

TRUCK *talk*

BY VICKY POULSEN

Three landscape company managers talk about what they expect from a good truck

Landscape professionals want tough, dependable and low maintenance trucks. And they're doing everything they can to get a good return on their investment by staying with proven brands, sticking to a stringent preventive maintenance plan and using quality mechanics.

Landscape pros also want trucks that get the job done in the shortest amount of time while adjusting to the handling styles of many operators.

Depending on its reliability, a truck can be a landscape pro's best friend or worst enemy. But once you've owned a great truck, it's hard to forget it. We asked three landscape managers to talk trucks with us, and here's what they had to say:

▲ PHOTO COURTESY CHEVROLET

LARGE CONTRACTOR

Name: Preston Leyshon

Title: Equipment Manager

Company: Chapel Valley Landscape Co.

Location: Headquartered in Woodbine, MD, with a branch office in Dulles, VA, and satellite offices in Bethesda, MD and Crystal City, VA. Target markets include Baltimore, Washington, DC metropolitan areas and northern Virginia.

2000 revenues: \$21 million

Business mix: Mostly commercial

Employees: 300-plus total employees/130 year-round

Company profile: Founded in 1968 by J. Landon Reeve, IV, the company provides commercial and residential landscape services, including consultation, design/build, installation,

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landscape maintenance and irrigation and water management. Specialties include tree preservation, Colorscaping™, landscape lighting and hardscape construction.

Trucks: Fleet arsenal includes 24 cars, 98 trucks (S-10s to Tandem), 32 tractors (Kubota, John Deere, Ford, New Holland), 35 equipment trailers (four enclosed) and 503 small engine units. "We have a truck that's 25 years old and has over 250,000 miles on it, and another truck with over 300,000 miles. A good preventive maintenance program with regular oil changes and wheel alignments to prevent premature tire wear is key to their longevity. Also, our trucks are like rolling billboards, so we always make sure they're kept clean and shiny."

Favorite features: Automatic transmission, tool boxes and sideboards are must-have features.

Finance method: Vehicles are purchased and then leased back to the company.

Dream truck: Four-door, heavy-duty, low-profile truck with lots of crew space.

MEDIUM CONTRACTOR

Name: Rich Rivera
Title: Grounds Superintendent
Company: Joliet Jr. College
Location: Joliet, IL

2000 revenues: n/a
Business mix: Through a work order system, the Grounds Department provides many services from mowing and trimming to snow and ice removal to blacktopping and striping.

Employees: Five full-time, five-part time and nine student assistant groundskeepers.



Company profile: America's oldest public community college established in 1901, Joliet's main campus is nestled on a 400-acre scenic tract of land which embraces two 80-acre farm fields, a lake, an 11-acre arboretum, three miles of nature trails, rows of 200-year-old oak trees, a natural prairie area, seven acres of athletic fields and 10 tennis courts. Of those 400 acres, about 108 is devoted to turf, plant beds and landscape maintenance areas. His crew also maintains two other Joliet Jr. College branches in Romeoville and downtown Joliet.

Trucks: "We use a 1989 3/4-ton Chevy pickup with 1,000-lb. liftgate/towing package and snow removal and four-wheel drive capabilities; two 1993 one-ton Ford F350 pickups, one of which is equipped with liftgate/towing package and the other with a V-box spreader for the winter; 1996 one-ton Chevy pickup and 1999 GMC 3500 Series, both outfitted with liftgate/tow packages and snow plow. My oldest truck is a 1984 2-1/2-ton GMC series 5000 dump truck. We also run

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two Cushman's. All my pickup trucks are diesels and my dump truck is gasoline-fueled."

Favorite features: "My liftgates are real back-savers. The dump bed on our new Cushman saves us time on the job. Automatic transmission is a must."

Finance method: Purchased based on budgetary constraints and a bid system.

Dream truck: "If cost was not an object, I'd love to have pickups with dump beds and a dump truck with automatic transmission and split rear axle with a nursery style bed."

SMALL CONTRACTOR

Name: Ryan Hughes

Title: President

Company: Hughes Nursery, Inc.

Location: Odessa, FL

Business mix: Mostly commercial

Employees: 35

Company profile: Hughes Nursery, Inc. was established in 1972 as a family-owned landscape company. It was primarily involved in landscape, irrigation and sod installation, and now has expanded into other facets of the industry with divisions in lawn maintenance, grading and excavating, hardscaping, exterior lighting and waterscaping.

Trucks: Two Mack mini-wheelers, four Ford F-450's, one F-650, two F-250's, one F-350, four F-150's and two Ford Explorers.

Favorite features: "The most valuable truck we use today is the Ford F-650. It was custom built to accommodate our needs for large landscaping contracts. It also can carry a load that would normally require two trucks, and has a crew cab with seating capacity for seven, perfect for one crew. It's capable of hauling two pallets of mulch, 300 to 400 one-gallon plants, 8- to 10-ft. trees or palms and still has power to pull a 820 TCM loader. It gives us the ability to increase our bottom line because we can trans-

port more product, haul our equipment and transport our entire crew."

Finance method: "We always buy new vehicles. Cost considerations are based upon the task the truck will perform and the amount of anticipated use."

Dream truck: "One that didn't require any fuel to operate — a truck that could run on electric or solar energy would be fantastic. The increase in the cost of fuel over the last year has had a severe impact on our bottom line."



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Isuzu's 2002 NQR

Top TRUCKS

BY VICKY POULSEN

Who's got the best truck? We'll let you be the judge. As truck manufacturers continue to clamor to get their latest and greatest models to market, we invite you, our readers, to enter their inner sanctum by taking a peak at the hottest trends in the truck market today. Welcome to their world!

Chevrolet-GMC

Product: W4500 and W5500 medium-duty crew cabs and WT5500 single-axle extended cab

Best features:

- ▶ Duramax 7800 6-cyl. diesel engine with 200 hp at 2400 rpm and 441 lbs. per ft. of torque at 1500 rpm
- ▶ Vacuum/hydraulic with 4-channel ABS
- ▶ Greater maneuverability

Product: C-Series medium duty trucks — Classes 5-8

Best features:

- ▶ New 2000/2400 Allison automatic transmissions
- ▶ Vortec 8100 MD V-8 gas engine (Cat 3126E diesel, 190 to 300 hp listed as an option)
- ▶ Four-wheel anti-lock hydraulic brakes

Check out the hottest features on the hottest new trucks

- ▶ Front three-passenger bench with head restraints
- ▶ Government Vehicle Weight Ratings (GVWR) range from 18,000 to 61,000 lbs.
- Product:** T-Series, tilt-cab medium duty trucks/Class 5 through lower end of Class 8
- Best features:**
 - ▶ Available in single axle, tandem axles and LoPro models
 - ▶ Accommodates bodies up to 28 ft. and payloads up to 40,000 lbs.
 - ▶ Shorter lengths and tighter turn radius especially popular in congested areas

Product: GMC's Sierra 1500 HD (available in either 2WD or 4WD crew cab short box models)

Best features:

- ▶ Vortec 6000 SFI V-8 engine
- ▶ Sunshade extender
- ▶ OnStar available on SLE
- ▶ 7-way to 4-way trailer adapter included with Z82 training package
- ▶ Fog lamps now included with SLT

Product: Chevrolet's Silverado 1500

Best features:

- ▶ Powered by Vortec 4300 SFI for a V-6 engine or a Vortec 4800 or 5300 SFI for V-8 engines
- ▶ Available in either automatic or manual transmission
- ▶ Air conditioning is standard on all trim levels
- ▶ Remote keyless entry available on base models

Dodge

Product: 2001 Dodge Ram (available in both two-wheel drive and four-wheel drive in regular cab, club cab and quad cab and various box sizes and payload capacities.)

Best features:

- ▶ The Ram quad cab features two rear-hinged doors in the back of the cab that serve as convenient access for people or a large storage area for gear
- ▶ Available in a wide range of Magnum V-6, V-8 and V-10 gasoline engines, along with the Cummins turbo diesel engine
- ▶ Four-speed automatic or five-speed manual transmission is available
- ▶ Dodge Magnum gas engines feature sequential multi-port fuel injection (SMPI) for immediate throttle response and a flat torque range that delivers load carrying power
- ▶ High-flow exhaust manifolds combine with tuned port and combustion chamber configurations for maximum horsepower

Product: 2001 Dodge Dakota quad cab

Best features:

- ▶ Four full-size doors with six-passenger seating and great towing and hauling capability
- ▶ Offers a range of engines with four Magnum engine choices. Two optional Magnum V-8s — the only two in the compact pickup segment — include the 230-hp 4.7-liter engine and the 250-hp 5.9-liter V-8. Can be coupled to a fully automatic, electronically controlled automatic transmission with a dual ratio second gear
- ▶ A 6700-lb. maximum towing capacity and 2,100-lb. maximum payload

Product: 2001 Dakota R/T compact pickup

Best features:

- ▶ Equipped with a 5.9-liter Magnum V-8 engine and a large-bore, free-flow exhaust that delivers increased engine performance
- ▶ The 250-hp engine is mated to a four-speed transmission and supported by

255/55x17-in. tires. The Dakota R/T is lowered one inch and features suspension tuning and front and rear stabilizer bars

Ford

Product: 2001 F-150 Supercrew

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Best features:

- ▶ SUV-sized cabin with four full size doors for up to six adults, with the added versatility of a pickup box
- ▶ An under-8,500-lb. (3,856 kg) gross vehicle weight (GVW) pickup truck with four full size doors and full rear passenger compartment
- ▶ Its foundation is the chassis of the 139-in. wheelbase SuperCab
- ▶ The pickup box measures 1.7 metres (5.5 ft.) long and is the same width at the wheel-houses as the rest of the F-150 lineup
- ▶ Offers a choice of two Triton V-8 engines, both of which meet federal Low Emission Vehicle (LEV) standards, combined with a proven F-Series 4-speed automatic transmission
- ▶ The 4.6-litre SOHC Triton V-8 delivers 220 hp at 4,500 rpm and 290 lb. ft. of torque at 3,250 rpm. The 5.4-litre SOHC Triton V-8 churns out 260 hp at 4,500 rpm with torque of 350 lb. ft. at 2,500 rpm
- ▶ Standard four-wheel anti-lock braking system (ABS)

Product: 2001 F-Series Super Duty trucks (250/350/450/550)

Best features:

- ▶ Super Duty F-350 DRW equipped with the 7.3L Power Stroke turbo diesel engine with 11,500 GVWR. The 7.3L Power Stroke turbo diesel engine has even more horsepower and torque this year
- ▶ All Super Duty F-Series pickups will be trailer-ready with a standard trailer towing package, and a 4-wheel Antilock Braking System (ABS) is standard on all trim levels
- ▶ Three different engines are available — the standard 5.4L SOHC Triton V-8 is rated at 260 hp and 350 lb.-ft. of torque; the 7.3L Power Stroke turbo diesel V-8 produces 250 hp (15 more than last year) and 505 lb.-ft. of torque with the automatic transmission,

and 275 hp and 520 lb.-ft. of torque when joined to a manual transmission; the 6.8L SOHC Triton V-10 puts out 310 hp and 425 lb.-ft. of torque

- ▶ A 5-speed manual overdrive transmission is standard with the gasoline-powered Super Duty F-Series and features wide ratio gearing to quickly reach maximum torque. A 6-speed manual overdrive transmission is standard on Super Duty F-Series trucks equipped with Ford's Power Stroke turbo diesel engine
- ▶ The optional 4-speed automatic transmission has an automatic tow-haul feature that adjusts shift patterns for hilly terrain, heavy tow loads and high altitude driving
- ▶ All Super Duty F-Series pickups are trailer-ready with the trailer tow package as standard equipment
- ▶ Super Duty F-350, F-450 and F-550 chassis cabs have the power trains to suit the diverse needs of commercial and governmental fleets

Hino

Product: FB medium-duty Class 5 truck

Best features:

- ▶ An 11,000-lb. body and payload capacity
- ▶ It can be specked as a flatbed, with stake beds or with a small dump body
- ▶ Powered by a turbo intercooled, four-valve overhead cam engine and driven through a five-speed direct drive transmission, or optional four-speed automatic
- ▶ Its cab-over design makes driving in tight residential areas easy
- ▶ Cab features an enlarged interior with room for three people
- ▶ A six-way adjustable air-ride driver's seat with improved support on a chassis that is supported by long, taper-leaf springs



FB medium-duty Class 5 truck

Product: Utility Service Van (USV)

Best features:

- ▶ Designed for the business that needs a stand-up work area and maximum storage space for tools and equipment
- ▶ Spacious interior and exterior compartments supply abundant storage for equipment and supplies and are quickly accessible with the walk-through cab design
- ▶ A large, open cargo space provides extra hauling room and doubles as a covered work center.
- ▶ Up to 65% more storage space than a conventional van and up to two tons of payload capacity.

Product: Grand Challenger

Best features:

- ▶ Body is constructed with galvanized steel and designed to match the style of your truck cab
- ▶ Contoured sides, concealed hinges, a flush tailgate, and fuel fill doors
- ▶ Keyed alike locks, double panel steel doors, and weather-tight seals
- ▶ Adjustable shelves and material trays

Mitsubishi Fuso

Product: 2002 FE-SP with crew cab

Best features:

- ▶ Hauls seven people to a job site with its new 175-hp engine
- ▶ Can handle any application with 14,500-lbs. GVWR

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Isuzu's 2002 low cab forward Crew Cab (NPR-HD and NQR)

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- ▶ Accommodates landscaping dump bodies in the 13- to 14-ft. range and lawn service bodies up to 16- to 17-ft.

Toyota

Product: 2001 Tundra full-size pickup truck

Best features:

- ▶ I-Force V-8 engine is the only double overhead cam (DOHC), 32-valve V8 ever offered in a full-size pickup
- ▶ Electronic Throttle Control System with intelligence (ETCS-i)
- ▶ Toyota Direct Ignition system (TDI)
- ▶ Standard V-6 engine with four-speed automatic or five-speed manual transmission
- ▶ Optional V-8 engine with four-speed automatic transmission

Product: 2001 Tacoma Stepside

Best features:

- ▶ Part of a value package that includes several upgrades
- ▶ Available on regular and Xtracab 4x2 Tacoma models, powered by either four-cylinder or V-6 engines

- ▶ Cargo box is a solid steel unit

Isuzu

Product: 2002 NQR

Best features:

- ▶ A gross vehicle rating of 17,950 lbs. and a body/payload range from 11,733 to 11,965 lbs.
- ▶ Body lengths range from 12 to 20 ft. with a choice of four different wheelbase lengths
- ▶ A straight channel ladder-type frame with a section modulus of 7.20 cu. in. and a Resistance Bending Moment (RBM) of 316,800 lbs.
- ▶ Equipped with front and rear semi-elliptical, multi-leaf springs and shock absorbers
- ▶ A front stabilizer bar contributes to greater handling and steering capabilities
- ▶ Equipped with ABS
- ▶ 4.75-liter, 4HE1-TC, four-cylinder diesel engine
- ▶ It incorporates an overhead cam engine design and direct fuel injection. This 4HE1-TC is rated at 175 gross hp @ 2,700 rpm and 347 ft.-lbs. gross torque @ 2,000 rpm
- ▶ NQR offers a choice of transmissions

Product: 2002 Low Cab Forward Crew Cab (NPR-HD and NQR)

Best features:

- ▶ Seats a crew of seven people comfortably

- three across in front and four abreast in back
- ▶ Available in two wheelbase configurations — a 150-in. wheelbase accommodates 12-ft. bodies and a 176-in. wheelbase handles 16-ft. bodies
- ▶ The Crew Cab's diesel engine, coupled with a four-speed overdrive automatic transmission, delivers 175 hp at 2700 rpm
- ▶ Visibility is enhanced with an oversized panoramic view front windshield
- ▶ The NPR-HD Crew Cab is rated at 14,500 lbs. GVWR. The NQR is rated at 17,950 lbs.
- ▶ NPR-HD Crew Cab features 4,500 lb. GVWR; 150-in. wheel base and 176-in. wheel bases; accommodates 12-ft. bodies
- ▶ NQR Crew Cab features 17,950 lb. GVWR; 150-in. wheel base and 176-in. wheel base; accommodates 16-ft. bodies.

Product: 2002 Class 6-7 F-Series commercial trucks

Best features:

- ▶ Class 6 FSR, Class 6 to 7 FTR and Class 7 FVR are powered by an Isuzu 6HK1-TC diesel engine in two horsepower configurations
- ▶ The 7.8-liter overhead cam engine is turbocharged, intercooled and equipped with electronic fuel injection
- ▶ Installed in the FSR and FTR, the six-cylinder diesel develops 200 hp at 2400 rpm and 441 ft.-lbs. gross torque at 1500 rpm. The version used in the higher payload FVR diesel engine develops 230 hp at 2400 rpm and 506 ft.-lbs. gross torque at 1500
- ▶ All F-Series models include as standard an Isuzu MLD6Q six-speed manual overdrive transmission, synchronized in gears two through six. The transmission has a standard power take off (PTO) opening. Optionally available in the FSR and FTR is an Allison

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"The most valuable truck we use...was custom built to accommodate our needs for large landscaping contracts."
 — Ryan Hughes, Hughes Nursery

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AT545 four-speed automatic transmission

Textron Golf, Turf & Specialty Products

Product: Cushman Turf-Truckster work vehicles

- ▶ Added power, bigger payloads and durable, unibody construction
- ▶ Easily withstand the rigors of daily use without neglecting operator comfort
- ▶ Carrying capacity is 2,500 lbs. for the three-wheel version and 2,850 lbs. for the four-wheel version
- ▶ Improvements include 30% more cargo capacity, an independent-axle front end for a smoother ride and tighter turning radius, and stiffer molded plastic unibody construction
- ▶ The floorboard, hood, front end and instrument panel resist damage from rust and impact
- ▶ Powered by a choice of 18- to 34-hp gas or 22.3-hp diesel engines
- ▶ Operator amenities include car-style foot pedals, a console shifter, increased legroom, a 12-volt power plug outlet and a dashboard storage tray

John Deere

Product: E-Gator utility vehicle

Best features:

- ▶ Powered by a quiet electric motor
- ▶ Designed for customers concerned with operational sound levels and exhaust emissions, the electric utility vehicle is a clean, quiet and efficient option for a variety of landscape applications
- ▶ The electric utility vehicle provides the same advantages of the gas and diesel models — low ground pressure to help prevent ground compaction, smooth operation that's easy to learn, safety protections, durability for long life and easy access to service points

for convenient maintenance

▶ Designed for quick acceleration and steady performance between chargings, the electric utility vehicle offers numerous features, including overspeed and roll-away control

▶ A speed control feature governs the vehicle at a top speed of 15.5 mph and helps maintain a constant speed when traveling up or down inclines. Top reverse speed is 8 to 10 mph. The vehicle retains full torque even when on an incline

▶ Equipped with a directional change control

that's designed to slow the vehicle to a stop when changing direction from forward to reverse

Product: 6x4 Gator

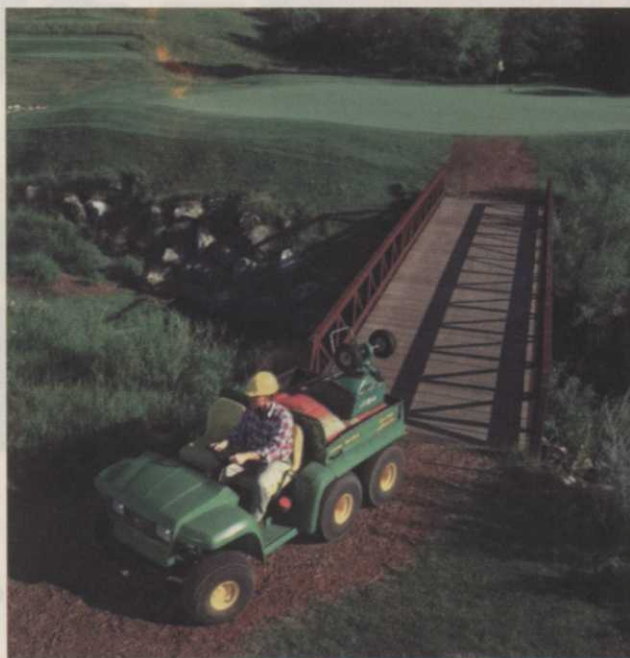
Best features:

- ▶ An 18-hp, liquid-cooled engine
- ▶ For extra traction, the 6x4 provides full-time four wheel drive and differential lock
- ▶ Arc-welded unibody design and front suspension
- ▶ 1,200-lb. towing capacity
- ▶ Low ground pressure and a low center of gravity

Product: 6x4 diesel Gator

Best features:

- ▶ Three-cylinder, 18-hp liquid-cooled Yanmar diesel engine
- ▶ Towing capacity of 1,400 lbs.
- ▶ Low ground pressure and a low center of gravity allow these heavy-duty haulers to



6x4 Gator

work on turf without leaving ruts or marks

Sterling (a subsidiary of Freightliner LLC)

Product: Acterra

Best features:

- ▶ Available in four different models, covering each of the weight classes from Class 5 to mid-range class
- ▶ Can be customized to fit customers' needs. Models are: the 5500, with a GVWR of 19,500 lbs.; the 6500 at 26,000 lbs.; the 7,500 at 33,000 lbs.; and the 8500 at 64,000 lbs.
- ▶ Chassis lowering tires and wheels
- ▶ Horizontal, vertical or transverse exhaust
- ▶ Radiator mounted grille
- ▶ Quick access hood openings
- ▶ Tow hooks—front, rear or both
- ▶ Back-of-cab access package for tractors
- ▶ Two-person passenger seat with tool box

TRUCK *accessories*

Lend a hand

The HitchHand provides short bed truck and SUV owners with a safe, low cost alternative for transporting lengthy, off-balanced cargo loads. The HitchHand measures 59 1/2 in. long, 27 to 49 in. in adjustable width; fits any standard t2-in. box receiver hitch; extends a truck bed an extra 38 in. (from edge of the downed tailgate); supports more than 750 lbs. in cargo load; weighs 46 lbs.; and fits behind the seat of a truck when not in use. It can convert any truck into a hauler of ATVs, motorcycles, canoes, kayaks, surfboards and sailboats. For more information, visit their web site at www.hitchhand.com/ / Circle no. 277

Well-received

Draw-Tite's Titan receivers are designed for full size long wheel base trucks, vans and utility vehicles with full frames and heavy duty suspensions. It has a 12,000-lb. Gross Trailer Weight (GTW) capacity and a 14,000-lb. GTW weight distributing capacity. The sturdy receivers are constructed with a secure heavy duty side bracket design, a 2 1/2-in. square receiver tube opening and an all frame attachment. The receiver unit has a pin, clip, receiver tube cover and welded electrical bracket. For more information contact Draw-Tite at 800/521-0510 or visit their web site at www.draw-tite.com/ / Circle no. 278

Lots o' trailin'

Bri-Mar Manufacturing's DT 612-

12 LPHD carries and dumps 4.6 cu. yds. of material. It features D-ring tie downs to secure equipment like skid loaders, small backhoes and other large payloads. With a 12,000-lb. GVWR, it also features a 6-ft. x 12-ft. bed size and twin telescopic cylinders. For more information, contact Bri-Mar Manufacturing at 800/732-5845 / Circle no. 279

Spray trucks

Westheffer Company, Inc. offers a wide range of spray trucks, from enclosed truck bodies to stainless steel truck beds, all sizes and configurations of tanks,

gas engines or PTO-powered pumps. For more information, contact Westheffer Company, Inc. at 785-843-1633 or visit www.westheffer.com/ / Circle no. 280

Equip yourself

The 2001 Adrian Steel pickup truck equipment catalog features all kinds of pickup toolboxes, each with a three-year/36,000-mile product warranty. The toolboxes are constructed of diamond tread aluminum with low profile domed lids and push-button locks. Low profile side mount boxes, single lid saddle boxes and double lid crossover boxes are available to fit both full-size and compact trucks. For more information contact Adrian Steel Company at 800/677-2726 or visit www.adriansteel.com/ / Circle no. 281

Tool and fuel

Northern Tool & Equipment Company's combo tool box and built-in auxiliary fuel tank is available in four styles in bright diamond tread plate aluminum. Tanks have a withdraw tube, return and drain fitting and a blank plate to mount a fuel pump or gauge sending unit. For more information contact Northern Tool & Equipment Co. at 612-894-9510 / Circle no. 282



Sturdy steel

Reading's Redi-Dek is a sturdy steel platform offering the ability to use 2x4 stake posts or pull a gooseneck trailer. All body parts are electrically welded into one integral unit. The Redi-Dek receives Reading's Lectro-Life immersion priming to protect against rust. In the Lectro-Life® process, the platforms are submerged in a vat of electrically-charged primer adhering the paint to the steel. The Redi-Dek (including understructure) is finished with a black top coat. For more information contact Reading Body Works, Inc. at 610/775-3301 or visit www.readingbody.com / Circle no. 283



8300/8800



- Our Model 8300 and 8800 (not shown) utilize a high torque fully reversible Eaton hydraulic motor.
- The Model 8300 attaches to the bottom or side of your front-end loader.
- The Model 8800 attaches to a Category I 3-point hitch.

8900



- The Model 8900 utilizes a high torque fully reversible Eaton hydraulic motor with a planetary gear driven system.
- The 8900 attaches to a Category I or II 3-point hitch, skid-steer or on the side of your front-end loader.

G20/40 (Not Shown)

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- The G20/40 gearbox contains a forged ring gear and pinion equipped with Timken bearings.

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Models MDH1 and MD6 level with tractor 3-point hitch.

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- Can drive 8' or 10' (depending upon model) length, up to 6" diameter wood or steel T-Posts.
- One operating lever controls drive weight through the complete driving cycle.
- Category I or II 3-point hitch.

- MD6** - PTO driven
- MDH1** - Hydraulic driven
- BMDH** - Boom mounted, hydraulic driven

RETROFIT SAFETY GUARDING is available for all older Danuser models! We encourage you to get current guarding installed on your older machines.