLCAA member) to be held on the trade show floor at 1:30 p.m., Tuesday, November 16. You must be present to win.
- ★ Register to win **one free roundtrip airfare to Indianapolis for GIE/2000** by stopping by the PLCAA booth on the trade show floor. The drawing will be held at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, November 16. You do not have to be present to win.
- ★ Register to win a **\$100 valued prize** from the Indianapolis Convention & Visitors Association by stopping by their booth on the trade show floor. The winner will be announced at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 16. You do not have to be present to win.
- ★ Attend PLCAA's Annual Meeting, Dinner & Casino Night on Sunday, November 14, and get a chance to **win prizes throughout the 20th Anniversary gala evening.** Door prizes will also be available at PLCAA's Live Auction on Saturday, November 13.



PLCAA

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



Conference + Expo = VALUE



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Conference: November 12-16, 1999

Trade Show: November 15-16

Baltimore Convention Center
Omni Inner Harbor Hotel
Baltimore, Maryland

Questions? Call PLCAA at 800-458-3466
www.plcaa.org ❖ www.gieonline.com

Q. Why is it important to attend GIE?

A. Companies boost their success potential by attending the "show of shows"—PLCAA's Annual Conference and the Green Industry Expo. This Super Show is a resource and networking marketplace for lawn and landscape companies and their employees, grounds managers and students who want to operate at the top of their game. *This is a must-attend event if you're serious about success in 2000 and beyond.*

The only time the controller is at fault is when there is no power going from the controller to the electric output in the field. If this is the case, the controller needs to be fixed or replaced. If the controller is supplying power, but there is no power actually going to the valve, Dubose said that is usually the result of a broken wire between the controller and the electric valve.

If a homeowner or property manager has some new landscaping work done on the property, then bringing an irrigation contractor out to the property afterwards to check the system is usually worthwhile, Bennett said.

"Many times the problems in an irrigation system stem from work that has been done on the property," Bennett declared. "Broken sprinkler heads are usually the result of passing lawn mowers, edgers or snow plows or from a growing landscape with



maturing trees and bushes that have changed things on the property. Sprinkler heads have to be moved to accommodate a growing landscape. And sometimes they just wear out."

The key to examining sprinkler heads, according to Bennett, is a thorough inspection. He recommended doing a head-to-head inspection, making sure they spin, turn and spray properly and adjusting each head accordingly vs. just checking to see whether or not they come up from the ground. He also recommended checking

Getting sufficient water flow out of the sprinkler head is generally an indication that the valve is in working order. Photo: Buckner by Storm

the valve manifolds around the threads of the valves or in the valves for leaks.

"A bad sprinkler head is easy to fix," Walter added. "The hard part is locating it."

If the controller is running fine but the heads are continuously running, there may be a bad rubber diaphragm in the valve or a bad electric solenoid, which is mounted on the side of the valve, that is broken or stuck open by some debris, Dubose said.

"Valves work off of back pressure," Dubose explained. "Some valves have to have a little bit to work properly. If there's no back pressure, then the valves won't close, which usually means there is a broken

(continued on page 91)



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NEW PRODUCTS

GLENMAC Harley S-4 Power Box Rake

- Can be used with Dingo and Ramrod mini skid-steer loaders
- Measures 48 inches
- Rakes forward and reverse
- Adjustable twin-barrier bar
- Bi-angular construction
- Can be used for gathering debris and stones for piling and pick-up, dethatching and the removal of old sod
- Equipped with vanadium carbide teeth
- Two sets of parallel arms link the quick-attach faceplate to the rake

Circle 200 on reader service card

Exmark Mower



- The 72-inch Lazer Z features the UltraCut deck
- Zero-turn maneuverability
- Flow-control baffles circulate clippings
- Deck-forward design offers visibility
- Hydraulically dampened steering provides smooth control

Circle 202 on reader service card

Kawasaki String Trimmers

- Line includes three models: KBL23A (23cc engine with dry weight of 9.3 pounds), KBL26A (26cc engine and a dry weight of 10 pounds) and the KBL34A (34cc engine with a dry weight of 14.1 pounds)
- Low-tone muffler and a plastic engine shroud
- 2-cycle engine technology, including spherical combustion chamber
- Features slit-profile automatic compression release system
- Includes a large-diameter clutch, large-bevel gear module and vertical cooling fins

Circle 203 on reader service card

Kanga Stump Grinder

- Terminator is a 20-hp gas engine driven stump grinder
- Uses a direct-drive, twin V-belt with centrifical clutch
- Heavy-duty spherical roller cutter rotor bearings



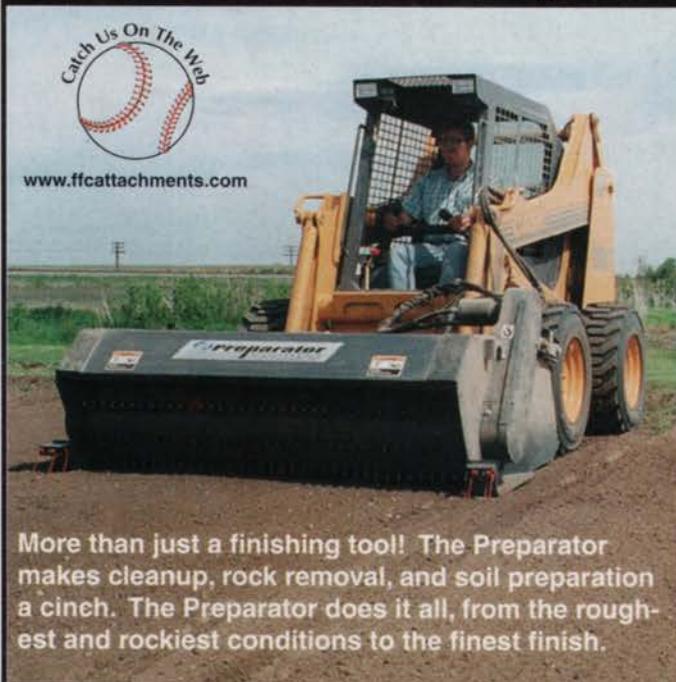
- Produces saw dust rather than wood chips

Circle 201 on reader service card

FFC Preparator & Mini-hoe



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- Easy mounting, no stabilizers



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NEW PRODUCTS

Thomas Skid Steer

- The T-245 HDS skid-steer loader can handle heavy-duty jobs
- Offers a 2,400-pound lifting capacity
- 83-net hp turbocharged diesel engine
- Two 3-inch bucket cylinders provide high front-end strength
- Boom arms are built to withstand the stress of high-impact loading
- Sound insulation keeps noise at less than 85 dBA inside cab

Circle 204 on reader service card



New Holland Tractor Family

- Three models are an addition to the Boomer tractor family
- Models include 18.5-hp Model TC18, the 21-hp Model TC21 and the 21-hp Model TC21D
- Sloped hood and underhood muffler permit visibility when working with a loader
- Ergonomically designed controls
- Comes with either mechanical or hydrostatic transmission
- 3-cylinder diesel engines

Circle 206 on reader service card

Jacobsen Rotary Mower

- The HR 9016 Turbo rotary mower is designed for high levels of productivity and durability

- Cutting swath of 16 feet
- The 92-inch, multi-flex front deck is designed to closely follow ground contours
- All three decks are rear discharge for an even distribution of clippings

- Four-wheel drive engages when switch is activated
- Features an 18-inch uncut turning circle
- The two swept-forward wing decks each measure 59 inches wide

Circle 205 on reader service card

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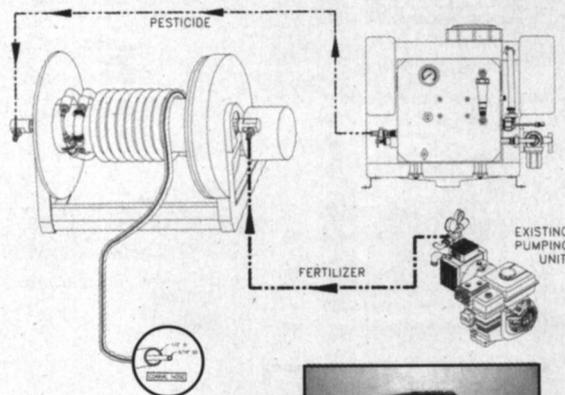
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NEW PRODUCTS

Stihl Trimcut Cutting Heads

- Manual-feed line heads for professional grass trimmers
 - Made of polymers
 - Features a split spool to reduce line welding
 - Notch in the spool enables contractors to wind one piece of line without having to cut and wind two separate pieces
 - Captured spring makes it less likely to misplace parts
- Circle 207 on reader service card**

Plant Health Care Inoculant

- Compete is a dry, dispersible microbial rhizosphere inoculant
- Improves plant health and helps prevent soil borne disease problems
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- The bacteria are microencapsulated

with natural polymers and formulated with dry soluble yucca extract and organic biocatalysts

- Designed for ease of use

- Available in ½ pound and 2 pound open-and-pour metallisine packs
 - Mix with water and apply
- Circle 208 on reader service card**

Kubota Tractor Line

- The Grand-L Ten Series diesel tractor line is available in four configurations
 - Each has a diesel engine and newly developed transmissions
 - Three vortex combustion system provides power
 - Feature high torque rise and lower engine noise
 - Enclosed hydrostatic power steering system
- Circle 209 on reader service card**



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NEW PRODUCTS

Tanaka Grass Trimmer

- The TBC-300SDH is a split dual handle grass trimmer/brush cutter
 - Features a 29cc, 1.6-hp engine
 - The BRAIN fully automatic cutting head is redesigned to hold more cutting line
 - BRAIN senses when more line is needed and feeds out right length
 - Has a 27 fluid ounce fuel tank capacity
- Circle 210 on reader service card**

Country Clipper Mid Mount

- Zero-turn radius mower
 - Designed for operator comfort
 - Offers workhorse durability and speed
 - Single-point, one-hand cutting adjustment from 1½ to 5 inches
 - Tilt up deck provides easier maintenance
- Circle 211 on reader service card**

Dixon Mid-Mount Mower

- The ZTR 5022 commercial mid-mount riding mower has a 22-hp engine
- Hydro Gear hydrostatic transmissions with separate fans and charge pump



- Tilt-up body for easy servicing
 - Low weight is easy on turf
 - Mulching, catching and snow blade accessory options
- Circle 212 on reader service card**

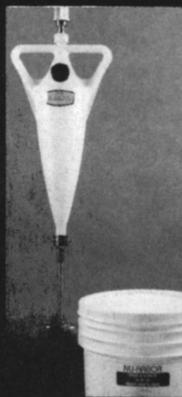
Land Pride Grooming Mower

- The FDR25 Series rear discharge grooming mower is newly designed
- Offers a simplified design
- Available in 60-, 72- and 84-inch cutting widths
- Rear discharge feature allows for

- cleaner mowing
 - Features a floating 3-point system to allow for excellent ground following capabilities
 - Adjustable lower hitch points
 - Four wheels with front roller option
- Circle 213 on reader service card**



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page

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for details.



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- Circle 214 on reader service card**

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- The A322 utility backhoe attachment increases job site capabilities
 - Features a center-positioned operator seat
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 - Maximum digging depth is 72 inches
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 - Remote engine throttle control
- Circle 215 on reader service card**



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- Meet mounting needs on zero-turn mowers, riding tractors and other turf equipment
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- and industrial tough
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- Circle 216 on reader service card**



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- The 214e Series 4 is an entry-level, 14-foot class backhoe loader
- Features a mainframe of 26 feet, 5 inches for tight turning circles



- Simplified loader arm and leveling system offer visibility
 - Choice of canopy or enclosed cab
 - Lift is 6,750 pounds
- Circle 218 on reader service card**

Vermeer Trencher

- The V-1350 trencher combines heavy-duty construction, easy maintenance and operator-friendly features
 - Powered by a 13-hp engine
 - Features sturdy steel shielding
 - Available with cup, rotary or shark cutters
 - Capable of trenching widths of 4 to 6 inches and depths down to 36 inches
 - Hydrostatic ground drive system is designed with steel gears
 - Greasable end idler
- Circle 220 on reader service card**

MTD Chipper/Shredder

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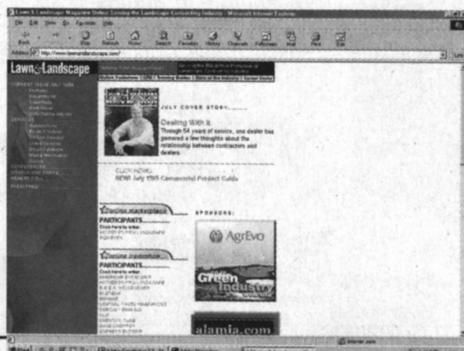
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15	39	63	87	111	135	159	183	207	231	255
16	40	64	88	112	136	160	184	208	232	256
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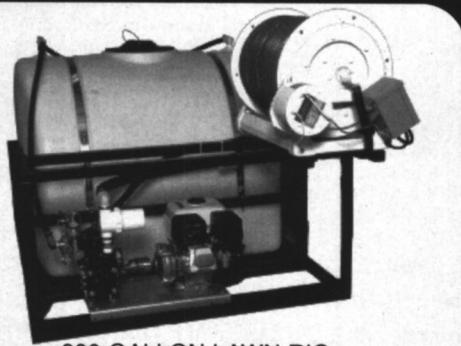
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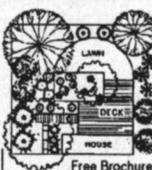


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Excellent salary and benefit package with advancement opportunities. Fax or e-mail resume with salary history to: Robert A. Lipinski, President, Lipinski Landscape & Irrigation Contractors, P.O. Box 605, Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054. Fax: 856-234-9348.

E-mail: pharan@lipinskiland.com

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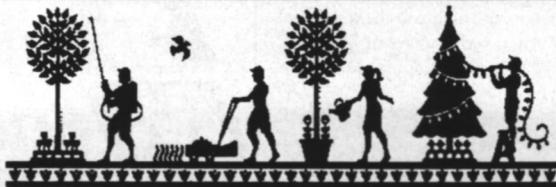
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irrigation

(continued from page 75)

line or a broken head somewhere.”

One of the worst problems an irrigation system faces is cut wires, Pate lamented. This can occur from recent construction, aging or a power surge.

“If power is present from the controller to the solenoid but the heads aren’t coming on, the wire inside the solenoid could be shorted out,” Dubose pointed out.

Pate said a common problem is irrigation contractors or do-it-yourselfers using wire that is not UL listed for direct burial in the ground, which means the jacks on the wire are not made for the corrosive elements in the soil. Irrigation wire should always be UL listed, he stressed.

When trying to find leak problems, another quick tip from Bennett involves checking for mainline leaks.

“The easiest way to determine this is to look at the water meter dial,” Bennett explained. “It spins if water is going through smoothly. If there is a small leak, it will pulse.”

TOYING WITH ANOTHER’S HANDIWORK.

Some contractors refuse to service systems they did not originally install or that were homeowner built.

“Unless we are working with the client on another project, we don’t service other contractors’ systems,” Pate said. “We are busy enough with our own customer base and we feel it’s a bonus to our customers to service them first and give them top priority and quality. If we do work on a system that wasn’t built by us, hopefully we can get some as-builts of the system to help us figure out how it was built.”

An as-built is a final drawing depicting how the system was installed in the yard—an item all homeowners and property managers with irrigation systems should have if the system was properly installed by an irrigation contractor.

“But nine times out of 10, residential customers misplace or lose their as-builts,” Boyce warned.

“And as-builts are overrated,” Bennett continued. “They can give you a good idea where the valves are in a system, but a system always changes and the as-builts are never

consistently updated.”

The hardest task when inspecting existing irrigation systems is locating problems, which are difficult to find even when a contractor is familiar with the system. There is a lot of guesswork involved, Dubose said.

“Most valves are located where the water leaves the house,” Bennett advised. “All of the fittings that connect the valves together, also known as the manifolds, are usually located right near the vacuum breaker.”

If an irrigation contractor ventures into the realm of troubleshooting do-it-yourself systems, Bennett said the biggest problem is usually found in the design of the system.

“And most of the time it’s a design problem that cannot be easily fixed,” he said. “We’ve seen systems where the homeowner will run four or five sprinkler heads on ¾-inch line, creating a low pressure problem. These types of system problems on a homeowner-built system require a lot of contractor patience and time to inspect and repair.”

The author is Assistant Editor of Lawn & Landscape magazine.

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BUILDING AN OFFICE AT BOZZUTO LANDSCAPING

WE HAVE ALL HEARD the tired cliché – location, location, location. In the world of landscaping, how important is the location of a headquarters?

When Bozzuto Landscaping Company strategically planned its recent move, location was the overriding issue we faced. We found that there are many different factors that need to be considered when selecting the location of your company's main facility.

In selecting Laurel, Md., we considered the various issues, which were all directly related to location. In our case, Laurel made the most sense because it is located in the middle of our geographic service area. Our new facility is conveniently located between Washington and Baltimore with easy access to several interstates.

We believed it was necessary to select a location that would help us serve our customers better. Locating in Baltimore or Northern Virginia would have created an obstacle in serving our clients at the other end of our service area. An additional consideration was the facility's proximity to our field offices in Springfield, Va., Gaithersburg, Md., and Upper Marlboro, Md.

Keeping in mind the facility's location relative to the field

offices was important since many of BLC's crews are dispatched from the field offices each morning. This keeps the crews close to the customers and keeps them out of traffic, which ultimately increases productivity.

Locating the facility near a quality labor pool was also important. When BLC began conducting market and location research, several of the company's employees encouraged us to consider Laurel as a viable option. It turns out many of the company's existing employees already lived in the Laurel area and recommended it to be a good source of qualified labor. Additionally, locating in an area that had reliable public transportation options for some of our employees was also a desire.

Location also comes into play when you consider your suppliers. Throughout the years, we have developed key partnerships with our suppliers

and have come to rely on each other.

Moving your facility to a region where it becomes inconvenient or difficult for them to deliver materials and mechanical parts puts unnecessary stress on the relationship, which, in the long run, could impact the level of service you deliver to your customers. Again, our decision to strategically locate between Washington and Baltimore solidified our working relationships with most of our business partners.

One of the more obvious considerations in planning our new facility was creating a productive and exciting work environment. We took into account not only the office space but also the maintenance and storage facilities. Having enough space to maintain and repair our equipment was imperative to continuing the Bozzuto tradition of providing superior landscaping services.

In order to meet the needs of our projected growth, we actually sought more space than we currently require. The new facility includes approximately 5,000 square feet of office space (with an additional 3,500 square feet for expansion), a 15,000-square-foot maintenance and repair shop and is surrounded by

10 acres of land. In addition,

the new office houses BLC's training center, which includes audio/video/presentation equipment, conference and seminar facilities and a training video library.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, financial considerations played a large role in the decision-making process. While profit margins in the landscaping industry are traditionally thin, finding the right location at the right price is vital to the bottom line. At Bozzuto Landscaping we were able to find a location that met and exceeded our current and future space needs and placed us in close proximity to our customers, suppliers and employees while only modestly increasing our costs. The cost increase, however, is offset by efficiency gains.

Everyone at Bozzuto Landscaping is extremely excited about our new facility. The decision-making process was not quick or easy by any means. However, with the proper amount of research, knowledge and patience, it is possible to identify the most appropriate location that meets or exceeds your business needs. The new Bozzuto Landscaping headquarters is proof. – Tom Davis

The author is president of Bozzuto Landscaping, Laurel, Md.



5 Keys to Success

Site Selection

1. Proximity to customer base
2. Close to quality labor pool
3. Access to suppliers
4. Ample office and maintenance space
5. Financial considerations



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