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Toro Enters Hydro-Mulching; Posts 6th Straight Top Year

Toro Manufacturing Corporation, Minneapolis, producer of powered turf-care equipment, has purchased Tex-Way Industries, Inc., Fort Worth, Tex., developers of specialized environment control equipment.

The acquisition, for an undisclosed price, gives Toro a series of hydro-mulching machines, said Toro president David T. McLaughlin. The hydro-mulchers are used to establish vegetation on various types of terrain by spraying mixtures of water, seed, fibrous mulch and fertilizer.

Tex-Way, less than a year old, was headed by Ralph E. Martin, who becomes a Toro consultant. Tex-Way’s general manager, Ralph W. Gebhardt, has been named sales manager for this new Toro venture, the first in a new Toro profit center named Eco/systems.

McLaughlin said development and marketing of the hydro-mulching machines will be directed by Edward A. Hurnicutt, manager of special projects in the division of corporate development.

The hydro-mulching method of establishing turf has been adopted for major construction programs, particularly federal interstate highway systems. Other applications include parks, athletic fields, playgrounds, golf courses, housing developments, and land reclamation work, such as strip mine areas and other terrain where growth establishment is difficult.

McLaughlin said that one hydro-mulching machine can cover up to five acres in 15 minutes in a one-step operation that eliminates the immediate follow-up maintenance that seeding normally requires.

Toro’s new hydro-mulching machines, which range in capacity from 500 to 3,000 gallons and are priced from $5,000 to $8,000, are designed to handle all the spraying chores landscape contractors may encounter, including chemical spraying, liming, firefighting and watering, as well as hydraulic seeding, mulching, and fertilizing.

The purchase announcement was coupled with one reporting that Toro had increased sales and earnings for the sixth consecutive year.

McLaughlin said sales for fiscal 1970 were $57,757,000, an 11% gain. Net earnings advanced 7% to $2,918,000 and $2.88 per share.