Too often, the positive contributions made from green industry people are not reported because the actions are not controversial or sensational. So you should work to get your efforts recognized publicly.

**Industry image**—Each company in an industry contributes to the industry’s general image. As new companies continue to proliferate, it is imperative that local groups organize to protect that image.

Because most states do not have barriers to entry into the green industry, existing owners and employees need to police, maintain and improve the industry’s image. Being an activist doesn’t mean being a thorn in people’s side, but it can make a difference: possible unwarranted regulations may be thwarted, and adversarial visits from federal and state regulators may be avoided.

The image your company has developed or is developing takes time to mature. Staying active in the community while maintaining a professional, quality service will not only help your image but it will also improve the image of the industry. Take the little extra time to make sure your company is working on it.

—The authors are owners of Wandtke & Associates, a green industry consulting firm located in Columbus, Ohio. To contact them, phone (614) 891-3111.

### Using your advertising to educate customers

by Judy Good

“Diplomacy” is telling someone where to go in a way that they actually look forward to getting there. And using education in advertising is like diplomacy: it’s putting your ad in front of someone so that they actually look forward to seeing it there.

I would like to encourage each of you to educate the public about our industry through the advertising or publicity you use to promote your company.

A few years ago, I suggested that J.B. Good develop a direct mail technique of marketing our tree services by mailing educational flyers to our local customers four times a year. We looked at the costs and thought it would be expensive. We didn’t know if we could afford it, but we went ahead anyway.

We bought the postal permit, we paid our yearly fee, and we developed our first educational piece (which was pretty crude compared with the things we’re using today). Here’s what we used then: low-cost paper, one color, my crude graphics, printed 100 at a time. Here’s what we use today: glossy paper stock, four-color photos, professional graphics, printed 100,000 at a time.

Why? Because educational advertising works. It not only tells people what they can do for their business, but it tells them what to ask for. The phone rings and they’ll either ask for some outdated practice or they’ll ask for what you’ve taught them to ask for.

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