Junk Yard Owner Salvages Image

Mike Nolan of Effingham, Illinois, believes in that old saying, “Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder”, and he’s doing his best to convince others. The sign in front of his auto salvage yard reads, “This is NOT a junk yard, this is my ROSE GARDEN.”

Nolan, owner of the Y Yard, is especially interested in improving the poor image of the salvage business nationwide and it is his goal to make his salvage yard look like a “rose garden” to everyone. Recently, he surrounded the property with climbing rose bushes provided for beautification purposes by the state of Illinois. Nolan hopes these bushes will eventually grow into a high, thick wall to block his salvage autos from the view of passing motorists.

He appreciates the value of a weed-free salvage yard. Weeds and tall grasses are not only unsightly, but they also increase the threat of fire and provide a haven for rodents and snakes.

Mowing is time-consuming and it is almost impossible to mow around cars once they are placed in the yard. Seeking better methods of weed control, Nolan and other salvage yard owners have been successful with the use of herbicides around and under the cars.

“We need to keep weeds and grass under control,” Nolan says. “I’ve been pleased with the results of ‘Hyvar’ X-L bromacil weed killer, applied at a rate of four gallons per acre. It is a water soluble liquid that is easy to spray.”

In nearby Terre Haute, Indiana, Kenny Palmer, manager of the Big 4 Auto Wrecking Co., has discovered that “Hyvar” X-L and “Tysben” 200 work best for him.

“Tysben” 200 was applied to eliminate thick growth of vines and brambles. A surfactant was added at a rate of two quarts per 100 gallons of water to increase the contact activity of the herbicides on tall vegetation.

Palmer explains, “We put the ‘Hyvar’ X-L on heavy (seven gallons per acre) because we wanted to get those weeds for sure.”

Weed control at Big 4 is part of a continuous program to improve roadways and generally upgrade the appearance of the salvage yard. Palmer has nearly 3,000 cars on nine acres of a 17-acre tract. He can’t afford to let the weeds and brambles get the best of him.

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cuts to construction. "Drainage is
the most important factor in build-
ing greens," Holmes said, "if you
don't do it right the first time, you
simply have to go back and do it
again later. There are no ways to cut
corners."
Holmes said of his specialty,
greens, "It would be nice to just
heap up a pile of dirt and grow grass
and start putting, but we can't do
that any more; we have raised stan-
dards so high that now we have to
have superior drainage to satisfy."
Holmes' formula for greens in-
cludes about 16 inches of top mix
that will compact down to about 12
inches. He said the top mix should
be any material that will infiltrate
four to 12 inches per hour. He then
recommends a two-inch sand layer,
four inches of pea gravel and then
perforated drainage tile surrounded
by gravel for the best green drain-
age.

Herschel Martin, superin-
tendent at Ridgeway Country Club,
Memphis, Tenn., explained when
the greens at his club were first built,
compaction figures and percolation
rates were explained informally to
course owners, not held to, and the
greens were not good enough when
built. He said his greens were so
hard he needed a sledgehammer to
pound his cup-cutter into the green,
and that golf spikes would not pen-
etrate the green. "The club's golf
committee paid off the architect,
cancelled his bond, then started to
complain to me." The architect later
had to rebuild the greens when it
was proved they did not meet
United States Green Section speci-
fications.

Martin, Stewart and James L.
Johns, superintendent at Lake Park
Country Club, Germantown, Wis.,
agreed that it is important to have
definite specifications spelled out in
black-and-white before work begins.
Johns is currently embroiled in a
lawsuit between the owner and archi-
tect of Lake Park. He has been
called as a witness in the lawsuit,
and said it is very hard to defend the
owner's position when "you only
have two pages of loose specifi-
cations to work from in court."
Johns said the specifications con-
tract is an insurance policy to the
club and should lay out in detail ex-
actly what is to be done, what
materials should be used and when
the responsibility of the architect,
contractor, superintendent and
owner begins and ends.

"Many owners and architects
think the superintendent is not
needed until grass begins to grow on
the course, but this is not true any
more," Johns said. "Today's
superintendent is aware of the pit-
falls that can result from faulty con-
struction and is intelligent enough to
head off future maintenance prob-
lems at the design and construction
phase." And that was one of the
reasons for the turf symposium in
the first place.

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"In the past, we've spent lots of
time and money just cutting through
the vines and brambles so employees
could remove needed parts from
cars in the yard," he says. "Herbi-
cides have helped us minimize that
problem."
Nolan faces many of the same
problems but he has more land (60
acres) for his "rose garden" near Ef-
fingham. He points out, "This large
tract allows me to organize my 1,500
cars in a 20-acre section. However, it
also increases my need for excellent
weed and grass control. I'm con-
vinced an annual program of herbi-
cides is the best way to go."
Herbicides are available in farm
supply stores and most areas have
custom applicators who will put
them on. However, Palmer and
Nolan elected to handle the applica-
tion themselves. Palmer borrowed a
neighbor's sprayer and gun, while
Nolan built a sprayer from pieces of
"junk".
If Nolan has his way, his dream
of a "rose garden" will become a
reality to lots of people in the near
future.