

Laures of the state of the stat

WADE'S LAWN SERVICE

Ira and Deborah Wade with their son, Darris



Second act

After 20 years in the business, the Wades want reliable systems and opportunity for their son.

Yup, it's that time again... prepping your business for the year ahead.



We feel you, but don't worry. We're here to help.

Start building profits for life with LMN and let us help you prepare and manage your business for 2017. Our software will help you with:

- ✓ Customer Relationship Management (CRM)
- → Budgeting & Estimating
- ▼ Timesheets & Job Costing
- → Planning & Scheduling
- ✓ GPS & Routing
- QuickBooks Integration

It couldn't be easier with our simple sign up & free onboarding process. Plus, we offer members only Bootcamps & Workshops held across North America to help get you started and stay on track.

Find out what we've got going on under the hood.

Sign up for a free demo:

GOLMN.COM/DEMO

*When you're ready, we are offering a free trial for new users! Yup, that's one whole month to explore LMN.

No credit card required! Visit **GOLMN.COM/FREETRIAL**



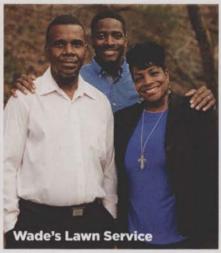
CONTENTS

Lawn&Landscape

FEBRUARY 2017

A GIE MEDIA PUBLICATION VOLUME 38, NUMBER 2









MEET THE CREWS

GET TO KNOW THE THREE COMPANIES PARTICIPATING. | 58

IN EVERY ISSUE

- 6 Editor's Insight: New in 2017
- & LL Insider
- I Grunder: The fine art of doing nothing
- 40 Huston: Mind your Ps and Ls
- 42 Words of Wilson: Lighten up
- 54 Green Guides: PPE essentials
- | | | | Hire Power: What's new with your crew in 2017

ABOUT THE COVER



We published three regional covers, each featuring one of the companies we chose for the 2017 Turnaround Tour.

FEATURES

On your feet

56 When it comes to stand-on mowers, here are a few options to fill your trailers.

Incognito irrigation

74 Your customers may not be able to see the water doing its job, but converting a traditional system to drip may result in more money in their pockets.

Out of the snow

If As we head into spring, here are some pre-emergents to consider for your lawn care arsenal.

Digital dive

HE Eliminate tedious paperwork and mobilize your staff with labor management software.

Stop the cycle

92 Fix your company's turnover problem today and make it more attractive to potential employees as you grow.



ALTERNATIVE POWER SPECIAL REPORT

P3 Exploring alternatives

Landscape contractors share their motivations for moving away from gasoline, and how propane or battery-powered equipment has changed their operations.

P6 Do the math

How do alternative power sources make good financial sense?

P9 System analysis

The type of fuel you use will have different effects on your engine.

P10 Figures behind the fuel

We surveyed more than 100 contractors to find out their feelings on alternative power.

Cover photo: O Jon Arman

Classifieds 109 🌣 Ad Index 113

LAWN & LANDSCAPE (ISSN 1046/54X) is published monthly. Copyright 2017 CIE Media, Inc. \$811 Canal Rd., Valley View, OH., 44:05. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted by any means without written permission from the publisher. Single copyrate: \$5,00 One year subscription rates. \$351 in the United States, \$551 in Canada and \$58 in other foreign countries. One year foreign airmail rate: \$318. Two year subscription rate: \$42. Subscriptions and classified advertising should be addressed to the Valley View office. Periodicals postage paid all Cleveland, Ohio, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster send changes to LAWN & LANDSCAPE, \$811 Canal Rd., Valley View, OH., 44:05. Canada Post: Publications Mail Agreement #406/2508, Canada Returns to be sent to IMEX International, PO 80x 35542, London, ON NGC 812.

The first thing it spreads is the distance between you and your nearest competitor.



It can treat everything from small lawns to sprawling commercial properties. It has the industry's simplest, most intuitive controls. It holds a hill like no other machine. With its 3-in-1 tank, it can treat up to 132,000 sq. ft. Yet still fits through a 36" gate. The industry-leading Turfco T3100. Sold direct to shorten the distance between our customers and us. Go to turfcodirect.com or call 800-679-8201 today and get the full story from a product expert.





Chuck Bowen, Editor | Lawn & Landscape

2017 is a year full of possibilities and of good things waiting to happen.

New in 2017

ruce Wilson casts one of the longest shadows in the landscape industry, so I knew a lot about him before I finally met him. After a couple of harsh winters as a tree trimmer in New York, he moved to California and spent a long and illustrious career growing ValleyCrest Landscape Co., into a giant in the industry.

He retired for a cup of coffee, then got into consulting, starting the industry's first peer groups. (He also helps run a highly successful landscape company in Palm Springs in his spare time).

Nearly half of our almost 100 Leadership Award winners have either worked with or for Bruce Wilson, or been mentored by him. I was lucky enough to write about him when we gave him our 2015 Leadership Award, and I'm even luckier to say that he'll be joining Lawn & Landscape this month with his own column to teach you to better understand, develop and manage your most valuable resource - your people.

Bruce joins an already stellar group of columnists at Lawn & Landscape. Marty Grunder continues to share superlative sales and marketing advice, and Jim Huston still shares his best practices on better understanding your numbers.

Landscapers and lawn care operators haven't yet solved the growing labor crisis, so we're continuing Hire Power, our recruiting and retention column, where a rotating panel of writers share first-hand experience on how they have done a better job hiring talented employees and keeping them on board.

Also new this year is Green Guides, a lawn care-focused column written by industry greats like Bob Mann from Lawn Dawg, Jen Lemcke from Weed Man, Brad Johnson from Lawn America (now Swingle Lawn, Tree & Landscape Care) and Keith Freeman from Greenview Partners. They'll be sharing insight and perspective on what makes a company great - everything from top technical knowledge to software solutions to training and customer engagement.

And starting later this year is our new Spanishlanguage e-newsletter and print section. We'll be profiling Hispanic contractors and sharing the same great information for readers, but in Spanish. You can sign up for the newsletter at bit.ly/lawnspanish. If you'd like to be featured in this new section, or have ideas about what you'd like to see covered, please contact me.

2017 is a year full of possibilities and of good things waiting to happen. I'm grateful to work with the best team in the industry, and we look forward to continuing to help you grow and learn. Here's to a successful and prosperous new year! - Chuck Bowen

Leading business media for landscape contractors. 58n Canal Rd, Valley View, OH, 44125

Phone: 800-456-0707 Editorial Fax: 216-651-0830 Subscriptions & Classifieds: 800-456-0707



CHUCK BOWEN EDITOR AND ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER chowen@gle.net BRIAN HORN MANAGING EDITOR bhorn@gie.net KATIE TUTTLE ASSOCIATE EDITOR ktuttle@gie.net

KATE SPIRGEN DIGITAL CONTENT EDITOR kspirgen@gie.net MARTY GRUNDER MARTY CRUNDER, INC. mgrunder@giemedia.com JIM HUSTON I R. HUSTON ENTERPRISES jhuston@giemedia.com BRUCE WILSON & COMPANY bwilson@giemedia.com

BROOKE BATES CONTRIBUTING FORTOR KRISTEN HAMPSHIRE CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

CREATIVE

JUSTIN ARMBURGER ART DIRECTOR jarmburger@gie.net

ADVERTISING/PRODUCTION INQUIRIES JODI SHIPLEY ishipley@gie.net

SALES

DAVID SZY PUBLISHER dszy@gie.net

DAN HEBERLEIN ACCOUNT MANAGER dheberlein@gie.net TRACI MUELLER ACCOUNT MANAGER tmueller@gie.net GAGE ROBERTS ACCOUNT MANAGER groberts@gie.net TED SCHULD ACCOUNT MANAGER tschuld@gie.net

BONNIE VELIKONYA CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING SALES bvelikonya@gie.net

CORPORATE

RICHARD FOSTER CHAIRMAN CHRIS FOSTER PRESIDENT AND CED DAN MORELAND EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT JAMES R. KEEFE EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT CHRISTINA WARNER AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

MARIA MILLER CONFERENCE MANAGER KELLY ORZECH ACCOUNTING DIRECTOR

IRENE SWEENEY CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER KEVIN GILBRIDE BUSINESS MANAGER, GIE VENTURES

LAWN & LANDSCAPE MARKET INSIGHT COUNCIL BILL ARMAN & ED LAFLAMME, The Harvest Group; ANDREW BLANCHFORD, Blanchford Landscape Contractors, Bozeman, Mont.; KURT BLAND, Bland Landscaping, Apex, N.C.; BENTON FORET, Chackbay
Nursery & Landscaping/Foret Land and Tree, Thibodaux, La.; JOHN GIBSON, Swingle Lawn & Tree Care, Denver; BOB GROVER, Pacific Landscape Management, Hillsborn, Ore; MARTY GRUNDER, Grounder Landscaping and Marty Grunder Inc., Miamisburg, Oh
MHUSTON, J.R. Huston Enterprises, Englewood, Colo.; BRAD JOHNSON, Lawn America of Tulsa, Tulsa, Oka; JESUS 'CHLUY'' MEDRANO, CoCal Landscape, Denver; TAYLOR MILLIKEN, Elite Landscape Company, Hendersonville, Tenn.; RICHARD RESTUCCIA,
Jain Irrigation, Fresno, Calif.; PHIL SARROS, Sarros Landscaping, Cumming, Ga.; JERRY SCHILL, Schill Grounds Management, North Ridgeville, Ohio

Growing a healthy lawn. Growing a strong business. Both require the right tools.

From lawns to customer relationships, using the right tools ensures the growth of your business. Take advantage of the wide array of free homeowner marketing materials that Syngenta has to help your business flourish. When you use the right tools, everything grows.

Learn more at GrowWithSyngenta.com or scan below.

Tools to help you grow:



Mosquito Protection Brochure



Selective Herbicide Brochure



Lawn Disease ID Guide



Fast-Acting Fire Ant Bait Brochure



Reduced Risk Grub Control* Brochure

syngenta

*A reduced risk pesticide is defined as one which may reasonably be expected to accomplish one or more of the following; (1) reduces pesticide risks to human health; (2) reduces pesticide risks to non-target organisms; (3) reduces the potential for contamination of valued, environmental resources, or (4) broadens adoption of IPM or makes it more effective. Acelepryn qualifies under one or more of the above criteria.







maximizes potential by quickly building a strong root base. Use for transplanting and maintenance for all horticultural needs.

SUPERthrive® Features

- Unique vitamin solution with kelp
- · High economic value
- May be combined with fertilizing programs for ease of use

SUPERthrive® Benefits

- Restores plant vigor
- Promotes chemical balanceReduces transplant shock

Always ahead in science and value.

The Original Vitamin Solution

www.SUPERthrive.com 📑 📳 Vitamin Institute / North Hollywood, CA

800-441-8482



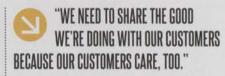
5 KEY TRENDS FROM LEADERS FORUM

The conference outlines major areas of customer behavior in 2017. **By Chuck Bowen**

SAINT THOMAS, USVI - At the annual National Association of Landscape Professionals Leaders Forum last month, Daniel Levine, director of the Avant-Guide Institute in New York, spoke to about 200 attendees about major trends his firm is tracking in 2017.

1. GREEN IS GETTING GREENER. "Green and the 'eco' trend is probably among the top trends that we see in our office every day and will be with us for the rest of our lives," Levine said. This runs the gamut from countries trying to reduce their carbon footprint to zero to individuals thinking more about where their food comes from.

Especially with the Millennial generation and younger, he said, "This idea of leaving the world a better place than we found it will be



- Daniel Levine, Avant-Guide Institute

even more powerful 10 years from now than it is today." He challenged attendees to think about how they, as members of the original green industry, can maintain a leadership position in this area.

2. LIVING SPACES GET SMART. Wearables like smart watches continue to grow in popularity, and that functionality is already spreading to home tech like the Nest thermostat and irrigation systems that can be monitored and con-

trolled via smartphones. As customers gain high levels of control in other areas of their homes, they'll come to expect the same from their landscape and lawn care, Levine said.

- 3. SIMPLICITY IS PARAMOUNT. As customers' lives continue to grow more hectic, Levine said many are looking for ways to simplify, and landscapers can help by removing what he calls "pain points" from their operations. "Simplicity is something you all should be selling," he said.
- 4. CORPORATE SOCIAL LEADERSHIP IS NEXT. Companies should be responsible to the world around them, not exist just for profits, Levine said, and that means leading by example, not just donating part of their profits to charity. He cited companies like TOMS Shoes, which donates

one pair of shoes

to someone in

need for each

pair purchased.

"I don't think

as an industry

you're telling

your custom-

ers enough," he

said. "We need

to share the good

we're doing with

our customers

because our cus-

tomers care too."

5. WELLNESS.

Customers are

more cognizant

of their mental

and spiritual

health and are

interested in

improving their

overall health and

connecting with

people Levine

said. "This is

what greenspaces

are all about. You

are in a leadership

position in this

trend already. Ev-

eryone is nipping

at your heels."

AT LEADERS FORUM. THE NEW NALP BOARD WAS INSTALLED.

PRESIDENT: Jon Cundiff, Weed Man

PRESIDENT-ELECT: Jeff Buhler, Massey Services

SECRETARY/TREASURER:

Andrew Ziehler, Ziehler Lawn & Tree Care

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT:

Brett Lemcke, R.M. Landscape

DIRECTORS TERMS BEGIN MAY 1:

- · Jason Becker, Caterpillar
- · Mike Bogan, LandCare
- · Jim Campanella, Lawn Dawg
- · Pete Farno, Bayer
- · Paul Fraynd, Sun Valley Landscaping
- · Rosco Klausing, Klausing Group
- · Joe Kujawa, KEI
- · Zach Johnson, CSU
- · Frank Mariani, Mariani Landscape
- · Shane Newman, YardApes

NOT PICTURED IN PHOTO:

- Jov Diaz, Landcare
- · Barb Stropko, New Desert Gallery
- · Bob Grover, Pacific Landscape Management

Event sponsors: Caterpillar, Bayer, John Deere, Bartlett Tree Experts, Syngenta, Toro, GIE+EXPO, Gravely and Aspire.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Concerns about organic coverage

N BEHALF of the National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP), I wanted to express our extreme disappointment in your article entitled, "An alternative approach" in the December issue of Lawn & Landscape.

Members of our public affairs advisory council and our board of directors have asked that I share our concerns with hopes of eliciting change in the way you cover organic and synthetic lawn care issues in the future.

The article in question is filled with inaccurate information and misguided rhetoric. A statement from your source like "... I think that, essentially, chemical herbicides and pesticides are just toxic," is irresponsible.

NALP has become increasingly active in advocacy issues, working to communicate the incredible benefits healthy lawns and landscapes deliver to families, their communities and the environment. As an industry, we need to work together in a united fashion to educate people about these benefits.

Cleaner air and water, increased oxygen, protection from insect pests and the diseases they transmit, and improved quality of life are but a few of the well-documented human health and environmental benefits this

Consolidate all your landscape management software and systems into one easy-to-use solution.

The result? Increased profitability. Reduced expenses. Greater productivity.

Discover a **Better Way to Run** Your Business

"We can't imagine our business today without BOSS." - Megan Lowe, Milosi

www.bosslm.com/discover | 866-596-5971



Were You **Featured In** This Issue?

Reprints enable you to reuse your article and simply place it into the hands of your target audience. Having been featured in a well-respected publication adds the credibility of a thirdparty endorsement to your message.

Give yourself a competitive advantage with reprints. Contact us for more information regarding reprints and additional applications designed to meet your challenging market needs.

Call 800-456-0707



industry enables. Inputs are essential components of these vital outputs.

Within this industry, there is no one-size-fits-all answer to most anything, including products. I do

know that our industry, comprising almost 1 million men and women committed to environmental stewardship, is dedicated to proper application and responsible use of products.

The vast majority of this industry includes small businessmen and women who have invested all they have in starting and growing their business and they are dedicated to doing the right thing. We look forward to working together with you on their behalf.

SABEENA HICKMAN

CEO, National Association of Landscape Professionals Herndon, Virginia

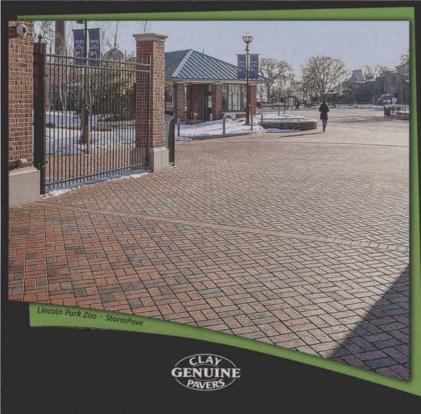
Focus on professionalism

WAS DISMAYED to read the comments in the December 2016 article entitled "An alternative approach" that denigrated the professional lawn care industry. Having started in this industry during the "Wild West" days, I am immensely proud of how we have fostered professionalism and continuously improve the quality of service that we bring to our customers on a daily basis.

We have a special duty to educate the public about the challenges in creating beautiful land-scapes. We spend a great deal of time identifying and treating problems involving insects, diseases and weeds. Sometimes the preferred solution to a problem is employing a pesticide, other times allowing nature to take its course is preferred. But whatever course of action we choose it's based upon established best management practices.

When we communicate about pesticides, demonization, distortion and fear-based safety messages have no place in the discussion. It is imperative that we make use of science-based research that demonstrate facts about these products and steer clear of emotional arguments. Likewise, we should not be led to accept the false premises of anti-pesticide advocates in an attempt to be seen as reasonable. It was acquiescing to false premises that brought about pesticide sign posting regulations, an enormous waste of resources that ultimately benefits no one.

Risks must be kept in perspective. Much of the discussion regarding pesticide risk is hysteria that



- Durability clay pavers lasts more than 100 years
- Colorfast clay paver colors will never fade
- Strength 12,000 psi average compression
- No degradation significantly exceeds rigorous freeze/thaw standards in salt water

Clay pavers have rich, warm colors with great aesthetic appeal.

The perfect compliment to brick, block and

many other building materials.



pinehallbrick.com

800.334.8689

info@pinehallbrick.com



BUYING GUIDE

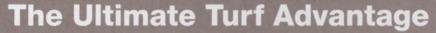












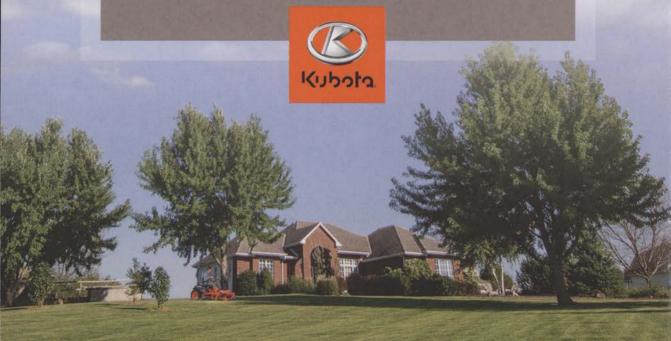
Kubota Has Your Complete Lawn & Landscape Lineup

Commercial | Municipal | Residential

Kubota's full line is stocked with residential and commercial turf maintenance systems designed to help property owners and landscaping crews everywhere achieve absolute perfection in a fraction of the time.

Plus, because Kubota stands behind their legendary reputation for quality at an affordable price, you can be sure you're getting more machine for your money with every purchase.

Discover the outstanding value, efficiency and performance of Kubota turf equipment and give yourself the ultimate turf advantage today.













INTRODUCING THE KUBOTA COMMERCIAL LINE



- Industry-Proven, Commercial-Grade Kawasaki Engine
- · Available in Gear or Hydro Drive
- Fixed or Floating Deck Options
- Heavy-Duty Maintenance-Free Spindles and Low-Maintenance Belt Drive
- Features Designed to Help Reduce Operator Fatigue

0% Down, 0% Financing for 36 Months1

150 down, 0% A.P.R. financing for up to 36 months on purchases of new Kubota equipment (excluding VS Series) is available to qualified purchasers from participating dealers' in-stock inventory through 3/31/2017. Example: A 36-month monthly installment repayment term at 0% A.P.R. requires 36 payments of \$27.78 per \$1,000 financed. 0% A.P.R. interest is available to customers if no dealer documentation preparation fee is charged. Dealer charge for document preparation fee shall be in accordance with state laws, inclusion of ineligible equipment may result in a higher blended A.P.R. 0% A.P.R. and low-rate financing may not be available with customer instant rebate offers. Financing is available through Kubota Credit Corporation, U.S.A., 3401 Del Amo Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503; subject to





Z400 Series









- · Commercial-Grade Kawasaki FS Engine
- 48", 54" or 60" Mower Decks
- 6.8-Gallon Fuel Capacity
- · Precision Cutting up to 10 MPH
- 12-Volt Charging Outlet
- 24" Low-Profile Tires
- · Adjustable Dampening for Optimum Comfort

0% Down, 0% Financing for 36 Months1

\$0 down, 0% A.P.R. financing for up to 36 months on purchases of new Kubota equipment (excluding VS Series) is available to qualified purchasers from participating dealers' in-stock inventory through 3/31/2017. Example: A 36-month monthly installment repayment term at 0% A.P.R. requires 36 payments of \$27.78 per \$1,000 financed. 0% A.P.R. interest is available to customers if no dealer A.P.R. and low-rate financing may not be available with customer instant rebate offers. Financing is available through Kubota Credit Corporation, U.S.A., 3401 Dei Amo Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503; subject to



W Series



Z400 Series



Z700 Series



7D Series



F Serie



MEDIUM ESTATE

MUNICIPALITY

- Gasoline, Kawasaki FX and KOHLER Command Pro® Engine Options
- 48", 54" or 60" Mower Decks
- · Terrain-Hugging, Wide-Stance Rear Tires
- · High-Visibility Instrument Panel with Hour Meter
- Kubota's Fastest Zero-Turn Mower at 11.2 MPH
- Deluxe High-Back Seat

0% Down, 0% Financing for 48 Months²

\$0 down, 0% A.P.R. financing for up to 48 months on purchases of new Kubota equipment (excluding WB, T, GR, G, Z100/Z400, ZD, ZG, F & VS Series) is available to qualified purchasers from participating dealers' in-stock inventory through 3/31/2017. Example: A 48-month monthly installment repayment term at 0% A.P.R. requires 48 payments of \$20.83 per \$1.000 financed: 0% A.P.R. interest is available to customers if no dealer documentation preparation fee is charged. Dealer charge for document preparation fee shall be in accordance with state laws, inclusion of ineligible equipment may result in a higher blended A.P.R. 0% A.P.R. and low-rate financing may not be available with customer instant rebate offers. Financing is available through Kubota Credit Corporation, U.S.A., 3401 Del Amo Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503; subject to credit approval. Some exceptions apply. Offer expires 3/31/2017. See us for details on these and other low-rate options or go to www.kubota.com for more information. For complete warranty, safety and product information; consult your local Kubota dealer and the product operator's manual. Power (HP/KW) and other specifications are based on various standards or recommended greatlines.

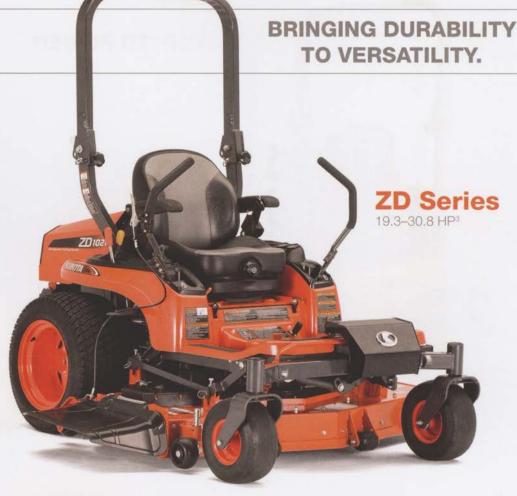












- Kubota Diesel Engine and Hydrostatic Transmission
- 48", 54", 60" or 72" Kubota PRO Mower Decks
- Available Aerodynamic Cutting System (ACS)
 - 16% Reduced HP
 - 27% Increased Work Performance
- New Patented Clean-Cut Blades
- Available with Side or Rear Discharge
- Air-Ride Suspension (ZD1500)

0% Down, 0% Financing for 36 Months1

\$0 down, 0% A.P.R. financing for up to 36 months on purchases of new Kubota equipment (excluding VS Series) is available to qualified purchasers from participating dealers' in-stock inventory through 3/31/2017. Example: A 36-month monthly installment repayment term at 0% A.P.R. requires 36 payments of \$27.78 per \$1,000 financed: 0% A.P.R. interest is available to customers if no dealer documentation preparation fee is charged. Dealer charge for document preparation fee shall be in accordance with state laws. Inclusion of ineligible equipment may result in a higher blended A.P.R. 0% A.P.R. and low-rate financing may not be available with customer instant rebate offers. Financing is available through Kubota Credit Corporation, U.S.A., 3401 Del Amo Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503; subject to credit approval. Some exceptions apply. Offer expires 3/31/2017. See us for details on these and other low-rate options or go to www.kubota.com for more information.











COMFORT TO POWER. Series

- · Kubota Diesel Engine
- · Commercial-Grade, Front-Mount Mower
- 60", 72" or 100"4 Mower Decks
- · Hydrostatic Power Steering
- Deluxe Operator Platform

0% Down, 0% Financing for 36 Months1

\$0 down, 0% A.P.R. financing for up to 36 months on purchases of new Kubota equipment (excluding VS Series) is available to qualified purchasers from participating dealers' in-stock inventory through 3/31/2017. Example: A 36-month monthly installment repayment term at 0% A.P.R. requires 36 payments of \$27.78 per \$1,000 financed, 0% A.P.R. interest is available to customers if no dealer documentation preparation fee is charged. Dealer charge for document preparation fee shall be in accordance with state laws: inclusion of ineligible equipment may result in a higher blended A.P.R. 0% A.P.R. and low-rate financing may not be available with customer instant rebate offers. Financing is available through Kubota Credit Corporation, U.S.A., 3401 Del Amo Bivd., Torrance, CA 90503; subject to credit approval. Some exceptions apply, Offer expires 3/31/2017. See us for details on these and other low-rate options or go to www.kubota.com for more information.

For complete warranty, safety and product information, consult your local Kubota dealer and the product operator's manual. Power (HP/KW) and other specifications are based on various standards or



THE KUBOTA FLEET PROGRAM ADVANTAGE

KUBOTA FLEET REWARDS

This loyalty program qualifies commercial customers for a fleet discount. Purchase more equipment and receive greater discounts. The more your business grows, the more you savel

EVER>GO LOANER PROGRAM

Participating Kubota dealers can now offer a loaner unit if your zero-turn mower requires a warranty repair and your local servicing dealer cannot repair it within one business day. This keeps downtime to a minimum.

KUBOTA LEASING OPTIONS

Kubota's leasing program gives commercial customers access to flexible options that make the full Kubota product line more affordable. Take advantage of no money down, low monthly payments, an easy application process, same-day credit decisions and more.

ORANGE PROTECTION PROGRAM

Extend your mower coverage, without interruption, by one or two years.

SEASONAL PAYMENT OPTIONS

Along with 0% promotional financing through Kubota Credit Corporation, commercial customers can now get seasonal payment options with structured payments and the ability to skip up to six payments in a given year.

KTAC INSURANCE

This Kubota-endorsed property damage insurance through Kubota Tractor Acceptance Corporation (KTAC) is designed to provide business owners with maximum peace of mind.



Visit **kubota.com** for more information and to find a dealer near you. Kubota's national network of more than 1,100 dealers makes buying and maintaining Kubota turf equipment easy. Fleet program details subject to modification.





is completely unmoored from reality and has no rational basis. I recall treating a lawn one day and having a neighbor angrily confront me about how I was affecting her health with what I was spraying. It would have been easier to take her seriously if there wasn't a cigarette hanging out of her mouth.

We also need to be mindful that regardless of whether a product is organic in nature or synthetically manufactured is meaningless when determining its toxicological effects on man and nature. After all, nicotine, botulinum and anthrax are among the most toxic substances known, but they're all organic, non-GMO and gluten-free.

Each product that we use in the green industry has an inherent risk, but that risk must be compared to the hazard the product poses, the probability of exposure, what level of exposure we have to the product and the consequences of that exposure. For most people, each of these risks is not only low but flies in the face of other risks that are far more hazardous.

The subjects of the article made a conscious business decision to offer organic lawn care services solely, and that's all it was – a conscious business decision. We wish them nothing but good luck and success in achieving their goals, but note well that basing your marketing upon misrepresenting not only your competition but your own services as well is irresponsible and makes climbing to your own success that much harder.

BOB MANN

Agronomist, Lawn Dawg Nashua, New Hampshire

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR: We at Lawn & Landscape focus on fostering conversation in the industry. But we shouldn't allow any of our sources to tear down anyone else's position to further their own, and that's what happened in our December issue. We give voice to many industry perspectives in our pages, but what our sources say does not indicate support from the magazine. Lawn & Landscape is product agnostic. Lawn care operators have tremendous choices available to

What do you think? Email us at cbowen@gie.net. solve their clients' agronomic challenges, and that those choices aren't binary. We don't think LCOs must choose either synthetic or organic products. As long as products are used according to the label and for their intended purpose, we trust our readers to make the best decision for their business, the environment and their customers.

- Chuck Bowen





Engineered smarter – so you look better.



Why choose Kichler Integrated LED?

All-weather performance Integrated solid-state drivers are fully potted and sealed to resist moisture

Superior results
Will not diminish lumen output or
truncate beam spread like drop-in
fixtures

Easy design & installation 9 to 15 volt operating range nearly eliminates voltage drop and delivers full stated lumen output even over long wire runs

15 YEAR

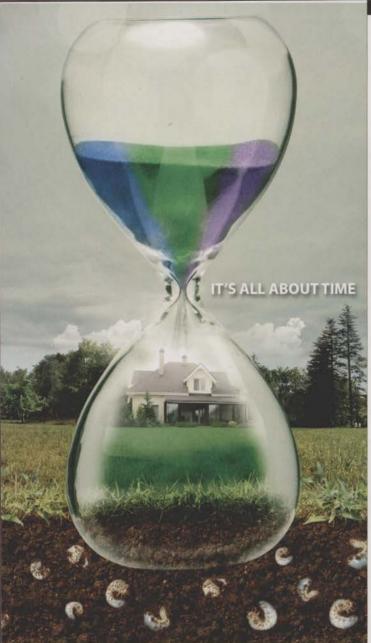
On the light engine and electrical components.

Warranty subject to change without notice.

Visit www.kichler.com for full warranty and limitations.

View our full line of integrated products at kichler.com/landscape

KICHLER.



ProScape® Fertilizer with Acelepryn plus Dimension.

LebanonTurf now offers our industry-standard controlled release ProScape fertilizer with Acelepryn insecticide plus Dimension herbicide. It's a one-two-three punch that delivers beautiful dark green color while providing effective, season-long control against grubs and crabgrass. One granular application in the spring protects your turf for the year. It's all about time ... using it, saving it.



Best of All Worlds* | LebanonTurf.com | 1-800-233-0628







L&L INSIDER For more news, visit Lawnandlandscape.com



During the National Collegiate Landscape Competition, students will test their skills in 28 real-world competitive events.

WORK & PLAY

Not only will some of the nation's best horticulture students get to compete at the National Collegiate Landscape Competition, they'll also get a chance to enjoy some of the outdoor fun that Utah offers. By Brian Horn

hil Allen has been attending the National Collegiate Landscape Competition for 20 years, and one thing continues to impress him – the energy of the students who attend the event. "It keeps me young,"

says Allen, professor of Landscape Management at Brigham Young University, which will be the host school for the event this year.

Allen also stays young via his method of travelling from outdoor event to outdoor event.



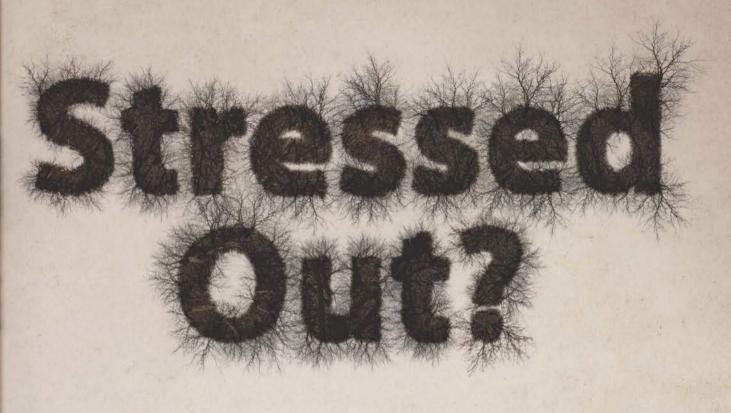
Phil ALLEN

"One of my crazy things is that I will often, on the day of the outdoor event, jog 20 miles just jogging event to event to event," he says.

At the NCLC, approximately 800 horticulture and

landscape students from about 60 schools will test their skills in 28 real-world, competitive events, and interview with industry companies at a career fair.

L&L caught up with Allen to find out what attendees can



reach for —

BioPak® Plus

A dry water-soluble micronutrient treatment that includes beneficial bacteria and 3-0-20 N-P-K fertilizer.

Save your plants from stress with ROOTS BioPak Plus by LebanonTurf

Feeds the whole growing environment... healthy soil means healthy plants.

Improves nutrient uptake through the roots.

Promotes quick recovery from summer and winter stress.





Best of all Worlds® LebanonTurf.com • 1-800-233-0628





DURABILITY OUT OF CUT EASE OF OWNERSHIP



BOB-CAT® QuickCat™ stand-on mower with 52 inch deck

The BOB-CAT® QuickCat™ stand-on mower makes quick work of the most challenging jobs with selectable mowing speeds up to 8 mph and ground speeds up to 10.5 mph. With its compact size, extra ground clearance and large drive tires, the QuickCat™ maneuvers in tight spaces, delivers a quality cut and a smooth ride. Choose BOB-CAT®, a machine you can trust, to make you money.

DURABILITY - QUALITY OF CUT - EASE OF OWNERSHIP



BOBCATTURF.COM



Sponsored by



ALTERNATIVE POWER SPECIAL REPORT

MOVING AWAY FROM GASOLINE | 3

CALCULATING CONVERSION COSTS | 6

INSIDE THE ENGINE | 9

FIGURES BEHIND THE FUEL | 10





ON YOUR RADAR

is buying into propane. Commercial mowers powered by propane are gaining traction among landscape contractors at an impressive rate. The fuel is propelling professional landscapers to a better bottom line through lower fuel costs, less maintenance and increased productivity. Add in a clean emissions profile and it's easy to see why propane mowers are winning over contractors.

Propane mower use has earned a firm footing in the commercial landscape industry ever since influencers began putting resources behind developing propane solutions in 2012. In 2016, more than 15,000 commercial mowers were in operation across the country. Currently, 14 manufacturers offer dedicated propane mower models.

As peer-to-peer validation of propane's benefits continues to spread, 2017 figures to be another year of growth. The Propane Education & Research Council is offering more tools and resources than ever to assist contractors interested in transitioning their fleet to propane.

For starters, in March, PERC is partnering with Lawn & Landscape to host a free webinar that will discuss propane's benefits and help contractors get started on the path to propane. Visit bit.ly/lawnperc to register.

PERC is also launching The Cut, a quarterly e-newsletter designed to keep contractors up to speed on all things propane in the commercial landscape market. The Cut will keep you in the know and bring you all the relevant tips, tricks, resources and tools to help you maximize your investment in propane. The first issue of The Cut will be delivered next month, and you can sign up for free at propane.com/TheCut.

The overwhelmingly successful Mower Incentive Program from PERC is once again available for contractors still making equipment purchases prior to the busy season. The program assists contractors by reimbursing them \$1,000 for every new propane mower purchase. The program also rewards \$500 toward a qualified conversion kit. To date, PERC's Propane Mower Incentive Program has helped put more than 4,000 new commercial propane mowers in the field in 43 states around the country.

We're excited for 2017 – and beyond – as propane continues to make a compelling case to contractors as the fuel that's best for business.

Hear what your peers are saying about their switch to propane at propane.com/commercial-landscape. Here's to a successful year!



JEREMY WISHART

THE PROPANE
EDUCATION & RESEARCH
COUNCIL

"As peer-topeer validation of propane's benefits continues to spread, 2017 figures to be another year of growth."

Jeremy Wishart

Deputy Director of Business Development, The Propane Education & Research Council



Exploring alternatives

Landscape contractors share their motivations for moving away from gasoline, and how propane or battery-powered equipment has changed their operations.

By Kristen Hampshire

ABOVE: Using battery-powered hand-held equipment can help contractors appeal more to environmentally friendly clients.

has been gradual during the last five years - but the cost savings of running on this alternative fuel vs. gasoline has been dramatic. We're talking \$100,000 less cash spent on fuel per year, and that's when gas prices are down.

"Our average crew drives only about 10 miles per day, so 90 percent of our fuel consumption is through mowers," says Casey Vickrey, president. "Our crews will use 1 or 2 gallons of gas in a vehicle and 10 gallons with two mowers running on gas."

But on propane, not only does fuel cost half as much (sometimes a greater savings), mowers also run cleaner and require less maintenance, Vickrey says. "We were changing oil every 100 hours, and we have gone to every 250 hours with propane. We sent the oil in for inspection and there's still plenty of life left in it.

"Propane burns leaner and



THE SUPPLY SIDE

nsite propane fueling stations are a significant benefit, according to Adam Linnemann, president of Linnemann Lawn Care & Landscaping in Columbia, Illinois. He partnered with a local propane supplier that installed a free 500-gallon propane tank at his business. "He set up the propane filling station so we can fill the tanks ourselves," Linnemann says.

A sensor on that 500-gallon propane tank alerts the supplier when fuel levels are low. Then, the supplier returns to Linnemann Lawn Care & Landscaping to replenish the propane. "It's a routine service," he says.

Casey Vickrey of Benchmark Landscaping in Austin, Texas, also has propane fuel stations at all of his company's locations throughout the state. "For us, if we did not have a good partner like we do, using propane would be much more difficult," he says.

Bottle exchange services for propane are available, Vickrey says. "But that fuel savings isn't as significant as what we can experience (with onsite fuel stations)," he says.

Vickrey figures the return on investment if you fuel on site versus bottle exchange is nine months compared to 18 months.

"All we had to do was set up a barrier for the fuel station and the supplier did the rest of the work for us," he says.

Regarding that barrier, Marc Wise of Greenwise Organic Lawn Care in Evanston, Illinois, explains that his company used concrete barriers it already had (previously for landscape bin dividers). "You need concrete posts, so you would drill a post and put in a pile, fill that with concrete, and so on," he says. You also need space on your property for this infrastructure. Where will you place the fuel site?

Because Wise already had concrete barriers, the setup of a fueling area was seamless. And, the propane company handled installing the tank, which was provided in return for a deposit.

What about battery power? Charging batteries while travelling is possible at Solar Earth Lawn Care in Indiana because of solar panels on the roof of Gus Mariscal's truck.

"We also have a little solar-powered stand that sits in the back yard, and we can use that to charge batteries," he says. Conventional battery charging stations that connect to "the grid" are more standard.

Regardless of the type of alternative power, the first question to ask before making equipment investments is: How will we refuel/recharge? Vickrey advises, "Get set up to work with a reputable propane supplier."

To find a propane supplier in your area, visit retailers.propane.com.

cleaner. And, at the end of the day, you have less maintenance."

For Vickrey and others who use alternative fuels, the decision is all about responsibility – from a profit and sustainability perspective. As landscape professionals consider ways to run leaner and compete in a price-sensitive market, they recognize that alternative fuel could elevate profit margins.

Also, there's a growing realization that "green" business is good business. Commercial clients might be asking about environmentally friendly methods to support their own corporate sustainability efforts, and homeowners are more attuned to the potential impact of engine emissions.

Here, Lawn & Landscape explores the why and how of moving to an alternative fuel source.

CONVERTING TO PROPANE. In the major metropolitan areas



of Texas, running propane is common among large landscape firms, Vickrey says. He estimates that three out of the four largest companies he competes with have already converted to propane, or at least are in the process.

"The key is to make sure you have a good propane provider, and every major city in this area has a provider that can offer service," Vickrey says, adding that there were really no logistical hoops to jump through when he decided to begin converting mowers.

Marc Wise of Greenwise Organic Lawn Care in Evanston, Illinois, says alternative fuel is not standard is in his region, but his company started running propane mowers seven years ago.

"We just wanted to use the most sustainable equipment, that's part of our mission statement," Wise says. "We looked into electric mowers, and at the time, we found that would only take us so far."

Back then, Wise had just a few mowers, so technicians used propane conversion kits to move engines from gas to propane power.

A propane company visited weekly to refuel propane tanks. (Now, Wise has a tank on site for fueling. See sidebar on page P4.)

"The major benefits for us are environmental," Wise says. "There is very little exhaust, and it's better for our guys in the field. They are the ones who are walking behind mowers all day, so making these considerate choices is the right thing to do by your employees."

Wise investigated both battery and propane options before he converted his first mower. "The difference is, the electric machines are more than double the cost of standard (gas-powered) machines," he says. "And, they're about double the cost of one of our machines converted to propane."

Now, depending on financing options, the fuel savings can help pay for battery-powered mowers, Wise says. But still, there's an upfront expense that was not an issue with propane.

Wise now buys mowers pre-converted rather than doing it himself. His equipment dealer uses a kit to convert the 21-, 32- and 36-inch mowers to propane, and the dealer also facilitates securing rebates and

incentives. "To get the incentives, you need documentation and it's easier for us to work through a dealer for that," Wise says.

Vickrey's team converts their mowers on site. "We buy our propane kits direct, and it takes about an hour and a half to install them," he says, adding that his team is certified to do so through the propane supplier.

He prefers to convert mowers versus buying machines that are already outfitted for propane power because of the resale advantage gasoline offers. "We can take off the kits with minimal expense and it's easier to sell to the ranchers or farmers who tend to buy them," he says.

The cost of a mower that

is manufactured with a propane-power engine ranges from \$1,800 to about \$2,500 depending on the make. However, Vickrey points out that incentives of about \$2,500 per mower can basically cancel out this expense.

The kits Vickrey purchases cost about \$1,000. So, when he crunches the numbers, after about nine months of running a propane mower, the machine is completely paid for. With rebates, he says you can save money on day one.

"With the cost of labor and insurance prices constantly going up, it's difficult to increase contract values at the rate that the cost of doing business is increasing," Vickrey says. "So, anywhere you can cut expenses is vital."

BATTERY POWER. For Gus Mariscal, battery-powered mowers and hand-held equipment that are charged by solar panels on his service truck are an economical and ecological advantage.

"The main reason for our move to battery power was more environmental and personal health issues that gas mowers cause because of engine emissions," says Mariscal, president of Solar Earth Lawn Care in Indianapolis.

His first two years in busi-



LEFT: Gus Mariscal spent \$10,000 to add solar panels to his truck to charge batteries for his equipment. The panels provide 16 hours of charge time. ness, Mariscal operated typical gas-engine mowers, trimmers and blowers. Then he began exploring battery-powered equipment to determine whether moving this direction would make sense financially.

The initial investment was 37 percent more than gas mowers. For example, a typical 21-inch gas mower Mariscal uses costs about \$250. A comparable battery-powered mower runs about \$400.

Mariscal operates two 21-inch mowers, along with a 33-inch and 46-inch walk-behind. Commercial-grade batteries for smaller mowers cost about \$150 to \$180, offering a run-time of about 50 minutes. Batteries for larger mowers can cost up to \$3,000, he says, and must be replaced every five years.

Still, these expenses were far less over time than running gas-powered mowers, he says. He figures spending about \$3.70 per hour to operate gas-powered mowers and less than \$0.20 per hour for electric mowers.

"Over a five-year span, we would pay \$18,000 a year for gas, and the maximum we'd spend for electric would be \$1,000 every five years," he says, based on his equipment's battery requirements.

Mariscal based this on 40-hour mowing weeks and a 25-week season.

"We did not see the initial return the first couple of years, but after two years we'll start hitting a tipping point where you make back your money from not spending on gas," he says.

Financially, Mariscal says his company is "good" compared to a business that runs only gas-powered engines.

"But in the next couple of years, we'll start seeing bigger profit margins because our initial investment will be paid off."

Meanwhile, Mariscal says the cost of outfitting his truck with solar panels to charge the batteries was about \$10,000.

The panels provide 16 hours of charge time. What if it's cloudy outside? "We can charge batteries if we have three days of no sunshine, and beyond that we can connect to the grid and charge batteries," he says.

Mariscal has not run into that cloudy day problem yet. And running out of power on the job is no concern because after a job, batteries are switched out in machines. There are always batteries charging while mowers are in use.

Is this the way of the future? Mariscal thinks so.

And Wise adds, "The financials do work out. The conversions do work out. And, alternative fuel (like propane) can extend the life of your engine."

Vickrey says for landscape professionals considering a switch, "It's always a savings with propane. The faster you can get it done, the better."





How do alternative power sources make good financial sense?

By Kristen Hampshire

RIK LOWES SAT DOWN TO CRUNCH some numbers so he could figure out exactly how much his business was spending on fuel. Three years ago, that number rounded out to about \$30,000. "Fuel is our second





MATH

largest expense, behind labor," says Lowes, president of Cuba, Missouri-based Lowes' Landscaping. "I thought, we can definitely work on labor expenses, but we need to work on fuel, so I started researching." He saw propane advertised and looked into it. "I stayed up nights, late, doing cost analyses based on our usage," he says.

CRUNCH THE NUMBERS. Lowes figured out his mowers used about 2.5 gallons of gasoline per hour, and at \$3 per gallon, that

equated to \$7 per hour to run a mower. He could get propane for \$1.39 a gallon then, which meant spending about \$2.50 per hour given the usage rate. (Propane mowers burn about 1.5 gallons per hour at Lowes' Landscaping – a gallon less than gas-powered mower engines, based on his estimates.)

With four mowers running about 400 hours per year, the potential savings quickly added up and justified investing in propane mowers.

His machines were already aging, so the timing was right for a switch. "I could get a 25 percent fleet discount, so I bought four machines and basically got one free," he says.

Then, Lowes found out about alternative energy incentives. He was able to score \$8,000 in federal government incentives, and another 15 percent off the total mower purchase price from the state of Illinois. That equated to about \$2,000 off per machine, and Lowes runs 60-inch mowers.

"I was getting really excited at this point," Lowes says.

LABOR COSTS. Then, Lowes went back to labor expenses. Every day, crews stopped at a gas station to fuel up.

"That was reduced because by working through a propane distributor, we now have a bulk fuel tank so one guy can fuel up all of the tanks two times a week," he says. "That means I have one guy fueling up tanks as opposed to five guys going to a gas station.

Now, the crews fuel their service trucks before the workday and one dedicated crewmember manages the task.

All of this streamlining of fuel and reduction of mid-day stops improved labor costs, too. "Our cost per man-hour has decreased by \$6 because of efficiency – not only because of fuel, but better processes," Lowes says. "That's money in our back pocket whereas before, we were at break-even with mowing. Now, mowing is profitable again."

IMMEDIATE SAVINGS. Before Adam Linnemann of Columbia, Illinois-based Linnemann Lawn Care & Landscaping switched to propane, he figured the cost of filling a fuel tank versus a



COST-CRUNCHING TIP SHEET

KNOW YOUR NUMBERS. Know your actual fuel costs today, and compare those with potential costs of alternative fuel. "Dive into the costs during a quiet time and look at every angle," Lowes says. "Propane may not work for everyone, but look at your expenses and start plugging in the numbers."

TAP INTO A FUEL SUPPLY. Having a relationship with a local propane fuel supplier has been critical for Linnemann and Lowes. Linnemann has a 500-gallon propane fuel tank on site (provided free of charge), and the propane supplier certified his employees to fill the tanks (also free).

APPLY FOR INCENTIVES. You can earn money back to recoup the cost of equipment purchases. Incentives vary by state, and these can be combined with federal alternative fuel incentives. Lowes earned back about \$2,000 per mower from incentives.

propane tank. "Our propane tanks are 33-pound cylinders that hold 7 pounds of propane," he says. He currently gets propane for \$1.34 per gallon.

"You're getting the same production out of the tank as you would gasoline," Linnemann says. "Right off the bat, there's a savings in fuel cost."

Linnemann opted to purchase already-converted propane mowers as opposed to using a conversion kit like some landscape professionals do because he believes there is a more lucrative government rebate for doing so.

Plus, he prefers to turn mowers over after their three-year warranty so he can rest assured that maintenance issues will not crop up.

"The mowers have more power when running propane vs. gasoline, and less pollutants," Linnemann says. "The mowers don't bog down in heavy grass as much, and engines run cleaner so there is less time and cost associated with maintenance like oil changes."

In fact, Linnemann switched engines to propane and oil to synthetic. That combination has seriously extended the period in between oil changes, he says. "You can practically change the oil twice a year vs. doing it monthly," he says.

Linnemann's propane mower investment qualified for federal and state tax incentives. He received about \$1,000 per mower just from the federal incentive in the form of a check a couple of months after the mower purchase.

Today, all eight mowers in Linnemann's fleet are powered by propane fuel. "It helps to have a good relationship with your dealer and with your fuel supplier," he says. "When you work together, the conversion can be seamless."



SYSTEM ANALYSIS

The type of fuel you use will have different effects on your engine. By Kristen Hampshire

HILE GASOLINE MAY STILL BE the most popular method of powering equipment, manufacturers have been exploring and investing in R&D and new products designed for propane power. This gives contractors an option to buy a ready-made propane mower vs. using a kit to convert an existing gasoline engine to one that will accept propane fuel.

"Propane has been around in the turf care industry for 20 to 30 years," says Kohler marketing manager Eric Hudak, who has been responsible for marketing and helping develop the propane engine business.

"It was typically done as an engine conversion that required taking off the gasoline fuel system and mounting a propane tank, and installing an aftermarket propane carburetor and propane regulator." Currently, only Kohler and Kubota manufacture propane engines.

Hudak says landscape professionals have shared that they tend to change oil less often when running propane.

"There's a financial benefit of running propane versus gasoline," Hudak says, adding that propane can save you in excess of 25 percent on fuel expenses.

Some landscape professionals were saving \$1,200 per year per mower during high-fuel cost years. "That translates to about \$2 per hour compared to a carbureted gas mower," Hudak says.

With lower gas prices at the pump now, the immediate push to propane is not quite as prevalent as it was when the cost per gallon was near \$4, Hudak says.

"The demand for propane seems less intense now with fuel prices down," Hudak says. "But it's an opportunity to keep an eye on as fuel prices go up and we are all expecting that to happen."

FUEL SYSTEM ADVANCES.

Kohler offers an EFI gasoline engine that offers 25 percent fuel savings with gasoline. Now, an EFI propane engine adds more savings on top of that. "You are getting an engine that has been designed and optimized specifically for propane," Hudak says.

Some landscapers might choose to stick to gasoline, but switch from a carbureted system to fuel injection, says Paul Leech, engineering director at Briggs & Stratton Corp.

By using a quarter of the fuel with an EFI system, you'll reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent compared to a carbureted gasoline engine.

"If you are using good, fresh fuel in a gasoline engine vs. propane, the engine durability should not change at all," says Brett Jury, engineering manager, fuel systems, Briggs & Stratton Corp. "But if you introduce stale gasoline into the system, you can cause damage right then and there."

Ethanol gasoline creates new concerns in terms of engine longevity and performance, Jury says. Take fuel storage, for example.

"Gasoline is stored in a container where oxygen can get into it, which causes fuel to oxidize and go stale. That used to not be as big of a deal until we started introducing ethanol," Jury says.

"Ethanol absorbs water, and that can cause fuel to break down and degrade faster than it used to. In that process, it can cause corrosion and gumming, and it can cause bad thing to happen to fuel systems, which can result in performance running stability issues and starting problems."

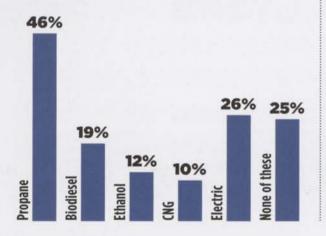
That said, Leech notes that



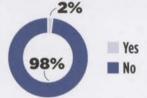
FIGURES BEHIND THE FUEL

We surveyed more than 100 contractors to find out their feelings on alternative power for their mowers and handheld equipment. The results show that fuel still has a strong hold on the market, but contractors are open to trying something new.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ALTERNATIVE FUELS WOULD YOU CONSIDER USING IN COMMERCIAL MOWERS?



DO YOU USE PROPANE IN ANY OF YOUR COMMERCIAL MOWING EQUIPMENT?



HAVE YOU USED ALTERNATIVE FUELS (PROPANE, CNG, BIODIESEL, ETC.) IN THE PAST AND STOPPED?



Why did you stop? Answers included: (1) Tanks are heavy on the mowers, refilling can be troublesome. Have had multiple broken brackets on the tank mounts, and the re-routing of cables is problematic. (2) Gasoline is cheaper, propane is too much trouble to change out every day and our jobs are too big to use propane. (3) Battery power in a mower did not last long enough.

propane can offer mechanical benefits compared to a carbureted gasoline engine. "Gasoline can dilute engine oil if it gets mixed in, so propane eliminates the concern," he says.

"As far as fuel going bad or concerns with ethanol and gumming of jets, the carburetor or injectors, you virtually eliminate those issues so your maintenance can be a big benefit."

But quality gasoline with a stabilizer running in an EFI engine can give landscape contractors a leg up in the fuel efficiency and performance arena.

"The recommendation we make with ethanol fuels is to either use it, don't buy more than you'll use in 30 days, or if you do have fuel that is stored longer, then absolutely put a fuel stabilizer in it," Leech says.

CNG AND BIODIESEL. While Compressed natural gas (CNG) is a growing option in the highway trucking industry, the high-pressure storage tank required and accessibility of the fuel are obstacles for the green industry. Hudak says Kohler

has introduced CNG power for home generator sets, but not outdoor power engines.

As for diesel and biodiesel, emission regulations have nearly doubled the size of engines because those control devices are nearly the size of the engines, Leech says. "They're somewhat problematic from a packaging perspective," he says.

"There has been a shift in the



WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS TO INCREASING YOUR USE OF PROPANE IN COMMERCIAL MOWERS?

Carrying tanks is a hassle	44%
The incremental cost to convert the fleet to propane is prohibitive	38%
I don't know how to perform maintenance or how to find a mechanic to service them	31%
I prefer what I have/I don't have interest in propane mowers	25%
Don't know where to get propane for mowers	22%
I don't know where to get the equipment	19%
Hassle of training the crew how to use	19%
I'm not familiar with the fuel	18%
I believe propane is more expensive	17%
I don't feel comfortable with propane	15%
Other	12%
Propane equipment needs better technology	9%
Propane is not as efficient	5%
There are government regulations/I'd need a permit to operate propane mowers	2%
Propane is not safe	1%



Other answers included:

Don't want the liability of a propane storage rack in event of a fire to adjacent properties in my commercial storage facility

Do not know how mowers will handle hills

WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS TO INCREASING YOUR USE OF BATTERY-POWERED COMMERCIAL EQUIPMENT?

Run time is too short	76%
Recharging the equipment takes too long	52%
They are more expensive	31%
Electric equipment needs better technology	29%
The incremental cost to convert the fleet is prohibitive	26%
Electric equipment is not as efficient	21%
I'm not familiar with them	20%
I prefer what I have/I don't have interest in battery-powered equipment	18%
Other	11%
I don't know how to perform maintenance or how to find a mechanic to serve them	10%
I don't know where to get the equipment	9%
I don't feel comfortable with them	9%
Hassle of training the crew how to use	6%



Other answers included:

Batteries too heavy on commercial mowers

Industry suppliers haven't "pushed" it. Tells me not time.

After training, making sure crew people keep and operate equipment properly. Crews tend to cut corners

smaller engine displacements to gasoline and away from diesel.

MAKING A CONVERSION. Historically, using propane meant using a conversion kit, and this is still the method many business owners use. They might contract with a third-party or ask their dealer to make the conversion. However, the cost

today of conversion via kit versus purchasing a propane engine from the get-go is not all that different, Hudak says.

"When you figure the labor of doing a conversion and the hardware costs, you are typically better off purchasing it outright than doing a conversion."

For landscape contractors who want to switch over engines they're already running on gasoline, or convert a new machine that is not yet equipped for propane, Jury says that "a third party is a good choice for our industry, because they will make sure that (the engine) is certified and meets engine regulations."

MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES.

Propane has a running advantage for landscape firms operating in areas where sustainability is especially important, Hudek says. Companies in Seattle or Madison, Wisconsin, for example, could market their propane mower fleets as a green advantage.

And in areas that enforce ozone action days, landscapers with propane mowers can still operate. "You can keep working," Leech says.

GETTING IN SHAPE HAS NEVER BEEN SO PAINLESS.

SUPPORT A HEALTHIER BOTTOM LINE BY SWITCHING TO PROPANE WITH THESE RESOURCES.

Transitioning to propane — the only fuel that cuts your overall operating costs while reducing harmful emissions — is easier than you may think. Make this the best year yet for your business with these resources on **propane.com**:

PROPANE COST CALCULATOR

Quantify potential savings with the Propane Cost Calculator. PROPANE EQUIPMENT DEALER POINT

Locate and talk details with your local propone equipment dealer.

PROPANE.COM

PROPANE
CLEAN AMERICAN ENERGY



expect from the event and trip to Provost, Utah.

GET A HEAD START. Allen says a letter of intent to host the event was sent two years ago, and the school had a site visit in June to make sure they were prepared for the event. "We had a period last May prior to the site visit in early June when we spent almost full time figuring out locations for each of the 50 separate events," he says.

HOME-FIELD ADVANTAGE. Hosting the event gives BYU a great opportunity to show off the industry to students, both current and future. "Like so many



schools, we're trying to figure out how to recruit more students," he says. "The last time we hosted, we picked up 25 additional majors within a couple of weeks. We're hoping something that good happens again."

EXTRA CREDIT WELCOMED. Along with participating in the even, students can also stay and enjoy the area. "We have great mountains literally a stone's throw from campus," he says. "For those students who are inter- ! March 15 to 18.

ested, we are having a series of activities for Saturday afternoon.

Those include mountain biking, skiing, hiking and weatherdepending rock climbing and tours of some of the finer gardens in Salt Lake."

PERFECT TIMING. The event normally takes place when the host school is on spring break, but BYU doesn't have one. That was until this year.

"We are actually having a oneday spring break on the outdoor competition day, which is actually pretty good," Allen says. "It was total coincidence."

The NCLC will take place



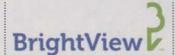
BRIGHTVIEW BUYS TOP 100 COMPANY

PLYMOUTH MEETING, Pa. – BrightView Landscapes acquired Marina Landscape Maintenance last month.

Marina Landscape Maintenance employs nearly 400 people and services 200 client sites in Orange County, and the greater Los Angeles, Inland Empire and Northern California markets. In 2016, Marina was ranked 21st on the Lawn & Landscape Top 100 list.

Terms of the deal, which will not be disclosed.

"This is a great addition to



the BrightView family and one that will help us strengthen our presence in the key Southern California market," said Bright-View Chief Executive Officer Andrew Masterman.

"Like BrightView, Marina has a long tradition of innovation and client service and we are delighted to welcome them into our company. We are continuing to seek out acquisition opportunities with landscape maintenance companies that share our dedication to clients and team members."

"We have worked for decades to build up our maintenance business and we are gratified that a company like Bright-View recognizes and values the commitment to our clients, employees and the industry," said Marina Landscape Maintenance Vice President Marty Stowell.

"BrightView and Marina

share many of the same values, including an unwavering commitment to our clients and to the safety, well-being and career advancement of team members."

Stowell will remain as vice president and general manager.

King & Spalding LLP served as legal advisor to BrightView, and Massumi + Consoli LLP served as legal advisor to Marina.

This move marks Bright-View's first significant acquisition since forming in 2014. The company acquired a small tree company, Swan Hill Olive, near Phoenix in September of 2014. L&L



WORK VISAS "Are you having a difficult time finding



Robert Kershaw The Kershaw Law Firm PC legal low wage workers? Let us help you get the low wage labor force that you need, just as we have for hundreds of other companies."

-Robert Kershaw, Attorney at Law

Legal foreign workers with H2B visas may be the answer to your labor needs!

1-99 H2B Visas \$3,000.*

That's \$3,000 in fees for all of your visas—not \$3,000 per visa!

*Flat rate per application paid in advance, or pay installments of \$1,500.00 down, with four installments of \$600.00.

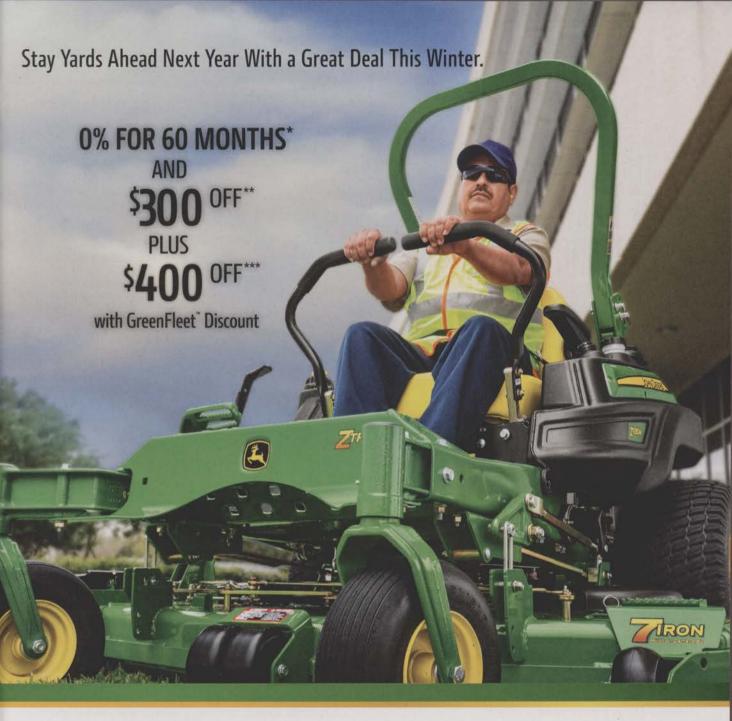
Does not include bus fare, USCIS (DHS) fees, required newspaper ads, foreign processing & consulate fees, nor foreign recruiting fees.

Give us the opportunity to beat any competitor's published price. Number of potential clients is limited! Call toll-free for more information

1.855.321.0077

Robert Kershaw, Attorney at Law
The Kershaw Law Firm PC, 3355 Bee Caves Rd. Suite #307, Austin, TX 78746
Office: 512.347,0007, 1.855.321.0077, Fax: 512.347,0009, www.workvisasusa.com
Email: robert.kershaw@kershawlaw.com

Licensed by the Texas Supreme Court. Not certified by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization.



Maybe the season is starting to wind down, but a deal on a terrific ZTrak™ mower is just starting up. Right now, until February-28, 2017, we're offering \$300 off ** any Z930M mower plus 0% financing for 60 months*. Better yet, if you're a GreenFleet Platinum 1 member, you can get an additional \$400 off *** instantly. See your John Deere dealer today for a deal on the ultimate zero-turn mower.

JohnDeere.com/MowPro



^{**\$300} off and fixed rate of 0.0% for 60 months available October 25, 2016 through February 28, 2017. Savings based on the purchase of a 2930M.

Offers available on new equipment and in the U.S. only, Prices and . savings in U.S. dollars. See your dealer for details. Available at participating dealers



^{***} GreenFleet discount offer expires October 28, 2017. \$400 off with GreenFleet Platinum 1 Member discount. GreenFleet level savings are based on total units purchased. A member's per unit discount for an eligible sale will be based on the highest accumulated qualifying equipment purchased at the time of an eligible sale. See terms and conditions at JohnDeeve com/GreenFleet for details.





RECENTLY I RETURNED FROM THE LEADERSHIP FORUM put on annually by the fine folks at the National Association of Landscape Professionals. The event was held in beautiful St. Thomas, in the U.S. Virgin Islands. I know, I know – poor me. Somehow, though, I managed to get through it. I also managed to emerge from it with a career and life lesson I never expected.

The forum was a first for me in that it marked the only time in more than 20 years that I've attended a green-industry conference that I wasn't speaking or teaching at. It was a first for my wife, too. Despite having been stuck with me for 23 years, Lisa has never accompanied me to a conference. Between her full-time work as a kindergarten teacher, our four kids, a very demanding little puppy and the prep I need to do on the road when I'm speaking, it's been fairly impossible for her to come.

Lisa and I got to spend time with many of my friends and clients and their spouses, and I was excited for her to get to see our industry up close. She came away as impressed with the remarkable people leading



MARTY GRUNDER is a speaker, consultant and author. He owns Grunder Landscaping Co.

our profession as I am. One woman asked Lisa if I worked long hours. Lisa told her that I used to – that when you're growing a business and providing for your family, you do what you have to do.

Now that my business is fully established, I explained to this nice young couple, I try to leave my office in the evenings by 5:30 p.m., and I've struck a much healthier work-life balance.

Or so I thought, until the next day when I posted on Facebook a photo of me reading a business book on the beach. Seeing the photo, my friend and mentor Jim McCutcheon posted back, "Stop working and look up! Often, that is when the best ideas happen."

Jim's comment really made me stop and think. Here I was with my wife, in a spectacular setting, with the blue, blue waters of the Caribbean Sea in front of me and an island to explore behind me and what was I doing? Reading a book, studying, trying to gain a competitive advantage.

So, I took Jim's words to heart and set about heeding his advice. I put my book down. For the rest of the trip I made a conscious effort to practice the fine art of doing nothing. I'm not going to lie; this did not come easy to me. I doubt it comes



ONLINE: You can now view Marty's video series "60 Seconds for Success," where Marty will give you quick tips on

how to better run your business.

Download the Layar app, then use your mobile device to scan this page. The video will then play on your mobile device. This month, Marty gives you tips on how to organize your truck.

easy to any business owner or hard worker.

But mostly, I relaxed. And without the distractions of home or the office or the incessant need to do more pressing down on me, I gained fresh perspective on my life and on my business. Enjoying dinners with industry friends and their spouses against an extraordinary backdrop, we ate and laughed and shared stories about our lives and our businesses. As I listened to them, I reflected on my own life, what's good, what's not so good; what I'm grateful for and what I need to work on.

Those five days away provided me with an uncommon clarity and calm I haven't felt before. I returned to the office rested and re-energized, with renewed excitement for the days ahead and new creative approaches for how to meet them.

So, my fellow workaholics, give it a try. Take time for yourself. Plan a vacation or block out a regular part of your day or week to do nothing much. Put the book, or the newspaper, or that darn cell phone down and look up. **L&L**

BIG MACHINE. BIG POWER.



INTRODUCING THE FUEL-SIPPING, TIER 4 FINAL SV340. With a rated operating capacity of 3,400 lbs. and bucket breakout force of 9,531 lbs., the SV340 is a productivity monster. The SV340 runs virtually all attachments with better handling and performance thanks to superior high-flow auxiliary options. Add to that a host of other features and you've got one mean machine that will change the way work gets done on your construction site. Learn more at CaseCE.com/SV340







IN JANUARY 2016, I conducted several estimating workshops in Colorado. At
one workshop, I asked a landscape contractor how 2015 wrapped up for him. He
responded that he didn't know because his financial information was with his CPA
and the CPA hadn't analyzed it yet and gotten back with him.

It might be too late to fix problems for 2015, but he needed to see his P&L statement moving forward. Essentially, the P&L statement is a snapshot of how well the business is doing at making or losing money at any given point in time. It's an essential tool for entrepreneurs to use if they are going to understand their businesses. Search "Mind your Ps and Ls" on lawnandlandscape.com for a downloadable P&L statement.

Formatting the profit and loss tatement

INCOME OR REVENUE. First, we identify the income for the company and its sources. Larger companies usually break down their revenue into divisions or profit centers. For instance, you might have installation, maintenance, irrigation and snow and ice divisions. If an activity accounts for at least 20 percent of company revenue, I recommend tracking it and its expenses in its own division. If the total income for the company is



JIM HUSTON runs J.R. Huston Consulting, a green industry consulting firm.

less than \$500,000, I'd recommend having just one division.

DIRECT COSTS. Next, we have direct costs. These are the costs that can be directly attributed to projects or services provided by the company.

- Materials and sales tax: This is the pre-markup cost of job materials (and the related sales tax) used and includes such things as plant materials, fertilizers, hardscape materials, irrigation parts, etc. It does not include fuel.
- Direct field labor: This is the cost of the crew working in the field. It usually does not include project or account managers.
- Labor burden for direct field labor: Labor burden includes FICA, FUTA, SUTA, workers'

- compensation insurance, general liability insurance, 401K costs, vacations, holidays and paid time off expenses. It ranges from 20 to 30 percent of direct field labor.
- Field equipment and truck costs: This category usually runs 12 percent of sales +/- 2 percent and includes: fuel, auto and inland marine insurances, repairs and parts, mechanics, depreciation, leases, etc.
- Subcontractors: This is the cost of subcontractors used by the company on projects and services.
- Rental equipment: This is the cost of rental equipment used on projects and services.
- Miscellaneous: This category includes such things as dumpsters, Porta-Potties, etc.

GROSS PROFIT MARGIN (GPM).

Sales revenue minus total direct costs gives us the gross profit margin

(GPM) for a company or division. This is a very important calculation as it tells us how profitable the company or division is before subtracting general and administrative (G&A) overhead costs.

GPM is also the report card for a division manager when compared to the company's annual budget and national benchmarks.

INDIRECT OR GENERAL AND AD-MINISTRATIVE (G&A) OVERHEAD

costs. These costs include everything that is not directly attributable to the cost of specific projects or services. It includes such things as rent, advertising, utilities, owner's and office salaries, etc.

For companies under \$5 million in annual sales, G&A overhead costs usually run about 25 percent of sales. It drops as a company grows beyond the \$5 million mark.

The owner's pre-dividend and office salaries account for approximately 50 percent of G&A overhead costs.

NET PROFIT MARGIN. Once you subtract G&A overhead costs from the gross profit margin, you have calculated the net profit margin (NPM) for the company or division.

This is what I call the pre-tax and pre-dividend/bonus NPM. The NPM is calculated after all bills are paid and owners receive a pre-dividend salary.

Ten percent NPM for a green industry company is good, 15 percent is excellent and more than 20 percent is superb.

OVER/UNDER BILLINGS. The final calculation is for over and under billings. If you have work in process that is completed but not yet billed, you are under billed and you would add this amount to the NPM.

If, on the other hand, you have revenue in income that you have not completed (or earned), you are over billed and you should subtract this amount from NPM. L&L

VE THE TRUCK FOR THE JOB!



Isuzu NPR with 19' Dovetall Landscaper Body 297 HP Gas or 210 HP Diesel Engine, Automatic Transmission 12,000 lb. or 14,500 lb. GWR, Exhaust Brake (Diesel Only), AMFM CD Player, A/C, P/S, Power Windows & Locks, Tilt Wheel, (Other Options And GVW Ratings Available)



Isuzu NPR HD with 12' Dump Body



Istazu NPR HD with 19' Revolution Body
Cas Cogine, Automatic Transmission, 14,500 lb, GWR, 19.5 Free
MFM CO Player, AlC, P/S, Power Windows & Locks, Till Wiseel,
Electric Hotel, (Other Options And GVW Ratings Available)



Juzu NPR HD with 11' Bed & 600/100 Gallon Tanks





Isuzu NPR HD 4 Door with 19' Dovetail Landscaper Body 297 HP Gas or 210 HP Diesel Engine, Automatic Transmission, 14,500 lb. GWR, Exh Brake, AWFM CD Player, AIC, PIS, Power Windows & Locks, Tilt Wheel (Other Options And 12,000 lb. GWR Gas Availble)



Used Landscapers in Stock! Variety of Specs Available re not in the market for a new landscape truck, maybe a premium use you. We are one of the few dealers in the country that is dedicated to you with used landscaper trucks. Many have brand new bodies!

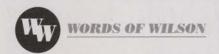


SUZU NPR with 18 Enclosed Landscap 297 HP Gas Engine, Automatic Transmission, 12,000 AMFM CD Player, A/C, P/S, Power Windows & Locks, T



Isuzu NPR with 19' Custom Irrigation Body

Nashville, TN 800-367-7712 Decatur, AL 800-433-6351 **NEW or USED TRUCKS @ www.neelycoble.com**





• THE OFFICE. WHAT'S NOT TO LIKE? Crushing workloads, stacked deadlines and demanding customers give us plenty to grouse about. Gallows humor and in-jokes thrive at the water cooler and take the edge off being overwhelmed. Even the language we use to inspire our employees diminish the potential for fun. We tell them to be hyper vigilant, to have a sense of urgency and to be relentlessly focused. We create warriors, not brand ambassadors, and we wonder why no one's happy.

There is a remarkable advantage to having fun at work. At my company, we strive to keep our employees motivated and refreshed. Our people form relationships outside of work, laugh a lot and share positive relationships inside the office.

I encourage team activities and friendships because social bonding is not only critical to collaboration, but appears to have had a huge impact on our profitability and growth.

There's a lot of talk about the happiness index and we've been exploring this at my company too. When our employees were interviewed recently for a company



BRUCE WILSON is principal of green industry consulting firm Bruce Wilson & Company.

story, our controller said that her greatest daily takeaway was that coming to work was fun.

When asked why, she said, "We celebrate the small wins." Everything feels meaningful and everyone feels like they're making progress on meaningful work.

To become a more effective leader of your landscape company in 2017, help your own stress levels and those of your employees by giving the rat race back to the rats. Here's how:

1. ALLOW OCCASIONS FOR FUN

AND GAMES. Invite staff to produce Plant Jeopardy, Brags & Bloopers, Regrets – I've Had a Few, Lemons to Lemonade Awards, Trivia Team Building, Customer Crossword/ Service Scrabble or Project Pictionary, or create a company song. The ability to laugh at our foibles and sing our praises plays a serious role in leadership effectiveness.

2. START MEETINGS WITH MENTAL AEROBICS TO IMPROVE THE GROUP'S MOOD. The more people

TO BECOME A MORE EFFECTIVE LEADER OF YOUR LANDSCAPE COMPANY IN 2017, HELP YOUR OWN STRESS LEVELS AND THOSE OF YOUR EMPLOYEES BY GIVING THE RAT RACE BACK TO THE RATS."

focus on a creative exercise, the less they'll be distracted by their smartphones.

3. CONNECT WITH YOUR EMPLOY-EES TO SHOW YOU CARE ABOUT THEIR OUTSIDE INTERESTS.

Sponsor their charity fun runs, marathons, tournaments, cycling tours, philanthropic outreach, faith-based initiatives and volunteer commitments, and make their win a win for the whole company.

4. PROMOTE PERKS THAT BOOST COMMUNITY MORALE AND GOOD HEALTH. Allow flexible schedules,

HEALTH. Allow flexible schedules, family time off days, healthy catered lunches, snacks in the lunch room and an annual wellness day.

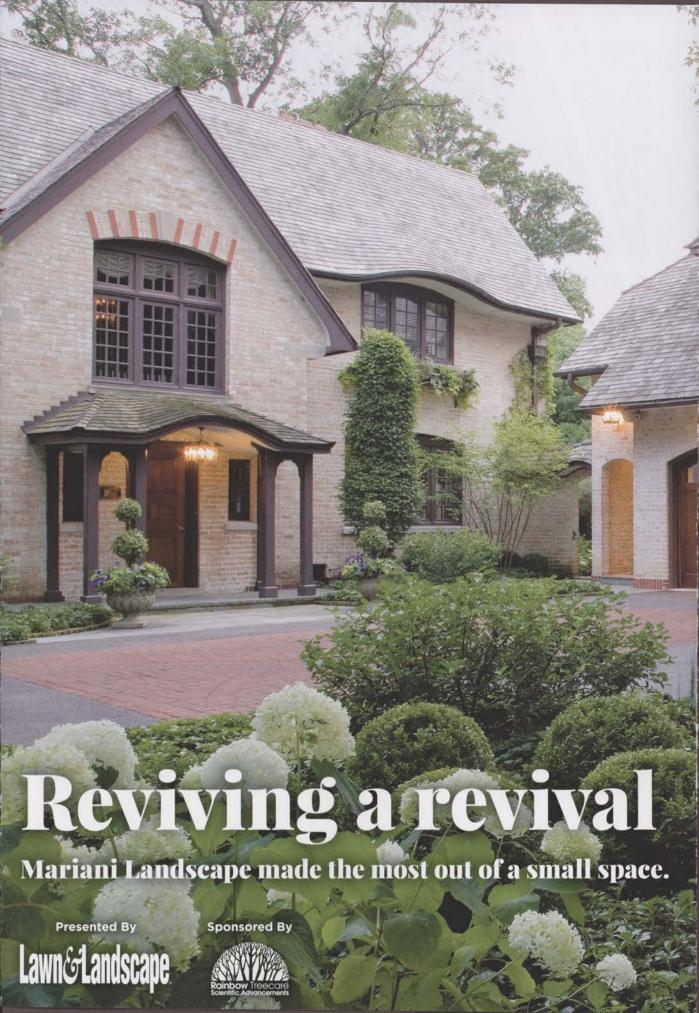
Develop a company recipe book based on potluck lunches where everyone brings a favorite dish and tells its story. Create a company garden and harvest and serve what you grow.

5. RETHINK YOUR TEAM RESUMES.

Create "The Humans of ..." storyline instead. Learn the backstory of your employees and promote their unique personalities, not just their frontline or back office personas.

Customers love knowing more about your people and it makes your company more interesting.

Most of all, leverage your rebooted team spirit. Social media, recruiting outreach and community events are all good places to let folks know you're a great place to work. L&L







62% LABOR REDUCTION

Maintaining a manicured landscape can be a time consuming and laborious task. Applications of Trimtect have been shown to reduce the required labor by an average of 62% by decreasing the number of pruning events and amount of biomass that must be removed and disposed of.



Species: **Viburnum** 12 weeks after Trimtect treatment

Trim-1

30%-70% REDUCTION IN GROWTH

note the reduction in weeds



note the reduction in biomass when treated

Species: Privet 4 weeks after Trimtect treatment





Species: Asiatic Jasmine 6 weeks after Trimtect treatment



Species: Creeping Fig 24 weeks after Trimtect tr

Trim-tect*



Untreated
Required 4 whole-shrub shearing events in 12 weeks



Trimtect
Required just 3 light tip pruning events in 12 weeks

tect Growth Regulator Roundcovers - Vines - Bedding Plants



note the improved appearance of the treated plants



Untreated

Trim-tect

Species: Rugosa rose 4 weeks after Trimtect treatment



ent



Species: Coneflower 4 weeks after Trimtect treatment



Species: Yew 24 weeks after Trimtect treatment

Mixing Trimtect

STEP 1

Shake container VIGOROUSLY for 1 minute before use.



Audible 90 surfactant from Rainbow comes with a 2ml dosing pump. Apply one pump per gallon of water. Easy!

STEP 2

- A. Determine what rate of Trimtect to use based upon the species. Contact Rainbow for a current rate guide.
- B. Determine total volume of solution you wish to apply based upon the surface area of the plant material to treat.

Note: For best results, Rainbow recommends mixing only enough solution for what you will need for the current day.





STEP 3 Mix Trimtect into appropriate amount of water. Add non-ionic surfactant for best results.



Fill tank with 1/2 the require volume of water.

Add Trimtect dose and surfactant

Rinse measure cup and pour into tank

Add remaining water

Shake well and/or agitate tank



Application Timing

CAUTION: Never apply Trimtect in the same tank you use to apply herbicide.



Natural Appearance

Apply Trimtect when shrub reaches desired appearance. Trimtect will start to slow growth within 2 weeks after application.



Manicured Look

Prune back shrub, allow regrowth then tip back. Apply Trimtect.

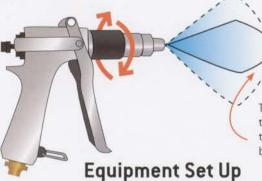


Sheared Look:

Dormant Shrub Trimming: Apply Trimtect just after bud break and leaf expansion Growing Season Shearing: Shear shrub to formal look. Apply Trimtect within 1 week after trimming.

and technical support: 877-272-6747 info@treecarescier

Application



Set pressure to approximately 50 PSI. For tall plants you may need to adjust to 80 PSI to achieve more height with spray.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Applicators and other handlers must wear:

- · Long-sleeved shirt and long pants
- · Chemical-resistant gloves such as barrier laminate, butyl rubber, Nitrile rubber or Viton.
- Shoes plus socks.

To achieve the best coverage, turn the shaft of the nozzle to adjust the angle of spray between 30° and 45°



Foliar Application

- Apply to dry foliage, just after bud break and leaf expansion during the growing season
- Apply within 1-2 weeks after pruning for best results
- Apply as a Spray-to-Drip application, ensuring the foliage, canopy, and all woody stems are thoroughly covered



A white residue is typical and fades after a few weeks. Promptly wash any non-target surface, such as sidewalks or driveways, with water to avoid staining.



Prune plants, then treat. Pruning plants within 8-10 weeks after application will remove the product and reduce the effectiveness of the treatment.

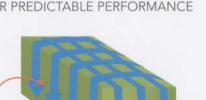
Before applying Trimtect, remove any dead leaves, trash, or any other debris that could prohibit your spray from reaching the plant material.





TO SUCCESS

PROPER APPLICATION IS CRITICAL FOR PREDICTABLE PERFORMANCE



Completely and thoroughly treat the entire plant.

NOTE: Areas that are NOT treated or get thoroughly covered will not exhibit desired growth reduction.



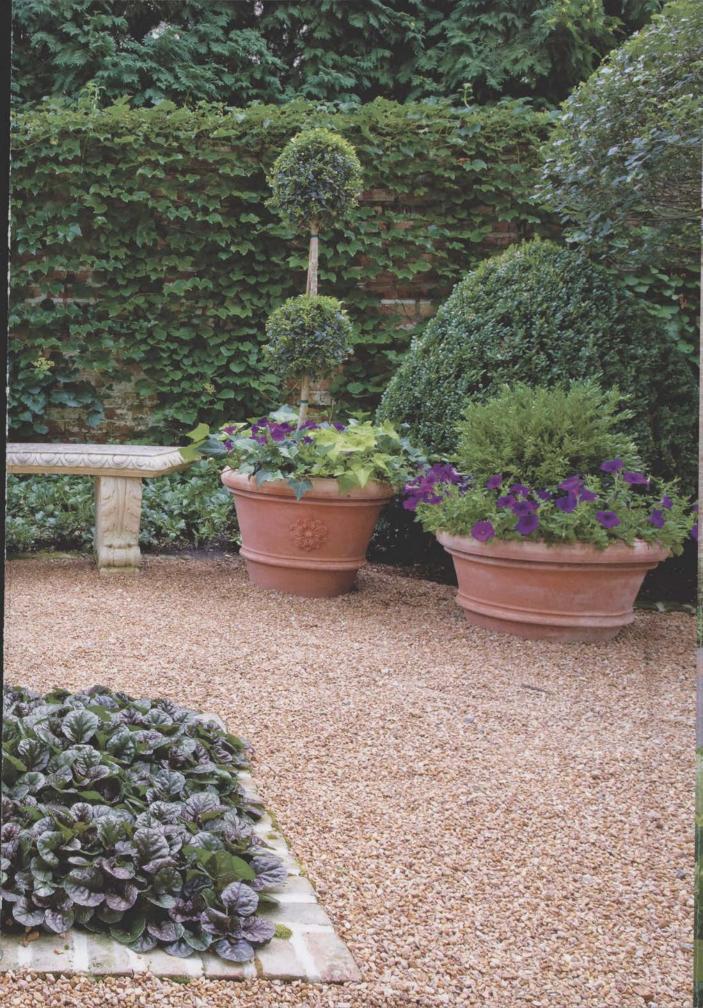
Trimtect is rain-fast once dry. Trimtect will typically dry within 20-30 min after application. Avoid applications if rain is imminent.

Spray-to-Drip on leaves, green twigs, & shoots.



Scientific Advancements

ce.com = treecarescience.com







MAY 17-19, 2017 INDIANA CONVENTION CENTER INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

A comprehensive conference that brings manufacturers, suppliers and ice and management professionals together for $2\frac{1}{2}$ days of high-quality education, elite networking and a trade show.

- Earn or renew your industry-leading ASCA-C certification.
- Focus on the modern principles of successful snow and ice management – including managing risk, reducing insurance rates and reducing bogus slip-and-fall claims.
- · Engage in peer-to-peer discussions on real-world business issues.
- Discover cutting-edge technology and solutions from industry-leading BUSINESSES in our expo hall.
- Learn how the ANSI Accredited standards are changing the industry...for the better!

EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!

Register today for the best rates: www.snowandiceshow.com

Booth space is going fast!

Contact Gage Roberts at 800-456-0707 to secure your spot at **Snow and Ice 2017**

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:







TROUBLE CLOSING

One landscaping company's sales skyrocketed with special financing. C





N JANUARY 2016, LAWN & LANDSCAPE found that only 1 in 10 landscape companies offered financing to their customers.¹

What 90% of these companies don't know is what giving clients time to pay for their outdoor improvements can do for business. That's exactly what one landscape company learned when it offered its customers financing for the first time.

Before 2013, this landscape business faced common revenue struggles many still face today: customers scaling back, stalling out, delaying, or cancelling jobs because of cost.

THEIR SOLUTION?

Simple. For the first time, they decided to offer their customers special financing through the Wells Fargo Outdoor Solutions consumer finance program.

In the first year, their sales soared by 600%. After such phenomenal results, they continued offering special financing a second year. What happened? Their already higher sales rose again, this time doubling from their record levels in 2014.²

HERE'S HOW THEY DID IT

The first question companies considering a consumer finance program often ask is, "What will it cost me?"

That's an important question. Look how this landscape company approached it.

Weigh the cost vs. the benefits. This business quickly learned the higher-ticket projects and overall sales the finance program generated far outweighed their cost to offer it.

For example, offering one popular plan that gives customers 12 months to pay for an \$8,000 Job could cost a business under \$400 — less than five percent of the sale.

MORE LEARNINGS

Besides costing their company a lot less than they thought, this company also learned these important lessons:

- New homebuyers make excellent prospects.
 Often they account for improving the inside of the house with their home loan, but forget about the outside.
- Special rate financing options attract customers. A lot of people expect monthly payment options for larger expenses, and land-



How much the company's sales rose in the first year

scaping is no exception.

- Offer financing early. Regularly talking about financing with all customers during initial meetings breaks down sales barriers.
- Consider your cost. Weigh the cost to offer a financing program, and offer the plans that make financial sense for your business.

THEIR GO-FORWARD STRATEGY

From their successful experience, this landscape company implemented an important strategy moving forward.

- They continued offering financing through the Wells Fargo Outdoor Solutions program.
- · They promoted it.
- They turned the benefits of financing into selling points. For instance:
 - No interest if paid in full (deferred interest), no interest, and reduced rate financing options offer several ways for customers to take advantage of special terms.
 - Purchase power gives customers a way to pay for the project they really want.
 - Budget flexibility with convenient monthly payments.
 - A short application and fast credit decisions take only minutes to apply.
 - Immediate access to credit (if approved) keeps projects moving forward quickly.
 - Revolving line of credit gives cardholders a convenient way to pay for future projects.

LEARN MORE. ENROLL TODAY!

Join this company's success in offering the Outdoor Solutions credit card program. To learn more or enroll online, visit **wellsfargo.com/outdoorsolutions** or call 1-866-840-9445, Monday – Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Central Time.

Lawn & Landscape magazine financing survey, January 2016

Results may vary among companies.







PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT for lawn care operators can be a very dry subject. While it may not be exciting, it is essential for separating you from the innate hazards of your job. In this article, I'd like to explore some features and benefits that the proper PPE can have for you.

While you will seldom encounter pesticide label requirements to wear head protection, you should still protect yourself from the damaging effects of the sun. The American Cancer Society estimates that one person in 40 will develop skin cancer sometime in their life. It is the most common cancer, even more so if you work outdoors. Simply wearing a hat, especially one that has a large brim like a Panama hat, will help protect your head from the sun's rays.

If you've ever had the misfortune of having a prill of fertilizer land in your eye, you know full well how important a good set of safety glasses can be. The most commonly used broadleaf herbicide will cause permanent



BOB MANN is the corporate agronomist for Lawn Dawg.

damage if it comes in contact with your eyes, but if I were to name the piece of PPE that is ignored most often, eye protection would top it. This may be because when people think of eye protection they immediately think of the oversized plastic glasses they used in high school chemistry lab. A quick catalog search of suppliers will give you a number of very comfortable and stylish glasses that will stay put on your face and not fog in inclement weather.

Many pesticide labels require

that you wear both long-sleeved shirts and long pants when mixing, loading and applying. Unfortunately, there is no exception on the label saying you can ignore this requirement when it's hot and humid outside. This is one of those instances in which using a uniform service makes sense. They can provide lightweight fabrics specifically designed for use outdoors in the summertime and keep them clean as well.

Your hands are the parts of your body that are in constant contact with whatever pesticide you are

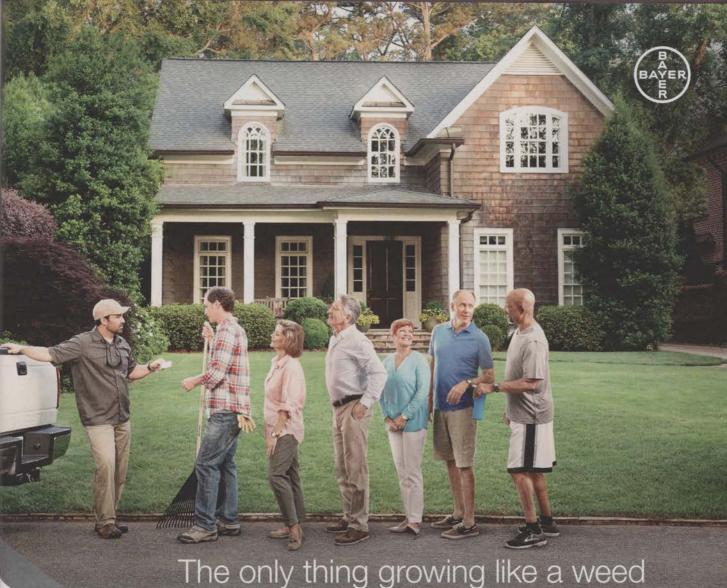
handling. However, you just can't wear any kind of gloves that you want. Most labels will specify an unlined glove made of a product called nitrile. A common mistake is to use a box of disposable nitrile mechanic's gloves. The problem with this is that the nitrile is too thin to properly protect your hands. Plus, they tend to rip very easily. The proper choice is to use a full gauntlet nitrile glove that is at least 14-mils thick. For more specific information, consult the label of the specific product you are applying.

A lawn specialist who is servicing a residential route can walk between 18 and 20 miles in a day. The standard issue PPE footwear in lawn care is the 14-inch rubber slip-on boot. I can think of nothing worse to put on your feet. First, these boots were never designed for walking long distances and do not have the proper support your foot needs. Second, the fact that they are 14 inches high means that the top of the boot will be constantly coming into contact with your shin and calf, causing very uncomfortable abrasions.

Since lawn specialists walk such long distances, weight is the enemy. A steel toe or shank is not necessary and should be avoided. As for me, after trying every possible kind of footwear imaginable, I finally settled on a waterproof but breathable mid-weight hiking boot that supports my feet combined with a rubber overshoe to keep pesticides out.

The bottom line in choosing what PPE you buy should be picking out products that you will actually use on a daily basis. PPE that you leave in the truck can't do a good job of protecting you. L&L

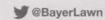
A COMMON MISTAKE IS TO USE A BOX OF DISPOSABLE NITRILE MECHANICS GLOVES."



The only thing growing like a weed is your bottom line.



When you make a living in lawn care, you're used to things growing. Some of those things are good, some of them bad. With the unparalleled weed control and residual benefit of Specticle, weeds may have a tough time growing, but your business won't. To help you solve your toughest weed challenges, Bayer offers a flexible array of Specticle solutions. Business growth not only means fewer callbacks but more referrals. So next time you buy Specticle, buy more business cards, too, You'll need them.



MAINTENANCE

ON YOUR FEET

When it comes to stand-on mowers, here are a few options to fill your trailers.



DIXIE CHOPPER STRYKER

The pitch: The Stryker standon gives operators the option to flip up the operator platform to use as a conventional walkbehind.

- High horsepower and low fuel consumption with the new 25.5-hp Kawasaki FX EFI engine.
- 7-gauge steel and 14-gauge stainless steel for commercial mowing.

For more information: Dixiechopper.com



GRAVELY PRO-STANCE

The pitch: The Pro-Stance is a hybrid that can be converted from a stand-on mower to a walk-behind by flipping up the suspension platform.

- Improved operator presence controls with larger diameter handles and forward/backward index bars
- Large operator pad, foot pedal deck lift and foot platform help reduce fatigue for the operator.

For more information: Gravely.com



WRIGHT STANDER ZK

To see stand-on mowers from Exmark and Jacobsen, search "On your feet" on Lawnandlandscape.com.

The pitch: The Stander ZK mower features reinforced wheelie wheels and elastomer bumpers for ride control and a mowing speed of up to 12.5 mph.

- Comes with the option of a large 52-, 61- or 72-inch Aero-Core deck.
- The deck has air-tapered surfaces that eliminate clumping, and airflow provides a uniform cut.

For more information: Wrightmfg.com

IS THE CLOCK TICKING ON YOUR ROOT INTRUSION PROTECTION?

The ONLY Root Intrusion Protection
Designed to Last as Long as Your Dripline

The latest addition to the best-selling line of landscape dripline, Netafim's Techline® HCVXR is the **ONLY** landscape dripline that infuses Cupron® Copper Oxide directly into the mold of each emitter to provide a long-lasting root barrier for subsurface drip irrigation systems that won't wash away after years of use.

- Infused Cupron® Copper Oxide Combined with Netafim's Physical Root Barrier Properties Provide Long Lasting Protection Against Roots Throughout the Life of the Dripline
- High Check Valve in Each Emitter for Uniform Distribution on Sloped Landscapes
- . Built-in Anti-Siphon Feature Protects Against Debris
- Four New Emitter Flow Rates
- . Laser Etching on the Dripline for Easy Identification





15 YEAR WARRANTY

The Landscape Industry's Longest Root Intrusion Warranty





TAKE THE 60-DAY CHALLENGE

TRY THE PERMAGREEN ON YOUR TOUGHEST PROPERTIES FOR 60 DAYS. IF YOU DON'T LOVE IT, WE'LL BUY IT BACK!

CALL FOR DEALER LOCATIONS & REGISTER TO WIN A TRIUMPH 800.346.2001 permagreen.com



Fuel the dream

Fleetmatics is proud to sponsor the Lawn & Landscape Turnaround Tour

WE UNDERSTAND THE DREAM.

We know what it means to throw all your passion, energy, anxiety and hope into building a profitable, growing business – to stretch every day and every dollar in the pursuit of sustainability. We also understand the value of information to drive the insights that enable profitable growth. That's why Fleetmatics has always been uniquely focused on the needs of small service businesses.

Since our founding, our focus has been on developing solutions that put the power of business

visibility and insight into the hands of small business owners who depend on mobile workers for their success. Because we know that when your trucks roll out in the morning you want the peace of mind that comes from knowing your workers are where they're supposed to be, that they're driving safely and that they're representing your business in its best light.

We know watching your fuel costs and keeping your vehicles up and running can have a major impact on your profitability. We know you have better things to do than stare at spreadsheets to understand what's going on in the field and in your checking account — that the services you use have to give you the information you need at a glance.

We know small improvements can have big impacts.

That's why we're excited to partner with Lawn & Land-



Todd EWING

scape on a program as powerful and potentially transformational as The Turnaround Tour. We're thrilled to ride along as Ed and Bill work with these small businesses to uncover their hidden potential and help them discover the tools and systems to get them from where they are to where they dream to be.

Most of all, we're proud of these business owners for their willingness to share their stories. It takes real courage to ask for help and open your business to the gaze of others. But courage is how these busi-

nesses got started in the first place. Stories are powerful things, and those who are willing to share their stories have as much to gain as those who read and learn from those stories.

So thank you Lawn & Landscape. Thank you Harvest Group. Thank you Freedom Lawn and Landscapes, Wade's Lawn Service and Vineland Landscaping for giving Fleetmatics the opportunity to support the sharing of these great stories. We're looking forward to great things.

Let's all enjoy the ride!

Todd Ewing

Director of Product Marketing Fleetmatics, A Verizon Company

To learn about Fleetmatics' Fleet Monitoring and Field Service Management solutions, visit Fleetmatics.com

Sponsored by





CONTROL COSTS. MANAGE SAFETY. GET MORE DONE.

Your people and your vehicles are your two most important assets. With Fleetmatics REVEAL, you'll know how your drivers are performing, where your vehicles are and if your fleet is safe.

GPS FLEET MANAGEMENT FOR YOUR BUSINESS CAN HELP YOU IMPROVE:



SAFETY

Monitor speeding, harsh braking and unauthorized vehicle use from your desk or mobile device.



PRODUCTIVITY

Dispatch more efficiently and improve customer service with help of near real-time vehicle locations.



ELD COMPLIANCE

Drivers log into the Fleetmatics LogBook app and start driving. Hours of service are tracked quickly and accurately.

CALL NOW TO SET UP YOUR FREE DEMO | 866.844.2235

WWW.FLEETMATICS.COM

©2017 Fleetmatics. All rights reserved.

JEREMY & HEATHER DIRKSEN This husband-andwife feam run a \$500,000 lawn care company. They are growing and working very hard, but don't know how to pay themselves and are not seeing a financial return on their sweat equity. wife team run a 60 FEBRUARY 2017 LAWNANDLANDSCAPE.COM



Flight path

An Oklahoma couple wants to take their company to the next level.

JEREMY DIRKSEN STARTED FREEDOM LAWN CARE

while he was in high school and ran it for 13 years, providing lawn maintenance. Dirksen did everything at the company: mowing, billing, selling new work. But he couldn't fathom any type of growth since he was struggling to meet his current demand and wasn't sure how he could service any more accounts.

Jeremy and Heather met at an airfield in 2013 (she was working as general manager and he was helping a friend wrench on his jet), and married two years later. With Heather's landscaping background and business acumen, they bought a small lawn care company for its equipment and customer list in late 2015. They added a few commercial accounts and brought on an additional crew, added irrigation system maintenance and brought landscape installation work in house. Now Freedom Lawn and Landscapes, with Heather as CEO and Jeremy as director of operations, has four seasonal employees (including Jeremy's brother, Ryan, on irrigation repairs) and one part-timer (Jeremy's mother, Cherry, who works in the office once a week).

In 2016, the full-service company posted revenue of \$498,632, performing mostly residential lawn care and landscape maintenance, and has been steadily growing, but has struggled with cash flow and managing overtime.

ABOUT THE TURNAROUND TOUR



Bill Arman and Ed Laflamme

WE HAD A TREMENDOUS RESPONSE TO OUR INAUGURAL TURNAROUND TOUR PROGRAM.

Nearly 50 companies from across the country applied, and all of them had a great story. It was difficult to choose just three. A panel of experts sorted through all the applications and conducted several rounds of interviews to choose the top three finalists for the program. The teams at Vineland, Wade's and Freedom will receive a year's worth of consulting, including on-site visits, phone calls and a customized plan for operations, growth and profitability from the Harvest Group.

Head Harvesters Bill Arman and Ed Laflamme spent the winter visiting with each of the companies and have identified key areas to improve immediately, and what they can work on throughout 2017. It's my hope that you see yourself in part of their story – and can use some of their same solutions to their problems. So, stay tuned: We'll be covering their progress throughout the year here in print, online and on social media.

- Chuck Bowen



As they wrote in their Turnaround Tour application: "Although all of this sounds like a great success story, (we) are finding it difficult at times to pay (ourselves) To cut costs and improve their bottom line, (we) have been vigilant about preventing overtime and began doing a larger portion of the field work on (our) own. It has come to the point where (we) are considering getting second jobs on the weekend. (We) know that just working harder is not the answer. (We've) done that.

"(We) need your help to grow successfully and to strategically plan what's next. (We) feel like (we) have exhausted (our) ideas

FREEDOM LAWN AND LANDSCAPES

MANAGEMENT TEAM: Heather Dirksen, CEO; Jeremy Dirksen, director of operations

LOCATION: Yukon, Oklahoma 2016 REVENUE: \$498,632

SERVICE MIX: Maintenance, design/build,

lawn care, irrigation

CUSTOMER MIX: Residential 73 percent, commercial 20 percent, HOA 7 percent

EMPLOYEES: 2 full-time, 4 seasonal, 1 part-time

and (we) need your expertise.

"(We) are humble people and will do what (we) are ordered to do – both veterans of the armed service ... that type of environment is where (we) function best. (We) know what it's like to make sacrifices for the greater good and (we) give everything they do their all."

THEIR GOALS FOR 2016:

In their application for the Turnaround Tour, Heather and Jeremy said they wanted to double their 2015 gross revenue (\$336,000) in the next year, manage their cash flow better and ultimately do more selling and less production work in the field. After meeting with Arman and Laflamme, issues immediately became clear.

"We were just operating day to day, and not looking forward too much. Working with Bill and Ed, you can take a step back and look at everything. They tell you step by step, 'This is what needs to be done, but this is most important,'" Heather says.



GREENWORKS



COMMERCIAL GRADE POMMERCIAL GRADE

GL 250

...from a BATTERY









The Most Powerful Cordless Commercial Tools on the Market

Find out more at www.greenworkscommercial.com





"(We want) systems in place for everything we do, cleaning up the operations and working as a more lean company than what we were. We've already started making so much headway."

Some of that headway includes a decision to get rid of half a dozen residential accounts and two large commercial accounts that aren't profitable. It will mean a loss of about \$100,000, but help them realize a higher gross profit margin in the coming years.

HARVESTER ASSESSMENT:

Arman and Laflamme recommend first an investment in equipment, specifically trucks, so

"IT HAS COME TO THE POINT WHERE WE ARE CONSIDERING GETTING SECOND JOBS ON THE WEEKEND. WE KNOW THAT JUST WORKING HARDER IS NOT THE ANSWER."

Heather Dirksen, CEO

the Dirksens can look as good as the jobs they're doing.

"They're afraid to spend money because they're not making money," Laflamme says. "I get that, but then what happens is it gets to a point ... and starts to cost more than if you buy new stuff. We're encouraging them to fix the stuff that needs to be fixed – get the trucks painted and get them consistent. Maybe invest in one truck. You have to look good, you know?"

Arman says Freedom needs to reevaluate its margins on each job individually and improve its estimating so it only works on profitable accounts.

"The margins aren't enough to sustain a business. They had three or four jobs that were upside down," he says. "If we don't have enough gross margin we can't even feed the bear."

As Freedom eliminates unprofitable work, Arman and Laflamme both recommend more commercial work to balance out the business, but they disagree on how far to take it.

"Bill is pretty much a 90 percent commercial guy, and I'm more a 75 percent commercial guy, but they've been doing mainly residential and feel comfortable there," Laflamme says. "Commercial is out of their comfort zone. My idea is: Let's go after both and see what happens. It won't hurt."



THIS IS EXMARK INNOVATION...

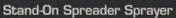


TAKING A 'STAND' ON PERFORMANCE AND PROFITABILITY.

Committed to providing landscape professionals with an array of products that increase their service offerings and revenue opportunities, Exmark has delivered, yet again—this time with the industry's most innovative, versatile, stabile and maneuverable Stand-On Spreader-Sprayer and Aerator. Outfitted with intuitive controls and packed with a laundry list of leading-edge technologies, both will elevate customer satisfaction ... And your bottom line!

Stop in to one of our 1,500+ servicing dealers today to experience, first-hand, why Exmark turf management products are trusted by those whose livelihoods depend on delivering additional customer solutions once the perfect cut's been made.



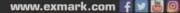




30" Stand-On Aerator

Save 15% or more on our Fleet Purchase Program with minimum purchase requirement!*

*See your Exmark Dealer for complete program details.







IN THE LATE 1990S, IRA WAS WORKING AS A MACHINIST,

mowing lawns for friends and neighbors on nights and weekends. His wife, Deborah, was a cosmetologist. They ran the side business for about six years until it grew to a point where they had to make it their full-time focus. In September of 2004, Ira gave a month's notice to his boss, but his boss tried to convince him to wait until the next summer.

"We prayed about it. Ira told his boss, 'I have a window of opportunity, and if I miss that window it may close and never open again,'" Deborah says. "He had more faith than I did."

That window has stayed open for the Wades. They now have one full-time and eight part-time employees, working mostly maintenance accounts and doing a little plant installation work. Last year, the company brought in about \$335,000 – 20 percent from HOAs, 40 percent from commercial clients and 40 percent from residential accounts. Their son, Darris, works as operations manager, and their daughter, D'Anna, works remotely from Texas as a business manager.

Ira and Debora referenced their children and community in their application, writing about their efforts to grow the company but not always knowing the right path.

"Having a business is a lot like rearing a child. As parents, we are blessed with children, and because we love them, we pour our all into them. We teach them everything we know, give them our best efforts and try to do right by them at all costs. We marvel at their aptitudes and great potential; we see the best in them.

"There comes a time as parents that we realize our knowledge is not sufficient to support the growth and great potential of our child, so we naturally enlist the help of outsiders – schools, churches, civic organizations and more. We know it is absolutely critical that our child gets the information he or she needs to be successful,



After 20 years in business, the Wades want reliable systems and opportunity for their son.



even though we may not know exactly what that information is," they wrote.

"We are at a crucial moment in our business right now. We have poured our all into

it and have done everything we know to do. From participating in conferences and workshops to hiring professional finance personnel, we've done the things we know to do to make the business better. Still, we feel lost, stagnant and at times very unclear about our next steps. We know there is more work to do, more to learn and more to understand in order to truly get our business to the next level, but we don't know what. We need an outsider – someone with industry experience and business management savvy to take a hard look at our business and tell us what we need to do to improve."

Later, on the phone, Deborah summed up their situation as mostly frustrated with what they have compared to all the work they've done: "That was hard to write, because it's true but it's not true," she says. "God has been so good to us — all of our needs have been met. I feel like with all the hours we've put in, the work that we do, we should be further along than we are now."

THEIR GOALS FOR 2016:

Ultimately, the Wades want to grow their business to the \$500,000 mark in the next year, and then to even greater heights in the years ahead, paying off debt and putting themselves and their company in a stronger financial position. They also want to imple-

WADE'S LAWN SERVICE

MANAGEMENT TEAM:

Ira and Deborah Wade, owners; Darris Wade, operations manager; D'Anna Wade, business manager; Irika Skeete, marketing manager

LOCATION:

Goodlettsville, Tennessee

2016 REVENUE: \$334,412

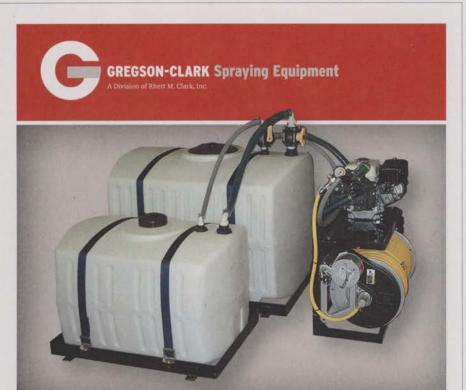
SERVICE MIX: Maintenance

and landscaping

customer MIX: 40 percent residential; 40 percent commercial; 20 percent HOA

EMPLOYEES:

1 full-time, 8 part-time



YOUR SEARCH FOR THE IDEAL SPRAY SYSTEM JUST GOT EASIER.

Let us design and build the ideal modular spray system for your business.



800-706-9530 sales@gregsonclark.com | gregsonclark.com



SAVE 60% ON OIL MAINTENANCE PER SEASON PER UNIT

Ferris® Commercial Mowers with the new Vanguard™ Oil Guard System raise the bar on how productive a landscape contractor can be on any given day. A first-of-its-kind solution for the commercial turf market. Ferris mowers with the Oil Guard system offer major productivity gains by allowing landscape contractors to operate their mower for **500** hours between oil changes.



Less time spent changing the oil and more time cutting!

The Vanguard™ Oil Guard System is available on these Ferris® mowers:



IS® 3200Z Vanguard™ BIG BLOCK™ Vanguard™ BIG BLOCK™ EFI



IS 2100Z Vanguard™ 810 EFI



Vanguard™ BIG BLOCK™ EFI Vanguard™ 810 EFI





Vanguard™ 810 EFI



Vanguard™ 810 EFI

Start Enhancing Your Productivity Today! Visit: Ferrismowers.com to locate a dealer near you.









SMART & SIMPLE

No Power? No Problem.



7XOA Series
Two, Four and Six
Station Battery
Operated Controllers



- · Simple programming
 - Waterproof (IP68)
- 4 Independent programs
- · Sensor & master valve connections
 - Up to 3 year battery life
 - 3 year warranty

Call 1.800.322.9146 today for a catalog, or visit www.digcorp.com/710A/LL







Head Harvester Bill Arman talks with Ira Wade, owner of Wade's Lawn Service in Goodlettsville, Tennessee, during a site visit this winter.

ment the necessary systems that would allow them to step back (Ira is 56 and Deborah is 53) so Darris, 29, can operate the company day to day.

"What we'd like to see happen, honestly, is to get things in place so much so that the company is basically running itself – my son coming in and being the person and Ira and I would like to step back and go into a semi-retirement," Deborah says.

HARVESTER ASSESSMENT:

Arman and Laflamme say the Wades actually have too much gross margin – more than 50 percent.

"They have so much gross margin it looks like they're overpricing the market and that's why they haven't been able to grow," Laflamme says. "They go high thinking they have to make it all on the one job."

Arman says a few more employees – and a more productive operation – could mean tremen"WE ARE AT A
CRUCIAL MOMENT
IN OUR BUSINESS.
WE FEEL LOST,
STAGNANT AND
VERY UNCLEAR
ABOUT OUR NEXT
STEPS. WE KNOW
THERE IS MORE
WORK TO DO, BUT
WE DON'T KNOW
WHAT."

Deborah Wade, owner

dous improvement in profits for the Wades.

"They haven't grown," he says.
"One more crew could achieve
48-50 percent gross margin, they'll
have a windfall profit like they've
never had before. Just add one
more crew on. Put three guys
to work with another truck and
equipment and let's go to town.
It's all about sales with those guys."

REDEFINE YOUR MOWING EXPERIENCE

with the new BlackHawk HP from Dixie Chopper





Suspension Seat - Full suspension for ultimate comfort



OCDC - Foot-operated discharge chute to control grass clippings



Parker® HT Series - Smooth change intervals



InCommand Console - Keyless ignition, SoftStart clutch engagement, and more

A mower built to give you an unparalleled mowing experience is coming to a Dixie Chopper dealer near you. Elevate your ride with the smoothest steering, intuitive controls, and a deep 7-gauge deck for heavy-duty mowing. See the new BlackHawk HP online or at your local Dixie Chopper dealer today.

dixiechopper.com | 765.246.7737







Young Chungry

Two New Jersey natives want to grow their start-up into the next Brickman.

WILL GRUCCIO AND MICHAEL D'ORAZIO STUMBLED into the

landscape industry by "complete dumb luck," Gruccio says. He was fresh out of an MBA program and D'Orazio was out of work. They needed something to bring in some cash while they looked for something better. Two years later, they still didn't have anything better to do, so in 2013 they formalized their operation and focused on making Vineland Landscaping a going concern.

Both men were born and raised in Vineland, a 60-square-mile town in southern New Jersey, and their local connections have been key to their growth.

"Growing up there, we know everyone," Gruccio says.

But those connections have also been a hurdle. Most of the companies and homeowners Gruccio and D'Orazio approached that first year already knew them, and also assumed they wouldn't stick with landscaping for long. Gruccio had an MBA and a job offer from Barclay's, and D'Orazio had started a career as a firefighter.

Manage Your Crews From Any Location.



See progress. Take action.

Use our app to track and manage your crews. Monitor their activities in the field for better budgeting and oversight, and nip overtime in the bud. All data is securely stored in our cloud-based software.

- · Leave the pain and hassle of paper time cards
- · Workers clock in and out on their own device
- · Get Photo ID verification & GPS tracking
- Real-time visibility on overtime and compliance
- · Easily transfer data to your accounting package



VINELAND LANDSCAPING

MANAGEMENT TEAM:

Will Gruccio, president; Michael D'Orazio, chief operating officer; Jordan Gartner, vice president

LOCATION: Vineland, New Jersey

2016 REVENUE: \$700,000

SERVICE MIX: Maintenance, construction,

landscaping, lawn care, irrigation

CUSTOMER MIX: 70 percent commercial,

30 percent residential

EMPLOYEES: 7 full-time, 3 part-time

"I want to be home with my family and friends. We both want to live in Vineland and raise our families in Vineland," Gruccio says.

THEIR GOALS FOR 2016:

Vineland's goals are to increase efficiency and profitability, specifically getting net profit closer to 10 percent. The company has grown rapidly in five years – \$700,000 in revenue in 2016, double what it posted in 2015 – but the duo struggles with cash flow and actually making profits.

Vineland operates out of a shop that Gruccio's family owns, which eliminates significant overhead and the management team takes very little in salary. He wants to structure the company so it can be high-performing on paper, and in real life.

"We'd grown pretty good, but still not making money. Artificially, we look like pretty much every other company, doing OK," Gruccio says. "We want to actually be looking good." "WE'D GROWN
PRETTY GOOD,
BUT STILL
NOT MAKING
ANY MONEY.
ARTIFICIALLY,
WE LOOK LIKE
PRETTY MUCH
EVERY OTHER
COMPANY, DOING
OK. WE WANT
TO ACTUALLY BE
DOING GOOD."

Will Gruccio, president

HARVESTER ASSESSMENT:

Arman and Laflamme love the connections Gruccio and D'Orazio have built – including with the Vineland mayor's office – but are concerned that the town is too rural and too spread out to have enough business to sustain a million-dollar



1.877.391.0475 www.exaktime.com/lal

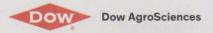


Up to 50 percent* of customers who call to complain about dandelions cancel their service. Protect their lawns, and your business, with Defendor® specialty herbicide. It works when nothing else does. Apply Defendor in early spring or late fall to stop dandelions, clover and other broadleaf weeds before they cost you a client. That way, the next time your phone rings, you'll be saying hello to more business. Learn more at www.FewerCallbacks.com.



*Jefferson Davis, 2012

*Trademark of The Dow Chemical Company (*Dow") or an affiliated company of Dow State restrictions on the sale and use of Defendor apply. Consult the label before purchase or use for full details. Always read and follow label directions. ©2015 Dow AgroSciences LLC T38-900-003-A (10/15) BR DATOTURF5061





At Nufarm, we know a better tomorrow takes more than quality solutions. That's why we're growing more than an innovative line of plant protection products. We're also growing communities, educational opportunities, and friendships.

Learn how we can help you grow better.

NUFARMINSIDER COM



Last Call

ONE CALL WEED CONTROL FOR COOL-SEASON TURF

Exclusively from Nufarm, Last Call™ knocks out more than 40 grassy and broadleaf weeds including difficult mid-tiller crabgrass.

OFFERING COMPLETE PLANT PROTECTION NUFARMINSIDER.COM

NUFARM.COM/US ©2016 Nufarm. Important: Always read and follow label instructions. Last Call[™] is a trademark of Nufarm.



Grow a better tomorrow.





The Harvesters' initial take on Vineland is that the leadership have made great connections in their market, but might have to expand their reach.

landscape company. "Will is a networking genius. The guy is over the top," Arman says. "He knows every person on Earth in a 20-mile radius."

Their immediate focus for Vineland will be improving gross margins, safety and sales.

"These guys are really smart, college-educated business guys; they just don't know what they don't know," Laflamme says. "But they're catching on real fast." L&L

"I WANT TO BE HOME WITH MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS. WE BOTH WANT TO LIVE IN VINELAND AND RAISE OUR FAMILIES IN VINELAND."

Will Gruccio, president



WHAT'S NEXT

Visit our website to see video of the Harvesters working with our winners, and learn more about how they're solving their problems.

ADD ZORO TO YOUR TOOLBOX

Ordering Ground Maintenance supplies shouldn't be **hard work**. You do enough of that already.

FROM

AA BATTERIES TO Z-CLIPS,

ZORO'S GOT YOU COVERED.

- & Helpful customer service
- Net 30 terms available**
- **S** Great everyday prices
- Trusted brands
- Easy ordering
- Tast delivery

*20% off your first order on \$50 minimum purchases. Maximum savings of \$2,000. Enter code above at checkout. Limit one (1) use per customer. May not be combined with any other promotions or discounts. Order minimum is required - excluding tax and shipping. Offer may not be applied to previous purchases. Promotion is non-transferable. Offer valid until May 10, 2017—expires 11:59 p.m. CT.

Some exclusions apply. Visit zoro.com/rules_restrictions for details.

**Standard credit terms are \$1,000 with 30 days to pay. Credit is subject to Zoro's credit policies as determined from time to time in its sole discretion. Zoro reserves the right to terminate this offer at any time at its sole discretion.

zoro.com



VISIT
zoro.com/LawnLand
▼ ▼ AND RECEIVE

20%
OFF
YOUR ORDER OF
\$50 OR MORE*

GADGET29

Enter code at checkout | One time use code. Offer valid until May 10, 2017 11:59 p.m. CT*



Shop now at



© 2016 Zoro, Inc.



INCOGNITOR

Your customers may not be able to see the water doing its job, but converting a traditional system to drip may result in more money in their pockets.

By Katie Tuttle

HE TOPIC OF WATER is a hot one, especially as communities expand restrictions and homeowners look for alternative ways to keep their yards looking refreshed.

If customers in your area are looking to replace sprinkler systems in their yards, it might be valuable to suggest a drip irrigation system. Unlike traditional systems that spray water above ground to keep plants and turf watered, drip line systems are inground, delivering water directly to the root system.

"You're going to end up using a lot less water," says Greg Martin, design and installation manager with Paradise Garden Center in Riverside, California. "You're cutting water bills in half, which is huge here in southern California." ABOVE: Contractors can place drip tube emitters where a plant is installed, which helps with water regulation.

For a round-up of drip irrigation products, turn to page 82.







Quote With Confidence:

Use Go iLawn

With Go iLawn, you'll really know your jobsites, so you'll have the confidence to quote your work aggressively. Your customers can see exactly what you're quoting them, and they'll have the confidence to choose you.



See the whole job



Visit more jobs in less time



Bid with facts, not guesses



Execute faster using maps



Sell better using images



Market yourself to the neighborhood

Try Go iLawn for Free today:

Visit www.GoiLawn.com/promo and use the code LL172

Martin says the conversion from an existing irrigation system to drip isn't complicated.

"Basically, what we do on an existing system is we put the valve or take the existing valve and cut into it on the downstream side and put in a filter and a regulator," he says.

He adds that if a customer is using potable water, the filter isn't entirely necessary. Its job is to make sure small particles or debris aren't clogging the emitter.

"Check periodically during the establishment period because you never know a dripper is clogged until the plant dies," he says. "You can't tell because it's all covered up, so be sure and use

a filter and a regulator and use quality drip material."

When putting in drip irrigation systems, landscapers can either use the existing lateral lines and just add new drip fittings and emitters, or they can adapt the drip tubing to run less like a grid.

"The inline drip tubing is good if you're planting all the same species and you're planting on a grid," says Martin. "So when you first plant it, it looks like a crop and then it grows in full."

However, Martin says 99 times out of 100, residential applications aren't that patterned.

Being able to put drip tube emitters wherever each plant is really helps with water regulation. That way, if you have a plant like an agave, which requires virtually no water, near a rosebush, which requires four times the water, you can regulate that.

"With the inline emitters, you can't regulate how much is coming out of that emitter or the other emitter," Martin says. "What I can do with the rose bush is put 2-gallon emitters so it's getting 4 gallons an hour, where the agave is getting 1 gallon an hour."

He says you're able to establish based on the plant growth, how much water each will need, and the emitters can be pulled out and changed if the plant is getting too much or not enough water. **DILEMMAS.** One of the biggest dilemmas with drip irrigation is trying to make the homeowner understand how it works.

"It's a very simple system to put in," says Don Holder, a certified irrigation auditor with ConServ in Menifee, California. He says the materials are inexpensive compared to the labor cost, but homeowners are still wary. "A lot of people are just scared of it because they're used to seeing spray heads and water spraying their plants," he says.

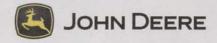
Martin says there's virtually no evaporation with drip because the water is applied directly to the plant and below the soil.

(continued on page 82)





Building your snow removal business together. As long as Old Man Winter cooperates, there is no offseason for landscapers. But you'll need the right snow removal equipment — like the E-Series Skid Steers and Compact Track Loaders from John Deere. Thanks to input from all-season pros like you, they accommodate a wide range of snow removal attachments, including blades, blowers, pushers, brooms and buckets. And with our universal Quik-Tatch™ system, your machine can go from blade to broom in no time. Our forecast calls for accumulating revenue. To learn more, see your dealer or visit our website.



JohnDeere.com/Eskid



HUNTER ECO-MAT

The pitch: Eco-Mat is a subsurface irrigation product made with fleece-covered professional landscape dripline and attached to a capillary mat. This special fleeced mat moves water through any type of soil and promotes longer root growth and healthier plants.

For more information:

Hunterindustries.com



NETAFIM TECHLINE HCVXR

The pitch: Techline HCVXR landscape dripline infuses Cupron copper oxide directly into the mold of each emitter to provide a root barrier for subsurface drip irrigation systems. The root intrusion protection won't wash off, wear off or leach out of the emitter.

For more information: Netafimusa.com



RAIN BIRD TLF SERIES TWIST LOCK FITTINGS

The pitch: Rain Bird's TLF Series Twist Lock Fittings connect lengths of dripline or drip tubing with a tight, leak-free seal. Ribbed construction offers greater leverage when gripping and twisting the fittings into place.

For more information: Rainbird.com



TORO DL2000 Subsurface Dripline

The pitch: With the DL2000, irrigation takes place at or below grade so there is minimal water loss due to mist, evaporation, run-off or wind. Toro's ROOTGUARD technology creates a root barrier around each emitter outlet.

For more information: Toro.com



LAWN AND LANDSCAPE COMPANIES HAVE GENERATED OVER

In Sales From CLC LABS SOIL

LET US SHOW YOU HOW!

TESTING!

Call 614/888-1663 Today for your Soil Testing & Marketing Information

CLC LABS®

325 Venture Drive Westerville, OH 43081 614 888-1663 FAX 614 888-1330

Exclusive laboratory services for the Turf & Ornamental Professional.

However you want to access Lawn & Landscape, WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED.



LAWNANDLANDSCAPE.COM

Lawn&Landscape

INCOGNITO IRRIGATION

(continued from page 80)

"The surface of the ground may seem a little

dry, but once you dig to the plant's root ball, there's moisture there," he says.

Because of this, a lot of homeowners end up overwatering and killing the plants, he says. "They're used to putting down a pretty good application of water," Martin says. "It's more of an adjustment thing to get used to only watering twice instead of five times a week."

Another difference is that even though you turn the system on fewer times during the week, you have to leave the drippers on longer because the water is dripping very slowly.

"It may take 30 minutes twice a week or 30 minutes three times a week, but, at the same time, you're using less water," Martin says.

Something else to keep in mind is making sure your customers are thorough when they decide to make the conversion.

"When they decide they're going to convert, they shut the water to their grass to let it die out," Martin says. "They think it's dead but it's not."

He says when this happens, the grass, especially Bermuda, goes into a dormant state. When you go in and cut the turf out to put in the irrigation and replace it, the root systems remain.

"Then the next spring, here comes the Bermuda all back in their planted space," Martin says.

He says for a proper conversion with no interference from the previous landscape, you need to spray the grass with a glyphosatebased chemical.

"It's super important to do a proper weed and turf abatement before they remove the old sod," he says.

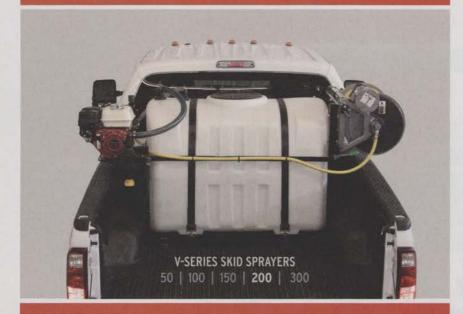
The last advice both Martin and Holder have is to invest in quality material for the new irrigation system.

"Quality drip material is important," Martin says. "Whatever you put into something, that's what you're going to get out. Use quality plant material, quality drip line, a smart controller. Stuff like that."

Holder says both the contractor and the homeowner should do their research prior to the installation of drip irrigation systems.

"There's all kinds of great information on YouTube on drip irrigation with different manufacturers," he says. "They make very simple products that are easy to understand. If they follow just those simple guidelines, it's a very easy system to put in." L&L





HEALTHY GROWTH

(For lawns, trees... and your business)



- Balanced space-saving designs
- Expandable with modular add-on tanks
- Many options and accessories available

800-706-9530 sales@gregsonclark.com | gregsonclark.com

PROS KNOW

Productivity and profits go hand in hand, and Takeuchi's all-new TL10V2 vertical lift track loader delivers both. A fully redesigned operator's station gives you a comfortable spot to get the job done — as does the outstanding operating capacity and load and carrying capabilities. Add in the unmatched responsiveness and quiet track design, and you've got the ideal combination of power and performance. Learn more at takeuchi-us.com.

____ TL10V2 ____ Vertical Lift Compact Track Loader



Takeuchi Fleet Management (TFM)* is a remote monitoring system that keeps track of location, hours, alerts and more to help you prevent costly repair calls, better manage your fleet and lower your overall operating costs.

*Available on most models.

Those in the know, know Takeuchi

OUT OF THE SNOW AS WE HEAD INTO SPRING, HERE ARE SOME PRE-EMERGENTS TO CONSIDER FOR YOUR LAWN CARE ARSENAL.

CIVITAS WEEDFREE BRAND CONCENTRATE

The pitch: Intelligro brings you CIVITAS WEEDfree BRAND Concentrate, which is specially formulated to kill more than 60 listed broadleaf weeds.

- . The formula shows visible injury on weeds within 12 hours.
- The microtechnology enables the product to penetrate into weeds with less active ingredients required to kill weeds.
- · Produces a white emulsion when sprayed that identifies treated areas, reducing over-use and product waste.

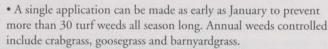
For more information: Civitaslawn.com



SYNGENTA BARRICADE

The pitch: Barricade herbicide from Syngenta controls summer annuals when applied as a preemergent in the spring.

- · If overseeding in the spring, Tenacity herbicide may be applied at the time of seeding.
- · Even after heavy rain or snow, Barricade stays in the weed germination zone and will not break down.



For more information: GreenTrust365.com



LEBANON PROSCAPE 22-0-6 40% MESA .15 DIMENSION

The pitch: ProScape 22-0-6 40% MESA .15 Dimension is a combination of a selective herbicide, which provides control of listed annual grasses and broadleaf weeds, and Lebanon's proprietary controlled-release nitrogen source MESA.

- · Unlike coated nitrogen technologies, MESA does not lose its slow-release properties when cracked, chipped or crushed.
- · It is a combination fertilizer and weed control.

For more information: Lebanonturf.com



NUFARM SUREGUARD SC

The pitch: SureGuard SC Herbicide delivers long-lasting residual control of grass and broadleaf weeds.

- · It's available in two convenient formulas - liquid and dry Water Dispersible Granule.
- It offers utility for landscape ornamental bed use, including the broad spectrum control of more than 30 weed species and tolerance to established landscape ornamentals.
- · SureGuard SC is also labeled for use in dormant warm season turf, including Bermudagrass.

For more information: Nufarm.com



PBI-GORDON BARRIER

The pitch: Barrier delivers season-long pre-emergent control of listed annual and perennial weeds.

- · Activated with water, it attaches to soil organic matter and releases the active ingredient.
- · It creates a "vapor barrier" that slowly kills existing shallow-rooted weeds and grasses, and prevents new growth.
- · Formulated for use in established landscape and non-crop settings such as hospitals, sport facilities, cemeteries, apartment complexes and other institutional settings.

For more information: Gordonsprofessional.com

CHEMICAL COCKTAILS

WE ASKED A COUPLE OF LCOS FOR MIXTURES THEY USE ON TURF.

Jack Layton, owner of Layton Lawncare in Wilmington, Delaware

I use a methylated seed oil that is required in the mix when used for certain grassy and broadleaf weed control products. I mix it with Pylex and Battleship III.

I have been using this for about the last four years. Prior to that, I was using a standard 80/20 non-ionic surfactant.

Brian Pabst, operations manager at American Turf and Tree Care in Greeley, Colorado

We mix Vista XRT with 2.4-D. I use this mix exclusively for kochia and Russian thistle control.

This is a great cocktail to use for kochia as we deal with the ALS resistant bio-type here.

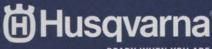


You've got a job to do and Husqvarna has everything you need to do it safely and comfortably. Our extensive range of protective clothing and accessories offers the latest innovations in design and materials, while providing the level of safety and comfort you need to get the job done.



For a complete selection of Husqvarna safety equipment and accessories, see your local Husqvarna dealer.

husqvarna.com



READY WHEN YOU ARE



DIGITAL DIVE

Eliminate tedious paperwork and mobilize your staff with labor management software. By Catherine Meany

HEN ALEX FRANSEN WAS READY TO START
HIS OWN BUSINESS, he knew one of the first things
he would do was set up a digital labor management system to handle all of his administrative tasks. A little over
two years later, the staff at Fransen Group in Louisville, Kentucky, is still
learning about all of the things Service Autopilot software can accomplish.

"It handles everything from scheduling to proposals to routing to accounting," Fransen says. "One hundred percent, it has been one of the best things we've done. We pay \$95 a month for a cloud-based software we can log into from anywhere. It is probably one of the best investments I've ever made."

The moment crews pull up to a job, the software automatically clocks employees in based on a pre-programmed geo-location. Their phone or tablet will prompt them to check in and provide pertinent notes and information for that job, and will clock users out when they leave, Fransen says.



Get the complete mobile lawn care business solution that you'll never outgrow.

Agile, automated, intuitive mobile software and growth solutions from Real Green Systems – the single source to efficiently schedule, increase and manage

your fleet, your staff, your productivity, your customers, your marketing, your revenue.



Grow Revenue • Optimize Efficiencies • Evolve and Scale

For a no obligation demo, visit:

RealGreen.com/MobileGrow

(877) 252-9929





TECHNOLOGY



Beyond basic timekeeping, labor management software can also gather and analyze data from the information it tracks, which may allow managers to spot cost-saving opportunities. At C. Caramanico & Sons in Pennsylvania, mJobTime software not only tracks field personnel hours, but it breaks down their specific tasks such as planting trees, mowing or seasonal cleanup, says President John Caramanico, Jr.

"We can track where our crews are being efficient and where we have some lack of efficiencies so we can ultimately adjust our bidding to those time estimates," Caramanico says. "We may find that we can plant trees quicker than what we estimated, but planting ground cover is taking longer, so we adjust. It has been particularly helpful in maintenance when it's repeat job functions that they are doing year after year."

The mJobTime software replaced the paper timesheets that Caramanico's foreman had to fill out from memory at the end of the day. Now, employees are paid to the minute versus the quarter hour, and the time cards are more accurate because the hours are being entered immediately, Caramanico says.

FILE FROM THE FIELD. Some labor management programs also allow companies to customize and build forms that managers can fill out from their phones.

That's how Clean Scapes, headquartered in Austin, Texas, uses Laserfiche software to

"People get stuck in their ways, and anything to change the processes that they have done for years is going to alienate and frustrate some people," he says. "Know that you will have to fight those battles, but it will be worth it in the end."

Travis Dyer, Clean Scapes

help its employees spend less time in the office filling out paperwork and more time out at their properties. At a job site, managers can complete purchase orders, process credit cards or even snap a photo of their Home Depot receipt to submit for filing, says Clean Scapes Information Technology and Special Projects Manager Travis Dyer.

"We saw Laserfiche as an opportunity to help our managers work better out in the field," Dyer says.

"There is a forms wizard where you can easily create forms and map things out to where people can fill out a relatively complex form on their phone or tablet, and when they submit those forms they go through a



workflow to get approved or alert people."

Any information submitted through these forms can be exported out of Laserfiche and into Clean Scape's accounting software. Additionally, whenever documents such as invoices are scanned in, Laserfiche will use optical character recognition on those documents to read all of the text, fill out most of the metadata and queue it up to be processed. This eliminates a lot of hand-entry and paper filing.

"All of our forms are highly customized and built from scratch, but Laserfiche does have a library of pre-built forms that are pretty standard across different industries," Dyer says.

"You can do very simple submission forms to just stop using paper and start keeping things electronically, or you can have very robust forms that go through many people and stages of approval."

MAKING THE INTRODUCTION. While the end application may be easy to use, the implementation of new software can prove challenging for many companies. Fransen found himself doing tutorials and drilling himself for hours every day during his off-season to try to get Service Autopilot up and running.

"If you're trying to administer this in the middle of the season with the full board running, you're going to have a hard time," Fransen says. "It is way too much information to digest. That's why I started from the beginning so everyone is familiar with it and we can all learn together and be more successful.

And it has been. It is a process that you have to devote the time to. If you don't, you're just spinning your wheels."

Dyer also came to realize that not everyone will be excited to change because of new technology. Dyer recommends being strategic when changing the forms and choosing which departments are changing at what time.

"People get stuck in their ways, and anything to change the processes that they have done for years is going to alienate and frustrate some people," he says. "Know that you will have to fight those battles, but it will be worth it in the end."

Some contractors may find that they need to overhaul their old processes and workflows because there may not be an even translation for them in the new software.

When making those changes, Dyer has learned the hard way the importance of having an approval process from all parties involved.

While he tries to think through the forms in a simple, linear fashion, feedback about the user experience has more than once required him to rework a process.

"We thought the implementation would go a lot quicker and we would be able to use a lot more forms than we did," Dyer says. "It has been a little more of a challenge getting everything right before implementing. A lot of meetings have to happen and rolling things out takes longer than we expected."

While some companies may be looking for labor management programs that will work with their existing programs like QuickBooks, others may be looking for one program that can do it all, like Fransen.

"I tried to simplify it as much as possible instead of running tons of different programs. There's several programs out there that all do one thing really well, but they don't do a lot of things," he says.

"That's what we liked the most about Service Autopilot. It handles everything. If you can simplify things, you can be a lot more successful, and you can be successful quicker if you can be profitable." L&L

The author is a freelance writer based in Kentucky.



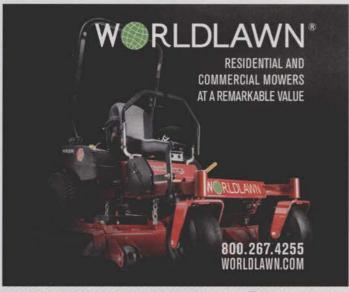


STOP the CYCLE

Fix your company's turnover problem today and, in the process, make it more attractive to potential employees as you grow. By Leslie Allebach

A BOUT 10 YEARS into business at The Greenskeeper in Palmyra, Pennsylvania, we realized that we were going to need to make some pretty substantial changes if we didn't want to subject our company to the endless cycle of employee turnover.

What we put into place has worked and we now have several employees who have been with our company for 15 years or longer. Since this season will be our 30th year in business, this means they have been with our company for more than half its lifetime. Unfortunately, it took us way too long to understand the importance of employee retention.







- For use with 16 mm, 17 mm and 18mm tubing
- Use PL-55 Series with 700 X 600 Tubing
- Materials: Glass Reinforced Polypropylene
- Operating pressure: up to 60 PSI
- For use with 1/2" tubing size .520 ID to .620 ID



To learn more about how Join is leaving this world better than we found it, please visit

www.jainsusa.com

"WE CATER TO LANDSCAPE CONTRACTORS' NEEDS NATIONWIDE!"

www.bellamystricklandisuzutrucks.com



Debris Dump



Irrigation



Dumps



Van Scape



Flat Bed



Spray



Open Lawn

BELLAMY STRICKLAND ISUZU

MCDONOUGH, GA • 1-800-535-5229 • jw@bellamystrickland.net







STAFFING

THE BASICS. Employees can be a challenging part of owning a company. It is really hard to find good workers. And just about the time you think you have found a "keeper," they come to you one morning and inform you that they like working for you but that they have a better opportunity somewhere else with better benefits, better pay or more vacation time.

Your heart sinks but you simply submit to the fact that you just can't compete with the bigger corporations and companies.

But wait! Not only can we offer the typical benefits employees want, we can also compete as small businesses on a whole different level. It is time to think outside the box.

Before we do that, let's focus on basic benefits that most of our employees desire.

1. Would you be satisfied with the benefits your company provides? What benefits would you like to have in place if you were your employee?

Of course, the first thing all employees want is a decent wage. They have bills and mortgages to pay and they'd sure like a little extra with which to enjoy life after these payments are made. Do you pay a competitive wage? This is probably the first place to start.

2. Make sure you have an IRA and a good plan for health



DON'T PASS THAT BATON!

Losing your copy of Lawn & Landscape each month?

Tell them to get their own subscriptions!

Contact us any time at subscriptions@lawnandlandscape.com. Subscriptions are also offered at lawnandlandscape.com/subscribe.

Lawn&Landscape.



DON'T GO IT ALONE.

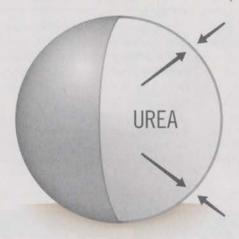
BE PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER.

JOIN US!

800.395.2522 | bit.ly/landscapeprofessionals



The Advantages of Applying a Proven Brand Run Deep



SPRAY-ON INHIBITORS

Nitrification inhibitors are sprayed on granules of urea. However, only a limited amount of the nitrification inhibitor can be applied to the surface area.



UFLEXX' STABILIZED NITROGEN

Urease and nitrification inhibitors are incorporated and evenly distributed throughout granules of urea. With this process UFLEXX® fertilizer gives you **up to six times** the amount of nitrification inhibitor making it more effective.

You may hear "just about as good for turf" when discussing stabilized nitrogen fertilizer with spray-on inhibitors with your distributor. **But they're not.** UFLEXX® stabilized nitrogen is the only dual-inhibitor technology in the turf market that is backed by more than 15 years of research, demonstrating an effective combination and concentration of active ingredients that promote turf performance and prevent potential nitrogen losses to the environment—both on and below—the soil surface. Get your money's worth. UFLEXX® stabilized nitrogen is A Better Way to Fertilize.™



For more information, visit UFLEXXDual.com

insurance in place. If these two things are not available for faithful employees, it is time to get busy. These are extremely important to most employees and so they should be. To not offer these is to automatically subject yourself to losing your best employees and may even keep you from having potential employees consider your company in the first place.

If you do not feel capable of researching and finding the most cost-effective way to offer these two things, then find yourself a trustworthy health insurance agent and a financial advisor who will help you sort through this. The money and time you invest into these two benefits will be well worth your effort.

All employees should be offered is some vacation time. Your employees have families and personal lives. Sometimes we

OVERTIME RULE REMAINS IN LIMBO

An injunction from a federal judge has stalled legislation that would have a significant impact on wages.

egislation that would have made millions of workers eligible for overtime pay is facing an uncertain future. The rule, which was set to go into effect Dec. 1 of last year, would have more than doubled the threshold for overtime eligibility from \$23,660 to \$47,476. And for the first time, employers would have been able to meet up to 10 percent of salary levels with bonuses and commissions.

However, a coalition of 50 business groups and 21 states filed separate lawsuits to overturn the regulation in November, alleging that the government had overstepped its authority, and that the new rule would be harmful to business-

es. A federal judge halted its implementation, stating that in setting the new salary threshold, "the department exceeds its delegated authority and ignores Congress's intent."

The Department of Labor has filed an appeal to the injunction and is considering its legal options. "We strongly disagree with the decision by the court, which has the effect of delaying a fair day's pay for a long day's work for millions of hardworking Americans," the agency said.

The rule was meant to put more money in the pockets of middle class workers or give them more free time, according to the DOL.

– Kate Spirgen



HOTO COURTESY OF LESUE ALLEBACH

are tempted to think that a winter lay-off is enough vacation for them (for those of us who close down over winter), but this provides them no time for summer vacations or fall hunting. In our company, we ask our employees to avoid vacation days from March 15 through May 31.

But, after that, we give each employee some paid vacation days off, the amount of which is based on how long they have been with us. We give employees one paid day of vacation for each season worked up to a full week. For example, if you've been here 60 days you qualify for one vacation day. If you have been with us three seasons, then you get three. If you have been with us six years, you would be at the maximum of five paid vacation days.

But we also put into place that any employee eligible for one vacation day is able to add unpaid days to his paid time off to equal one week. Our employees with a full week of vacation are eligible for two unpaid extra days, if they choose to use them.

Employees who work through the winter months (office staff, mechanic, etc.) automatically get two paid weeks. We reserve the right in our policy to give extra vacation days to employees who have been here more than 10 years.



Changes made to improve retention caused price increases, but they paid off because long-term employees make for happy customers.

We did have to increase our prices slightly to reflect the costs involved with these changes. However, it has paid off because long-term employees make for happy customers. Most people are happy to pay a little more if they see the same face week after week and know that their lawn is being serviced by someone they can trust.



HAVE SOME FUN. What else can small land-scape companies do outside these three things to make it a place employees want to stay?

One of the most effective and inexpensive

things we can do is offer employee incentives. Come up with a fun way to reward your diligent employees. Whether it is through a monthly drawing for a gift card or a special

parking spot for a chosen employee of the month, these small things go a long way in providing a bit of fun outside the mundane work life.

Also, we can provide ways for employees to socialize together outside of work. In our company, we provide a summer barbecue for our employees and their families and then a Christmas breakfast at a local all-you-can-eat buffet. This is a way we can say thank you and get to know them outside of work.

And finally, strive to create a family atmosphere. If employees feel cared about, they are much less likely to want to leave. Take a few moments, ask them about their lives and be truly interested. Know the names of their spouses or significant others. Know the ages of their children.

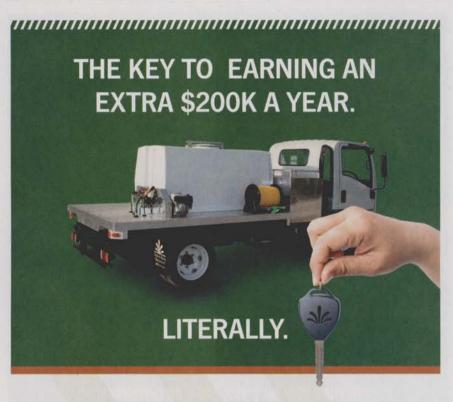
Don't just act like you care about them but instead develop a genuine interest in them and their lives. Deal with problems immediately and be approachable. These are some of the most important things you can do.

TAKE THE HIGH ROAD. I would also like to discuss a new challenge that we have experienced in this area of employee retention in the past five or 10 years. We have noticed a drastic change regarding loyalty to our company.

Most employees are looking out for themselves first and foremost and the loyalty that used to characterize our best employees is mostly a thing of the past. While there are still some wonderful exceptions to this, the general trend in this direction can make it very hard to go above and beyond as an employer.

You will be betrayed and employees you trusted will slander and malign you. You will be told, no matter how hard you try, that what you offer is just not good enough.

May I encourage you to keep on doing the best thing for your employees even when it is hard and you feel unappreciated? Keep doing what's right because it is the right thing to do. If your actions are based on your employees' responses and reactions, your enthusiasm for making your company



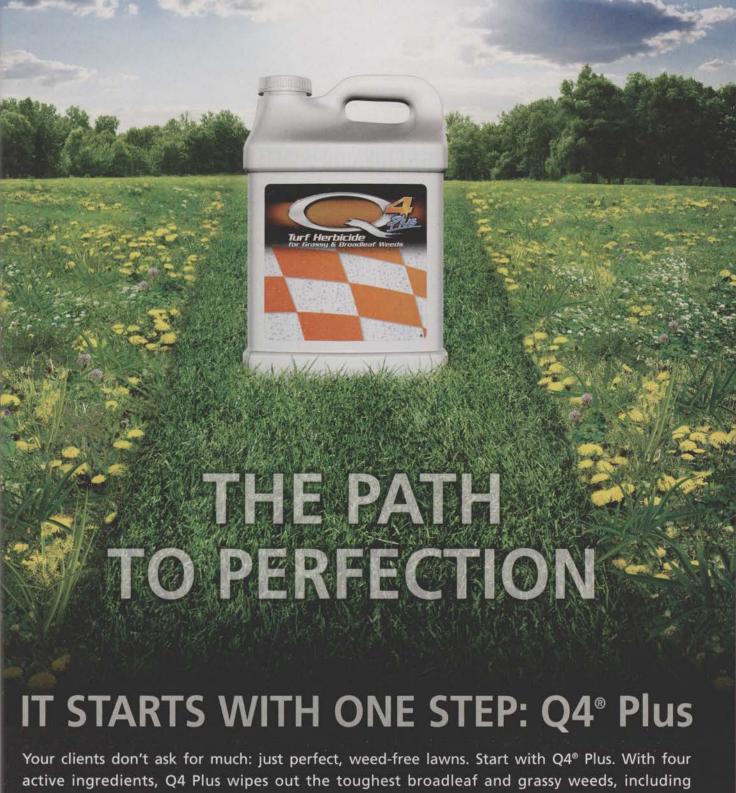
But don't just take our word for it. Do the math.

Buy our 600-gallon spray unit and truck for just \$49,900 and spray an average of twenty 6,000-square-foot lawns a day for ten months. At \$50 per lawn, that's \$200,000 in one year. Add Graham's reputation for lifelong reliability and service, and you have the key to success.



YOUR IDEAS ARE WHERE WE START

(770) 942-1617 | (800) 543-2810 | GrahamSE.com



yellow nutsedge. And Q4 Plus delivers fast visual response for fewer callbacks.

Start down the path to perfection with Q4 Plus.

GordonsProfessional.com



a great place to work will dissipate rapidly.

Bosses and managers are rarely looked at as the "good guys." It takes a lot of work to change that perception and with certain employees it is impossible. Thankfully, there will be those moments when a worker reaches out with a grateful word of appreciation or encouragement. These moments will motivate you to continue to make your company a great place to work.

I hope that this gives you some fresh inspiration for retaining your employees. There are few things in business that are as rewarding as seeing the same personnel stick around year after year, giving their best and growing as employees under your care. L&L

The author is vice president of The Greenskeeper. a landscape firm based in Palmyra, Pennsylvania.

H-2B RETURNING WORKER EXTENSION IN LIMBO

NALP still unsure what Trump administration means for the embattled quest worker program.

president who used the H-2B quest worker program could mean positive changes for a landscape industry keen on increasing access the program, but so far the Trump administration hasn't made its position clear.

Paul Mendelsohn, vice president government relations, National Association of Landscape Professionals, says President Donald Trump - who has hired guest workers through the H-2B program at his hotels and golf courses - and a new Congress could mean major changes either way on the program.

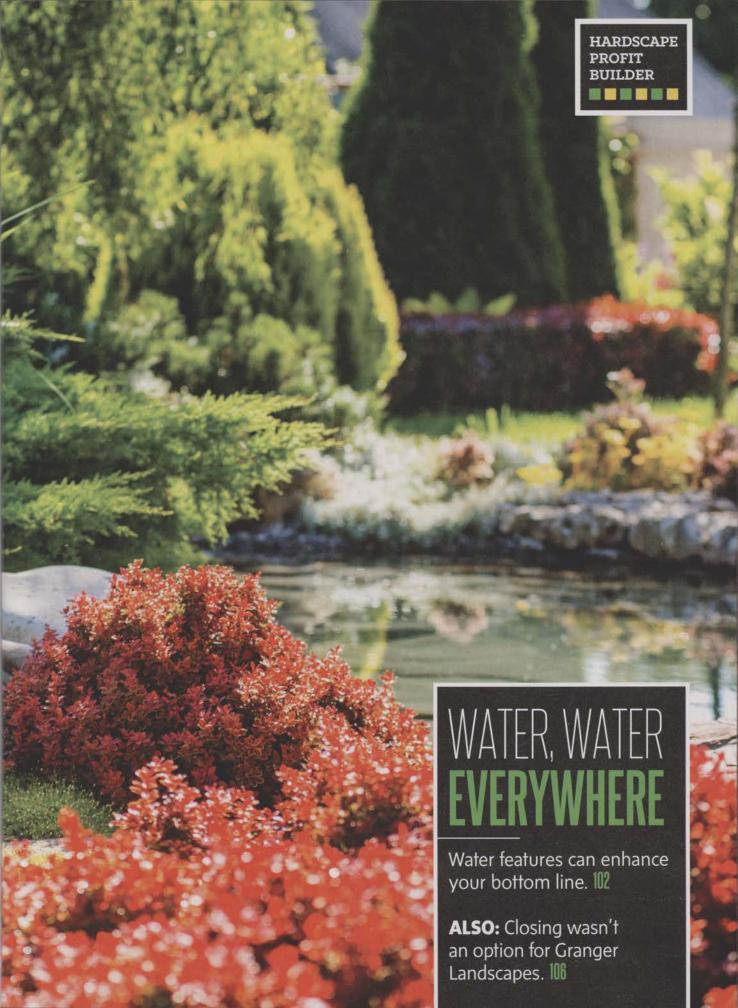
"We received reassurances from Congress that they understand the importance (of H-2B)." he says. "Partially, as a result of the focus on immigration and anti-immigration that were heard during the election, there's a lot of hesitancy by members of Congress to publicly take a position that's related to immigration.

"Even though publicly they'll say it's workforce, not immigration, their constituents see it otherwise "

NALP has asked several members of Congress to introduce specific legislation to reinstate the exemption, but if those efforts fail, the next chance for Congress to reenact it will be April 28, when the current federal budget extension expires. - Chuck Bowen











HETHER IT'S A BUBBLING FOUNTAIN or a winding stream, water features add lasting interest and beauty to the landscape. Knowing how to create and maintain these features is a way to expand your offerings, keep clients happy and add a dynamic aspect to your designs.

"People are attracted by the sound and the motion of water," says Chris Horwath, landscape sales and designer with Weiss Landscaping in Nevada City, California. "Years ago, ponds were incredibly popular, but ponds just sit there. Most clients have different expectations nowadays."

Water features are often installed as part of a larger landscape design or drawn up as a part of a project that can be installed over time as budgets permit. Most residential features take a few days up to couple weeks, and the most commonly requested element, the pondless waterfall, typically runs about \$8,000 to \$15,000. More elaborate projects, such as a small stream with boulders, cost \$20,000 to \$30,000.

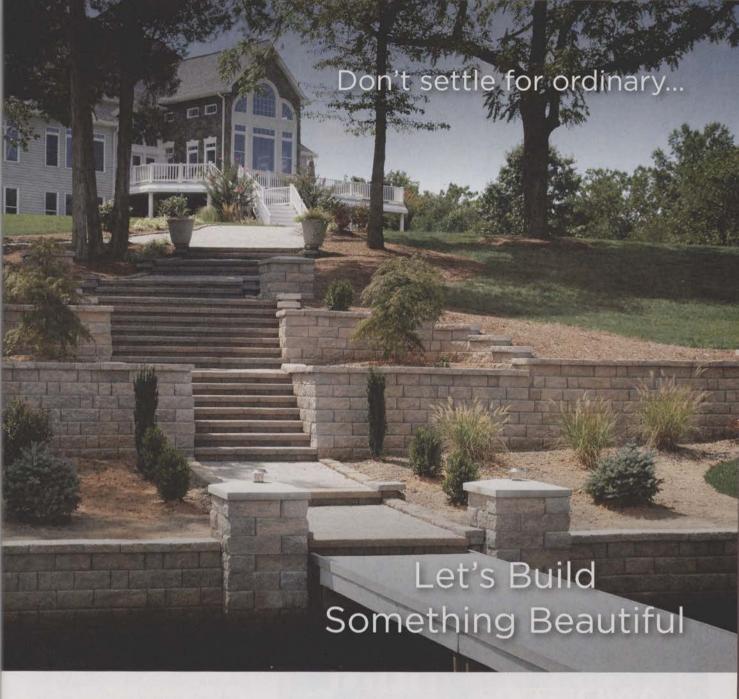
With a thorough examination of the site and proper planning, water

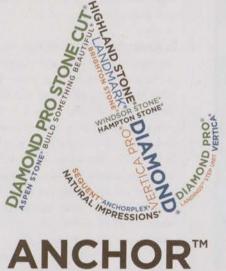
features can work in most locations. "I don't recall ever telling a client we couldn't do a water feature, but factors that drive up the challenge and cost include steep hills, boulder outcroppings and difficult access," Horwath says,

CLIENT EXPECTATIONS. One of the most important aspects of the design process is communicating with clients from the beginning. "Clients may not really know what to ask for when they initially call," says Kelly Ogden, director of revenue with Michael Hatcher & Associates in the Greater Memphis area.

"I NEED TO KNOW WHAT A CLIENT **EXPECTS WHEN HE** SAYS 'WATERFALL' TO ME."

TOM WAMBAUGH, WATERFALL GARDENS





LEADING HARDSCAPE BRANDS AND LICENSING NETWORK

FIND OUT WHERE

www.anchorwall.com





Another crucial aspect of communication is ensuring you and the client are talking about the same thing. "I need to know what a client expects when he says 'waterfall' to me," says Tom Wambaugh, owner of Waterfall Gardens in Mohnton, Pennsylvania. "Does he want Niagara Falls or a meandering brook with small spills? There's a huge difference in planning and budget, and I have to be able to describe all the options."

CHOOSE PLACEMENT CAREFULLY. "It all starts with the site," Horwath says. Where he works in the foothills outside Sacramento, terrain is rugged with sloped back yards that have natural elevation. Yet, what the homeowner thinks is ideal for a waterfall, such as between two large existing boulders, may be inaccessible.

Clients also may want a low spot in the yard filled in because they think it's a natural place for a water feature. "But in the winter, that low spot may be a creek which can flood out and cause your work to settle or fill with silt," Horwath says.

There's also the dilemma of a flat site, which may require more work to create elevation. "A level yard can be an issue because you don't want a waterfall rising up out of the lawn like a volcano," says John Kenna, owner of Water, Color & Stone in the Greater Atlanta area. "Blend it with appropriate plant materials and mounding so that it appears to be part of the topography of the landscape. Work with nature, not against it."

As far as installing koi ponds, the overhead canopy plays a role in the health and appearance of the pond. "Shade can be helpful for preventing algae, but too much means your water lilies won't bloom, for example," Wambaugh says.

A canopy also helps prevent predator issues like blue heron attacks by breaking up their flight paths so they're less likely to swoop in and dine on your client's fish.

BE AWARE OF COMMON PITFALLS. Not knowing what's underground is the biggest bump in the road when building water features and constructing plumbing and electrical components. "We prepare clients up front by explaining there may be unknown challenges, such as unmarked irrigation lines or a chunk of bedrock right where we need to dig so that costs may be impacted accordingly," Kenna says.

Size is also a consideration when it comes to ponds. "It's far easier to balance a large ecosystem than a small one. We generally stay away from anything smaller than about 9 feet



by 12 feet," Wambaugh says. "Balance in a natural pond can be achieved by the proper ratio of aquatic plant materials, a little shade from overhead or plant selection, and a few fish. But a small body of water heats up faster, leading to algae blooms."

Leaks are another issue. Even a hole the size of a ballpoint pen tip drains water constantly, which adds up, especially in places experiencing drought. Watch for sharp points of rock in the ground, and pad with scrap liner or underlayment beneath the liner such as a geotextile-type fabric.

More commonly, leaks occur if the liner is cut too short. "Most leaks are not going through the liner. They're going over the liner," says Horwath. If the ground is not compacted, it settles and the liner settles with it, causing water to spill over."

Don't cut close trying to make things too neat. Instead, allow an extra four to six inches of liner to overhang so you can make future repairs, if necessary.

All the landscape professionals we interviewed say education through classes, trade show seminars, vendors, and websites is helpful. "Sometimes contractors think, 'Oh, this is so easy. It's a hole, a liner and some rocks," Horwath says. "But it's a mistake to become serious without the education. It's your reputation, and there are too many variables that can present challenges if you're not educated."

EXPAND YOUR SERVICES. Some contractors offer water feature maintenance plans, charging a few hundred dollars per service call. Annual plans usually include a spring cleaning and a winterization in colder climates. "About half of our clients opt for our maintenance plans, while the rest – typically, the younger 20- and 30-somethings – prefer DIY," Ogden says. Other contractors subcontract our repairs and maintenance to specialty companies because it's time-consuming and less profitable than the design/build part of the project.

If your clients are DIY-ers, recommend they clean out organic materials on a regular basis, which may be weekly depending on the volume of leaf litter. Ponds and streams require more intensive maintenance, which most homeowners cannot perform themselves. Proper care includes draining the pond every few years, flushing dirt and debris, and power washing boulders. "A pond that's neglected causes stress on the mechanical parts as well as the eco-system," Kenna says. L&L

The author is a freelance writer based in the Northeast.





G00D-NAHJRH

An honest service approach and commitment to the family business drive success at Granger Landscapes.

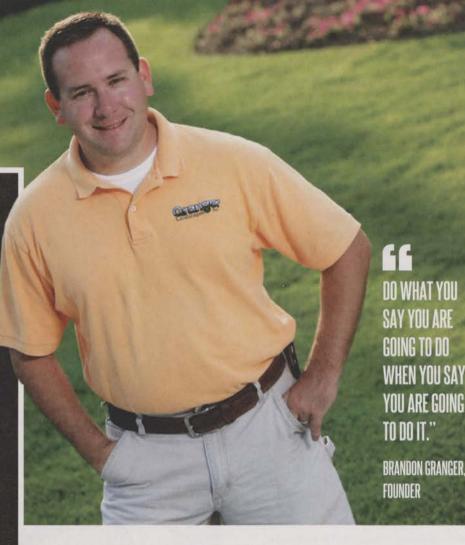
By Kristen Hampshire

EVEN-YEAR-OLD SAWYER GRANGER wanted a battery-powered edger for his birthday, and his father, Brandon, was proud to let him unwrap the wish. The boy put on safety glasses and made rounds on the family's Florence, South Carolina, property.

The Facebook video showing Sawyer's day in the field went viral and quickly got nearly 4,000 hits.

"He loves to go to our jobsites," says Granger, who started the business full time in 1998, after spending time studying horticulture at North Carolina State University.

For Granger, capturing Sawyer's excitement and drive for the outdoors and landscaping is like revisiting his own start in the green industry. "When I was young, I would for hours be outside, pull weeds, and that is how my business started - mowing neighbors' yards when I was a teenager," he says.



A REAL-LIFE BUSINESS EDUCATION. Today, Granger Landscapes is a design/ build and maintenance firm that has grown sales by 20 percent the past several years. In 2016, Granger broke the \$1 million revenue mark.

But, for every heartwarming story about a business, there's the lessonlearned situation that makes a company grow stronger. Even during the toughest times, Granger has persevered.

"Closing the business was never an option for me because this is what I love to do," Granger says, relating how a developer's bankruptcy in 2009 put his company in a grave financial situation.

The developer owed Granger \$30,000 for a landscape installation job that included a subdivision's common areas and entranceways. Granger still owed vendors about \$20,000.

No matter how carefully you vet a client, there are market forces you just can't control. "This guy did the (subdivision) project on good faith, but he got caught up in the Recession and it was one of those times," Granger says.

For a small business like Granger's at the time, the \$30,000 loss was significant. "It took us three to four years to recoup," he says. The process began with calling vendors and working out payment plans with them.

Then, Granger sold some trucks and equipment the company wasn't using to pay off debt. "We stepped back and re-evaluated," he says.

Before the developer filed bankruptcy, which made him financially untouchable in terms of collections, Granger says he did all the right things, including file a lien on the property.

But ultimately the loss resulted in expenses Granger had to eat.

Granger Landscapes still works with some developers today and while





there was no way he could have anticipated the fallout from that recession-year deal, he says he carefully reviews a developer's track record before entering into any agreement.

"But you really don't know," he says, reiterating that the previous deal was never supposed to end that way. Running a stronger business will protect Granger Landscapes from a hit like that.

KEEPING SERVICE PROMISES.

"Do what you say you are going to do when you say you are going to do it," Granger says, reciting the customer service mantra businesses often hear but don't always practice. At

Granger Landscapes, delivering on the promise goes deeper than the company culture. It's how Granger lives his life.

For example, Granger Landscapes completed a total overhaul on the Florence Baptist Temple property, including lighting.

The business administrator, Ryan Caudill, says, "Brandon is true to his word. He did exactly what he told us he was going to do, and that's very important."

Commercial clients Granger serves include the local Veterans Affairs office, where the firm installed 30,000 square feet of sod, and business sites like a cookout restaurant chain in Summerville, South Carolina, where it put in new landscaping. Residential design/installation is its "sweet spot."

That includes projects on new home sites and renovating existing properties.

Granger loves working with a blank slate. "We come in and create people's backyards," he says, noting that those projects take about two weeks and are a higher profit margin (30 to 40 percent) than maintenance work, which is closer to 15 percent.

On the residential side, Granger says a consultation process and ongoing communication is in part responsible for all the referrals his company gets.

"We meet with clients on site,

talk about their goals and draw up a plan to present," he says.

When projects take longer to complete - some larger design/ build efforts could take 60 to 90 days - Granger keeps clients updated with weekly meetings. "There are no surprises," he says.

In the future, Granger sees opportunities to continue expanding geographically and from a service perspective.

Granger will continue to grow that strong landscape core business - and pass the love of working outdoors to his children, particularly his son, who is so interested in the activity.

"He's definitely following in the footsteps," Granger says. L&L



INSTANT GRATIFICATION

Your customers want it. PRO Landscape lets you deliver it.

In the office or on the go, PRO Landscape has all the tools you need to create winning designs.



LEARN WHY PRO LANDSCAPE DOES IT BETTER

prolandscape.com | 800-231-8574 | sales@prolandscape.com

PRO Landscape

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES



Voted Best Landscape Company in 425 Magazine and Best of Houzz.com

Landscape Design/build in the heart of the Puget Sounds Microsoft/ Starbucks & Amazon residential areas

See us at classicnursery.com

A leading Puget Sound area landscape design/build firm for 30+ years with a 10acre nursery is seeking business expansion, partnership or an acquisition opportunity. Located in a winery district, this \$2M+ firm is very profitable & well-established with thousands of successful residential projects and strong referral network. This 5-Star Envirostar, Best of Houzz & Angie's List Award winning company has a reputation for innovative cad based design & timely project execution. The owners are looking to explore options for future growth & are flexible with continued involvement.

To learn more, please contact: Brad Wiens, Vantage Point Advisors, LLC Vantage-Points.com 206-713-1234

bradw@vantage-points.com 11820 Northup Way, Suite E 200 | Bellevue

!MAKE MORE MONEY!

\$\$ Attention Landscapers \$\$ Add a Lawn and Ornamental Spray service or Bug route to your existing customers!

Go to Pestcontrollicense.com Give us a call 352-443-1193

BUSINESS SERVICES

Need to calculate the value for a Green Industry Company?

From the Green Industry's Leading Management Consultant!

Obtain a written evaluation for your business or a business that you're thinking about buying.

Cost to you \$3,500.00

Email Jim Huston for details at: jhuston@jrhuston.biz

Or call: 1-800-451-5588

BUSINESS FOR SALE



EAST COAST OF FLORIDA LAWN AND LANDSCAPE

21-year-old company, 80% commercial Sales of \$1.3M, cash flow \$333k Extremely well run, asking \$1.2M SBA Financing Available

Contact: John Brogan Office: 772-220-4455 • Cell: 772-284-4127 E-mail: john@acquisitionexperts.net Visit our website at www.acquisitionexperts.net

WE SELL BUSINESSES IN FLORIDA

Profitable Landscape, Sprinkler, and Snowplowing company located in Rockland County, N.Y.

Established 1968. All equipment included in sale. Gross sales \$945,969. Also available land and buildings.

Contact John 845-825-0930

FOR SALE

LAWN MAINTENANCE AND LANDSCAPING FORMS

Order online and save. Invoices, Proposals, Work Orders, Door Hangers, Promotional Products and more. ShortysPrinting.com. 1-800-746-7897.

Discount **Small Engines & Parts**

Small engines & parts from Briggs & Stratton, Kohler, Tecumseh, Robin and more.

www.smallenginesuppliers.com

Also, look up your own parts and buy online at

www.smallenginepartssuppliers.com

GOT PLOW PARTS?

WWW.GOTPLOWPARTS.COM

ADVERTISING

MAXIMIZE YOUR | We offer the industry's lowest costs for you to be seen in both Lawn & Landscape magazine and on Lawnandlandscape.com. **DOLLARS** Please contact Bonnie Velikonya at 800/456-0707 x291 or bvelikonya@gie.net.

FOR SALE

Seat Warehouse

Quality Replacement Seats



Call 855-700-SEAT (7328)

www.seat-warehouse.com

Reduce downtime, equipment failure, wear and maintenance costs.

One gas can for all your two-stroke mix ratios. AMSOIL for all your lubricants and fertilizer needs.

> Buy wholesale. Free catalog! 1-800-866-7570, lubedealer@coho.net. 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Pacific.





Fax - 585.538.9577

GregsonClark.com

Sales@GregsonClark.com

FOR SALE



* Unique Patent Pending Design *



Mighty-Spikes™ can be used for holding down most any product securely to the ground. Made from

strong Polycarbonate plastic with 8 unique Patent Pending alternating reverse arrows, designed to resist pulling back out.

*Last For Years * Re-Usable * Sharp Point *Large 3/4" Head * Super Strong * 6" Length

Proudly Manufactured In The USA



www.mightyspikes.com Phone: 1-800-410-7661



NEW/USED/REBUILT

Plows, Spreaders and parts Largest diverse plow inventory Western, Fisher, Blizzard, Meyer, Diamond, Snoway, Snowman, Boss, Snowex 1000 plows in stock

WWW.STORKSPLOWS.COM 610-488-1450

HELP WANTED

GreenSearch

Since 1995, GreenSearch is recognized as the premier provider of professional and confidential employment search exclusively for exterior and interior landscape. irrigation, and the overall green industry throughout North America. Check us out on the Web at

www.greensearch.com or call toll free at 888-375-7787 or via

e-mail info@greensearch.com



Charlotte, N.C.

As we GROW, we VALUE new talent! North American Lawn and Landscape is looking for talented, hardworking individuals to join our team!

COMMERCIAL GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

Still growing with positions available for:

Account Managers Maintenance Sales **Route Managers Construction Managers**

- · Medical/Dental Insurance
- · 401K, PTO and other great benefits

To learn more about our company, visit us at: www.nalandscape.com

All résumés should be emailed to: DDECKER@NALandscape.com

Snow and Ice

Management Company We are looking for Subcontractors in DE, FL, GA, IN, KY, MD, NC, NJ, NY, OH, PA, SC, TN, VA, WV to provide SNOW removal, landscaping, parking lot sweeping. Please go to our website www.snowandicemgmt.com

and fill out our form "Join our Team"

HELP WANTED

IRRIGATION TECHNICIAN

Large Landscape company is seeking experienced Irrigation Technicians with valid driver's license. Must have a minimum of 3-5 years of previous experience. Qualified females are encouraged to apply.

INTERVIEWS: Tuesdays at 7 a.m. to 9 a.m.

\$14-\$18/HR | Full-time

RESUMES: email to: paulw@fslandscape.com

Call Paul (909) 851-3763

5151 Pedley Rd. Riverside, CA 92509

Florasearch, Inc.

In our third decade of performing confidential key employee searches for landscape and horticulture employers worldwide. Retained.

Career candidate contact welcome, confidential and always free.

Florasearch, Inc.

Phone: 407-320-8177 Email: search@florasearch.com www.florasearch.com

TREE TRIMMER

\$15-\$25/HR | 3-5 yrs. of experience

N. Calif Office 43197 Osgood Rd. Fremont, CA 94539

Call John (925) 786-2780 john@fslandscape.com

LANDSCAPE EQUIPMENT

TREE STAKES

Doweled Lodgepole Pine **CCA Pressure Treated** 2" Diameter, Various Lengths Economical, Strong and Attractive Phone: 800-238-6540 Fax: 509-238-4695 JASPER ENTERPRISES, INC. We ship nationwide. Web site: www.jasper-inc.com



ADVERTISE WITH LAWN & LANDSCAPE TODAY!

Please contact Bonnie Velikonya at 800-456-0707 x291 or bvelikonya@gie.net

INSURANCE



INSURANCE PROGRAMS: ALL LAWN / LANDSCAPE BUSINESSES Auto, Equipment, Liability, Property, Umbrella, Work Comp

PLUS SPECIALTY COVERAGES INCLUDING:

- Professional Liability
- Damage to YOUR Customer's Property / Your Work
- Pollution Liability Including Auto Spill
- Herb/Pest Endorsement

Active Members of: NALP—ONLA—OLCA—CALCP

CALL 1-800-886-2398 TODAY FOR A QUOTE!

Daryl Erden, Green Industry Specialist daryl.erden@bureninsurancegroup.com

LANDSCAPER ACCESSORIES



er 200 Quality, Innovative Landscaper Accessories WWW.WECHAPPS.COM 800-816-2427

LAWN SIGNS

PROMOTE TO NEIGHBORS

PROMOTIONAL POSTING SIGNS



View Hundreds of Promotional Ideas, Layouts & Exclusive Images Online!

RNDsigns.com • 800.328.4009 Posting Signs . Door Hangers Brochures · Mailers More

Lawn&Landscape

PLANTS, SEEDS & TREES

NATIVE SEEDS

Largest supplier of native seeds east of the Mississippi. Over 400 species of grass and wildflower seeds for upland to wetland sites. Bioengineering material for riparian areas and erosion control. Contact ERNST SEEDS today.

www.ernstseed.com - 800/873-3321

ESTIMATING SOFTWARE

Simplify Your Entire Bidding Process

Easy New Software from Jim Huston Proven with hundreds of contractors Fully Integrates Estimating, Job Costing & More Learn more at www.irhuston.biz Free on-line demo e-mail: jhuston@jrhuston.biz

SOFTWARE

BILLMASTER Software®

Simple, Reliable, Affordable

Perfect for Small Business Convert from any existing system All at a price your business can afford

Call today to get started. 201-620-8566 Email: sales@billmaster.info www.billmaster.info

INSURANCE

Liability Insurance For Your Work

Most insurers will not provide coverage for damaged lawns as a result of your work as defined in all standard General Liability policies. If your tech is negligent, the product applied is improperly mixed or agitated, a roque em-



AGENO

ployee intentionally damages the yards. or perhaps the lawn was not properly diagnosed, there is no coverage for the damage done to the customer's lawn as a result of your work. Some insurers call this the business risk exclusion.

Other common endorsements that have been added to General Liability policies in the past such as the Pesticide-Herbicide Applicators endorsement and various forms of Contractors Limited Worksite Pollution endorsements will not cover damages to your customer's lawns based on the issues discussed above and damages caused as a result of your work.

The Keenan Agency, Inc. has designed a stand alone Lawn Care Professional Liability policy which will provide coverage for damaged customers lawns due to your negligence including damages which are/were the result of your work.

This program is not a replacement for your standard commercial general liability policy.

In summary, you probably do not have the coverage you think you have.

Please contact The Keenan Agency, Inc. if you are concerned that your current coverage does not cover your work.

Premiums as low as \$550/yr.

The Keenan Agency, Inc. 6805 Avery-Muirfield Dr., Suite 200 Dublin, Ohio 43016 614-764-7000 Rick Bersnak - Vice President

rbersnak@keenanins.com Gen. Liab., W.C. and Comm. Auto, Property Programs also available.

ADVERTISE WITH LAWN & LANDSCAPE TODAY!

Please contact Bonnie Velikonya at 800-456-0707 x291 or bvelikonya@gie.net



THE POWER OF THE PURPLE POT.

Regional assortments, retail appeal and battle tested.



First Editions® has an outstanding assortment of plants that are well matched to your markets.



The purple pots are easily recognized and add instant value to your selections.



First Editions® plants are rigorously tested for performance in production and in the landscape.

For more information, visit FirstEditionsPlants.com

Advertiser	Website	Page #
Ariens/Gravely	gravely.com	115
Avant Tecno	AvantTecnoUSA.com	35
Bayer	backedbybayer.com -	55
Bellamy Strickland	bellamystrickland.net	93*
BioPlex	bio-plex.com	100
BOB-CAT	BOBCATTURF.COM	22
Boss LM	bosslm.com	9
CASE Construction Equipment	CaseCE.com/SV340	39
CLC Labs	syntheticturflesting.com	82
Dig Corp.	digcorp.com	70
Dixie Chopper	dixiechopper.com	71
Dow AgroSciences	dowagro.com	75
ExakTime	exaktime.com/lal	74
Exmark	exmark.com	65
Ferris	FerrisMowers.com	69
First Editions Plants	FirstEditionsPlants.com	112
Fleetmatics - a Verizon	THE SECUNION OF TARIEST CONT	112
Company	fleetmatics.com	59
FMC	fmcprosolutions.com	62
Focal Point	growpro.com	outsert*
GIS Dynamics	GoiLawn.com	79
Graham Spray Equipment	grahamse.com	98
Greenworks Tools	greenworkstools.com	63
Gregson-Clark	gregsonclark.com	68, 84
Ground Logic	groundlogic.com	100
Horizon	HorizonOnline.com	83*
Hunter	hunterindustries.com	116
Husqvarna	husqvarna.com	87
Jain	jainsusa.com	92
John Deere	JohnDeere.com	37
John Deere Construction	JohnDeere.com/Eskid	81
Kichler Lighting	landscapelighting.com	19
Koch Agronomic Services	UFLEXXDual.com	95
Kubota Tractor Corp.	kubota.com	insert
L.T. Rich Products	snowrator.com	96
LandOpt	landopt.com	36
Law Office of Robert Kershaw	workvisasusa.com	2100000
Lebanon Turf Products	LebanonTurf.com	36*
Little Giant		20, 21
	lg-outdoor.com	97
LMN	golmn.com	2-3
MistAway	mistaway.com	80
National Association of Landscape Professionals	landscapeprofessionals.org	94
Neely Coble	neelycoble.com	41
Netafim	netafimusa.com	56
Novae	NovaeCorp.com	113
Nufarm	nufarminsider.com	76
Otterbine	otterbine.com	64
PBI/Gordon Corp.	pbigordon.com	99*
PermaGreen Supreme	permagreen.com	57
Pine Hall Brick	americaspremierpaver.com	10
Pro Landscape / Drafix	prolandscape.com	108

Advertiser	Website	Page #
Propane Education & Research Council	propane.com	insert
Rainbow Treecare	treecarescience.com	insert
Real Green Systems	RealGreen.com	89
SavaLawn	savatree.com	82
SUPERthrive / Vitamin Institute	superthrive.com	8
Syngenta:	syngenta.com	7
Takeuchi	takeuchi-us.com	85
Toro	foro.com	90, 91
Turfco	turfco.com	5
Wells Fargo	wellsfargo.com	52-53
World Lawn	worldlawn.com	92
Zoro	zoro.com	77

Hardscape Supplement			
American Landmaster	americanlandmaster.com/done	104	
Anchor Wall Systems	anchorwall.com	103	
Ewing	Ewinglrrigation.com	107	
Permaloc Aluminum Edging	permaloc.com	105	

* denotes regional advertising





WE ARE JUST TWO MONTHS INTO 2017 and we have a new leader in our country, ongoing discussions about Brexit and how it will affect our markets, continuing uncertainty about H-2B programs and ongoing questions about how the general economy will fare. Despite all of this uncertainty, we can define multiple hiring trends that promise to give clarity in the process of finding talent for organizations no matter what happens next.

BOOMERANG WORKERS. BOOmerang employees are those who terminate employment with your company then return at a later date. In the past, HR Today reported that more than 50 percent of companies had a "no rehire" term so employees who left were not permitted to return.

Now, less than 33 percent of companies report discouraging rehires, noting that boomerang employees require less training, already know the company and culture and can still bring in a new perspective that might be valuable.

MILLENNIALS AS MANAGERS. Millennials (usually born between the 1980s and the 2000s) are gaining experience, learning what is required to



JUAN TORRES is the president of the National Hispanic Landscape Alliance.

be successful in your organizations and becoming managers. Millennials are managing as the Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) are beginning to reach retirement age.

MANAGING MILLENNIALS. There has been much discussion about how to manage Millennials, employees who tend to need regular feedback and appreciate technology. They also expect to understand how their personal work adds value to the organization as a whole, and they embrace

virtual learning opportunities.

Understanding what this group prefers can help managers understand how to structure jobs and feedback to use the strengths of these employees.

A NEW GENERATION. As Millennials move up the employment ladder, Generation Z (born between 1994 and 2010) started entering the workforce in 2016. This group of individuals also expects on-the-job mentorship, are even more connected to technology (and social media) and say that they are deeply affected by the Recession (as they watched some of their parents struggle with finances, housing and credit card debt). Most also report that they suffer from the weight of student loans and don't expect to be able to afford traditional housing.

WORKING OFF THE CLOCK, More than 66 percent of managers expect their employees to be reachable off hours, according to the Brighton School of Business and Management. This means that managers must also provide work-life balance opportunities as employees say that they plan to make decisions to change jobs based upon work-life balance and flexibility.

TECHNOLOGY ADVANCEMENTS.

With technology becoming more advanced, we can automate some of the design, estimating and invoicing processes. So, companies are outsourcing some jobs. Ensuring that all of your employees (even those who aren't great with technology) are trained and understand how tools, technology and equipment might assist them in their jobs can alleviate some of their concerns.

ALTERNATIVE EMPLOYMENT. Last year, we saw that many Millennials turned away from the traditional job market, sought part time work or preferred to start a new business venture. Can you alter the hours of your business to accommodate the changing needs of your employees and customers? Be sure to listen to your employees and consider whether adding some flexibility to your environment is worth it to retain your team.

Considering these hiring trends can shed some light on the changing requirements of your work force, allow you to plan for your staffing needs and help you attract the best candidates possible. L&L

Sponsored by





WELCOME TO THE FAMILY

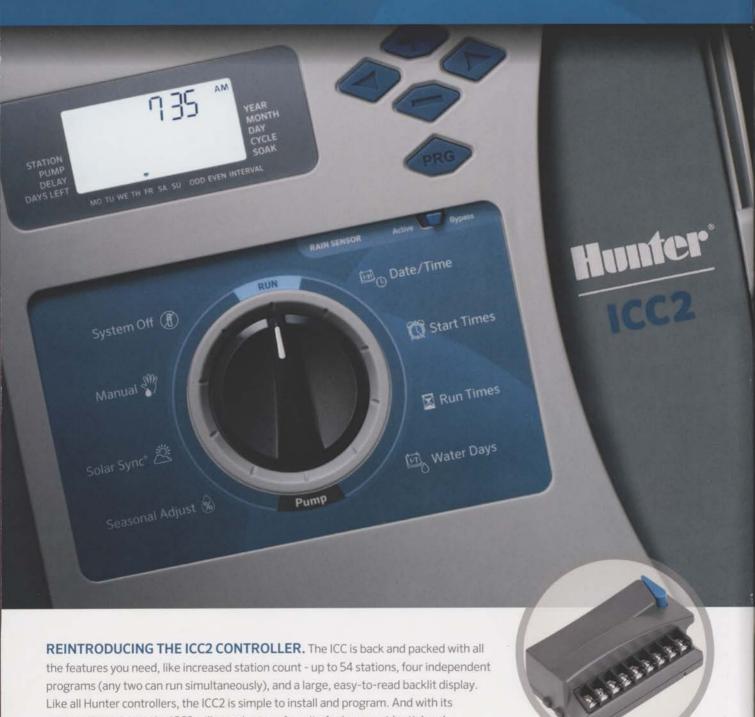


SEE THE NEW FACE OF GRAVELY





ICC2 FORWARD DESIGN. BACKWARD COMPATIBLE.



REINTRODUCING THE ICC2 CONTROLLER. The ICC is back and packed with all the features you need, like increased station count - up to 54 stations, four independent programs (any two can run simultaneously), and a large, easy-to-read backlit display. Like all Hunter controllers, the ICC2 is simple to install and program. And with its competitive pricing, the ICC2 will soon be your favorite for large residential and commercial projects.

ICC2 EXPANSION MODULE

