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Highway Vegetation Control
Seen as Construction Trend

Growing use of vegetation control contractors and greater emphasis in planning and construction of roads from the standpoint of low maintenance costs for vegetation control, were highlighting statements at a recent meeting of the American Road Builders Association. Predicting these important developments for the vegetation control industry were Clyde A. Bryant and Bernard P. Thomas, Dow Chemical Co. specialists, as they addressed the meeting held in Washington recently.

They went on to forecast that mowings would be reduced by more than half because in the next 10 years effective growth retardants will be on the market. More attention to choice of desirable plantings is expected.

Bryant and Thomas said new technology promises significant achievements in safety, beauty and economy of roadside landscaping. Progress in roadside vegetation control in recent years has been "modest for a number of reasons including the fact that we have had to teach ourselves the technology involved with this new tool."

They did add that "almost unlimited capabilities" exist today to create or to tailor products and techniques for vegetation control "if we understand your needs."

Probably the most significant concept that will lead to future growth is programming, they said.

"Today we seldom see the individual who wants to sell or the customer who wants to buy a one-chemical, one-treatment, one-year approach; rather, we see on an orderly basis three- to five-year programs coming into being. Within these programs, one or several chemicals may be utilized depending upon the climatic factors, the vegetation problems, the needs and desires of the engineer."

Already in wide-scale usage, they said, are these methods:
- Removing broadleaved weeds from desirable grassy areas
- Complete vegetation control around guardrails, signs, delineators, culverts, bridge abutments, rural mailboxes, and parking, maintenance, etc.
- Selective crabgrass control in medians, roadside edges, rest areas, and parks.
- Grass and weed control in the expansion joints, transition strips, passing lanes, and roadside edges on macadam roads.