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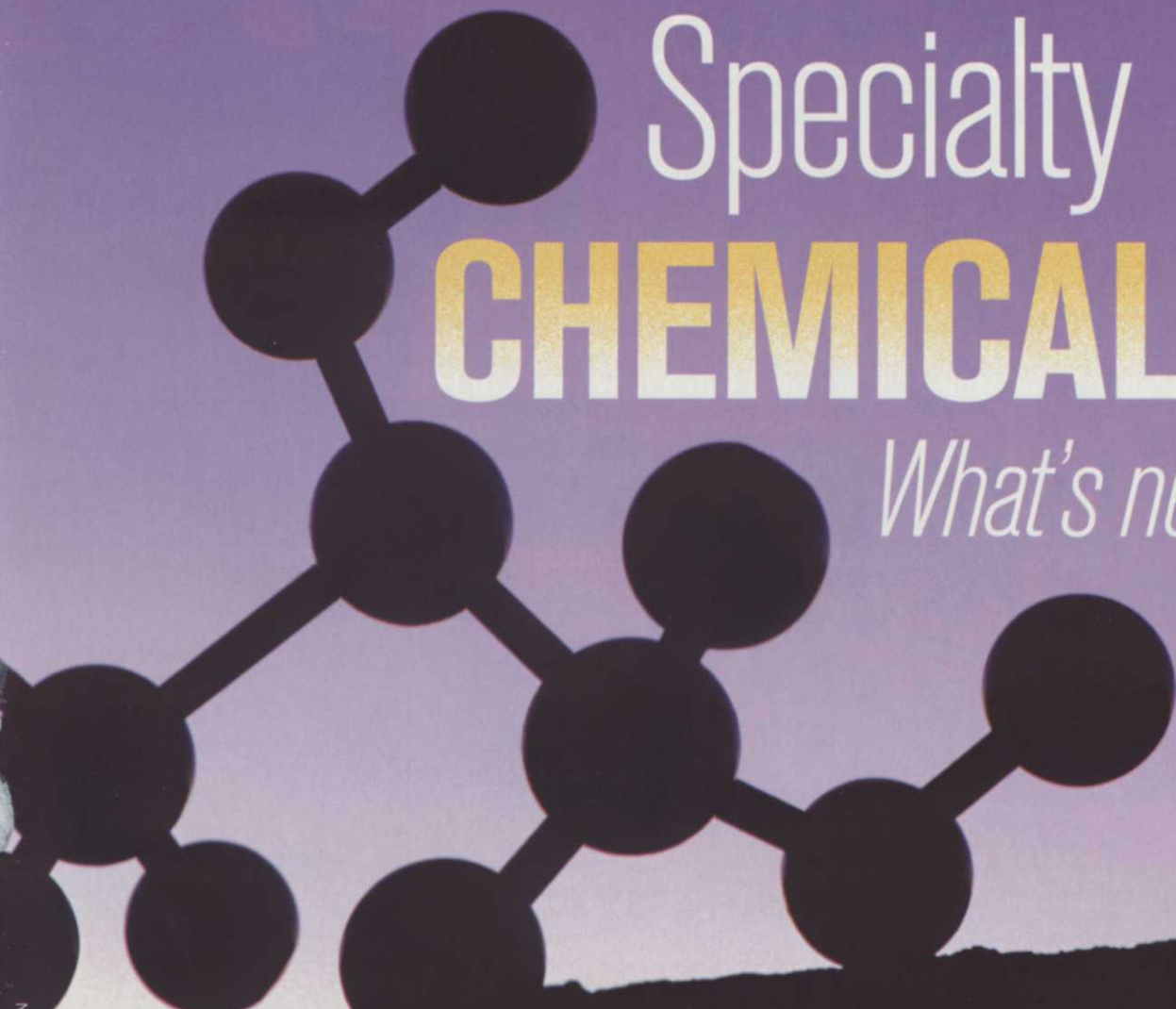
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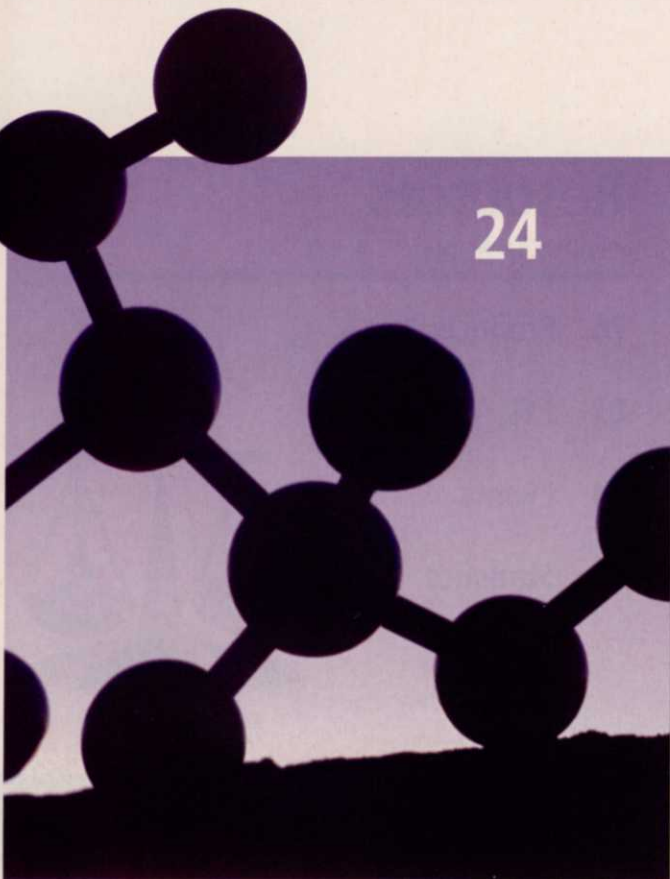
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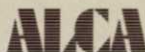


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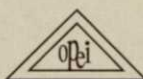
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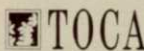
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How to Spot Brown Patch

The symptoms of brown patch can vary depending on the grass cultivar, soil, climatic and atmospheric



conditions, as well as intensity of the turfgrass management. Brown patch typically causes rings or patches

of blighted turfgrass that measure 5 inches to more than 10 feet in diameter. It also causes leaf spots and "smoke rings"—thin, brown borders around the diseased patches that appear most frequently in the early morning. After the leaves die in the blighted area, new leaves can emerge from the surviving crowns. On wide-bladed species, leaf lesions develop with tan centers and dark brown to black margins.

Brown patch favors high humidity as well as temperatures of over 85 degrees Fahrenheit during the day and over 60 degrees Fahrenheit at night. Brown patch can be quite active at cool temperatures on warm-season grasses in the spring and fall. It also occurs in areas that experience more than 10 hours a day of foliar wetness for several consecutive days.

Brown patch infestation is more severe when the turf is cut to a height less than the optimum for the turfgrass being grown.



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Mowers and chemicals

BY RON HALL / Editor-in-Chief

In this month's issue, we focus on specialty chemicals and zero turn radius mowers, two tools that allow us to maintain customers' properties professionally and efficiently.

Safety is the subject of our mower coverage. Today's ZTRs are shiny, fast and can literally mow circles around the commercial mowers we counted on just a decade ago. Manufacturers entice us with their colorful paint jobs (OK, forget lavender and pink) and with names promising toughness and speed. The Tank. Dixie Chopper. Warrior. Tiger.

These low-slung machines give the maintenance business a measure of sex appeal, and young men look at showroom floor models with the same admiring eyes that my buddies and I used to reserve for, say, a cherry '57 Chevy.

But ZTRs aren't kids' play. They're big-time work machines, and operators have to realize this.

In this issue, some of the best professional mowing operators in the country tell longtime safety editor Barbara Mulhern about ZTR safety. Her report is a must read; you'll learn something new that you can use in your safety training immediately.

Basic manufacturers bullish

In this issue, I also get a chance to do some writing after interviewing some of the top minds in the specialty chemical business. We think it's vital that you know what's going on here. Consolidation, ever-tighter government regulation and activist agitation over so-called "cosmetic use" of chemical pest control products keep this segment of the industry bubbling.

Find out how the biggest players on the chemical side bring important products to the landscape market, including some of the newest molecules showing

promise against landscape and turf problems. We think you'll be encouraged.

What we learned — and what you'll discover when you read our coverage — is that, while there are fewer basic manufacturers than a generation ago, the survivors are more committed than ever to our industry. They say the Green Industry, in particular landscaping and lawn care, will continue to grow, and they see themselves continuing to develop and bring out new products to meet the demands of this growth.

Toronto battle continues

And while we're on the subject of special chemicals, keep abreast of what's going on in Canada, specifically the situation in Toronto in our "In the Know" section. The debate over a controversial bylaw to severely restrict the use of chemical control products that went into effect April 1 there has been taking some strange twists lately. A battle between the professional lawn care industry and the bylaw's supporters is underway to gain the public's attention and support there, and it's not clear yet which side will prevail. Or whether a compromise can be reached.

This is a huge issue for the Green Industry. What happens in Toronto can happen in your town, too.

.....
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ZTRs aren't kids' play. They're big-time work machines, and operators have to realize this.



Make it easy for your account managers to sell extras by developing a price list.

Enhancement sales how-to

BY BRUCE WILSON

Now that the spring rush is over, many of you are focusing on selling enhancements to hit your budget numbers. While there's no such thing as a sure thing, you'll stand a better chance of meeting or exceeding your enhancement sales goals if your plan includes the following time-proven methods.

Hurray, it's client budget time! Be there. Be involved. Be helpful. Get involved with your clients' budget process. That's the best method for selling enhancements. That's the time to offer your clients recommendations for work that they could (and likely should) be doing in the next season. Maybe you want to break it down into categories as follows:

- ▶ Specific projects, for instance, a redesign and re-landscape at the main entry
- ▶ Landscape repairs for vandalism based on historical information for the site
- ▶ Irrigation repairs based on historical information for the site
- ▶ Budget for large tree pruning.

You must have sales targets. Each of your account managers should have a specific goal for enhancement sales as a percentage of their contract base sales. If you consider an enhancement sale as a


sale of a service or product that's a one-time sale to a client that isn't part of the contracted service, such as mulch or annual color, then many companies go with a target of 25% of the contract base or the account manager's book of business. Track the progress of each account manager against his or her goal.

Make selling easier. Make it easy for your account managers to do their proposals. Have you developed some standard pricing using unit prices, especially for smaller upgrades? If the account managers have a price list with them, they can often sell the enhancements during a walk-through with a client and have them sign a handwritten work authorization. There's no reason to make it difficult.

Regular promotions? You bet. Consider promoting a different type of service or product for each month of the year. For instance, sell spring color with a fall bulb planting special. Some companies do promotions of particular types of plants, or an extra service such as aerifying. Here's one I bet you've never considered: Pick out a couple of outdoor receptacles for cigarette butts to sell to customers for placement by areas where employees take smoking breaks.

Set aside time to brainstorm with your account managers to consider new opportunities, perhaps even services you've never offered before. Remember, the customers will always consider upgrade ideas that enhance their businesses. If you're just selling them extra work so that you maintain your own billing targets, the customer will tire of the constant extras.

— *The author is a partner with Green Industry entrepreneur Tom Oyler in the Wilson-Oyler Group, which offers consulting services. He is also the Director for the Symbiot Landscape Network. Visit www.wilson-oyler.com.*



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Toronto pesticide bylaw upheld

Compromise version rejected; lawn care pros stunned

BY JASON STAHL / Managing Editor

TORONTO — It's hard to find a lawn care professional with a smile on his or her face here after the May 21 vote by city councilors to ban all pesticides from private property. Just two days before, things had looked really good for them after councilors voted 6-5 to allow chemical usage on lawns if the amount of weeds was 5% or more of the total area.

"We were winning," said a stunned Lorraine Van Haastreht, co-owner of Dr. Green and member of a group of lawn care companies called the Toronto Environmental Coalition. "The media were coming up to us on Wednesday and saying, 'We think you won.' But the Mayor (David



Miller) whipped the vote and we had no chance of winning. He strong-armed anyone in the middle or soft on our side."

More disturbing to Van Haastreht was that homeowners will be allowed to use pesticides until 2007, while lawn care companies will be fined for doing so starting in September 2005. It hasn't been determined yet whether golf courses, lawn bowling greens or cemeteries will be exempted from the ban.

More than 200 lawn care pros wore green to stand out in Toronto city hall chambers.

"It just came down to a completely political issue. If you just move forward and let democracy work, it was a normal solution — a 70% reduction in pesticide use," she said. "For whatever reason that didn't happen. What sense does it make to take the products out of the professionals' hands and into the homeowners'?"

The original bylaw was passed by council a year ago and took effect April 1. As part of a compromise, however, council didn't make a decision on when insecticides and herbicides could be used in exceptional cases of a pest or weed infestation. Two committees voted to ease the restrictions, but council rejected that.

Chris Lemcke, Technical Coordinator of Weed Man USA, reiterated Van Haastreht's comments that the vote was purely political.

"It's just that David Miller is anti-business and that most of the councillors lean left and it went down those lines," Lemcke says.

Lemcke's next plan of action is to scrutinize the constitutionality of the bylaw. He claims it discriminates against disabled people who cannot apply chemicals on their own and must hire a lawn care company.

No-spray zones near Oregon rivers remain

PORTLAND, OR — A federal judge recently ordered no-spray zones to remain in effect around thousands of miles of salmon streams in Washington, Oregon and California despite the claims of hardship by pesticide manufacturers and farmers.

The order denies the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency from allowing aerial spraying within 100 yards and ground spraying within 20 yards of any stream that's important to salmon or steelhead stocks listed under the Endangered Species Act.

The judge also ordered the EPA to

develop point-of-sale precautions to retail consumers that certain lawn and garden chemicals "may harm salmon or steelhead" and that use in urban areas can pollute salmon streams.

The restricted products include insect sprays and dusts containing the widely used active ingredients carbaryl, diazinon and malathion, as well as the weed killer 2,4-D.

The no-spray order will remain in effect while pesticide makers and farm groups appeal the original ruling from a lawsuit brought by environmental advocates and fishing groups.

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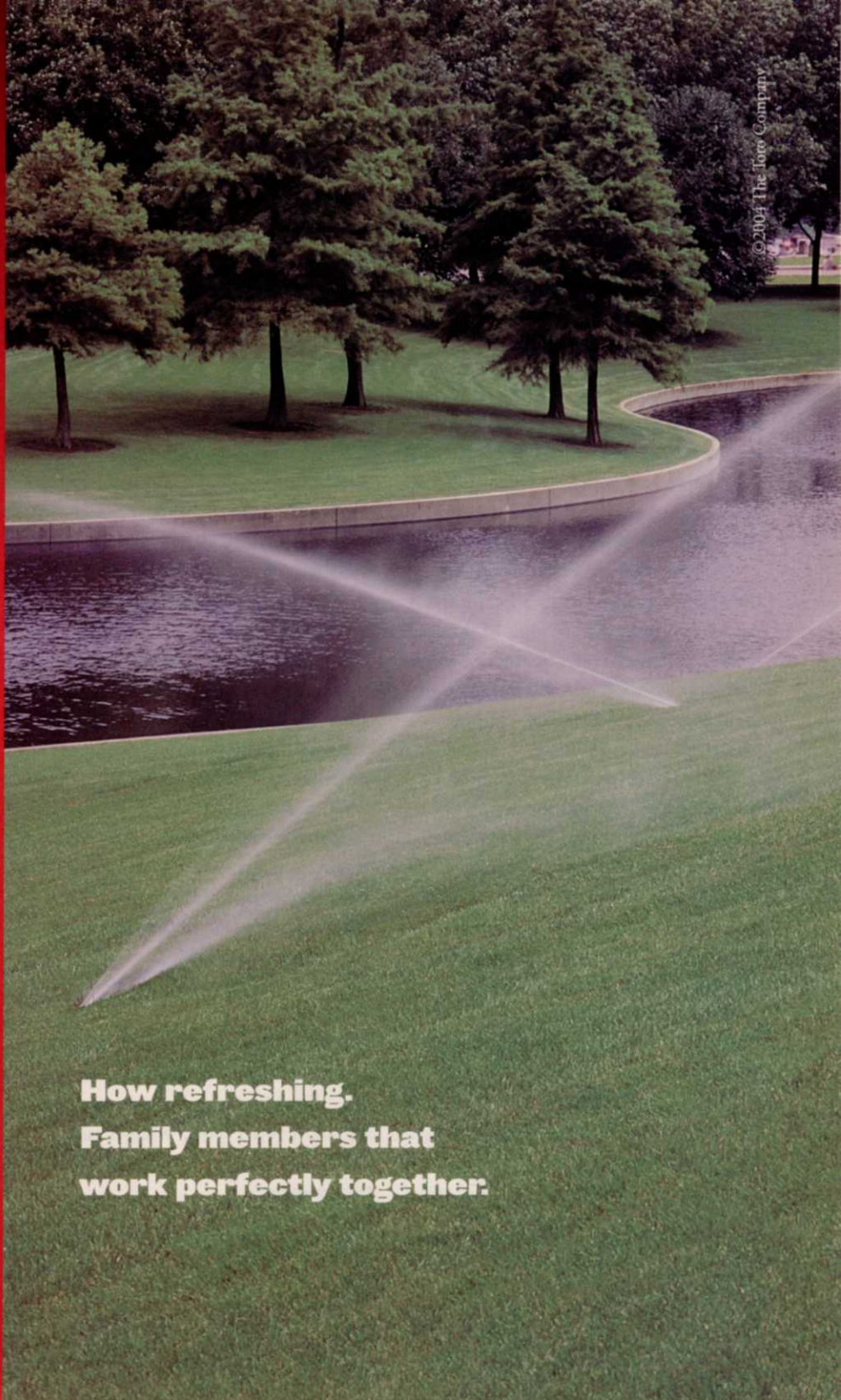
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Circle 111



Count on it.

Water solutions at ASIC Conference

BY JASON STAHL

NEWPORT BEACH, CA — The heat was on, so to speak, at the American Society of Irrigation Consultants' (ASIC) 21st Annual Conference held here May 1-4. Temperatures hovered near 100° F, and wildfires raged in nearby Riverside County.

Despite the searing heat, Southern California was a perfect location for the conference given the hot topic of the weekend: "Smart Water Solutions." Irrigation plays a pivotal role in water management and insuring adequate water supplies there.

That message was driven home by a myriad of speakers, one of whom was Mark Limbaugh of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. Limbaugh told the over 200 conference attendees (the largest turnout yet) all about the Water 2025 Initiative, designed to prevent future crises and conflict in the West. The initiative was launched as the result of:

- ▶ Explosive population growth in the West — and fastest in nation
- ▶ Low precipitation
- ▶ Water shortages even in normal years
- ▶ Old infrastructure.

According to Limbaugh, the \$21 mil-

lion initiative's success will depend on four things:

- 1.** Conservation, efficiency and markets. "Viewing water as an asset, not an entitlement," Limbaugh says.
- 2.** Collaboration — cooperative approaches to help resolve the conflict
- 3.** Technology — reducing the cost of water treatment technologies
- 4.** Removal of institutional barriers and increase in interagency cooperation.

Dr. Dave Minner of Iowa State University also gave an interesting talk on "Landscape Management Practices to Increase Irrigation Efficiency." Given how droughts are becoming more frequent, Minner's advice was well-received.

"I always tell my students that it's as important to know when not to water as it is to know when to water," Minner said. "The trick is also not putting more water on turf than is needed."

Minner's strategy on preparing for a drought:

- ▶ Act before conditions become dry
- ▶ Avoid the temptation to over irrigate. Why? "Deep and infrequent watering builds better roots," Minner said. "Also, slightly dry soils produce better, thicker roots."



Partygoers at the ASIC Conference opening reception talk irrigation.

Turfgrass America has new owner

NAPLES, FL — Florida Citrus Holdings, LLC recently acquired Turfgrass America, the largest sod production company in the U.S. The company's primary lines of business include sod production for the landscape market, retail sod sales, and sports turf production and installation. Turfgrass America has operations in Texas, Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, Arizona and California.

JP Horizons unveils new program

PAINESVILLE, OH — JP Horizons, a Green Industry consulting team, has launched a new program called WIB-WOB (Working in your Business/Working on your Business). The goal of the program is to teach young business owners how to shift gears from being immersed in job tasks to being a visionary and seeking ways to maximize current contracts while developing in other areas. For more information visit www.jphorizons.com.

SS RentX expands presence in CO

DENVER, CO — National rental company HSS RentX recently announced the opening of a new location at 3675 South Santa Fe Drive in Englewood, expanding the company's footprint in the Denver metropolitan area. The announcement follows the opening of a new San Diego location late last year.

ValleyCrest celebrates 55th

CALABASAS, CA — ValleyCrest Companies celebrated its 55th year in business recently with a nationwide Cinco de Mayo bash honoring the companies' 7,500 employees. In honor of the anniversary,

continued on page 20

[CLIPPINGS]

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Chariot LX (shown) starting at \$79.99/month; 25–28 hp, 61–72 in. decks

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GREAT DANE

It's about time.

Husqvarna offers free equipment

CHARLOTTE, NC — When landscape professionals crash at night from a long, hard day on the job, they don't dream about castles or treasure chests or bodacious babes. No, they dream about a truck filled with all kinds of state-of-the-art landscape equipment...and it's all free.

That dream could come true thanks to Husqvarna, which is once again putting on its nationwide "Total Source Sweepstakes." The prize at the end of this rainbow? You guessed it: an official Husqvarna landscaper truck loaded with the latest Husqvarna outdoor power equipment.

The Isuzu N-Series truck features a landscaper body, gas-powered engine, automatic transmission, air conditioning, mower ramp and a full-size tool rack. It's loaded with a Husqvarna zero-turn mower, hydro walk, back-

pack blower, trimmer, hedge trimmer, chain saw and edger.

A second prize winner will be awarded a trip for two to a 2005 NASCAR race in Charlotte, including suite tickets, airfare and lodging. The third prize winner will receive a certificate for two to the King's Experience, the hands-on program that allows participants to handle a high performance race car at the Richard Petty Driving School.

All you have to do is find a computer, visit www.husqvarnatotalsource.com and head to the Green Industry Expo in Charlotte, NC November 4-6 to find out if your dream comes true. Deadline for sweepstakes registration is October 1, 2004. Dream on, baby.



A truck full of free equipment...could it be yours?

CLIPPINGS

continued from page 18

ValleyCrest also produced commemorative key chains, company shirts and a special publication honoring the company's achievements. ValleyCrest, founded in 1949, is privately held and has annual revenue of \$700 million.

Symbiot funded for expansion

LEXINGTON, KY — Symbiot Business Group, a consolidator in the Property Services Market and owner of the Symbiot Landscape Network, announced today it has received \$2 million dollars in funding from vSpring Capital, and the Rocky Mountain Investors, LLC. This represents Symbiot's first round of institutional funding.

BASF's Insignia registered in CA

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, NC — BASF recently announced its Insignia fungicide has received registration from the California Environmental Protection Agency. Insignia provides landscapers and golf course superintendents broad-spectrum, extended control of more than 15 major turfgrass diseases as well as suppression of dollar spot.

Lawn care associations partner for new turfgrass training

MARIETTA, GA — The Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) has always emphasized the importance of professional training in the lawn care industry. Recent evidence of that is the association's partnership with the Lawn Care Association of Pennsylvania (LCAP) to offer an independent course entitled, "Certified Turfgrass Professional — Cool Season Lawns."

"The independent study allows the participant to learn the subject at his own pace, without attending formal classes," said Gary Clayton, PLCAA Execu-

tive Vice President. "Like other educational and self-improvement activities, the more one puts into it, the more he or she will learn and benefit from the experience."

The course is designed to provide the beginning lawn care or landscape professional with a foundation for understanding the "hows and whys" of lawn and grounds management in the northern United States. It consists of 10 study sections, each covering a particular topic related to the management of cool-season lawns. Topics range from growth

and development to calibration of pesticide application equipment, with those topics most important to lawn care or landscape operations covered in the greatest detail.

The course was developed by Peter Landshoot, associate professor of Turfgrass Science at Penn State University, and Nancy Bosold, an extension agent with Penn State Cooperative Extension Service, in conjunction with LCAP and PLCAA.

Those interested in purchasing a copy of the self-study should contact PLCAA at 800/564-4322 or LCAP at 800/577-6801.

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Talstar PL granular insecticide is a sand-core granule that filters down through the grass, ground cover, and mulch to where insects live. It's heavy and dust-free so it won't drift off target. And it remains on the soil surface so it's effective even after irrigation or rainfall. Plus, it's effective for long-lasting control of hard-to-kill lawn and nuisance pests.

Talstar EZ granular insecticide has a larger particle size so it's easier to calibrate and easier to see where you apply it. Talstar EZ utilizes unique technology that allows particles to disperse and disappear upon wetting, providing increased coverage. Plus, it won't stain concrete or damage plants. It's effective around perimeters, on lawns and landscape areas for long-lasting control of common residential, turf and ornamental pests. (For use in California, FMC offers Talstar EZ CA and Talstar CA granular insecticides.)

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Project EverGreen continues fundraising effort

NEW PRAGUE, MN — The Evergreen Foundation is changing its name to Project EverGreen to better reflect its proactive goals to promote and defend the Green Industry. The organization exists to raise the awareness of the environmental, economic and lifestyle benefits of landscapes and maintained properties — and promote the significance of those who preserve and enhance green spaces at home, work and play.

"The name change more accurately reflects the urgency of our cause," said Paul McDonough, Co-Chair of the Board of Directors. "It's a name that more clearly describes our efforts to conduct a national marketing campaign. We need to educate and enlighten consumers and Green Industry professionals about all the benefits of well-maintained green spaces, but we also need to defend our industry against imminent threats."

The 5-year-old organization developed this direction and mission in mid-2003. Project Evergreen is an alliance of Green Industry service providers (end users), associations,

suppliers/distributors, media companies and others. In late 2004 or early 2005, depending on financial support from service providers and others, Project EverGreen will launch a national marketing campaign to consumers and promote the positive effects of well-maintained landscapes and lawns, sports turf, golf courses and parks.

Phil Fogarty, Co-Chair of Board of Directors with McDonough, said 2004 contributions thus far exceed \$300,000, about one-third of the way to the group's goal. Beginning July 1, Project EverGreen will contact about 200 companies and other associations to continue its drive to raise \$1 million in contributions to start the consumer campaign.

Project EverGreen is a 501c3 non-profit organization. To make a contribution, send to: Project EverGreen, 120 W. Main St., P.O.Box 156, New Prague, MN 56071.

For more information, visit www.projectevergreen.com or contact Gardner at 877/758-4835 or dengardner@projectevergreen.com.

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Circle 114

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Circle 115

People & companies

BASF Corporation appointed **M. Todd Henderson** Communications Manager for the Turf & Ornamental group.

Maravich to Technical Services Representative of the Technical Services Department.

Aquatrols made **Brian Blair** East Central Territory Manager.

FMC made several appointments to its Specialty Products Business, Agricultural Products Group:



(Left) **Brenda Franke**, Marketing Manager; **Amy O'Shea**, Marketing Manager and Export Zone Manager for Latin America North.

Naturalawn of America appointed both **Mark Nannenhorn** and **John Quintana** regional managers at the company's corporate office in Frederick, MD.

Ruppert Nurseries gave its 2003 Achievement Award to **Stan Clements**, its Impact Award to **Oswaldo Reyes**, and its Crewman of the Year Award to **Carlos Rivas** in the installation division and **Jose M. Cruz** in the tree-growing division.

Lifestyle Landscaping, North Ridgeville, OH promoted **David Hoffman** to President.

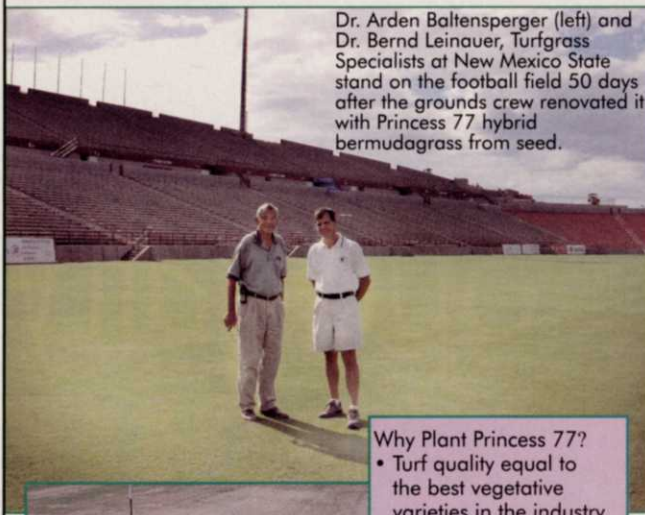
GreenScapes of Columbus, OH, received nine Marketing and Merchandising Excellence Awards and the Grand Marketing Award for an Associate Level Member of the Building Industry Association of Central Ohio at the 17th annual MAME (Marketing and Merchandising Excellence) Ceremony.

The **Engine & Equipment Training Council** (EETC) named **Toro** its "Manufacturer of the Year." The EETC also gave a "President's Award" to **Tecumseh Power Company** and **Tom Kane**, National Training Manager of **Kubota Tractor Corp.** **Briggs & Stratton Corp.** received the EETC's "Spirit Award."

Spring-Green Lawn Care Corporation named **James M. Young** Vice President of Franchise Development.

LESCO promoted **Luke Stratton** to Technical Services Manager and **Mike**

Princess 77 Helps New Mexico State Develop a Strong Field for Their Team



Dr. Arden Baltensperger (left) and Dr. Bernd Leinauer, Turfgrass Specialists at New Mexico State stand on the football field 50 days after the grounds crew renovated it with Princess 77 hybrid bermudagrass from seed.



Removal of the existing ryegrass revealed an 85 - 90% loss of Tifway (419) on the field.

Why Plant Princess 77?

- Turf quality equal to the best vegetative varieties in the industry
- Requires 21% less water than Tifway (419)*
- Provides an easy, cost effective tool for renovation projects

Following their first undefeated season at home, the New Mexico State University Aggies were looking to start the 2003 football season with their second consecutive home opening win. However, the players weren't the only people preparing for the upcoming season. The responsibility of having the field ready for play by the first snap of the ball fell on the shoulders of Bud Jones and the New Mexico State Grounds Crew.

Removal of the existing ryegrass revealed an 85 - 90% loss of Tifway (419) on the playing field. Renovation of the field using Princess 77 hybrid bermudagrass from seed solved the problem. 50 days later, the field was pronounced to be "at full density and in excellent condition." According to the grounds crew, Princess 77 held up "remarkably well" to the traffic of the first game.

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*Response of Bermudagrasses and Zoysiagrasses to Applied Water Using a Linear Gradient Irrigation Design, Sean Reynolds, 2000, Master's Thesis



Specialty

CHEMICALS:

What's next?

Manufacturers focus on wringing value from today's chemistry in the face of rapidly changing market forces

BY RON HALL / Editor-in-Chief

Editor's note: Specialty chemicals are vital to the ongoing growth of the Green Industry and, in particular, to those of us involved in the professional turf and landscape industry. Many forces are shaping our ongoing access to these products. In this report, we investigate market forces, dollars-and-cents forces, likely to have an impact on the products available to us and to those yet to be developed for our green market.

From his front yard, Jim Mohrman can look toward the cloud of water vapor hanging over the massive concrete cooling tower at the Davis Besse nuclear power plant 14 miles to the northeast. The farmland here in northwest Ohio, former marshland, is flat and its soil is heavy and fertile. Jim and his dad farm 300 acres of soybeans and, like most of their neighbors, they switched to Roundup Ready beans seven or eight years ago.

"Before, we would mix a couple of weed controls, one for grasses and another for broadleaves," says Mohrman. "Now we use a quart of Roundup in 18 gallons of spray per acre. We've tried as low as a pint per acre when the weeds were small and, sometimes, we didn't have to come back."

The stakes are high

What's Jim's farm got to do with us in the Green Industry?

On the surface, not much it would seem. Not right now anyway. But worldwide changes in agriculture caused by advances in biotechnology present just one of many chal-

lenges to the developers of chemical pest control products.

In the case of the millions of acres now planted in Roundup Ready and Bt-containing crops (a gene from *bacillus thuringiensis* is engineered into a crop to control destructive lepidoptera pests), it means reduced demand for many once-popular herbicides and insecticides, and it may mean less incentive to develop new ones. This has implications for us since many of the pesticides that we've relied upon have been developed for use in agriculture and then formulated and labeled for turf and ornamentals.

"The flow of new chemistry is going to be impacted by changes in the agricultural community," says Gary D. Curl, a longtime industry figure who now offers market research to the specialty chemical industry. "Companies are raising the bar in terms of the market potential to justify development of a new molecule."

With the cost of bringing a new active ingredient to the marketplace at \$100 million or more, the stakes are high.

An attractive market

It's never wise to overstate a case, however, and manufactur-

Ambitious study frames an industry

Gary D. Curl is the former business director of turf, ornamental and pest control products businesses at American Cyanamid (now BASF). He has more than 25 years experience in product development, marketing and business management in the specialty pesticide industry. In 2000, he formed Specialty Products Consultants, LLC (SPC), a market research and business development consultancy dedicated exclusively to the specialty pesticide industry.

He recently completed a benchmark analysis of the U.S. turf and ornamental pesticide market. As part of the ambitious study, Curl commissioned The Olson Research Group, Inc., Ewing, NJ, to interview more than 1,000 lawn care operators, golf course superintendents and ornamental plant producers.

The report is exhaustive at 383 pages. Understandably, it's been of great interest to those within the Green Industry that manufacture and distribute pest control products.

In the report, Curl says that nearly \$700 million (manufacturer level dollars) were spent in 2003 on fungicides, herbicides, insecticides and plant growth regulators in lawn care, golf course maintenance and ornamental plant production in the United States.

Other findings arising from the analysis:

- ▶ Professional lawn care operators are caring for about 3 million acres of residential and commercial turf.
- ▶ Nationwide, professional lawn care companies recorded revenues of \$4.2 billion for their service in 2003.
- ▶ Syngenta, led by its flagship fungicides Heritage (azoxystrobin) and Daconil (chlorothalonil), is the largest supplier of the U.S. turf and ornamental fungicide market.
- ▶ Bayer's Merit (imidacloprid) is the leading seller of insecticides by a wide margin.
- ▶ Dow AgroSciences is the third largest supplier with impressive sales of Dimension (dithiopyr) and other pre-emergent herbicides.
- ▶ Nearly two-thirds of the lawn care operators surveyed purchased from just eight distributors nationwide. Four out of 10 of those surveyed said their primary distributor was LESCO.

For more information about Specialty Products Consultants, LLC, visit the Web site www.spcresearch.com.

ers do develop or acquire chemistry specifically for T&O.

For example, FMC Specialty Products Business acquired the active flonicamid from an overseas partner and is readying a new insecticide to control suck-

ing plant pests such as aphids. The product will be introduced into the greenhouse/nursery market first and then into T&O.

Jim Walter, Business Development Manager, says the product is in registration and

may be available by year's end. The company also has a product in the works to control surface-feeding pests, but it's too early in the process to discuss, he adds.

The fact is the Green Industry remains an attractive market for specialty chemical makers with lawn care growing at a respectable 3-5% annually thanks to convenience-loving Boomers, strong home construction, growth in the South and Southwest with their long growing seasons and consumers' pride in their properties.

Jim Fetter, Director of Marketing, Bayer Environmental Sciences identified the following marketplace trends at a media event at the Bayer ES research facility in Clayton, NC, last summer:

- ▶ Consolidation at all levels in the channel (manufacturer, distributor, end user)
- ▶ Loss of older chemistry
- ▶ New and more restrictive regulations, slower registration turnaround
- ▶ Longer intervals between new product introductions
- ▶ New product life cycle shortening
- ▶ More targeted, less broad-based approach to pest control
- ▶ Increasing generic competition
- ▶ Growing emphasis on differentiation by manufacturers and distributors



Jim Walter

▶ Manufacturer, reseller and end user profitability pressure These shifts, to one degree or another, affect everyone who counts on the flow of new chemistry and chemical innovations to meet pest problems on the turfgrass and ornamentals they maintain. But what do these shifts mean to end users right now?

One of the biggest changes, as popular proprietary molecules go off patent, will be end users' access to a growing number of off-brand or so-called generic products. The attraction will be price. This isn't a new trend in the industry, but it will become more pronounced, say insiders.

"About 80% of the products in the marketplace will be generic," predicts Kyle Miller, Market Development Specialist at BASF, a company positioned in both branded and generic products. "And I think you're going to see companies making a big effort to improve their current products because it's going to be tougher to bring a new product to the market. You'll see a lot of people try to make something they have a lot better."

He points to his company's Pendulum AquaCap formulation of its popular pendimethalin pre-emergent herbicide. Miller describes



Jim Fetter

continued on page 28

A molecule's long, costly journey

A new molecule that makes it onto a distributor's shelf and eventually onto your customer's property takes a long, costly journey. So long and so expensive that it's fair to ask, will the basic manufacturers serving the turf & ornamental market continue to develop new chemistry?

Every basic manufacturer we interviewed said, "Yes."

"We are developing new products. We have products in herbicides, insecticides and fungicides that we're looking at that have potential for both turf and ornamental pest control," says Dr. David Ross, Technical Manager, TO, Syngenta Professional Products. "We're also going back and looking at active ingredients that might have been passed over in the past."

Having said that, bringing a new pest control compound to the market is a lot like playing high-stakes poker. For starters, the cost of discovering, developing and bringing a new chemical pest control product to the market starts at about \$100 million. The process can take from nine to 12 years, says Dr. Joe DiPaola, Golf Product Manger, Syngenta.

Why so much? Why so long?

Consider the steps involved — discovery of the active ingredient (a.i.), development of the a.i., government registration, production, formulation production, packaging development, basic manufacturer storage, shipping to distributors, distribution storage, shipping to customers, customer storage and, finally, end use.

Some of these processes can take place simultaneously. The company developing the compound wants the process to go as smoothly as possible so that it can maximize the return on its investment because a molecule has a patent life of 20 years. The clock starts ticking at discovery.

The cost and complexity of developing a new compound is one of the main reasons for consolidation within the chemical industry. Only a company with the necessary resources can screen as many as a half million candidate compounds annually.

"Automation and micro-technology have really driven the process forward," says Syngenta's Ross remembering when he was in charge of insecticide screens for Stauffer Chemical in 1987 and only able to test 350 compounds a month. "We can now run thousands of screens a day at our facilities (Jealott's Hill, England, and Stein, Switzerland). We do it on disks and with small amounts of plant and disease matter. We need just a tiny amount of material to test. That has greatly increased our chances of finding a new active ingredient."



Joe DiPaola

— RH

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continued from page 26

AquaCap as a much-improved liquid formulation, "a micro-encapsulated product so the active ingredient is, in a sense, protected. And, obviously, if you apply it to an off-target surface, it will rinse off with water very easily."

Miller says the formulation is a significant breakthrough, a water-based "capsule suspension," which offers reduced odor and makes the product easier to handle and mix, among other features. "They worked on this formulation for a long time," says Miller of the company's formulation scientists.

Similarly, FMC's Walter points to superior formulation as one of the keys for the ongoing market success of his firm's Talstar insecticide, one of several bifenthrin-containing products available to our industry.

Differentiation is key

Indeed, developing improved formulations and other value-added features, such as more convenient packaging and product delivery systems, are at the top of every manufacturer's "to do" list. Their goal is to differentiate their products, and maintain and grow market share in an increasingly competitive arena.

Consider the ubiquitous herbicide Roundup by Monsanto. Although its active ingredient glyphosate has been a weed control mainstay for decades and is marketed in products

under various names by a number of suppliers, Monsanto defends a premium brand status with formulation advances that increase its products' utility.



Kyle Miller

For example, working off the knowledge that landscape pros say their clients want to see faster results, Monsanto formulators created a dry weed control, Quick-Pro, based on Roundup technology. The company claims it delivers herbicidal activity within 24 hours.

Donald Suttner, Ph.D., Technical Lead for the T&O Business, says that a small group of researchers developed the glyphosate-based product in about 2 1/2 years, about half the time normally needed to bring a new product to market. "We would get versions of the product from our formulation/discovery group and we would take those out and field test them, and we would get as much evaluation data as we could," says Suttner. "Then we would cycle back to the formulation people with additional suggestions based on what we found."

"Customers have a lot of great ideas of how we can improve our products if we listen to them. We just have to have the imagination to figure out how to do it," adds Suttner.

Similarly, formulation scientists at Syngenta Professional Products have been successful in expanding the number of the company's products avail-

Putting a name to performance

Bam! The name hit Doug Obermann like a bolt from the big blue sky as he mowed the grass in his yard on a Saturday afternoon a couple of summers ago. The word "speed-zone" flashed into his consciousness.

"Gosh, I was thinking, here we have this new, unique, very fast-acting product and its primary ingredient is CAR-fen-tro-zone, and somehow the name popped up," recalls the Turf & Ornamental Product Manager for PBI Gordon Corporation. He shared his revelation with company marketers and, after a series of powwows, they applied the name to its newest broadleaf herbicide for turf. Later they mapped out a catchy NASCAR-related them. They were off to the races with what turned out to be a successful product launch.



Doug Obermann

In this case, a company took familiar compounds and combined them in new formulations for new or expanded uses. The broadleaf weed control SpeedZone employs a unique co-solvent technology, a mixture of carfentrazone-ethyl with phenoxies and dicamba.

David Fearis, T&O Product Specialist, says that PBI investigated 300 different formulations before hitting upon the one that the company finally took to market.

"We wanted to get it so that it obviously controls the weeds and doesn't allow regrowth for complete control. But we wanted to get it so that it doesn't burn the turf either," says Fearis.

Look for other new products from the Kansas City-based company in the near future, including a "combo" Trimec plus Dimension granular herbicide that received its registration this past winter, says Obermann. "It's a neat concept. You're getting broadleaf weed control and pre-emerge with the same application."

able in its popular MAXX (clear micro-emulsion concentrates) formulation.

"A turf and ornamental product is much more than just the active ingredient," explained Dr. Joe DiPaola, Syngenta's Golf Product Manager, at a company media event in Greensboro, NC, this past summer. A specialty chemical also contains inerts and impurities. How they're all made to come together is "like the Coca-Cola secret," he explained.

Even so, generic products producers claim their products compete in performance with similar branded offerings. They have access to knowledgeable formulators, too, they say.

What the long-term effect of the growth in the number of generic products might mean to the T&O market is uncertain. There's concern that if price becomes the determining factor in a product's success, it could eventually lead to less technical

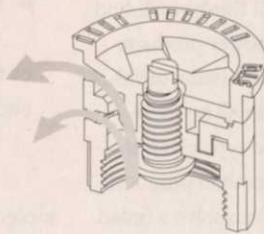
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continued from page 28
and sales support industry-wide by basic manufacturers.

Short term, this doesn't appear to be the case as a company like Bayer Environmental Science, an obvious example, ramps up its focus on our market as evidenced by the activity at its impressive Clayton, NC, research facility.

"We're not just taking what the agriculture side of the business is going to be launching and developing a little stream off of that for the non-crop area," says BayerES's Fetter. "We're starting at the customer level, at the baseline and then engineering products and solutions to satisfy customers' needs."

"And I don't mean just in terms of products, but also in supporting their businesses and providing marketing solutions among other things."

While the loss of older chemistry is obvious and well documented, and the stream of new molecules might not be as robust as we would like, major suppliers are still developing new pest control solutions.

Scott Eicher, Senior Product Marketing Manager for Dow AgroSciences, points to his company's new herbicide Spotlight with the active ingredient fluroxpyr, a chemistry that has had a U.S. registration since 1998.

"Spotlight provides our formulators and distributors with an essential tank-mix partner

for improved post-emergence broadleaf control, especially on clover," says Eicher. He adds that new mixtures of popular products such as Confront and Millennium Ultra with active ingredient fluroxpyr, replacing chlorpyralid, are on the horizon.

"Those registrations have been submitted to the EPA," says Eicher. "We've tried to make sure that the professional lawn care and landscape management companies won't miss a beat," he adds. "There was enough chlorpyralid-containing products with the residential label to get them through this spring, but those supplies should start dwindling by mid to late summer." Extensive testing indicates the control activity of the new formulations to be "as good, if not better" than the products that they're replacing, he adds.



Scott Eicher

"I think you'll find the newer products that are being developed will be more niche-type products rather than products that can solve a broad range of problems,"

adds Kyle Miller at BASF. "What most of us are trying to do, to some extent, is to fill in the voids. One example, perhaps, would be developing a product that takes orchardgrass out of tall fescue lawns."

Is it reasonable to expect more? Yes, say the manufacturers. They say the pipeline is half full, not half empty.

"We've got another new

Packaging: Yes, it matters a lot

If you witness what manufacturers do to test the delivery of their products to end users, you'll never look at a package in the same way again. We saw this firsthand at a recent tour of the Syngenta Professional Products headquarters in Greensboro, NC.

In a room filled with exotic mechanical equipment we watched in awe as packaging engineer Jason Monsees demonstrated what he does to packaging designs. Compression tests. Drop tests. Vibrations tests. It's medieval.

So important is packaging to a product's success that a company like Syngenta, as an example, relies upon the skills of four "packaging engineers" in its Professional Products Division for ensuring that its products progress through the supply chain and are delivered and, ultimately, used by Green Industry applicators in the most efficient, most cost-effective and safest manner possible.

"The package is really the delivery system of the formulation," says Tim Cotter, Syngenta Global Packaging Manager. "We make all of our packaging easy and convenient for the end user. Other important goals are safety and proper disposal."



Tim Cotter

- Cotter explains that packaging:
- ▶ communicates the positive attributes of the product,
 - ▶ reinforces the perception of value,
 - ▶ reinforces the perception of quality,
 - ▶ is a key part of the brand or product line image,
 - ▶ can be used to differentiate the product from the competition,
 - ▶ is the delivery system for the formulation and
 - ▶ continues to influence after the product is purchased.

The next time you open that chemical product, take note of the packaging and consider how it adds to the experience of using that product.

— RH

molecule that we'll know more about probably at the end of next year," says Dow's Eicher.

"I can say enthusiastically yes, there will be new products," continues Dr. David Ross, Technical Manager, T&O, Syngenta Professional Products. "We're continuing with our synthesis of new actives and testing a broad library of active ingredients from other companies. We haven't slowed down at all."

"We have several new products in the pipeline," adds BayerES's Fetter. "It's more challenging these days, but we have a number of new herbicides we're screening."

In spite of changing market conditions and fierce competition, the remaining major chemical manufacturers remain enthusiastic about our industry. "We see lawn care as a neat opportunity," says Fetter. "There's a healthy market there." **LMI**

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Say no to **ZTR** **mishaps**

Safety training strategies to keep zero-turn mower operators safe on your customers' properties

BY BARBARA MULHERN

They're speedy, low to the ground and can turn on a dime. Zero-turn radius (ZTR) mowers have improved productivity for landscapers, grounds maintenance and commercial lawn care crews. But they also bring with them a stepped-up need for safety training.

"Water, retaining wall drop-offs and slopes may expose walk-behind units to substantial damage, but present little risk of injury to an operator," says Bob Bogel, risk manager at Cagwin & Dorward in Novato, CA. "However, the same hazards mishandled while riding a ZTR with its high center of gravity offer a strong possibility of rollover and serious personal injury."

Bogel, whose company's landscape maintenance crews operate approximately 20 zero-turn mowers throughout the San Francisco Bay area, adds: "The speed and abrupt turning ability that make ZTRs so productive is a double-

continued on page 36



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continued from page 34

edged sword in terms of safety. This is particularly true on slopes. Any slope exceeding 15 degrees should be maintained with a walk-behind. Given the sharp turning radius and shorter time to react, operators must be alert to their surroundings to avoid the elevated risk of property damage."

Sam Steel, Director of Projects and Grants for the National Safety Council in Itasca, IL, says that zero-turn mowers "require well-trained operators who are aware of the sensitivity of the control levers and the importance of staying away from such potential hazards as slopes, wet mowing conditions and obstacles that could compound or increase the level of risk, such as

trees, plant beds, ponds or water retention areas, retaining walls and curbs."

Many of the zero turn-related injuries that occur, Steel says, are the result of excessive speed. "The operators are being pushed to complete the jobs in a very tight time frame. As a result of that, they're taking risks that get them into trouble," he says.

Brave or smart?

Just picture yourself operating one of these mowing wonders. It's your first opportunity to use this machine that's highly maneuverable, exceptionally fast (at least for a mower) and allows you to get the job done quickly — something you're certain your supervisor will appreciate. Why wouldn't



Roll bars offer zero-turn mower operators a measure of safety.

you clip along at a high speed and think about your plans for the evening rather than the risks at hand?

That's exactly what often does happen, and unfortunately it can result in serious injuries or even death.

David Kennedy, account manager at GroundMasters' Kentucky Branch, says speeding is the biggest zero-turn hazard he sees. This includes speeding "both in parking lots during transport and on the turf." Sudden stops while going backwards is also a problem. "Men being more brave than smart," he adds.

At The Bruce Company in Middleton, WI, Operations Manager Bob



Bob Schroeder

Schroeder says the biggest zero turn-related hazard he sees is "running into things. Operators think they can get into certain areas but they can't."

Schroeder, whose landscape contracting company has about two dozen of these units in use in Middleton, Milwaukee and Racine, WI, adds that "getting them to stop" is also a major problem. "On steep slopes, they may lose traction, then it (the mower) won't stop until it gets to the bottom — whatever that bottom may be," he says.

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Landscape company managers and operators should be aware of several other hazards when using these speedy mowers. Here are a few examples:

- ▶ "Operating without seat belts and roll bars," says Jason Hall, Account Manager at GroundMasters Tri-County Branch, headquartered in Cincinnati, OH.
- ▶ Jamie Jamison, Brandywine Nurseries, Wilmington, DE: "Safety issues we find are keeping the safety and operator's presence switches in operation, parking brakes, guards and shields."

Zero-turn training success

How do you get zero-turn mower operators and the companies that hire them to participate in effective safety training?



David Holmes

In Ocala, FL, Marion County Extension Service Director David Holmes says a hot lunch and a safety "rodeo" with prizes are good incentives for many of the workers he trains.

Holmes has conducted a one-day Lawn Maintenance Safety School for commercial landscapers and municipal workers the past several years. The school gets "good industry support" from equipment manufacturers, he says.

"We offer four one-hour training sessions in the morning, serve lunch and offer a safety driving rodeo in the afternoon," Holmes says. The sessions always include zero-turn and front deck mower safety, and rotate various other topics such as back and lifting safety, chemical safety, driving safety and tractor safety.

"We have made it a point to serve hot lunch, a reward for many of these workers, then offer the driving rodeo, which consists of three event courses — zero-turn mower, large tractor and walk-behind mower," Holmes says.

"We conduct evaluations at the end of the classes, and worker responses have always been positive. They have indicated they learned something that they would change in the way of their 'safety practices.' Winners in the safety rodeo are always very proud of their trophies.

"I suspect companies that have invested time in their workers and have showed concern for their welfare by sending them to this school have had more loyal, dedicated workers and better worker retention in the long run, but I have no data to prove this," he continues. "To further encourage participation, we supply a certificate of training, which is mailed to the employer after workers have completed their training. Some indicate this is useful for insurance purposes, and all need it for OSHA purposes."

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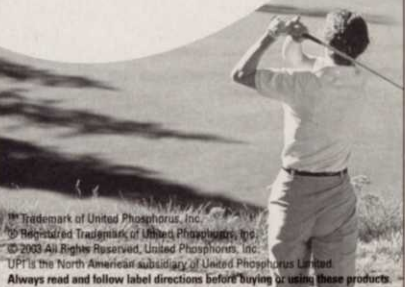
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BUSINESS MOWER SAFETY

► Mike Graves, Account Manager, GroundMasters' Dayton (OH) Branch, says the biggest hazard he has observed is "the blade flap (that blocks the deflector chute) being able to be pulled up or down from the sitting position."

Train, train, train

Everyone *Landscape Management* interviewed on zero-turn mower safety says that continuously training operators in the safe use of these mowers is the key to preventing injuries. That training, says Steel, needs to address the fact that many zero-turn operators are foreign born.

Training needs to address the fact that many zero-turn operators are foreign born.

"In addition to language barriers, these workers are operating modern equipment that is not typical of the equipment found in their native country. Also, most of these workers are lacking in even the most basic safety training. As a result, they face the risk of serious injury and even death," Steel says.

At Cagwin & Dorward, where some zero-turn operators speak English and others speak Spanish, training on ZTR mower operation begins when landscape maintenance workers "reach their third and final tier on their path to become crew leaders," Bogel says. "They view and discuss a safety video presented in English or Spanish, provided by the manufacturer. Cagwin & Dorward has also created a training manual with color pictures of ZTRs at work, instructional text and excerpts from our Company Safety Program, a broader training aid.

"Hands-on training begins at our facil-

ity with a mechanic who covers daily maintenance requirements, controls and operation, and tips on basic mechanical problems likely to be encountered in the field," Bogel continues. "A crew leader or production specialist performs field training on site, where specific hazards and methods can be addressed. Bilingual mechanics and field trainers are available so that all ZRT orientation and training is in the operator's primary language."

At The Bruce Company, "extensive training per person" is provided with the help of bilingual trainers, Schroeder says. "We do training during spring orientation, plus in the shop, plus out on the job," he says. "There's always a two-man crew — usually a crew leader and an assistant. They don't go out on the job until we feel they are ready."

"Train, train, train," GroundMasters' Graves strongly suggests. Among the topics covered during zero-turn training at his company's branch are blades engaging, blade changing, oil levels, proper fueling, speed, turning and backing up. Hispanic operators participate in a training day "with the company's own Hispanic trainer and a bilingual employee of the manufacturer, who also comes in with a videotape," he says.

Kennedy's GroundMasters' branch provides "on site, hands-on training," he says. "Mostly on what it (the mower) will hold and what it won't, proper turning to not damage property, loading and unloading from a trailer, awareness of all of the safety switches, and the proper way to turn on a hillside." Spanish-speaking zero-turn operators are trained by Hispanic trainers once a week, and the manufacturer comes in once a year to train all of the branch's zero-turn operators, he says. **LM**

— The author is a Belleville, WI-based agricultural/horticultural project consultant and freelance writer. She can be reached

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Hey Ed, show me the money

BY ED LAFLAMME

Two of the most common questions I get each month are: **1.** How in the world do I make money in this business? **2.** How do I get out of this business? Both questions speak to the essential command, "Ed, show me the money."

The key to understanding begins by asking: What makes a landscaping company valuable and, eventually, something that somebody would pay a premium to buy from you?

Three "R's" unlock the essential issue of worth, says Don Delaney, my partner in business brokerage through Grassroots — Top Dollar. The 3 R's are revenue, relationships and reputation.

Revenue

With revenue, we're talking three things: profitable revenue, right revenue margins and recurring or one-time revenue. The nutrient value of revenue, like a growth agent, is all in the mix. A nurturing revenue mix begins with real net profit, meaning owner's perks are added back in, before tax and debt service. A growth-promoting target for profit is in the 10% to 20% range.

Next is having generous gross margins, which is revenue minus direct costs. The wider the margins, the wider the margin of error you can absorb. High margins lower risk and raise value. Healthy gross margins create a cushy cash flow.

Lastly, seasoned buyers or sellers zero in on the ratio of recurring maintenance to design/build revenue.

Recurring revenue has a service contract. It's repeat business month after month. Service contracts add value and improve salability. The percentage ratio I like is 70:30 service contract revenue to onetime jobs.

Relationships

There are also three types of relationships — customer, employee and vendor. How tied are your customers to you? Customer dependence adds value to your company. Build this dependence by delivering indispensable expertise, quality, responsiveness, trust and a service contract. Low price isn't on the list.


Don't overlook the asset value in your employees. Their loyalty, ability, dependability and customer service skills build value in your company. Then there's mutually beneficial vendor and referral sources. These relationships can drive down marketing costs and drive up revenue. Include them in your asset list.

Reputation

Regarding reputation, what unique service or expertise do you bring to the marketplace? When you're recognized as a leader in a particular field of expertise, you can charge more; generalists are a commodity, with a lower value. By leveraging your reputation, you can open cross- and up-selling opportunities.

Your third grade teacher told you the 3 R's would take you far. She knew what she was talking about. Follow the principles presented here. You'll be able to show me the money now and when you sell your firm.

— *The author built and operated a multi-million dollar landscape company before forming Grass Roots Consulting, Inc., serving Green Industry contractors. Contact him at ed@grassrootsconsulting.com or 203/225-0807.*



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Let's make sure we declare the way we'll do business, with honesty and integrity, and have controls to make sure we do.



Integrity — keep it alive

BY GARY LASCALEA

A friend recently told me a story about how his company was preparing to videotape a seminar entitled, "Ask the Experts." He was asked to choose from a list of topics that he wanted to address and was surprised to find that nobody wanted to talk about business ethics.

There has been a lot of media coverage about business ethics these days, but we don't hear anything about business ethics from the business community itself — including our industry.

Have you ever heard anybody say something like, "There isn't any room for ethics and integrity" or "Nice guys finish last"? Or, "If you aren't involved with some type of litigation on a regular basis, then you're probably not being aggressive enough and not taking the necessary risks to be successful"?

Hot issues

In the press, the topics of ethics and integrity have become hot issues in light of the headlines created by the massive meltdown of several companies outside our industry. Everybody saw how the lack of ethics and integrity destroyed these companies. Unfortunately, a lot of hard-working innocent people got hurt in the process.

Companies have to be recognized for quality, providing great places to work, customer satisfaction and, ultimately, for their integrity.

Remember in the 1980s when Tom Peters set the tone with his books, "In Search of Excellence" and "Doing the Right Things Right"? Remember when he

challenged us to seek continuous improvement?

So, what has happened in recent years with the spate of high profile, unethical business dealings? Is this just a cycle, or is it that we simply stopped talking about doing the right things right?

How many companies in our industry, as they revisit and recite their mission statements, stress ethics and integrity?

How many in our industry are guilty of questionable advertising statements, claims that the owners know aren't true, such as:

- ▶ All of our technicians are highly trained professionals.
- ▶ All of our technicians are licensed and certified.
- ▶ We utilize only the best products available.

Instead of promoting what we know isn't entirely true, I suggest that we start acting ethically each and every day. We can do this by:

- ▶ servicing each landscape as if it were our own,
- ▶ training our technicians to treat every customer as if the customer was observing their every step. This means no shortcuts when the customer isn't home,
- ▶ never taking risks that could damage the trust our customers have in our companies or our industry, and
- ▶ monitoring our sales people to insure their total honesty and trust. Are they selling services that offer true benefits to our customers?

When we examine our goals and revisit our mission statements, let's make sure we declare the way we'll do business, with honesty and integrity, and have controls in place to make sure that we do.

— *The author is the owner of GroGreen, a \$2 million lawn care company based in Plano, TX. He can be reached at 972/578-6600.*



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Get to really know clients

BY JOHN GIBSON

I'm repeatedly reminded, as our lives become faster-paced and more technology driven, that old adages remain relevant. Take, for example, the saying, "Knowledge is power." This simple thought, when combined with the will to act on knowledge, could be the key between success and failure for your business.

Know your customers

Obviously, an owner must have a certain level of knowledge about managing, business practices and operations to succeed. Fortunately, there's a wealth of this type of information at our fingertips today. When I consider the most critical elements in determining the success of a lawn care business, though, I always come back to knowledge about our customers.

Now, I can hear the howls from all of you. You *know* your customers and exactly what their needs are when they purchase the services of a lawn care provider. It's the best product for the best price, right? As consumers, we can probably all agree this is true. But is this enough in our world of increasing competition, downward price pressure and greater customer sophistication?

How many of you are dedicating your resources of time, money and management skill to look behind this simple view of your customers to reveal opportunities to grow your sales and profits? Are you taking advantage of technology and you and your staff's creativity to really get to know your customers?

If you're not collecting information about your cus-

tomers and prospects, you're behind the competitive curve. If you haven't identified, segmented and profiled your best customers, you won't be able to efficiently target potential new customers, the ones that will give your business its highest future returns.

This type of market research doesn't have to be complicated. Start by asking your customers these simple questions:

- ▶ What do you like or dislike about our service?
- ▶ What is your opinion of our "brand"?
- ▶ How do you prefer we communicate with you?

Their responses can give you clear and sometimes surprising insights and provide you with a long-term advantage against your competitors.

Embrace market research

In a related matter, don't hesitate to participate in market research conducted by the companies that provide you products and services. In these cases, you're the customers providing feedback. Suppliers are interested in your needs, opinions and insights. Your input helps them to develop new product features, pricing and packaging. They understand that without meeting your needs and giving you the products and services to make you successful, they can't be successful either.

Market research is increasingly essential in a competitive marketplace. It needn't be expensive, complicated or time consuming. We as business people have to embrace the time-tested lesson of the past that "knowledge is power," and that acting on this knowledge leads to success.

— The author is a PLCAA member and works for Swingle Tree & Lawn Care, CO. He can be reached at 303/306-3141.

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Landscape
MANAGEMENT

A few days of training and an increase in my grease rag inventory solved the training issue.



Could it hurt to check the oil?

BY HARRY SMITH

I was feeling good about myself the other day. My operators were dutifully checking the engine and hydraulic oil in their equipment every day. And I had slowly come to several conclusions about my operators and equipment. My first revelation was that I was losing time and placing responsibility for the equipment fluid levels on the wrong person.

My technician did his best to check all the equipment before it left every morning but there was always some forgotten issue or minor crisis that pulled him away from his checklist. Either the crew waited for the tech to check their equipment or the checks were skipped. I lost either way.

Easy does it

The second revelation was that these operators were much easier on their equipment when I permanently assigned them a unit. For a while I had rotated the equipment from truck to truck with some vague idea about spreading the wear. I knew that some routes and jobs were tougher on equipment than others.

This strategy didn't seem to work. My equipment seemed to get more abuse, looked worse sooner and failed at a higher rate.

So I began assigning each operator their own equipment. It wasn't a fool-proof procedure but it was much eas-

ier to spot an "abuser." There were also fewer discussions about who tore up what. That was a nice side benefit of my system.

Now I have a new problem. My tech tells me that his latest report from the oil analysis lab indicates several of the big zero-turn mowers have silica in the engine and hydraulic oil. What is that all about?

The tech has checked all the air filters and intake areas because dirt and sand (silica) frequently enter an engine from these areas. Everything looks good. What is going on?

A few days of careful observation by your tech pays off. Problem solved.

Don't overlook training

In my haste to implement the oil and hydraulic fluid check program, I overlooked a training issue. I taught my operators the locations of the engine oil dipstick and the hydraulic reservoir cap. I taught them where the levels should be but I didn't teach them how to check the fluids. My tech reflexively grabs the ever-present rag out of his back pocket and wipes around the dipstick and the reservoir before removal. I never taught my operators that step. As they pull the dipstick or remove the cap, dirt that has gathered around the cap and dipstick falls into the reservoir or engine crankcase. A preventive maintenance process had become destructive!

A few days of training and an increase in my grease rag inventory solved the training issue. My equipment durability should soar. I will let you know.

— The author is the turf equipment professor at Lake City Community College, Lake City, FL. He can be reached at smith@lakecitycc.edu.

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Circle 129

Broadleaf weeds are common problems in turf situations. They seem to be especially noticeable when in bloom — the bright yellow flowers of dandelion, the white flowers of white clover or the purple flowers of henbit.

Some people, when referring to their weed problems, talk about “weeds and grasses.” The term “weeds,” however, refers to all invasive plant species, not just broadleaf ones. It’s important to tell the broadleaf weed group from weedy grasses, sedges and other undesirable plants.

Dicots and monocots

Broadleaf weeds are also referred to as dicots, an abbreviation of dicotyledon, which refers to the two seed leaves, or cotyledons, that are seen during seed germination. Grasses and sedges are monocots; they have only one seed leaf at germination.

The following strategies will widen your opportunities to control broadleaf weeds in fine turf

BY DR. JEFFREY F. DERR

Dicots differ from monocots in other ways. Dicots tend to have wide leaves, hence the term broadleaf. Dicots generally have a net pattern of veins in the leaves, flower parts in 2’s, 4’s or 5’s (i.e. 4 sepals, 4 petals) and a taproot. Monocots generally have narrow leaves, flower parts in 3’s, parallel leaf veins and a fibrous root system.

Why is it important to tell broadleaves from monocots? One reason is herbicide



◀ Black medic (bottom) and lespedeza (top), two similar legume weeds.

Take the
‘broad’
view



◀ **Dandelions are readily apparent when in bloom.**

summer annuals. It can emerge in early spring or sometimes late winter. Prostrate spurge is more of a warm-season weed and begins to germinate in late spring. If one wishes to control prostrate knotweed pre-emergence, the timing should be in late fall or winter, while the timing for spurge control would be spring.

Biennials also spread strictly by seed. There are only a few that can infest turf, and include species like wild carrot, musk thistle and common mullein. These weeds are most frequently seen in low-maintenance, infrequently mowed turf. They die after flowering, so control treatments should be targeted when these species are in the rosette stage rather than at flowering.

Perennials live for many years. They can be divided into simple perennials, which spread strictly by seed, and creeping perennials, which spread by seed but also spread vegetatively through stolons or their rootstock. Examples of simple perennials include common dandelion, buckhorn plantain, broadleaf plantain and curly dock. Ground ivy, Virginia buttonweed, white clover and Indian mock-strawberry are creeping perennials that infest turf. Creeping perennials are harder to eradicate than simple perennials.

Cultural control

Hand pulling or cutting annual broadleaf weeds at the soil surface will control these species since they cannot regenerate from their root systems. Perennial weeds can regrow from underground portions of the plant. Dandelion can regrow if sufficient root fragments are left in the soil. To eradicate a perennial, one must completely control the underground as well as the above-ground parts.

Broadleaf weeds are opportunistic; they'll invade any bare patches in a lawn. So maintaining a dense turf is the first and most important aspect of a lawn weed control program. I was noticing in my

sensitivity. One group of herbicides, the growth regulators, which include 2,4-D and related chemicals, control broadleaves and have little to no effect on grasses. Conversely, the post-emergence grass herbicides such as Acclaim Extra control grasses and have essentially no effect on broad-leaves.

Sometimes it takes a close look to tell if a weed species is a dicot or not. Have you ever been fooled when looking from a distance at a yard infested with buckhorn plantain? This species has somewhat narrow leaves and resembles a grass but is really a broadleaf. Greenbrier, with its wide leaf, is a monocot in the lily family.

Yep, that's a weed

Identify the major weeds species infesting each site you maintain. Sometimes it's important to separate closely related species. In my trials, for example, I have seen differ-

ences in response of lespedeza and black medic, two annual species in the legume family, to post-emergence herbicides. Besides identifying the predominant broadleaf weeds at each location you maintain, you need an understanding of their life cycles.

The most troublesome broadleaf weeds in turf are perennials. However, there are some important annual species and a few biennial broadleaves that infest lawns.

Annuals spread strictly by seed. These can be divided into summer annuals, which germinate in spring and summer, and winter annuals, which germinate primarily in fall or late winter. Knowing when a particular annual germinates is important if you're using pre-emergence herbicides. Although we consider prostrate knotweed and prostrate (spotted) spurge summer annuals, they germinate at different times. Prostrate knotweed is one of our earliest germinating

own lawn that wherever I saw a large plant of common chickweed, that spot was devoid of tall fescue. Maintaining a thick turf through overseeding, proper fertilization, aeration, mowing height, pH and irrigation, and control of insect and disease pests will improve any management program for dicot weeds. Certain weed species can tolerate soils that are compacted, acidic or low in fertility better than turf species.

Cultural control

Most people, when asked how they control broadleaf weeds, talk about post-emergence herbicides. Pre-emergence herbicides, however, can play an important role in dicot weed management.



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Circle 130

There are some advantages to pre-emergence control. Weeds are controlled before they emerge, so one doesn't see large, dead broadleaf plants in the lawn as one does see after post-emergence applications. Certain weeds, like henbit, seem to resist being controlled for a long time when sprayed after emergence. If the plant is controlled at germination through application of a pre-emergence product, that weed doesn't have a chance to produce seed. If a post-emergence herbicide is applied at flowering, the weed may already have produced viable seed, which can contribute to next year's infestation.

Most of the pre-emergence herbicides pose little hazard to ornamentals growing adjacent to turf if some drift occurs. Many of the post-emergence herbicides pose a risk of systemic injury to desired broad-leaves like vegetables, fruit or ornamentals. Pre-emergence herbicides will provide months of weed control. Most post-emergence herbicides have short soil residual so seed blowing into a site soon after it was sprayed with a post-emergence may not be controlled.

In general, though, pre-emergence herbicides don't control established plants of perennial species. They can be utilized to control these weeds from seed, if existing plants are controlled by a post-emergence product. Hence, there are opportunities for tank mixing pre-emergence and post-emergence broadleaf herbicides.

The major pre-emergence herbicide used in turf is Gallery (isoxaben). One common application time is late summer/ early fall since this herbicides controls winter annual broadleaf weeds such as common chickweed, hairy bittercress and henbit.

Gallery will control summer annuals like prostrate knotweed and common groundsel if applied in the spring. Gallery will control perennials like white clover, common dandelion and buckhorn plantain from seed but not established plants. Application of a post-emergence herbicide



combined with an application of Gallery could control weeds like dandelion, clover and plantain for three to six months. Since dandelion seems to be flowering and producing seed for a good bit of the year, having extended residual control is a benefit for controlling this weed.

Saying that Gallery is the only pre-emergence herbicide available for broadleaf weed control isn't entirely accurate. We think of herbicides like Barricade, Dacthal, pendimethalin (Pendulum, Pre-M, Corral), Team and Dimension as pre-emergence crabgrass products. These compounds, however, also will control certain broadleaf weeds from seed.

Some weeds that are controlled pre-emergence include prostrate spurge and common chickweed. Lespedeza from seed is another weed that has been controlled by pre-emergence application of Dimension and Pendulum in my trials. So although we primarily apply them for annual grass control, a side benefit can be improved broadleaf control. Like Gallery, the pre-emergence crabgrass herbicides won't control any established perennial weed.

Simazine, atrazine and Sencor (metribuzen) control a range of annual broadleaf weeds in some warm-season turfgrasses. These products cannot be used in cool-season turf and thus have specialized uses in southern turfgrasses. These three herbicides, unlike the pre-emergence chemicals already mentioned, will control small emerged weeds, along with residual effects.



◀ Violets are one of the hardest lawn weeds to control.

ies), the benzoic acid herbicide dicamba, and the pyridine herbicides triclopyr, clopyralid and fluroxypyr. These are generally sold in 2-way or 3-way combinations for broader spectrum weed control.

Each compound will have a slightly different spectrum of broadleaf species that they control. For example, dicamba and triclopyr are added to 2,4-D to improve control of white clover, ground ivy and chickweed. An application of 2,4-D alone, however, will provide very good control of dandelion and buckhorn plantain.

Check which turf species can be treated with a given combination. For example, St. Augustine and creeping bentgrass won't tolerate full rates of all of these herbicides.

Certain formulations are sold with reduced rates for use on sensitive grasses.

The growth regulator herbicides are all systemic, meaning they translocate throughout the plant. Repeat applications will generally be needed for creeping perennials like Virginia buttonweed since the species will regrow from any portions not completely controlled. These chemicals are both leaf and root absorbed, so they're available in sprayable and granular forms. Sprayable formulations are preferred since foliar uptake results in maximum weed control. Applying granular formulations early in the day when dew is present will allow granules to stick to weed foliage. The chemical will then be released from the granule and be

continued on page 54

Post-emergence herbicides

The primary ways emerged broadleaves are controlled in turf is through application of the herbicides that cause twisting, epinasty and other growth-regulator type effects. Compounds in this group include 2,4-D, MCPP, MCPA and 2,4-DP (the phenox-

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continued from page 53
available for leaf uptake.

As with all systemic herbicides, it can take a while for weeds to die off after application of a growth regulator, especially during cold weather. One newer technique to speed up the control of broadleaf weeds is through application of carfentrazone, either through addition of QuickSilver to the growth regulator chemicals or through use of a prepackaged mix containing this contact herbicide, such as SpeedZone.



▲ **Buckhorn plantain resembles a grass because of its long, narrow leaves.**

These herbicides are sometimes available in both ester and amine forms. Ester formulations penetrate better through the waxy layer coating of leaves than amine formulations, resulting in better weed control. Ester formulations are more likely to drift, however, resulting in damage to nontarget broad-leaves like vegetables, fruit or ornamentals.

One approach is to use ester forms in late fall through winter before trees and shrubs leaf out. From spring til fall, an amine form would be a better choice when spraying near desired broadleaf plants.

Don't use clippings from a lawn recently treated with a growth regulator herbicide as a mulch in vegetable beds since small residues could damage tomatoes, snap beans and other vegetables. This issue may

be of special importance for products containing clopyralid, where residues may persist longer in compost and cause damage to broadleaf crops. Read and follow all label precautions if grass clippings are collected for use as compost, and inform your clients of this issue if they do their own mowing. Obviously, if grass clippings are returned to the lawn, this problem is alleviated.

The growth regulator herbicides are hard to clean out of spray tanks. Since broadleaf crops can be injured by low levels of these chemicals, it's best to use a separate sprayer for lawns than that used to apply fungicides and insecticides to ornamentals.

Other post-emergents

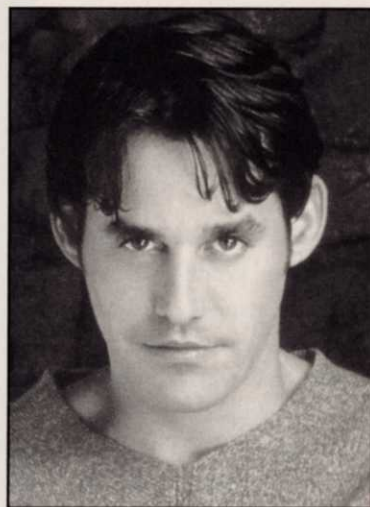
Some of the other post-emergence herbicides used in turf will control certain broadleaf weeds. Drive and Progress, for example, will control white clover. Basagran, Image and Manage, although thought of as nut-sedge control chemicals, will also control certain dicots.

The transition tools used in bermudagrass, such as Corsair/TFC, Kerb, Manor, Monument and Revolver will also control certain broadleaf weeds. Check herbicide labels and cooperative extension publications for the weed control spectrum of these chemicals. Weed identification is especially important for these miscellaneous compounds since they don't control a broad spectrum of weeds like the growth regulator herbicides.

Weed ID coupled with an understanding of their life cycles is the first step in developing a broadleaf weed management program. Integrate cultural and chemical options to develop a year-round maintenance plan. Using a broad approach will allow you more time to spend on your narrowleaf weed problems. **LM**

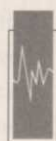
— *The author is a Professor of Weed Science with Virginia Tech. He is located at one of Virginia Tech's research stations and can be reached at 757/363-3900.*

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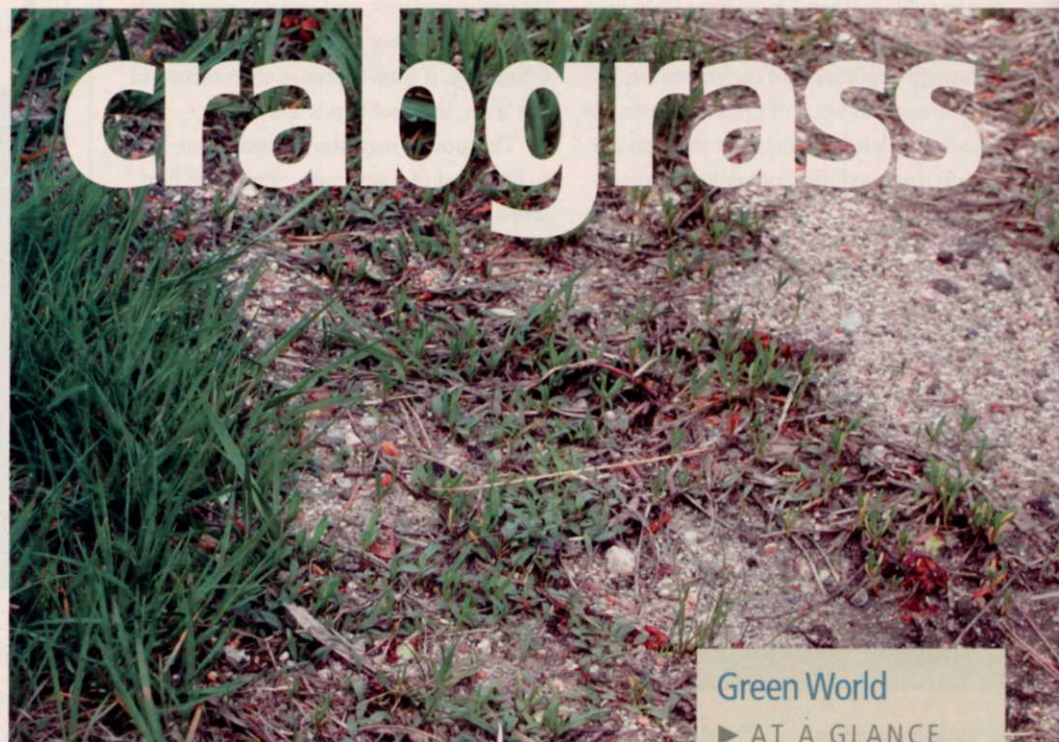
Rick Morgan has made an art out of running his lawn care business, and he encourages other lawn care operators to do the same.

Morgan, who owns and operates Green World in Hampstead, NH, started out 22 years ago as a landscape designer, an occupation in which he does what he describes as “sculpting in the real world.” After he and a partner purchased a lawn care business from a relative 17 years ago, he began putting his artistic abilities to work in his new company.

“Running a business is an art,” explains Morgan, who is a fine arts painter and sculptor in the off-season. “It’s the creative process of organizing your resources with the goal of producing a tangible, recognizable result.”

Those results have helped Morgan build Green World into a thriving business with \$500,000 in annual sales and 600 customers within a 30-mile radius of his office in southeastern New Hampshire. “Results and good communication equal customer satisfaction,” Morgan says.

To facilitate the creative process, Morgan relies on talented people and his computer



This lawn care operator found a way to guarantee that his customers’ lawns will be crabgrass-free

BY BARBARA MCCABE

software program, Lawn and Pest Assistant III. This software, which is custom-designed for lawn care companies, helps Green World track customer and prospect calls and follow them to resolution.

“When a customer calls, I can immediately pull up the screen that lists all the contact

we have had with them, including any information that may help us provide more personalized service,” says Morgan, who retains two employees year-round and an additional five in season. “For instance, it’s common for us to know their dog’s name. When they hear that, they think,

Green World

► AT A GLANCE

Location: Hampstead, NH

2003 gross revenue:
\$500,000

Employees: 7 (5 seasonal)

Services: Lawn care application

Customer mix:
70% residential,
30% commercial

‘Hey, these guys are really paying attention.’”

With a customer retention rate of 92%, Morgan, whose customer base is 70% residential, says that simply following up with customers to make

continued on page 58

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continued from page 56

sure their lawn care program is working can be a major factor in retaining their business. "If you guarantee a certain result, you have to know what you're going to do if something fails," he explains. "If you don't know that, you're in trouble. Most homeowners don't believe you can do what you say you can do. So, never make a promise you can't keep."

The problem: crabgrass

One of the results Green World promises is that its customers' lawns will be free of crabgrass. "The key to customer retention is quality results, and a lot of customers cancel over crabgrass," says Morgan.

To control crabgrass, Green World includes a pre-emergence grass herbicide with its first fertilizer application in April. When making second fertilizer applications in May, Green World applies a post-emergence broadleaf herbicide and looks for signs of crabgrass along the edges of driveways and walkways.

The solution: Acclaim Extra herbicide

If he sees crabgrass at this point, he spot treats it with a low rate (.5 oz./1,000 sq. ft.) of Acclaim Extra herbicide. "If you stay on top of it, it's less expensive in the long run," says Morgan.

When crabgrass escapes the barrier created by the pre-

emergence herbicide, Morgan relies on the product to provide the kind of post-emergence crabgrass control he needs.

"Even our basic program includes spot applications with Acclaim, and that gives us the ability to guarantee our results," he says. By adding the herbicide to their programs, lawn care operators may increase their costs by "a couple of dollars per 1,000 square feet," he adds, but the additional cost is justified by the amount of customer satisfaction it buys.

"Guys who don't take advantage of this product are leaving one of the best tools they have on the shelf," he says. "Crabgrass control is one of the most basic things a customer expects. If you can't control crabgrass, you're going to lose that customer."

Morgan doesn't charge his regular customers extra for the applications. Instead, the cost is spread over the total square footage of lawns in his firm's portfolio.

"I know what the percentage is that I will have to treat for established customers," he explains. "I track everything and relate it to a common denominator — square feet. About 10% of residential turf will get hit with it." On average, Green World sprays the post-emergence herbicide at the rate of .7 oz./1,000 sq. ft.



Rick Morgan says that when crabgrass rears its ugly head, clients will look elsewhere for lawn care.

dren, ages 12 to 18, volunteer about 15 hours a week with the FIRST Robotics Competition, a nationwide program that teams professionals and high school students to solve an engineering design problem in an intense and competitive way. "I find this a very worthwhile endeavor," he says. "Lawn care operators should find ways to contribute to their communities. It's incredible how much new business can result from this type of community involvement."

Morgan challenges other lawn care professionals to improve their services by focusing their talent on quality results. "Be challenged," he advises. "Be creative and have fun." **LM**

— *The author is a freelance writer who covers the Green Industry.*

Following up on spring seedings with an Acclaim application is "critical," says Morgan, who works the cost of the herbicide application into his seeding estimates. "Most spring seedings fail in the long run because they are overtaken with crabgrass," he says. Being able to guarantee a \$5,000 seeding job with \$250 worth of product is worth it, he says. "If the seeding fails because your herbicide doesn't work, that customer will badmouth you and the direct result will be a loss of business."

During the winter months, Morgan, his wife and four chil-




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TECHNOLOGY

YOUR GUIDE TO PRODUCT RESEARCH



Buying tips

- ▶ Look for the pattern. Uniformity of spray pattern and spread pattern is paramount with sprayers and spreaders
- ▶ Buy equipment that is easy to operate
- ▶ Buy gear that's ergonomic...comfortable to operate for long periods
- ▶ Agitation is important with sprayers
- ▶ How easy is it to clean the unit?
- ▶ Compare weights. A few ounces add up over a day's work
- ▶ Consider your use requirements: If you'll use the product only occasionally, a basic model may have the features you need
- ▶ Be realistic. For heavier use, consider models with extra options and durability to better handle the workload
- ▶ Are gaskets and hoses standard sizes. Can you buy an emergency replacement at a local hardware?

BY CURT HARLER

Sprayers & spreaders

Toro ▲

Multi Pro 1200 and 1250 dedicated spray vehicles feature a ground drive proportional spray system. Spray Pro control system ensuring application rate adjusts to travel speed. 1250 features electronic spray control, 1200 manual control system. Spray Pro monitor is standard on both models. System monitor positioned for convenient viewing. Fingertip controls are located within easy reach of the operator. The control panel is lighted for early morning/late evening spraying, and the foot on/off boom control keeps the operator's hands on the steering wheel.

For more information contact Toro at 612/888-8801 or www.toro.com / circle no. 266

Finn

The Finn 302 is a 1.5-cu. yd. bark blower. Powered by a Kubota V1505, 33.5-hp diesel engine. Weighs 4,400 lbs. empty and is also available as a trailer-mount.

For more information contact Finn at 800/543-7166 or www.finncorp.com / circle no. 267

Gregson Clark

V-series sprayers mount in a pickup bed and come in 50, 100, 200 and 300-gallon units. All have jet agitation and Arag strainer with shut-off. The V-50 has 200 ft. of 200 psi, 3/8-in. hose. Larger models have 300 ft. of 600 psi

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Landscape
MANAGEMENT

LM Reports

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half-in. hose with Hannay E-1530 12-volt reel. All have Chemlawn gun with nozzle.

For more information contact Gregson Clark at 800/706-9530 or www.gregsonclark.com / circle no. 268

Befco

Choose 3 models of Hop fertilizer spreaders with 3.5, 10.6 or 17.6 cu. ft. seamless hopper capacity. All have 46-ft. spread. Smaller 203 model has adjustable ejector spoon to center spread. Larger 209 and 212 have adjustable spreading fins. All have heavy-duty pto shaft, fixed agitator and sealed heavy-duty gearbox.

For more information contact Befco at 800/334-6617 or www.befco.com / circle no. 269



Demco

Tandem-axle ATV sprayer features 100- and 200-gal. polyethylene elliptical tanks. Jet agitation, sump, molded sight gauge, fillwell with no-splash cover. 2.5-gal. clean water tank for safety. Works with Demco's 21-, 28-, 30- and 40-ft. Truss-T booms. Dethmers Mfg.

For more information contact Demco at 800/725-3626 or www.demco-products.com / circle no. 270

Andersons

The SR-2000 rotary spreader sits on larger, 13-in.

Turf Saver 2 pneumatic wheels for an easier push. Made with new, thicker-walled, stainless steel frame. Helical



cone provides uniform, consistent spread pattern. Front and back lift handles make loading easy. Standard port shut-off control. Tuff-foam grips for comfort.

For more information contact The Andersons at 800/225-2639 or www.andersonsgolfproducts.com / circle no. 271

Mackissic, Inc.

Mighty Mac power sprayers come in five models ranging from 14- to 50-gal. tanks. The big PS 350T-10 is powered by a 5.5-hp B&S Intek engine. Hypro twin-piston pump with chain coupling delivers 10 gpm at 300 psi. Has pistol grip spray gun and 25 ft. of high pressure hose. Pressure relief valve and stainless in-line strainer included.

For more information contact Mackissic at 800/348-1117 or www.mackissic.com / circle no. 272

Brandek

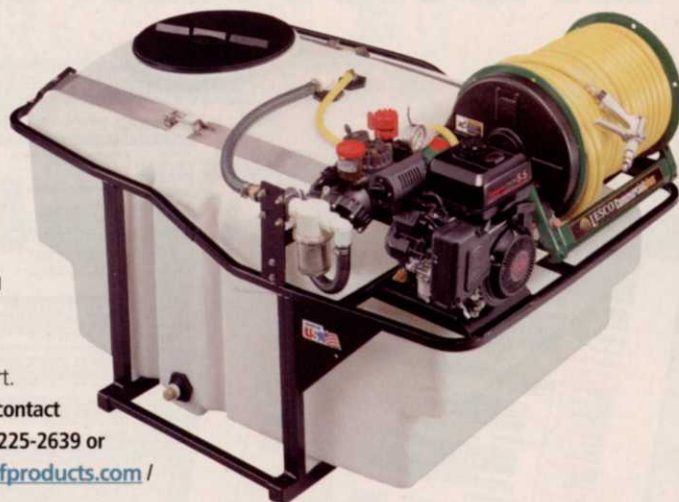
Tek Twister I (100 lbs.) and II (200 lbs.) detachable spreaders fit most commercial mowers, utility vehicles and tractors. Adjust spread pattern from 5 to 25 ft. Built on stainless steel frame. Delron impeller. 12-volt motor is rubber sealed. Lexan safety shield protects operator and transport unit from material spread.

For more information contact Brandek at 800/247-7335 or www.brandtekus.com / circle no. 273

Broyhill

Stadium-80 with mount for utility vehicles features 80-gal. poly tank with 10-in. locking lid. 10-ft. boom has break-away outers. 12-volt electric pump sprays 3.5 gpm at 45 psi. Also available with 3.5-hp B&S or 4-hp Honda. Belt-driven roller pump extends engine life, lowers noise.

For more information contact Broyhill at 800/228-1003 or www.broyhill.com / circle no. 274



LESCO

Unique 'side-saddle' mounting in 704608 sprayer slips easily into the bed of a pickup, with room for a pallet of granular fertilizer or liquid products. Hose, pump and engine are mounted on the curb-side of the truck. Has 200-gal. tank with a 16-in. fill well, a leak-proof lid and strainer with a clear strainer bowl and a 30-mesh stainless steel screen. 5.5-hp Kawasaki engine with a Hypro 3-piston pump puts out 9.5 gpm at 550 psi. Has 300 ft. of half-inch urethane inner core spray hose rated to 800 psi on a Hannay electric hose reel.

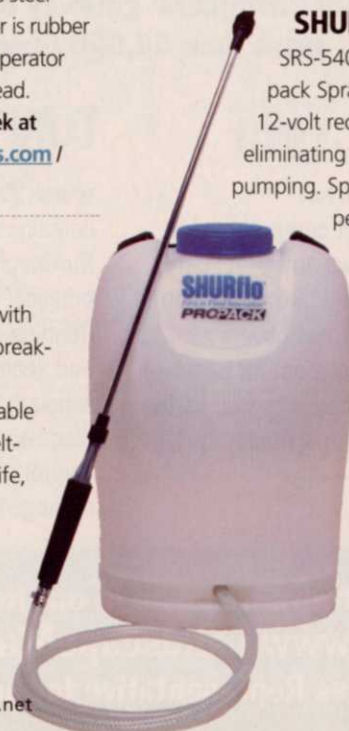
For more information contact LESCO at 800/321-5325 or www.lesco.com / circle no. 275

SHURflo

SRS-540 Rechargeable Backpack Sprayer is powered by 12-volt rechargeable battery, eliminating need for manual pumping. Sprays up to 120 gal.

per charge. Four-gal. poly tank's ergonomic design fits body contours. 24-in. spray lance, reinforced braided PVC spray hose.

For more information contact SHURflo at 800/854-3218 or www.shurflo.com / circle no. 276



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Rain Bird® Rotors Leave A Lasting Impression With Landscape Contractors

New Rain Bird® 5500 Series Rotor addresses contractors' needs

One example is Rain Bird's 5500 Series Rotor, expected to hit the market this summer. The 5500 is a 3/4" commercial-grade rotor of unmatched durability designed for smaller turf applications. Modeled after Rain Bird's robust commercial-grade rotors, the 5500 Series distributes water within the 33 feet to 55 feet range.

The 5500 can be strategically positioned within tighter, high-traffic areas without worry. A non-strippable drive mechanism prevents damage if vandals tamper with the rotor head. Memory Arc automatically returns the arc to its set position if the nozzle turret is rotated past its arc setting. And a reinforced brass shaft from the nozzle turret to the riser can withstand a vandal kick. In addition, each unit can be changed from part-circle to continuous full-circle with a simple top adjustment.

Willy Habelka, an Irrigation Supervisor with Ginn Golf, has field-tested the rotors on projects in Orlando, Fla., and south Florida. They've been used in commons areas, along roadways and between cart paths and buildings on golf courses.



"They have performed excellent in the sandy soil conditions of Florida," Habelka says. "The same benefits I see in other Rain Bird commercial-grade rotors are evident in the new 5500 Series Rotors."

— Willy Habelka, Irrigation Supervisor, Ginn Golf, Orlando, FL

Habelka, Lott and Winchel have all come to rely on Rain Bird rotors for maximum water distribution efficiency, ease of use and durability. They realize that providing the best service means installing the best rotors: Rain Bird.



As the top picture demonstrates, when going head-to-head against the competition, the advantages of Rain Curtain™ Nozzle Technology can be seen with the naked eye.

"I've switched to Rain Bird®, and I'm sold!"

Water distribution, adjustability and longevity are the three differentiating characteristics in rotors. For Greg Winchel, Rain Bird rotors are the difference maker.

President of Winchel Irrigation in Grandville, Mich., Winchel has used other brand name rotors throughout his career as a contractor. None, he says, compare to the performance of Rain Bird rotors.



"We've installed Toro, Nelson, Hunter and rotors from other manufacturers. Their water distribution pattern is not even close to what Rain Bird offers. As far as I am concerned, Rain Bird is equipped with probably the most superior nozzle pattern on the market."

— Greg Winchel, President, Winchel Irrigation, Grandville, MI

Winchel also prefers Rain Bird rotors for ease of installation and adjustability.

"When installing the Rain Bird 5000 Series rotors, I simply screw the rotor head down, turn the slip clutch and quickly adjust the head," he says. "With other rotors you have to use tools and turn the entire body of the head, so it takes longer to adjust and results in less profitability."

Winchel uses Rain Bird's 5000 and 7005 Series Rotors, as well as Falcon 6504 Series Rotors. He began using Rain Bird rotors exclusively almost seven years ago when he joined his two brothers in buying his father's contracting business, which has since quadrupled. Winchel Irrigation services large and small commercial and residential properties.

"Our customers don't really notice the difference in spray patterns, but they know when their lawn looks better and that their lawn is greener," Winchel says.

Rain Bird is in tune with the demands and challenges that contractors face in the field, and the expectations placed on them. As a result, Rain Bird focuses on superior service and innovative product development.

Innovative features result in superior performance, convenience

Installing the right rotors on a landscaping job is as important to Greg Lott as it is to his customers. Customer satisfaction in the product reflects positively on Lott and his company, Irrigation Consultants, a Cleveland-based irrigation contracting company. That's why Lott installs Rain Bird® rotors on all of his projects.

Among the features that impress Lott is the exclusive Rain Curtain™ Nozzle Technology. Rain Curtain nozzles, found on every Rain Bird rotor, ensure optimal water distribution efficiency and uniformity by creating larger water droplets and less mist. As a result, less water is wasted, more money is saved and healthier turf grass is likely.



"We test run sprinkler heads side-by-side, including one with Rain Curtain Nozzle Technology and one without, and the difference in water distribution is evident with the naked eye."

— Greg Lott, Owner, Irrigation Consultants, Cleveland, OH

Convenience is another advantage of Rain Bird rotors. Adjustment to the arc is easy with the top adjust feature, which requires only a flat-blade screwdriver to adjust the arc.

"With other rotors on the market, you need a special tool to adjust them, whereas Rain Bird rotors are easy to handle."

Other features found on Rain Bird rotors are Memory Arc® (5500, 7005 and 8005 models) and Dual-Action Wiper Seal. Memory Arc quickly and automatically returns nozzle stream to the set arc pattern if it is rotated past its stop by accident or vandalism. The Dual-Action Wiper Seal, meanwhile, protects internal components from debris and assures clean and smooth pop-up and retraction.

Lott says: "Other wiper seals have a tendency to get hard and brittle, then deteriorate and malfunction. Rain Bird rotors hold up the best in this regard."

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Delavin

Catalog has all manner of sprayer accessories, high-pressure guns and nozzles, tips, hose reels, couplers, bushings, hose couplers, pumps and similar items. Write or call for free copy.

For more information contact Delavan Agspray Products at 800/621-9357 or www.delavan-agspray.com / circle no. 277



Agri-Fab

Agri-Fab 45-0286 is 45-gal., 12-volt tow sprayer. Features 3-gpm 12-volt electric pump, quick connect electrical hookup, spring loaded break-away booms. Booms spray 160 in. from fine mist to 25-ft. stream. 15-ft. hose with spray wand and pressure gauge.

For more information contact Agri-Fab at 217/728-8388 or www.agri-fab.com / circle no. 278



C&S Turf Care

SS10012 Turf Tracker Time Machine is the latest in the family of Turf Trackers. Stand-on unit (or sit down, with the optional seat) offers full hydrostatic drive with zero turning radius maneuverability; rear-mounted booms with spray widths of 4 ft. or 12 ft. Front-

mounted 100-lb. capacity spreader with spread widths of 4 to 24 ft. Has fixed ground speed of 4 mph, transport speed of 8 mph.

For more information contact C&S Turf Care at 800/872-7050 or www.csturfequip.com / circle no. 279

Earth & Turf

TruFlow pull-behind topdresser turns on and off from lawn tractor seat. 36-D spreads 36-in. pattern, handles 225 lbs. or 10 cu. ft. The 54-D has a 54-in. pattern and handles 350 lbs. or 15 cu. ft. Both are ground driven, with 16-gauge galvanized hopper.

For more information contact Earth & Turf at 888/693-2638 or www.earthandturf.com / circle no. 280

Land Pride ▶

With all-steel frame, frontal splash plate and three hopper sizes, Land Pride Broadcast Spreaders fit most landscape, nursery, sod farm and municipality uses. 14-gauge hopper is manufactured using a spin process for sturdy one-piece construction. Smooth, seamless inner wall lets fertilizer, seed or sand flow freely for complete clean-out. Delivery is adjustable to spread on the left, right or full width of 54 ft. Application rates range from 44 lbs. to 890 lbs. per acre and hopper capacities of 350 lbs., 563 lbs. or 673 lbs. keep filling and clean-out to a minimum.

For more information contact Land Pride at 785/823-3276 or www.landpride.com / circle no. 281

Echo

The heavy-duty MS-40 is a 4-gal. backpack model with piston pump designed for extended spraying. 16-in. brass wand, hose rated at 300 psi. High density poly tank with

UV inhibitors. Long-life spray pistol with brass shut-off pin and double O-rings. 6-in. mouth is easy to fill.

For more information contact Echo at 800/432-ECHO or www.echo-usa.com / circle no. 282

Landscapers Supply

Rain covers for both 100-lb. spreader hoppers and 50-lb. units are available via catalog. Also available are 40-lb. chest-mounted spreader and a bag seeder/spreader, ideal for spot work. Catalog available upon request.

For more information contact Landscapers Supply at 800/895-4589 or www.landscapersupply.com / circle no. 283



Wikco

Model 800 tow-behind granular material spreader has an internal drag chain to break up material and help drag the material to the opening. Non-rust poly hopper holds 9 cu. ft. Built with pneumatic tires on 8-in. rims, and heavy duty steel frame. Ground driven with one wheel driving spinner with v-belt.

For more information contact Wikco at 866/464-8893 or www.wikco.com / circle no. 284

Master Manufacturing

The Dobbins Model C-8 electric sprayer features an 8-gal. polyethylene tank, rechargeable 12-volt battery with charger and a diaphragm pump with automatic cutoff to conserve energy. Includes 18-in. wand spray gun, adjustable from mist to solid stream that sprays to a height of 20 ft., and 8 ft. of hose.

For more information contact Master Manufacturing at 712/258-0108 / circle no. 285

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Mill Creek

Bulk mini-spreader doubles as utility wagon. Model 25 has 28-cu. ft. capacity. Steel floor is standard or optional recycled high-density plastic floor that won't rust or rot. Hooks to 15-hp or higher lawn tractor.

For more information contact Mill Creek at 800/311-1323 or www.millcreekmfg.com / circle no. 286

Lely

Broadcast spreader is 3-pt. hitch mounted, pto operated and ground driven. Models give range of spread patterns to 52-ft. wide. Force-feeding mechanism keeps fertilizer from blocking feed-ring openings. Type WGR and WFR have capacity up to 805 lbs. Comes with 2-year limited warranty.

For more information contact Lely at 888/245-4684 or www.lely.com / circle no. 287



BBI

Turf Cricket spreader is designed for precision application of fertilizers and lime for the turf industry. The Model 203 has capacity of 2 tons of fertilizer or 3 tons lime. Model 304 holds three tons of fertilizer or four tons of lime. Hopper capacity is 70 cu. ft., yet is only 62 in. high so it can clear entrances, tree limbs.

For more information contact Barron & Brothers, Inc. at 800/282-3570 or lbrothers@barron-bros.com / circle no. 288

PSB

PrizeLAWN BigFOOT HVO (high volume output) spreader is designed to apply PennMulch, topdress sand, Icemelt, limestone and fertilizer. Features hinged plate configured for normal fertilizer applications, which flips out of the way to expose the mass flow port. 1.75 cu. ft. hopper volume holds up to 100 lbs. 13-in. diameter



pneumatic tires sit on rust-resistant rims.

For more information contact PSB at 614/228-5781 or www.psbcompany.com / circle no. 289

Maruyama ▼

The MS068 sprayer is powered by a 22.5cc "AE" Commercial Engine. Weighing just 18.2 lbs., it's designed for heavy-duty commercial use. This backpack unit has a PCO cart available. It features a positive displacement, duplex piston pump with liquid bypass, and provides excellent tank agitation for wettable powders and liquids in suspension.

For more information contact Maruyama at 253/735-7368 or www.maruyama-us.com / circle no. 290

Gandy

Drop Spreaders available as either tow-behind or walk-behind models, in widths from 24 in. to 12 ft. Models 24 and 36 have an adjustable stainless steel bottom and slide which has triangular openings spaced 1.125 in. apart for application of granular chemical, fertilizer and seed.

For more information contact Gandy at 800/443-2476 or www.gandy.net / circle no. 291

Trynex ▲

The SpreadEx LG 575 is designed for grounds maintenance and landscape applications. Standard with variable speed controller, gate calibrates and controls flow. Works with utility vehicles, riding mowers, trailers or pickups. 3-pt. hitch, drop utility, trailer mounts available. Holds 350 lbs., spreads 40 ft.

For more information contact Trynex at 800/725-8377 / circle no. 293

Senninger

Lawn and garden pressure regulator maintains a constant, preset outlet pressure from 10 to 40 psi in 5-psi increments. Can be used with 6-420 1-gpm emitters and prevents wasteful misting when using small nozzles. Made of high-impact engineering-grade thermoplastics with stainless compression spring.

For more information contact Senninger at 407/293-5555 or www.senninger.com / circle no. 292


Solo

The 475 is a 4-gal., diaphragm pump backpack unit. Provides 60 psi pressure with 22-in. fiberglass spray wand. Ideal for use with abrasives found in wettable powders but can also be used with liquid formulations. Felt padded polyester straps, built in filter screen.

For more information contact Solo at 757/245-4228 or www.solousa.com / circle no. 294



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Landscape
MANAGEMENT

Renaissance Pinelsle Resort

2003 PGMS Honor Award Winner for Hotel, Motel or Resort

Property at a glance

Location: Lake Lanier Islands, GA
Grounds Supervisor: Anthony Williams
Category: Hotel, Motel and Resort
Total budget: \$29,639
Year site built: 1972
Acres of turf: 6
Acres of woody ornamentals: 17
Acres of display beds: .5
Total paved area: 4.4 acres
Total man-hours/week: 115

Maintenance challenges

- ▶ Wildlife damage (deer and geese)
- ▶ Turf maintenance in high traffic areas
- ▶ Lakefront and shoreline maintenance

Project checklist

- Completed in last two years:
- ▶ Entrance ornamental beds
 - ▶ Roadway enhancements
 - ▶ Beach, tiki huts

On the job

- ▶ 1 full-time staff, 2 seasonal employees, 1 licensed pesticide applicator

When the property you take care of is located in the middle of a lake, you have to do your job a little differently than everybody else. Anthony Williams knows that all too well. As the Director of Grounds for the Renaissance Pinelsle Resort & Golf Club, Williams has to keep a different priority list than others.

"The big focus is environmental issues," Williams says. "There is extensive wildlife here, so protecting the environment is our first priority. There are certain chemical solutions that aren't available to us, but the end goal is worth it."

Given that Pinelsle has a huge deer population and is a Audubon Society Cooperative Sanctuary, Williams' goal is to allow as many areas as possible to remain natural — which means he's more tolerant of weeds than other grounds managers might be.

That doesn't mean maintenance is lax around the resort. The largest area of turf near the entrance sign gets mowed frequently for curb appeal. The base turf of

419 Bermuda was overseeded with Double Eagle ryegrass to ensure "green" lawns year-round. The Pinelsle landscape motto of "Memorably, Clean and Green" is in full effect when the grounds crew blows and edges the curbs at the resort entrance and maintain the areas around the four outdoor and three enclosed tennis courts.

Staffers regularly tend to wildlife damage, turf damage in high traffic areas and lakefront and shoreline maintenance.

Williams, who's been at Pinelsle since 1986, has a management philosophy inspired by his agricultural roots.

"Coming from a background where my grandparents bought land and farmed it, you knew you were going to be there for 'x' number of years so you did nothing to compromise that," he says. "That was so ingrained in my decision-making that it carried over here. You have to maintain that commitment to long-term management to allow a property to be successful for years and years."



Anthony Williams keeps Pinelsle clean and green.



Editors' note: *Landscape Management* is the exclusive sponsor of the Green Star Professional Grounds Management Awards for outstanding management of residential, commercial and institutional landscapes. The 2004 winners will be named at the annual meeting of the Professional Grounds Management Society in November. For more information on the 2003 awards, contact PGMS at: 720 Light St. • Baltimore, MD 21230

PGMS **Landscape**
MANAGEMENT

• Phone: 410/223-2861. Web site: www.pgms.org



The 167-acre Pinelsle Resort consists of a 254-room hotel, golf course, indoor/outdoor pool, tennis courts and private beach. Colorful displays of hydranga, begonia and impatiens invite guests to enjoy the natural surroundings.



IPM alive and well

Knowledge-based pest control rewards practitioners...but only if they educate clients

BY D. DOUGLAS GRAHAM

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a process for attaining long-term, environmentally sound pest suppression and prevention. The process works with nature to achieve its grand design. Instead of periodically dowsing a pest-infected lawn with chemistry, IPM monitors the problem and employs practical solutions for dealing with it in an ecologically friendly manner.

Not surprisingly, the popularity of IPM has advanced with public interest in protecting the environment. It's often employed by educational institutions such as Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY, which drafted its own set of IPM strategies.

These strategies include:

- ▶ Structural and procedural modifications

to reduce food, water, harborage and access used by pests

- ▶ Cultural controls using fertilizer, irrigation, site selection, plant selection and sanitation to curtail pest problems
- ▶ Physical controls, including temperature and humidity modification, traps, repellents and hand-removal of weeds
- ▶ Biological controls using beneficial organisms as natural enemies to pests
- ▶ Pesticide application methods that present the lowest potential hazard to people and the environment
- ▶ Coordination and communication with the Vassar community.

"IPM is the wise use of pesticides, fungicides and insecticides to control pest threat," explains Vassar College's Jeffrey Horst, Associate Executive Director, Building and Grounds Services. "It's about



Vassar's Horst says IPM works.

monitoring the situation, identifying problems and taking action. Before you resort to using pesticides, you observe an area such as a lawn and use water and fertilizer to deal with the pests that may be lurking there.

In the old days, you managed pest problems with chemicals.

"IPM is about moderation," Horst continues. "It's an informed approach whose mantra is the acquisition of knowledge and action that you base upon that knowledge. It's comprehensive in scope, and requires the investment of hefty sums of time and effort. The payoff is that you don't injure the environment in the process of trying to save it."

Know your enemies

The concept of IPM was born in the 1960s and 1970s, a time when environmental consciousness was on the rise. The concept was based in part on the idea of establishing thresholds.

Some pests are more destructive than others, and one of the goals of IPM is recognizing when a molehill is a molehill and not a mountain. Such determinations are knowledge-based. Practitioners know their enemies — the insects, weeds and diseases that threaten the beauty of their land-

scapes. They also know that some enemies are more villainous and more destructive to the turf or landscape than others.

Grounds managers and lawn care professionals become very familiar with the pests that threaten the properties they care for. They should also know and continue

Seven steps to IPM success

"Integrated pest management is a decision-making process that strives to make best use of all available management tools, including cultural, biological, mechanical, environmental and chemical methods," says New York's Jennifer Grant. "IPM is both effective and economical, and it minimizes risk to the environment and human health. It is, however, a structured approach, and for a lawn care professional to practice IPM successfully, several steps must be followed."

These include planning, monitoring, management, evaluation, intervention, record keeping and communication.

1 Planning — Plan ahead. Determine the current condition of the lawn.

What grass species are present?

What weeds? What other pest problems are possible, or are likely to occur? Consider the history of the property in question, as well as the area in which it's located.

2 Monitoring — Lawns must be monitored on a regular basis to access the health of turfgrass and detect the signatures of pests and other stress factors such as drought. Proper identification of pests (weeds, insects, diseases and other underlying problems) is essential. Pests must also be quanti-

fied to determine if populations are rising or declining, if thresholds have been reached, and whether previous control methods were successful. It's also important to determine the life stage of a pest (e.g. weed, seedling, insect pupa) in order to determine when or if intervention may be appropriate. Lawn care professionals can enhance their monitoring efforts by using lawns with known problem histories as early indicators in individual neighborhoods.

3 Management — Maintain the lawn with the best cultural management strategies that are feasible for the site, including optimal grass species and variety selection, watering and mowing practices, and fertility inputs based on soil or tissue testing.

4 Evaluation — Use monitoring data, research-based damage thresholds and guidelines, current and predicted weather conditions, and homeowner expectations to make decisions on the short- and long-term management plan for the lawn. Analysis is an ongoing process that allows the lawn care professional to make timely and appropriate decisions throughout the growing seasons.

5 Intervention — At times, the monitoring and critical analysis process will reveal a problem in need of remediation. At this point, the professional intervenes with a cultural, physical, biological or chemical control tactic. Close attention to the monitoring and analysis of individual lawns often allows for spot treatments rather than whole area treatments. It also makes possible the use of lower toxicity treatments before pests reach high levels.

6 Record keeping — The turfgrass professional must keep good records of cultural practices, turfgrass health and pest incidence. He must also note the identity of the pests involved, and the severity of its infestation. Intervention tactics must be tracked, especially when they involve the use of pesticides. Such records are critical for making in-season decisions.

7 Communication — Homeowners need to understand and embrace the principals of IPM, and partner with lawn care services to maintain healthy lawns. The lawn care professional needs to convey to customers how his or her expertise, coupled with information gleaned from individual properties, will help create an IPM program customized to their property.

— For more information on IPM visit the Web site www.nysipm.cornell.edu.

to build a history of these properties. Knowledge makes informed pest management possible, and also makes it a practical alternative to the often unnecessary calendar-based pesticide application.



NY's IPM expert
Dr. Jennifer Grant

"IPM is really more of a decision-making process," says Jennifer Grant, Ph.D., Assistant Director of the New York State IPM program at Cornell University. "An IPM practitioner in the lawn care business would

have foreknowledge about when certain pests are due to arrive. Lawn care professionals manage lots of properties, and any

IPM is about moderation. It's an informed approach based upon knowledge.

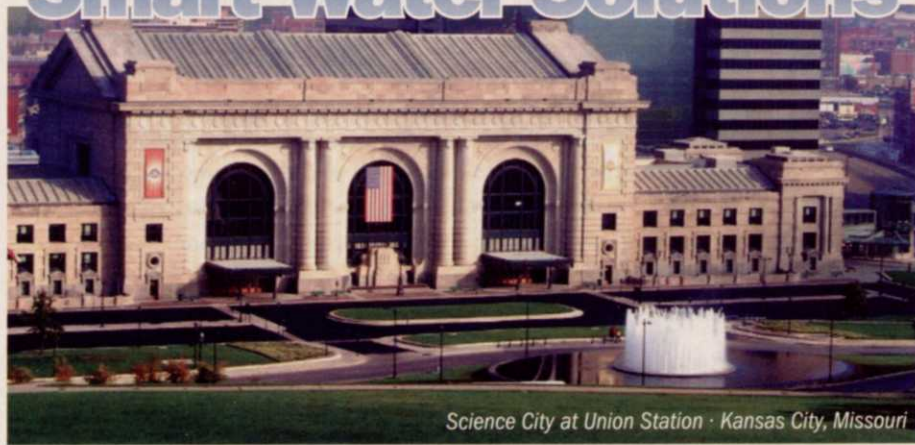
history they've built up on the sites will be important. Knowledge of history informs an IPM monitoring process. Say, for example, a company is looking for chinch bugs. It can go back to the properties where the pests have shown up before, and begin monitoring for symptoms indicating their return. It can begin sampling as well."

A property previously afflicted with chinch bugs will also act as a barometer for other properties facing possible infestation. When another property shows chinch bug signs, the IPM practitioner will know to monitor other lawns. The point is he won't have to duplicate work in this area. One property will serve as his indicator. Knowledge, both of chinch bugs and history will make this a reality.

It can be done

"One of the first things a company has to make a decision about is the level of IPM it will practice," says Tom Delaney, Vice President, Government Affairs, Professional Lawn Care Association of America. "IPM is a broad concept. It's often inter-

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Delaney: "IPM programs vary."

pretended differently by people working within the industry. Many companies do not offer across-the-board IPM services. This is because there is no recognized standard for IPM practice and implementation.

"There's a lot of latitude to work with, so a company will have to decide how and to what degree they will incorporate IPM into their business."

According to Delaney, an IPM program will be more or less profitable based upon the degree to which a practitioner educates his/her customers. Callbacks and com-

plaints cost dearly in the landscaping and lawn servicing businesses, he says. The more often a lawn service provider has to go back to retreat a disgruntled customer's property, the less profitable the service will turn out to be.

Education the key

IPM may or may not bring instantaneous results. More often than not, it doesn't, or so it may appear to the unpracticed eye. You have to educate customers to the process so that their expectations will be consistent with reality. You should also encourage them to participate in the process by watering, mowing and tweaking their properties as often as necessary to help the lawn care professional bring

about the outcome desired. Unfortunately, this is easier said than done.

"Some customers are information-driven, while others don't want to hear about it," Delaney adds. "Many will monitor a lawn care professional while he's working, and if they don't understand the IPM process they may think he's ripping them off. Confusion is a common and costly hazard in IPM, so the more sophisticated your customers become about the process, the more satisfied they will be with its results. Knowledge is fundamental to IPM. It should be shared with everyone involved in the project, especially the customer." **LM**

— The author is a freelance writer based in St. Louis, MO. He can be reached at mahakala@charter.net.

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New insecticides

United Phosphorus Inc. has introduced two new UP-Star insecticides approved by the EPA: UP-Star SC Lawn and Nursery Insecticide/Miticide and UP-Star Gold Insecticide. The SC insecticide/miticide is approved for commercial non-food use on indoor and outdoor ornamentals, greenhouses, nurseries, turf on golf courses, sod farms, and ornamentals and lawns in landscaped areas. Gold insecticide can control a wide spectrum of common pests in outdoor plantscapes around residential, institutional, public, commercial and industrial buildings, parks, recreational areas, parks, lawns and grounds.

For more information contact UPI at 800/247-1557 or www.upi-usa.com / circle no. 250



Floating aerators

Air-O-Lator's decorative fountains and aerators enhance the water quality and aesthetics of ponds, lakes and shallow reflection pools. The company's commercial floating aerators, available with 1- to 3-hp motors, are designed to establish continual pond turnover, introduce oxygen to the water appropriately and in the proper quantity, eliminate or prevent algae growth, and control insect infestation. Fountain packages



Go with the flow

Hunter Industries' Flow-Clik is a new electronic sensor that automatically shuts down an irrigation system if an overflow condition is detected, such as a ruptured pipe or broken sprinkler. It wires directly to any standard 24-volt irrigation controller and, if an overflow condition occurs, the electrical circuit is disconnected and the operating valves are

shut down. Each Flow-Clik can be custom calibrated in gpm, and the flexible flow range (17 to 120 gpm) makes the unit compatible with both commercial and residential piping systems. The units include the flow sensor, a weatherproof interface panel and a sensor body. The flow sensor body is available in seven models to accommodate all standard pipe sizes in schedule 40 or 80.

For more information contact Hunter at 800/733-2823 or www.hunterindustries.com / circle no. 251

include one of eight different nozzle spray patterns, 100 ft. of cord, propeller guard, ETL list (ANSI/VL 508) control panel with time clock and a three-year limited warranty.

For more information contact Air-O-Lator at 800/821-3177 or www.airolator.com / circle no. 252

A cut above

Yazoo/Kees' Kutter line of gear-driven walk-behind mowers consists of four models equipped with commercial grade Kawasaki engines with 32-, 36- and 48-in. deck options.



These mowers define toughness with their 7- and 10-gauge rolled-front cutting deck and 1-in. solid rear axle. The 48-in. model features a 15-hp Kawasaki V-twin engine with 48-in. cutting width. Adjust cutting height from 1.5 to 5 in. in .25-in. increments.

For more information contact Yazoo/Kees at 877/368-8873 or www.yazookees.com / circle no. 253



Compact blower design

Husqvarna's 125BT blower is lightweight and more compact than professional blowers but with the same design and features. It features air purge for easy starting, high volume capacity and convenient trigger throttle control mounted on the tube. Maximum

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Back By Popular Demand!

ATHLETIC TURF

Landscape Management re-introduces **Athletic Turf**. Formerly a sister publication of LM, *Athletic Turf* will now be sent as a monthly e-Newsletter to the leading turf managers who represent the markets most attractive buyers for your products and services.

In addition to the monthly e-Newsletter, www.athleticturf.net will provide instant access to the latest products, news and information.

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Products

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power speed is 7,800 rpm, sound level is 69 dB(A) and air speed is 116 mph. Weighing in at just 13.2 lbs., operators won't have to worry about fatigue.

For more information contact Husqvarna at www.husqvarna.com / circle no. 254



Self-propelled topdresser

Turfco Direct has added the Mete-R-Matic F-15 self-propelled topdresser to its line of turf maintenance equipment for lawn care professionals. With all controls at the operator's fingertips, it's easy to maneuver in tight places. The Mete-R-Matic F-15 has a 31-1/2 in. spreading width, a 11.5 cu. ft. hopper and 2.5 mph operating speed. It's also available with an easy-to-mount overseeding attachment designed to handle all grass types that allows seeding and topdressing to be combined in a single application.

For more information contact Turfco at 800/679-8201 or www.turfco.com / circle no. 255



Chip off the old block

Vermeer's BC2000XL brush chipper tackles high volume organic chipping projects with

ease. Two 18-in. diameter spring-tensioned vertical feed rollers automatically control the feeding of material into the cutting chamber. The 20-in. by 24-in. feed opening and large rollers allow the BC2000XL to chip whole trees up to 20 in. diameter. Three Caterpillar 3126B Tier II engine options of 200, 225 and 250 hp can be customized to fit a customer's specific needs.

For more information contact Vermeer at 888/837-6337 or www.vermeer.com / circle no. 256

Get your kicks

General Motors says that its Chevrolet Kodiak and GMC TopKick have raised the bar in the medium-duty truck segment. For the 2005 model year, factory-engineered 4-wheel drive will be added in July 2004. The 4-wheel-drive TopKick and Kodiak models feature wheel-



bases ranging from 152 to 235 in. in both regular cab and crew cab configurations, and are powered by either the standard Vortec 8100MD V-8 gasoline or Duramax 6600 V-8 Turbo Diesel engine. Enhancing these vehicles off-road capability is an electronically controlled New Venture Gear Model NV273 two-speed transfer case and an instrument panel-mounted rotary selector switch for 4L, 4H and 2H drive settings.

For more information contact GM at www.gm.com / circle no. 257



Power drive

John Deere's ProGator utility vehicle combines modern styling and operator-friendly features with rugged durability and sheer power. Engine options include a 23.5-hp diesel and 26-hp gas, and a 5-speed fully synchronized transmission lets you keep going without stopping to change gears. Hydrostatic steering provides for precision control and a tight turning radius of only 33 in. It weighs in with a 2,650-lb. load capacity, and the cargo box is solid steel. A versatile 3-pin system lets you take the cargo box on or off in minutes without tools.

For more information contact John Deere at 952/888-8801 or www.deere.com / circle no. 258

Blower for the long haul

Peterson Pacific Corp.'s 60 cu. yd. capacity blower truck is intended for operators who travel long distances with low-density organic materials. The Peterson feeder and high-capacity blower combine to deliver a



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Products

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wide range of organic materials. The live floor unloads materials rapidly without bridging, and redistributes the weight of the load for optimum truck handling capabilities. With just the pull of a lever, the Power Sweep Assist feature is engaged and makes it simple to deliver many kinds of materials in the same day.

For more information contact Peterson-Pacific at www.petersoncorp.com / circle no. 259

Keep track of your jobs

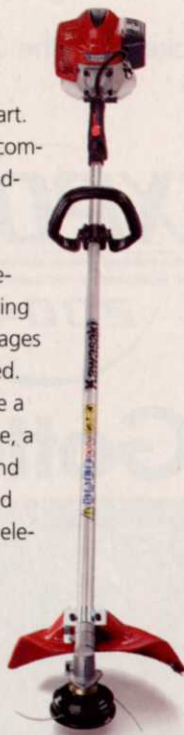
CLIPtrak technology by Sensible Software integrates with CLIP software to automatically record your jobs as started and ended with vehicle position and provides a "live" update back to your CLIP program. When the last job is finished, your jobs are ready to be posted. There's no waiting for the last crew to arrive, and you can job cost completely and accurately.

For more information contact Sensible Software at 800/635-8485 or www.clip.com / circle no. 260

Easy start

Kawasaki's easy-start KTR27A string trimmer takes only half a pull to start. At 26.3cc, it's one of the company's most powerful hand-held string trimmers. A new carburetor with a slow idle starter device prevents the blade from running during startup and disengages when the throttle is applied. Additional features include a reduced recoil pulling force, a fully covered carburetor and one-piece fan housing, and easy-to-service air cleaner element and muffler screen.

For more information contact Kawasaki at 877/529-7697 or www.kawpowr.com / circle no. 261



Heads up for Stihl offering

The new Stihl FixCut 5-2 and FixCut 25-2 trimmer heads are easy and quick to load — which means less down time for users. Reloading line is a snap: users simply insert a pre-cut length of trimmer line into the eyelet, stop insertion once the line appears on the inside opening of the head, and give a slight pullback to seat the line in the retainer. Unlike other trimmer heads, the FixCut's spool-less construction eliminates the nuisance of tangled spools. The FixCut 5-2 head easily attaches to the Stihl FS 45 and FS 46, while the FixCut 25-2 attaches to the FS 55, FS 80, FS 83, FS 85, FS 110, FS 250 and KM-FS models.

For more information contact Stihl at 800/467-8445 or www.stihlusa.com / circle no. 262

The right switch

Dynamax's Irrigation Moisture Switch, IL2-MS, is a new product that controls irrigation by an accurate measurement of soil moisture. The IL2-MS helps all existing irrigation controllers that aren't automatically adjusted by plant water need. Buried in the root zone where water is needed, it regulates water applied by continuously monitoring the soil conditions at the sensor and interrupts the controller schedule when enough water reaches the plant roots.

For more information contact Dynamax at www.dynamax.com / circle no. 263

Kincaid's new hydroseeder

Kincaid Equipment Manufacturing's hydro-seeder, the AgiGator, provides a fast and efficient method of seeding, mulching and fertilizing areas where lush green turf is desired. The 425-gal. model features a 13-hp Honda engine and can be towed by a trailer. Aggressive mechanical agitation with by-pass for pressure and volume settings allow the AgiGator to mix both paper and thicker wood mulch slurries. Enough power is generated to propel mulch slurry up to 75 ft. from the end of a 300-ft. discharge hose.

For more information contact Kincaid at 800/854-7287 or www.kincaidequipment.com / circle no. 264

Squeeze play with Ferris

With its overall width of 35 in., Ferris Industries' HydroCut walk-behind mower can squeeze in and out of places other commercial walk-behinds can't. Integrated Comfort Controls provide for simple maneuvering, and Quick-Adjust controls make it easy to control height-of-cut. Other features include a 13-hp Kawasaki V-twin engine, reliable hydrostatic transmission, electric PTO, 10-gauge fabricated double top deck with reinforced side



skirts and overlap welded corners, forward and reverse ground speeds of 0-5.5 mph and 16-in. turf-friendly tires.

For more information contact Ferris at www.ferrisindustries.com / circle no. 265

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 20 **Manager/Superintendent** - Arborist, Architect, Landscape/Grounds Manager, Superintendent, Foreman, Supervisor
 30 **Government Official** - Government Commissioner, Agent, Other Government Official
 40 **Specialist** - Forester, Consultant, Agronomist, Pilot, Instructor, Researcher, Horticulturist, Certified Specialist
 50 **Other Titled and Non-Titled Personnel** (please specify) _____

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 A Mowing F Turf Fertilization C Tree Care
 B Turf Insect Control D Turf Aeration L Pond/Lake Care
 J Turf Weed Control E Irrigation Services N Snow Removal
 G Turf Disease Control H Ornamental Care O Other (please specify) _____

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 I Landscape Design M Landscape Installation P Irrigation Installation
 K Paving/Deck/Patio Installation Q Other (please specify) _____

4. Type of customer served? (Fill in ONE ONLY)
 A Commercial B Residential C Both

5. Which of the following landscape products do you purchase or specify? (Fill in ALL that apply)
 B Blowers H Herbicides Y Ornamental/Nursery Products P Tractors
 C Chain Saws I Insecticides Z Pavers/Masonry/Bricks/Rocks Q Truck Trailers/Attachments
 U Engines W Irrigation Systems (Hardscape Materials) R Trucks
 V Erosion Control X Landscape Lighting 3 Seed/Sod S Turfseed
 F Fertilizers J Line Trimmers 1 Skid Steers T Utility Vehicles
 G Fungicides K Mowers N Spreaders 2 Water Features

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10-12 Snow & Ice Management Symposium / Minneapolis, MN; 814/835-3577; www.sima.org

17-19 Super Floral Show / Charlotte, NC; 617/728-0300; www.superfloralshow.com

22-23 Virginia Turfgrass Council Demo Days / Virginia Beach, VA; 540/942-8873

24-26 ITODA Summer Meeting / Boston, MA; Sponsored by the Independent Turf and Ornamental Distributors Association; 814/355-1912

27-30 Garden Centers of America Specialty Tour / Williamsburg/Tidewater, VA; 888/648-6463; info@garden-centersofamerica.org

July

6-8 Perennial Plant Symposium & Trade Show / New York, NY; 614/771-8431; www.perennial-plant.org

13-18 ANLA Convention & Executive Learning Retreat / Maui, HI; 202/789-2900

19-20 PLCAA Legislative Day on the Hill / Washington, DC; 800/458-3466

24-28 Soil and Water Conservation Society / St. Paul, MN; 515/289-2331; www.swcs.org

27-29 Penn Allied Nursery Trade Show (PANTS) / Fort Washington, PA; 717/238-1673; www.plna.com

27-30 Turfgrass Producers International Summer Convention & Field Days / Manheim, PA; 800/705-9898; www.turfgrasssod.org

August

3 INLA Certified Nursery Professional Train/Test / Ames, IA; Sponsored by the Iowa Nursery & Landscape Association; 816/233-1481; www.iowanla.org

5-7 American Conifer Society Meeting / Newark, OH; 410/721-6611; www.conifersociety.org

7-11 International Society of Arboriculture Annual Conference & Trade Show / Pittsburgh, PA; 217/355-9411; www.isa-arbor.com

12 Wisconsin Nursery Association Summer Field Day / Menomonee Falls, WI; 414/529-4705

12-14 SNA 2004 World Showcase of Horticulture / Atlanta, GA; 770/953-3311; www.sna.org

18 OSU/OTF Turfgrass Research Field Day / Columbus, OH; 888/683-3445

20 INLA 2004 Field Day / Charles City, IA; Sponsored by the Iowa Nursery & Landscape Association; 816/233-1481; www.iowanla.org



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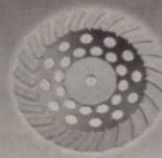
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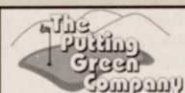
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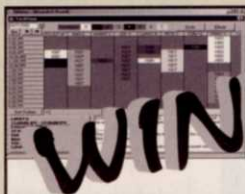
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H-2B'S RISING POPULARITY

The number of H-2B visas for temporary unskilled workers issued each fiscal year. The annual cap set by law is 66,000 visas.

- ▶ 1997 — 15,706
- ▶ 1998 — 20,192
- ▶ 1999 — 30,642
- ▶ 2000 — 45,037
- ▶ 2001 — 58,215
- ▶ 2002 — 62,591
- ▶ 2003 — 78,955



SOURCE: U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT'S BUREAU OF CONSULAR AFFAIRS



OWNERS AND THEIR SALARY

"Owner pay by primary business type" is defined as salary only and doesn't include any dividend payment or other perks. The chart below shows the mean salary, and salary as a percent of revenues for the mean size business reporting in our 2003 survey.

Average annual revenues	\$1,900,000	2,420,000
Average annual salary dollars	\$115,318	\$113,297
Salary as a % of revenues	6%	5%

Further research shows the following relationship between annual revenue dollars and owner/manager salary as a percent of total annual revenues. This chart constitutes what might be called a "fair pay" scale.

Annual sales volume	Salary as % of sales	Salary bonus
Under \$1,000,000	7.00%	
\$1,000,000	6.00%	\$60,000
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\$3,000,000	3.80%	\$114,000
\$4,000,000	3.30%	\$132,000
\$5,000,000	3.00%	\$150,000
\$6,000,000	2.80%	\$168,000
\$7,000,000	2.50%	\$175,000
\$8,000,000	2.30%	\$184,000
\$9,000,000	2.10%	\$189,000
\$10,000,000	2.00%	\$200,000

SOURCE: KEHOEGUIDO

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Q Analysts expect the already high gasoline and diesel prices to climb even higher this summer. Last year, readers told us they weren't concerned at all about fuel costs. We're wondering if that has changed. Here are the results of our online poll:

- 44% Very worried. This is going to hit our profits hard.
- 40% Concerned. Fuel costs are not that big an item in our overall expense picture.
- 13% Not worried. We're pretty sure this won't hit our bottom line too hard.
- 3% We haven't been tracking our fuel costs. Maybe we should start soon.

Percentages based on 45 responses

Log onto www.landscapemanagement.net and answer our online survey. We publish the results here monthly.



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