

THEFT - by Bob Livesey, CGCS Plaza Golf Course, Visalia

Golf courses and parks, also contractors, related to the landscape industry have learned over the years to contend with the petty theft and vandalism situations. Plants, sprinkler heads and small tools were items that could be replaced, and the theft of these items was looked on as something that couldn't be helped.

Until now, that is.

Nationally, it is estimated that somewhere between \$720 million to \$724 million have been lost to theft, vandalism and the like. So far this year in California the problem has reached epidemic proportions.

What do we do, and how do we cope with this type of situation? In the metropolitan areas, most of the golf courses and parks are fenced. Some municipalities have on-site patrols from dusk to dawn. Other areas split their people to where there are personnel on duty from daylight to dark, and a waterman to cover the night-time hours.

Not too long ago the theft and vandalism were confined mostly to the more populated areas. Now it has spread to the suburban and rural sections of the state. The California Landscape and Irrigation Council has posted a \$1000 reward for the arrest and conviction of persons engaged in such acts. This has helped deter some of the problems.

ACTION NEEDED FOR EXTENSION SERVICES - There has been increasing conversation in our industry lately concerning the plight of the UCCE in light of Prop 13, but very little done about it. The sad fact is that it's not only the UCCE and our own Prop 13 that are causing problems - it goes all the way to the Federal Government. In looking at the national picture, more than 1,000 extension personnel are losing their jobs each year due to budget cuts.

This situation is now being reviewed by a National Agricultural Research and Extension Users Advisory Board. It began preparation of a report to the President and the Secretary of Agriculture at a meeting on July 10. Unfortunately, this Board is currently made up of 21 appointees representing environmental interest groups, agricultural production, and nutrition with no representation for the turf and ornamental horticulture industries. We can be quite sure that they will be pursuing their own special interests with no thought of the non-agricultural Green Industries. In order to avoid, or at least lessen, the impact of further cuts in extension services falling on those specialists serving our industry rather than the strictly agriculturists, it is imperative to make our feelings and positions known NOW while this report, scheduled for completion in September and submission in October, is still being formulated. We must point out not only the tremendous service the extension turf and landscape