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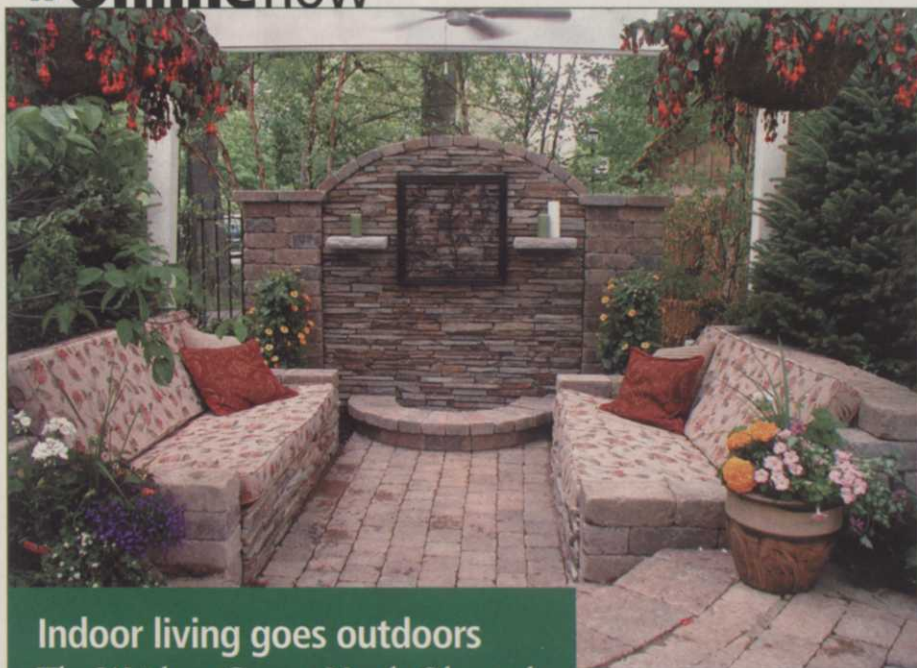
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Indoor living goes outdoors

The Weidner Group, North Olmsted, OH, earned seven Honor or Merit awards at the recent Ohio Landscape Association *Landscape Ohio!* dinner. See this Weidner winner and others at www.landscapemanagement.net.

» Readers respond

Last year at this time, one of your biggest concerns was rising fertilizer prices. We dive into the *Landscape Management* survey vault to revisit the results of our May 2005 poll: **How are fertilizer price hikes affecting your business?**

33% No worries. We just pass this cost along to the customer.

9% Fertilizer isn't very important in my line of the business.

8% We're OK. We made sure to get fixed-price contracts last year for this season.

35%

This is not good. We knew prices were going up, but we didn't expect it to be this bad!

8% No sweat. We're taking our biz in the direction of organics.

7% It's panic time! We'll lose customers if we raise prices.

Want to weigh in? Our survey question changes every month and we publish the results here. Visit www.landscapemanagement.net to voice your opinion.

» Special issue

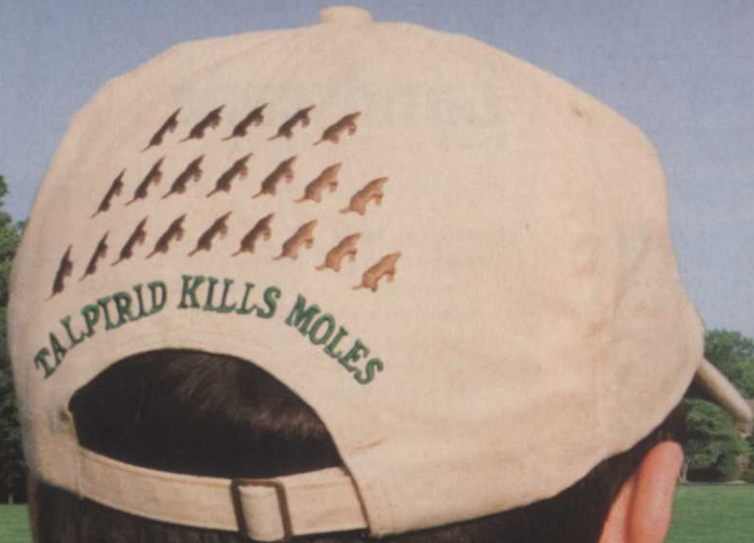
In July *Landscape Management* publishes its 11th annual listing of the biggest landscape companies by revenue. Check out last year's ranking to see where your company fits on the list. Click on "LM 100" in the "Special Issues" section of our home page.



» Overheard

"Boo-yah!"

— PLANET Student Career Days chairman **Jim McCutcheon**, sounding his trademark cheer at this year's event at Brigham Young University. Get more photos and results from this year's Landscape Olympics online.



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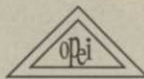
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Focus on local issues

BY RON HALL / Editor in Chief

It's time to compare notes and put together better action plans to meet the issues threatening the growth (in some instances survival) of the chemical lawn care industry. In particular we need better plans for issues that pop up on the local and state levels.

For this reason we're partnering with The Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) in a special "Grassroots Lawn Care Pesticide Summit" to precede the Legislative Day on the Hill and Renewal & Remembrance at Arlington National Cemetery on Sunday, July 23. The Summit will take place 2 - 5 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Capitol Hill, and just before PLANET's Welcome Reception at the hotel.

It will feature a panel of lawn care experts from the United States and Canada. It will illuminate the most challenging issues facing the chemical lawn industry and shed light on how we should prepare and meet new ones as they arise.

The issues relating to pesticide use will intensify, you can bet on that. Just look north to see what can happen.

The furor over the use of lawn care chemicals continues to spread over Canada like a rash this spring. It shows no signs of slowing down, never mind going away. Things are nasty north of the border and getting nastier.

By contrast the lawn care industry in the United States, by most indications, is off to good start. While the Canadian press is ringing with comment on the use of chemical control products for so-called non-essential or "cosmetic" uses (95% of the criticism aimed at the lawn application industry), the U.S.

scene is relatively quiet. Unnervingly quiet, say some U.S. lawn care business owners.

The fact is that the Canada lawn care professional and his/her U.S. counterpart work in two different worlds. The former allows towns and cities to make their own rules concerning pesticide use; the latter decided long ago that those decisions belong in the hands of the federal and, to a much lesser degree, state governments.

The fear, at least among the U.S. lawn application fraternity, is that the two worlds will become one, the Maple Leaf world. In Canada about 100 villages and cities have banned or severely restricted the use of chemical control products for turf care.

Canada's a great country and a wonderful neighbor but few people in the U.S. application business can be happy with what's happening up there. At the Summit on July 23 we'll find out what went wrong there (and in several locations in the United States too). Then we'll start making plans to keep them from happening here or spreading.

If you're a lawn care business owner and you're thinking about participating in this year's Arlington Cemetery or Legislative Day events, now you have an extra reason for coming to the nation's capital on July 23.

**Contact Ron at 216/706-3739
or e-mail rhall@questex.com.**

The furor over the use of lawn care chemicals continues to spread over Canada like a rash.



The best companies still find a way to stick to the discipline of their work processes to make higher margins.



Manage enhancements

BY BRUCE WILSON

Maintenance contractors thrive on enhancement sales as a method for improving their bottom line. However, most contractors rely on pricing and a high volume of enhancement sales as the driver. Enhancements are mostly small jobs that get accomplished in one to three days. These jobs are just as hard to organize, schedule and produce on budget as larger construction jobs.

Most companies do not focus enough on producing these jobs efficiently to make the optimum margin. Many companies do not have a system in place for producing these jobs. I think this is a lost opportunity.

Six tips

In order to increase your profit margin on enhancements, consider these tips:

1. Create a detailed work order outlining budgeted hours, materials needed, equipment and tools needed, along with a schedule of what is expected to be accomplished each day if the job lasts more than a day.
2. Close supervision ensures the work is getting done according to the desired schedule.
3. Coordinate with maintenance to verify the right site conditions (for example, is the irrigation turned off so the ground isn't too wet?).
4. Communicate with the client to double-check that expectations are being met.
5. Coordinate with purchasing to make sure

that the right materials get to the job or yard at the right time.

6. Finally, touch base with maintenance on post-installation maintenance to make sure the project was completed successfully.

Details pay off

Of these six key tips, the first one is the piece that gets overlooked the most. In the haste to get going no one has time to complete a detailed work order. The customer may have authorized the enhancement after sitting on the proposal for weeks and then wants it done tomorrow.

Skipping this critical step leads to lost time and efficiency on the job because you don't have a detailed plan for what you need on site. Or, skipping this step might lead to crews that just work to finish the job with no idea how much time they should have allotted. You don't find out that you are over budget until the final accounting has been done and it is too late.

The best companies still find a way to stick to the discipline of their work processes to make sure that all steps are followed and make higher margins. They hold all accountable in the work chain to do their piece and do it on a timely basis. After all, how effective is it to give the crew leader the work order after he has arrived at the job without some of the things needed to complete the job? Details are critical on small jobs.

The author is a partner with entrepreneur Tom Oyler in the Wilson-Oyler Group, which offers consulting services. Visit www.wilson-oyler.com.



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To promise and not deliver means a downhill slide in your customer count, along with costly and permanent damage to your reputation.



Focus on commitments

BY BILL HOOPES

It's May, the season is rolling along. Everyone, including the trainer, has plenty of work to do. But we cannot forget that effective training really is a two-step process. In addition to spring training on plant-pest relationships, operational job skills and problem solving, we must also train our crews to focus on commitments.

Far too often during the production season, management focuses on one thing — production. "Duh," you say. I've watched the same production parade for more than 20 years now, and the scenario never changes, at least not in companies that prioritize growth. We spend hours building knowledge and skills, stressing quality work and the importance of each customer. Then, as if possessed, we turn abruptly to the numbers at the exclusion of the rest of the job.

Promise and deliver

I can sense your eyeballs rolling as you read this. "Production equals dollars, equals paychecks," you say. Can't argue, it's a fact. Production does pay the bills and generate profit. But doesn't it make sense, just when it matters most, to teach your team that each of us is measured not by what we have promised but what we now deliver?

Or don't lost customers matter in your organization? If your strategy is to out-sell lost customers and job cancellations, you might as well go for it, service be damned. But if customer retention and repeat

business is your aim, you need to "choke your motor" long enough to emphasize the quality of the work or service provided and the absolute necessity to meet commitments and expectations set a couple of months ago by your sales people.

To promise and not deliver means a downhill slide in your customer count, along with costly and permanent damage to your reputation. And, like management, we trainers are responsible for making a conscious effort to keep that from happening.

Your May training "Action Now" list:

- ▶ Put "meeting commitments" at the top of your agenda for next Monday's team meeting.
- ▶ Take time to point out the very real cost of lost business and a damaged reputation that can result if service commitments are not kept.
- ▶ Find an example of outstanding service and focus on it.
- ▶ Make it a point to recognize team members who go one step beyond meeting the production goal. Your focus should be on the dual nature of our work — production and customer satisfaction.
- ▶ Reward someone each week for performance that results in happy customers [can be as simple as parking in the boss' spot or tickets to a ball game].

Your people will respond to the message you send. Why not make your message, "commitments count."

If you have a success story to share, I'd love to hear it and will share it in a future column. Contact me at the e-mail address below.

The author is founder of Grass Roots Training in Delaware, OH. Contact him at hoopes@columbus.rr.com or visit www.grassroots-training.com.

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The following pages highlight product innovations that will help you and your customers save water. Featured are insights into what Rain Bird is doing to support your business success.



For additional details about water-conserving Rain Bird products and technologies, see your Rain Bird distributor or visit www.rainbird.com/IUOW.



Like clockwork, Rain Bird controllers manage water efficiently.

Rain Bird continues to advance controller technologies that make it possible to more precisely and responsibly manage water use based on seasons, weather and landscape requirements.

Water Budgeting. Reduce water use during low-water use seasons with one easy adjustment that applies to all station run times.

Rain Delay. Use 15-20% less water by suspending irrigation when it's raining or when sufficient soil moisture is detected.

Cycle+Soak™. Minimize erosion and run-off by applying water at a rate that the soil can more easily absorb.

ET Management. Reduce water waste and promote deep watering by allowing the controller to only apply the amount required by the landscape.



ESP Modular

Controllers

ESP Modular. Four-station base unit expands up to 13 stations for residential and light commercial use; water-saving technologies include Water Budget and ET Manager compatibility.



ESP-LX Modular

ESP-LX Modular. Eight-station base unit expands up to 32 stations for residential and commercial use; advanced water-saving features include Water Budget, Rain Delay, Cycle+Soak and ET Manager compatibility.

ESP-MC. Eight to 40 station units for commercial use; water-conserving features include Water Budget, Rain Delay, Cycle+Soak and ET Manager compatibility.



ESP-MC

Central Controls

SiteControl. Single-site commercial irrigation applications; maximizes water savings with Smart Weather™ and ET-based scheduling, RainWatch™ intelligent rainfall reaction system, Cycle+Soak and more.

Maxicom2™. Unlimited number of sites, controlled from a single location; water-savings of up to 25-45% per year with Smart Weather and ET-based scheduling, RainWatch, Cycle+Soak and high-flow sensing and shut-off.



Central Control

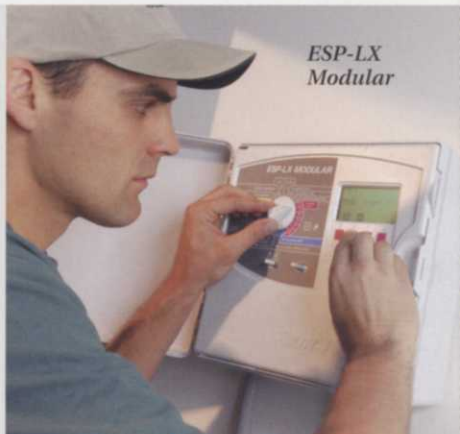
Accessories

ET Manager. Reduces water consumption by enabling the controller to apply only the water required by the landscape based on current weather and soil conditions.

RSD Rain Sensor. Automatically shuts off the controller when it's raining to minimize water waste.



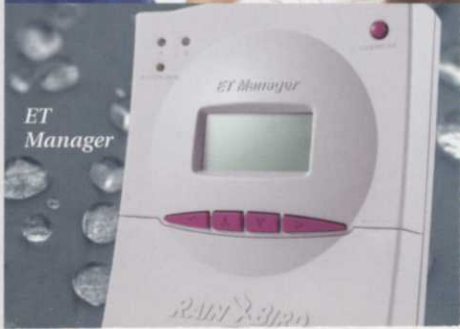
RSD
Rain Sensor



ESP-LX
Modular



SiteControl



ET
Manager



Rain Bird® spray heads and rotors
 pop up every day *with advanced technologies*
 to uniformly distribute water more wisely.



Rain Bird offers more nozzle and distribution technologies to responsibly manage water use on residential or commercial sites of every size.

Rain Curtain™ Nozzles. Generate larger droplets that are far less affected by wind and minimize misting, fogging and airborne evaporation. More even distribution throughout the radius reduces the likelihood of over-watering.

MPR Nozzles. Less water is needed and efficient, uniform coverage is achieved by matching precipitation rates across both radii and patterns.

U-Series Nozzles. Water use can be reduced by up to 30% with dual-orifice nozzles that provide uniform coverage—even close-in around the head.

Pressure-Regulating Stems. Water loss due to misting and fogging caused by high pressure is eliminated by maintaining a constant outlet pressure of 30 psi for spray heads and 45 psi for 5000-PRS rotors.



Rain Curtain
 Nozzles

U-Series Nozzles



MPR Nozzles





Rain Bird Spray Heads

More contractors choose Rain Bird 1800® Series Spray Heads and Nozzles than all other brands combined to optimize water use. Available water-conserving technologies include: U-Series Nozzles, MPR Nozzles and built-in Pressure-Regulating Stems.

Rain Bird Rotors

Only Rain Bird rotors feature advanced Rain Curtain™ Nozzle Technology for more uniform distribution throughout the radius range to optimize efficiency and water use. 5000-PRS Series are now available with pressure-regulating stems.

Rotary Nozzles

Rotating streams uniformly deliver water at a low precipitation rate to significantly reduce run-off and erosion and provide efficient water distribution from 13 to 24 feet; designed to fit on Rain Bird spray heads.

Accessories

In-Stem Seal-A-Matic™ Check Valve. Eliminates water loss due to puddling or run-off by preventing water from draining out of the irrigation system at the lowest head.

Pressure-Regulating Swing Joints. Optimize water use by equalizing pressure at each rotor; eliminate misting and conserves water by regulating droplet size.

Rotary Nozzle

Pressure-Regulating Swing Joint



Building
Partnerships
to Encourage
The Intelligent
Use of Water.™

Rain Bird actively partners with organizations to promote water conservation and educate others about how to be responsible stewards of the environment.

Irrigation Association

Smart Water Application
Technologies™ (SWAT™)

U.S. Green Building
Council (USGBC)

Leadership in Energy and
Environmental Design (LEED®)

American Public Gardens
Association (APGA)
*formerly American Association of
Botanical Gardens and Arboreta*

Landscape Architecture
Foundation

California Urban Water
Conservation Council
(CUWCC)

www.rainbird.com/IUOW



Taking a
Leadership
Role to Advance
The Intelligent
Use of Water.™

Leading by example,
Rain Bird authored the
comprehensive report,
*Irrigation for a Growing
World*, which discusses
causes and potential
solutions to the global
water crisis. We also
sponsor an annual
summit on outdoor
water conservation.

www.rainbird.com/IUOW

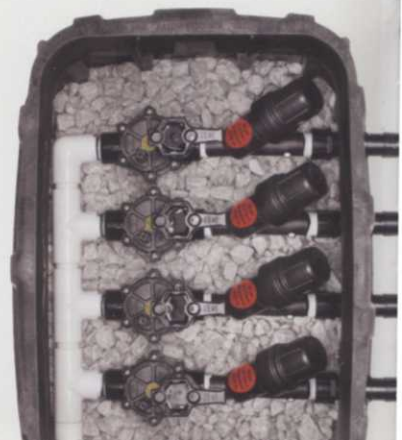
Slow and steady, Rain Bird® landscape drip products deliver precise irrigation for healthy plants.

Rain Bird low-volume drip irrigation systems are innovative by nature in the way water is responsibly distributed to any non-turf areas, including trees and plants in flower beds, street medians, vegetable gardens and hanging baskets.

Efficient Distribution. Landscape drip systems allow you to tailor the amount of water to each plant's specific watering needs. This minimizes water waste caused by over-watering and results in healthier plants.

Direct-to-Root Delivery. Precise amounts of water are slowly and uniformly applied at or near plant root zones. This efficient method places the right amount of water where it's needed, which eliminates run-off and overspray onto walls, walkways and streets.

*Pressure-Regulating
Filter Control Zone Kit*





Educating
Others About
The Intelligent
Use of Water.™

Rain Bird provides a series of public service announcements in partnership with the American Public Gardens Association, featuring HGTV's "The Gardener Guy", Paul James.

www.rainbird.com/IUOW



Landscape Dripline



Root Watering System (RWS)

System Components

Control Zone Kits with Pressure-Regulating Filters.

These kits with pressure-regulating filters increase efficiency and save water; pre-assembled to eliminate leaks.

Landscape Dripline. Optimizes water use as it slowly and precisely delivers the right amount of moisture at or near plant root zones.

Emitters. These delivery devices apply water at a specific rate and pressure to minimize waste.

Accessories

Root Watering System (RWS).

These self-contained systems precisely distribute water at or near tree and shrub root zones for efficient water use.

Irrigation Supplement. This all-natural water-bound gel extends the intervals between watering cycles for container plants, hanging baskets and streetscapes.



*Irrigation Supplement
Perforated Tube
and Gel Pack*



The Intelligent Use of Water™

At Rain Bird, we believe it is our responsibility to develop products and technologies that use water efficiently. Our commitment also extends to education, training and services for our industry and our communities.

The need to conserve water has never been greater. We want to do even more, and with your help, we can. Visit www.rainbird.com/IUOW for more information about The Intelligent Use of Water.™



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Fax: (520) 741-6522
www.rainbird.com

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Glendora, CA 91741
Phone: (626) 963-9311
Fax: (626) 963-4287

Rain Bird Technical Services
(800) RAINBIRD
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In the Know

BUSINESS

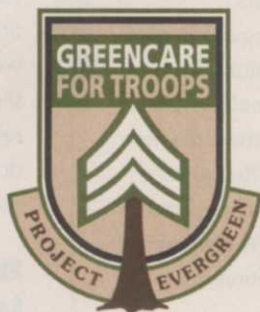
NEWS YOU CAN USE

PROJECT
EVERGREEN
HITS SPRING
RUNNING

GreenCare helps military families

Know a local family with a mom or dad serving active duty with the armed forces? Project EverGreen's new "GreenCare for Troops: Serving You While You Serve Us" program provides materials to local lawn and landscape companies who wish to help the community by providing their company's services to military families.

"Lawn and landscape maintenance becomes a hardship when a family's major breadwinner is on active duty overseas. GreenCare for Troops shows our industry's concern by setting up a way to provide services to affected families," says Project EverGreen Executive Director Den Gardner. The program is flexible and adaptable for associations, franchisees and independent operations.



Project EverGreen contributors can receive the project Mission Kit free of charge. The kit contains marketing and promotional materials, and a business blueprint for efficiently launching the program in local markets.

In addition, Project EverGreen will support GreenCare for Troops with consumer publicity beginning May 20, Armed Forces Day, says Gardner.

"This is an opportunity to show that we're ready to step up and help," he explains. "We understand that men and women on active duty away from home make financial, as well as emotional sacrifices. Caring for their lawns and landscapes is a tangible way for our industry to ease that burden."

For more information on this and

other Project EverGreen programs mentioned on this page. Or, to take a more active role in Project EverGreen, call 877/758-9135 or visit the Web site www.projectevergreen.com.

BECAUSE GREEN MATTER SCHOLARSHIPS PLANNED

Project EverGreen will give away two \$2,500 scholarships to college students seeking a career in the Green Industry through its "Because Green Matters" Scholarship Program.

To qualify, students must major or minor in a Green Industry-related field such as horticulture, plant sciences, botany, agronomy, plant pathology or water management. Eligibility extends to two- and four-year program students attending institutions that offer turf, landscape and golf management curriculums. Applications are due June 1 and may be downloaded from www.projectevergreen.com.

The organization is also seeking the best photos of well-maintained green spaces, lawns, landscapes, trees, gardens, parks, sports fields and golf courses for publication in its 2007 Because Green Matters Calendar.

Entries are free and will be judged on their portrayal of the environmental, economic and lifestyle benefits of green spaces. Winning photos will be published in the 2007 calendar and also made available as a series of screen savers. Amateur photographers are welcome to participate. The deadline for the contest is August 31, 2006.

DEVELOPER HONORED FOR GREEN SPACES

Project EverGreen named Southern Land Company, Franklin, TN, winner of its 2006 Because Green Matters award. Den Gardner, executive director of Project EverGreen, praised the company for what he termed, "Enlightened attention to the role green space should play in real estate development."

The company's philosophy makes landscaping and horticulture an integral part of community planning. Its Westhaven project, for example, is a 1,500-acre traditional neighborhood development in Franklin with 50% of the total area set aside for playing fields, walking trails and lakes.



"We are honored to receive an award that acknowledges our commitment to green space and solid horticultural practices," said Tim Downey, CEO of Southern Land Company. "From this company's inception, the natural environment has been an essential component to our philosophy and development model."



In the Know

EPA clears the way for tougher regulations on small engine emissions

BY LYNNE BRAKEMAN / Web Editor

WASHINGTON, D.C. — On March 17 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a study concluding that catalytic converters to clean emissions in small engines like those used in commercial mowers are not a fire risk. The EPA reported that emissions controls on small engines could have safety benefits.

The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI), an organization that represents equipment manufacturers, disagrees. The OPEI Foundation for Education and Research is helping fund a study sponsored by the International Consortium for Fire Safety, Health and the Environment with results expected by year's end.

"We don't think the EPA study addresses all of our concerns regarding the potential fire hazard with the implementation of catalytic converters," says Bill Harley, president and CEO of OPEI. "There's a continuing dialogue going on with the EPA and all the affected stake-

holders as we go through the regulation-making process."

Harley says industry manufacturers have already reduced emissions by more than 70% over the last 10 years.

The EPA and California regulators plan to move forward with regulations that would essentially require manufacturers to install catalytic converters to meet the new standards. The California Air Resources Board's (CARB) regulations are expected to take place in 2007. The EPA plans to release its own proposed regulations for public comment this fall.

California has a smog problem in many cities and is under federal mandate to clean up its air. Harley says OPEI has been involved in discussions with the EPA about the emissions regulations. He says that there are also discussions on the next phase of emissions regulations, including evaporative emissions from fuel lines, carburetors and tanks in outdoor power equipment.

CLIPPINGS

Bilingual safety tip sheets ready

HERNDON, VA — PLANET's series of four bilingual (English/Spanish) Safety Tips Sheets are now available online at www.landcarenetwork.org/cms/programs/safety.html. Each of the Safety Tips Sheets, developed as a product of the PLANET/OSHA Alliance, is a one-page script to train workers on four hazards: slip and trip injuries, lifting-related injuries, defensive driving and reducing the risk of amputations.

Bayer goes back to school

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK — Bayer Environmental Science started its Fire Ant Free Schools Program for 2006, which offers qualified public and private schools one free bag of TopChoice, the company's fire ant prevention technology, with every two bags purchased. The 2006 promotion is available April 1 through Oct. 31.

Swingle acquires Hyland

DENVER — Swingle Lawn, Tree & Landscape Care Co. acquired Hyland Lawn & Tree Care, Fort Collins, CO. Thomas Tolkacz, president of Swingle, explained the acquisition of Hyland will be supported by the company's north branch, Arborworks by Swingle, which it acquired in May 2005. The company plans to offer current Hyland's customers an expanded range of products and services.



Landscape 'business' book right on ▶▶

Don't let the textbook-sounding title, "Business Principles of Landscape Contracting," scare you. This is a well-written and practical primer on the "business" of running a landscape company. *LM* recommends it for every owner that's relatively new to the industry or needs a boost on the systems-building, profit-making end of the business.

Author Dr. Steven M. Cohan delivers tested business principles in an easy-to-comprehend style. He shares credit with fellow academics and successful landscape professionals who contributed case studies and reviewed drafts of the work.

Cohan is on the faculty of the University of Maryland's Natural Resource Sciences and Landscape Architecture Department and uses this book, among other resources, to prepare his students for the real world of landscape contracting. They needn't have this book all to themselves. After you've picked out the information that fills in your knowledge gaps, use the book as a training guide for your eager new professionals.

"Business Principles of Landscape Contracting" can be purchased from the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) Web site, www.landcarenetwork.org.

— Ron Hall

Tired of losing money on every payroll?

EMPLOYEE TIMESHEET
 NAME: Bill Kemp DATES: 12-16

DAY	START	LUNCH	END	JOB SITE	WORK DONE	HOURS
MON	7:00	1/2	3:30	Walby		8
TUE			3:30			8
WED			4:00			8 1/2
THU			4:00			8 1/2
FRI	▽	▽	4:00	▽		8 1/2

Employee Signature: Bill Kemp TOTAL HOURS: 41 1/2



Reality?

Employee Report

Bill Kemp

Jobsite Name: Walby Property Date Range: 6/12/2006 through 6/16/2006

Day	Start	End	Activity	Hours
Mon 6/12	7:08 AM	12:05 PM	Irrigation	4:57 hours
	12:41 PM	3:22 PM	Irrigation	2:41 hours 7:38 hours
Tue 6/13	7:12 AM	12:07 PM	Irrigation	4:55 hours
	12:43 PM	3:23 PM	Irrigation	2:40 hours 7:35 hours
Wed 6/14	7:12 AM	12:02 PM	Irrigation	4:50 hours
	12:46 PM	3:49 PM	Irrigation	3:03 hours 7:53 hours
Thu 6/15	7:17 AM	12:19 PM	Planting	5:02 hours
	12:50 PM	3:46 PM	Planting	2:56 hours 7:58 hours
Fri 6/16	7:13 AM	12:07 PM	Planting	4:54 hours
	12:44 PM	3:39 PM	Planting	2:55 hours 7:49 hours

Signature: Bill Kemp Employee total **38:53 hours**



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Looser pesticide regs defeated

BY MIKE SEUFFERT / Associate Editor

TALLAHASSEE, FL — A proposal that would have weakened certification and training requirements for prospective lawn and ornamental pest control licensees in Florida was defeated, as many national and state associations came together to fight lower standards for pesticide applicators.

The proposal, an amendment to Florida HB 7075/SB 1388 authored by Rep. Ralph Poppell, was due to be heard by the House Agriculture and Environmental Appropriations Committee this legislative session. Poppell withdrew the amendment when members of the Florida Pest Management Association, the National Pest Management Association, the Professional Landcare Network

(PLANET), the Certified Pest Control Operators Association, and the Certified Operators of SW Florida went into action.

The grassroots lobbying effort described as "phenomenal and far better than anything I've seen come out of Florida, ever," by Bob Rosenberg, senior vice president of the National Pest Management Association.

"The members of each association made the difference; your voice was heard and turned the tide," said FPMA Government Affairs Group Chairman D.R. Sapp Jr. "Certainly our efforts helped the small company most of all. If this legislation passed, small operators would have been hit hard."

The amendment would have allowed Limited Landscape Certificate holders to

Join the **LM 100**

Take your place among the ranks of the few, the proud, the LM 100.

The July issue of *Landscape Management* will list the largest landscape companies by revenue, and also profile 10 other "great" small or mid-sized firms.

If you think you belong on the list or would like to be considered for a profile, fill out our online form by May 19 to submit your information.

If you're not quite big enough to be among the 100 biggies, but your operation is unique and doing great work, send us your story in an e-mail too.

The company profiles that we include in this issue are among the most anticipated articles in the industry.

Enter today at www.landscapemanagement.net/enterlm100.

take the L&O certification exam after only 30 lawn applications supervised by a lawn and ornamental licensee.



28 / 2005 Landscape Management
28 Southern Landscape
30 Horizon
30A Update
30B News
30C Classified
30D Classified
30E Classified
30F Classified
30G Classified
30H Classified
30I Classified
30J Classified
30K Classified
30L Classified
30M Classified
30N Classified
30O Classified
30P Classified
30Q Classified
30R Classified
30S Classified
30T Classified
30U Classified
30V Classified
30W Classified
30X Classified
30Y Classified
30Z Classified

Canada activism picks on lawn care

BY RON HALL / Editor in Chief

Reports in the Canadian press indicate that from 84 to 113 Canadian municipalities have passed bylaws that either ban or severely restrict the use of synthetic pesticides for lawn care. Another dozen jurisdictions in Canada are debating similar measures.

The consequences to the professional lawn care industry in Canada have been huge since June 28, 2001. That's when the country's Supreme Court dismissed an appeal by two lawn care companies challenging a lawn care pesticide ban by the small community of Hudson in Quebec. That decision ended a 10-year legal battle between the city government and the professional lawn care industry. While Hudson, located about 30 miles west of

Montreal, numbers just 5,000 people, its successful effort to ban lawn care chemicals opened the floodgates for similar legislation across the country.

The consequences to the lawn care industry have been huge since June 28, 2001.

Initially the anti-pesticide activity, most of it focused on commercial application companies, was centered in Quebec Province. It's since intensified and spread to communities from coast to coast.

The Canadian court ruling stands in contrast to a the U.S. Supreme Court

finding about 15 years ago involving the community of Wauconda, IL. The U.S. court at that time reinforced the concept of pre-emption, meaning that the federal and state governments regulate and enforce pesticide law. Even so the issue of local regulation remains worrisome to U.S. application companies, especially in New England and the U.S. Northeast.

In Canada lawn care companies are scrambling to adjust their programs to fit the new reality in their communities, in many cases adopting so-called "natural" pest controls or becoming IPM certified through Landscape Ontario, the industry's national trade association.

From Toronto to small rural communities, rules concerning pesticide use for lawn care are changing in Canada.

Your window of opportunity for controlling grubs just got bigger.

ARENA™ is the only preventive and curative grub control product proven to provide maximum application flexibility.

Unlike other turf insecticides, ARENA™ Insecticide with clothianidin lets you apply from early spring to early fall and still get unsurpassed white grub control. Plus, ARENA offers proven performance against sod webworms, chinch bugs and other damaging pests. To learn more, contact your turf products supplier, log on to www.arystalifescience.us/arena or call 1-866-761-9397 toll free.

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Arena™
Putting You In Control™



Arysta LifeScience

Harmony In Growth

In the Know

People & companies

Malcolm Stack, founder of **Bell Laboratories**, Madison, WI, died April 16 from cancer. Stack started Bell Laboratories in 1974 and won many awards from professional pest management associations.

Entrepreneur of the Year Award at their seventh annual Keepers of the American Dream Awards Dinner.

Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE) hired **Stacey Pine** as the association's new grassroots manager. The association also expressed condolences to the family of former RISE member volunteer **Mark Phipps**, who died March 25 from cancer. Mark was with Nufarm Americas for seven years and was active on RISE's programs and membership committee and at annual meetings.



The Scotts Company Professional Business Group, based in Marysville, OH,

welcomes **Bernie Bross** as marketing director for the Pro Hort Americas team.



Hunter Industries of San Marcos, CA, promoted **Brandon Meadows** (above, left) to vice president of sales and



marketing. The company also added **Don Franklin** (right) to the company's Northern California sales force.

Tanaka America, of Auburn, WA, promoted **Ed Gervasio** from territory sales manager (Northern California) to regional sales manager for California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona and Hawaii.

Crawford Landscaping Group of Naples, FL, hired **Phinney Masoner** as its enhancement manager.

DIG Corp., of Vista, CA, hired **Ed Cristobal** as a commercial sales representative for Northern California.

Becker Underwood of Ames, IA, appointed **Kent Rotert** as marketing manager for the landscape coatings division.



ANLA immediate past president, **Peter Orum**, **Midwest Groundcovers** (IL) will receive the National Immigration Forum's Carvel

An Olympic year for Student Career Days

BY STEPHANIE RICCA / Managing Editor

PROVO, UT — Student Career Days hit a landmark birthday this year, celebrating the big 3-0 at Brigham Young University March 22-26.

More than 800 students from 50 colleges across the United States carried on the SCD legacy by competing in 26 different events in the industry's "landscape Olympics" sponsored by the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET).

This year's event celebrated 30 years with style and celebration, as students gathered on Wed., March 22, for a landscaping service project at the Olympic Village in nearby Park City. The keynote events — the career fair and competitions — kicked off on Friday.

"This is your opportunity to get a gold medal, and it's not just about the competition," SCD Chairman Jim McCutcheon told the assembled crowd at the opening ceremonies on Friday, March 24.

Friday's career fair included more than 90 industry participants who scheduled interviews for openings in everything from maintenance to design.

"The students here have the educational background we look for," said Bill Leidecker, president of Columbus, Ohio's Five Seasons Landscape Management. "I'm impressed every year with the students. It's a breath of fresh air."

On Saturday teams split up between several different venues for the indoor and outdoor competitive events. Wearing matching team t-shirts and cheering each other on, students climbed trees, laid pavers, navigated skid steers, gave sales pitches and identified plants.

"Wow," said BYU professor, organizer and event host Phil Allen. "There's just so much energy here."

Next year, students will descend on Michigan State University for the 31st Student Career Days March 29-April 1.



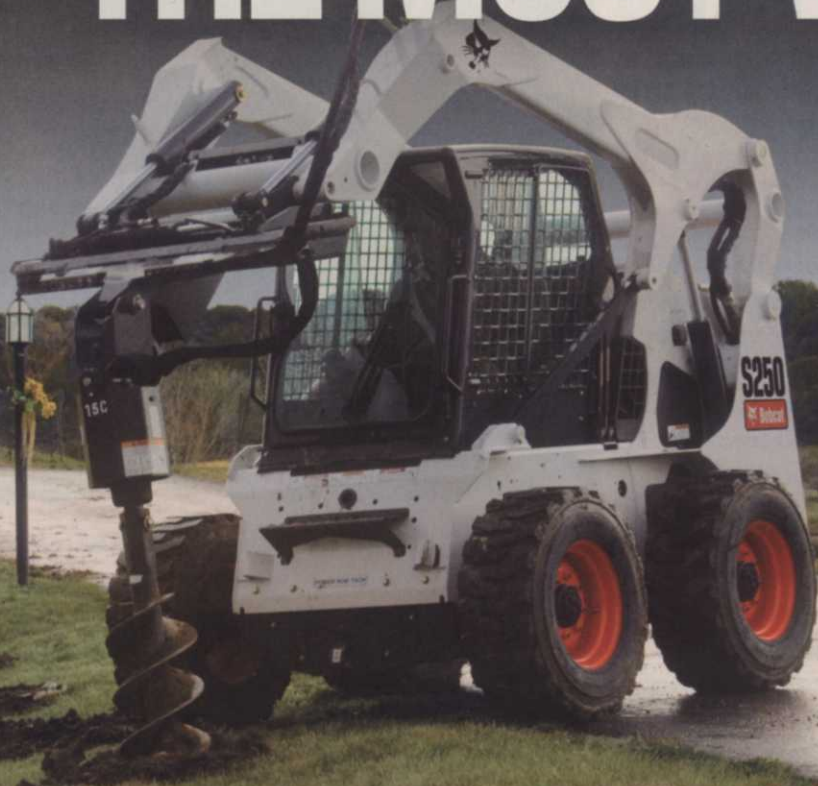
MORE INFO

Landscapemanagement.net Visit the LM Web site for more photos of the 2006 Student Career Days events in Utah.

SCD major sponsors included Stihl (platinum); Ariens/Gravely/Stens (gold); Caterpillar, Husqvarna, John Deere Worldwide/John Deere Landscapes, and The TruGreen Cos. (silver); Brickman, Pavestone, Outside Unlimited, and The Toro Co. (bronze).

Top participating individuals and teams received awards at the closing ceremony, and companies donated thousands of dollars in scholarship money to participating students.

HE WHO DOES THE MOST WINS.



MINI TRACK LOADER



COMPACT TRACK LOADER



ALL-WHEEL STEER LOADER

Nothing eliminates hand labor on the jobsite like Bobcat® equipment. Squeeze into backyards and leave the wheelbarrow behind. Maximize your fleet and add a new aspect to your business by adding dozens of attachments to help you do the work of an entire crew.

One Tough Animal™



Bobcat®

Add-On Biz

BUSINESS

EXTEND YOUR BUSINESS

Deer control

► Solve your clients' deer woes with repellents and fences

BY RON HALL / Editor in Chief

Many property owners regard the white-tailed deer, lovable Bambi of Disney fame, as a giant landscape pest. They have good reasons.

At the turn of the 20th century the U.S. deer population numbered perhaps 500,000 head. It has since grown to an estimated 15 million. With their habitat shrinking because of land development, and each adult deer requiring 4-10 lbs. of forage daily, the cause of the problem is easy to see. Equally distressing to property owners, the antler-rubbing behavior of males during the fall can damage or destroy small saplings of ornamental trees.

So what to do? Some landscape contractors see the deer problem as a challenge but also as profitable (and appreciated) service opportunity.

Depending on customer preferences and circumstances, contractors can employ one, sometimes several, strategies to protect clients' properties. This includes the

placement of 8-ft. high "virtually invisible" fencing around landscaped properties, the periodic application of repellents and/or the establishment of plants that deer generally do not eat. The operative word here is "generally."

Joe Gentle, of Joe Gentle Services LLC, Monroe, CT, uses Liquid Fence Deer and Rabbit Repellent, which he applies several times a season to landscape ornamentals at the properties he maintains in Fairfield County, CT, and Westchester County, NY.

Protecting a landscape from deer damage may require several types of control.

"I probably apply more of the product than is recommended," says Gentle, whose deer deterrent service is part of the total maintenance contract he has with customers.



"In most cases I am trying to protect more than the 'average' yard and the deer pressure is very very heavy."

Gentle points out that the repellent product he uses is made of food-grade materials and doesn't require a pesticide license to apply, although it does, like most repellents, have a strong odor. "We know when we can spray and when we can't spray. The property owners let us know," says Gentle, who often makes more than one application a month to the ornamentals on a property. "When perennials push out the new growth is unprotected," he says.

Gentle and his techs use 4-gallon backpack sprayers for most applications, but on bigger properties he breaks out the 200-gallon sprayer.

But even with repeat visits and treatments, a small number of properties still sustain

deer damage. "These are generally areas where deer have been moving on their paths in the middle of the woods for years and all of a sudden there's a brand-new pool and landscape with \$40,000 worth of plantings there," says Gentle. In these cases, he recommends 8-ft. high fencing around the property.

While he says he has "good results" with the repellent product (Liquid Fence) he uses, there are other repellents available to homeowners and contractors. There are several suppliers for deer fences (poly and electrified) as well as other more exotic products to keep deer from killing plants.

A quick Google search turns up excellent deer repellent advice from state extension services as well as dozens of products that a contractor can test to solve deer-landscape woes. **LM**

Introducing Cutless* Landscape Growth Regulator

Your crew will need something to do
with all that extra time.



Trim your costs with Cutless* Granular Landscape Growth Regulator.

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As treated plants are able to re-allocate resources to defense and storage, many species may exhibit potential disease reduction and improved tolerance to environmental stresses.

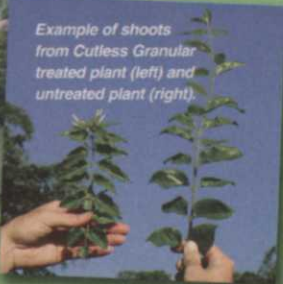
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STRATEGIES TO **SELL** YOUR BUSINESS

You've worked hard for years to build a valuable business. Don't you deserve something for your labors?

Here's how to get it



BY JANET AIRD

ILLUSTRATION BY: MEDIUMIMAGES

There are many reasons landscape contractors sell their companies. The owners of Brookwood Landscape, Inc. in San Diego had three of them.

"My father wanted to retire, my brother wanted to move to Oregon and start a different business there and I wanted to stay on with the purchasing company," says Glenn Wilhite, who is now regional manager in the San Diego area for The Brickman Group, which bought the family's business.

Ed Wandtke, of Wandtke and Associates in Westerville, OH, says that some sellers just get burned out, especially because of government regulations and competition with larger national firms. Others decide it's time to do something else. Few are in financial difficulties, he says. Wandtke is a CPA who's been doing business valuations and brokerage for small companies for almost 30 years.

Some transfer ownership to their children. Some sell to their employees. Others sell to a company in a related industry like lawn care, irrigation, or tree and shrub care. Still others sell to a larger company, either a regional or family-owned one, like Brickman, or a corporation like TruGreen or Scotts.

Landscape contractors and lawn care company owners should think hard before trying to sell their company on their own, Wandtke says. Business managers and brokers who specialize in the sale of small companies are experienced in all the



Brookwood Landscape founders (from left) Glenn Wilhite, Keith Wilhite and Mark Wilhite worked with a team to sell their business in 2000. As a result, the process went smoothly.

aspects involved in a sale. Because they aren't personally involved they can be calm, cool and collected at what can be a difficult time.

"It can be emotional at the exact time sellers have to be on top of everything," Wandtke says. "It's a traumatic event in the life of a business owner. It's like watching your first child get married."

There are exceptions. Jon Ewing, who started his company, Landtrends, Inc., in San Diego, with one friend and a truck in 1981, sold to Landcare USA in 1998 with only the help of a lawyer.

It was even more complicated because Ewing and his brother, Tom, owned a nursery (Miramar Wholesale Nurseries) and rolled it into the deal. Another difficulty was the length of time the negotiations took — eight to nine months — because they were considering multiple offers. "Once we made the decision, though, things came together very well," Ewing says.

They chose Landcare while it was merging with TruGreen. "It appeared to be a good financial move for myself and my family. It was also an opportunity to give my employees an opportunity to advance in areas we wouldn't have been able to give them. Weighing everything out, I felt it could be win-win for everyone."

Some business owners call a real estate broker to help with their sale, which is a

mistake, claims Wandtke. "Real estate brokers are not business brokers. The value of the business isn't in the real estate. It's in the customer base."

The Wilhite family was approached by potential buyers as well as by KPMG, a merger/acquisition company. They decided to hire KPMG and a merger/acquisition attorney, as well as the consultant who was already working with the company.

KPMG found some "suitors," including Brickman, which is one of the country's largest landscape design/build and horticultural services companies.

"Brickman was the clear choice," Wilhite says. "They met all our needs: It's a good, family-run company, it allowed us to have an exit plan out of our business and have the needs of the family met, and it gave employees who had been with us for a long time an opportunity to grow with the new company."

The family sold in June of 2000. "It went so smoothly, it almost made us nervous," Wilhite says.

It went well for two reasons, he says. First, they'd been having regular periodic check-ups with their business manager. "A lot of things you're doing as you go through this [sale] process, you should have been doing all along," he says. Second, they hired professionals to help with the sale.

"Having a broker worked out well for us. KPMG knew

what was going on in the industry. They did a lot of work and provided a lot of information," he says. So did having an attorney who specialized in mergers and acquisitions. "He was wonderful," Wilhite says. "He was a very calming, quiet force."

He's also happy with the results of the sale. "Right after, it feels like selling your child," Wilhite says. "But two or three months into it, it almost seemed like a godsend. It allowed us to do everything we needed to do with the family and for our employees."

Not much has changed for him, Wilhite says. The company became the West Coast headquarters for Brickman, and as regional manager he runs the business unit. Brickman changed the color of the trucks and the logo, and brought in its own administrative processes, but a lot of the business culture, the people, the horticultural processes and the types of equipment are the same.

Thinking of selling?

To be happy with your sale, you first have to know what you want — or need — from it, Wandtke says. How much money will you need if you're planning to start a new business? If you're planning to retire? Will you have to pay for health insurance? Do you want to stay on as an employee? If so, what kind of compensation do you want?

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6 TIPS TO BOOST THE SELLING PRICE

Start early. If you're pretty sure you're going to be selling in the foreseeable future start getting your business in selling condition, perhaps even two or three years before the planned sale. Stay on top of your financials, keep building your systems and the proficiency of your team.

Year-end is best. The ideal time to sell is toward the end of the calendar year when a company has results from the entire year, says Ed Wandtke, an experienced Green Industry broker. You have to start at least three or four months before that, to get the buyer to make a good offer. It can take as long as six months from the time there is an agreement to sell.

Hire a pro. If you think you'll need help seek out professional help such as a CPA or business broker. Other professionals who can help are lawyers, business appraisers/valuation experts, tax experts, and bankers or other financiers, if you need third-party funding. Seek recommendations from others who have sold their company.

Disappoint the tax man. It isn't enough to sell for the best price, warns Wandtke. The highest price on a deal may not bring the largest amount of money that is kept by the seller because of tax issues. The way your company is structured affects its taxability. You can change the structure to give yourself a tax advantage, but it will take a few years. Also, be aware of state tax laws. In some states you have to pay sales tax on the sale of your assets. In others you pay on the transfer of stock. Many states have transfer taxes on real estate or other assets.

Structure the payout. Will it be in cash, assets, stock or some combination? Do you want it all at once or spread out over time? "It's better to get some cash today and some in later years," says Wandtke. "That's how we get extra money." This is an advantage of passing the company on to the next generation — you can get a long-term payout.

Employees as buyers. Selling to your employees can be a good tax strategy, he says. Company owners who set up an Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOP) essentially make tax-deductible contributions (in cash or stock) to buy company stock for employees. This gives you a good tax break when you sell. But they're definitely not for everyone. They're expensive to set up and private companies have to buy back shares of departing employees. To learn more visit the Web site of the National Center for Employee Ownership at www.nceo.org.



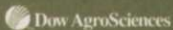


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If you're thinking about selling to your children or your employees: Are they capable of taking over when you leave? If your payout depends on future company profits, you may never get paid, says Tom Farley, a landscape business consultant in New River, AZ.

And then there are the considerations that have nothing to do with money. Do you want the new company to share your business philosophy? Do you want it to keep your employees? If you plan to stay on, do you think you could work for someone else?

A crucial question to ask yourself, says Ewing, who worked for TruGreen for a year after the sale of his company, is if you're really sure you want to get out of the business. "A person who loves what they do may want to consider the value of that," he says. "Just make sure it's something you want to do. It's hard to start over."

Know your market value

Once you've decided to sell, take a good look at where your company stands financially. But you should be doing this anyway whether or not you're thinking of selling.

You will need records that clearly document your transactions. Review financial statements from the past few years. Evaluate your company's assets — your customer list, land, and trucks

and other equipment, as well as your employees. Try to project the outlook for the industry, the economy and how your company will compete.

Sellers have to be realistic about the value of their business, Wandtke says. Most tend to overvalue it, often because other sellers sometimes exaggerate the amount they sold the business for.

National companies can give sellers an inflated idea of their company's value, Wandtke says. When talks begin, they give general, optimistic numbers, but before they finalize the sale, they evaluate the company in minute detail. Even when a company is strong, the selling price will drop if it's had a bad year.

Plan your strategy

Start planning your strategy at least a year, preferably more, before you want the sale to take place.

The first part of your strategy is to find ways to increase the value of your company. Once you know where it stands financially, identify areas you can improve. Do what you can to increase sales. Sell off equipment that doesn't contribute to the value of the company. Identify areas that might deter potential buyers, such as possible lawsuits or insurance problems, and fix them. Make sure contracts with suppliers and customers won't expire just as a new owner steps in. Cancel contracts with problem customers.



Jon Ewing (second from left) sold his company, Landtrends, to another company in 1998 that was in the process of merging with TruGreen. Shown with Ewing are, from left, Landtrends colleagues Larry Neuhoff, director of maintenance; Tom Smith, director of construction operations; and Tracy Johnston, estimator.

Farley says that employees are important assets. Much of the value of a company is its performance, he says. Too often the owner is the only one who knows how the company is run.

Farley recommends setting up policies and procedures and training programs so employees also know how the business is run. The company's performance becomes an attribute of its systems and employees rather than disappearing with the seller.

A seller has decisions to make about the company's different assets. National companies want your customer list and usually little else, says Wandtke. "They want to use their own trucks and their own business style." One seller might do best by selling the customer list and the

other assets separately, if they're good quality. Another might do best by selling all the assets together.

No matter how well your sale goes, though, be prepared for some mixed feelings.

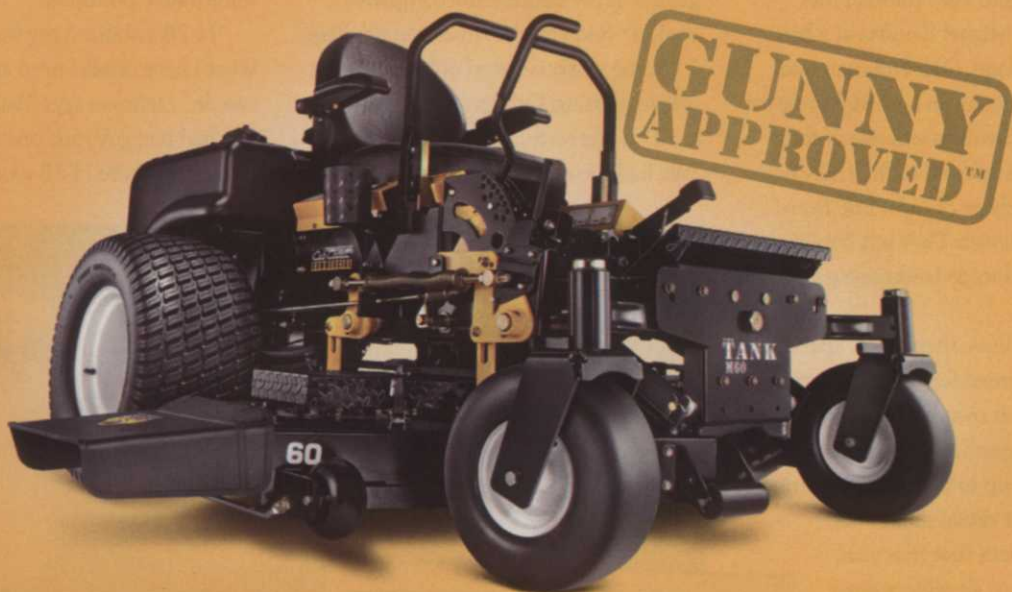
Ewing is pleased with the value he received for his business, and the opportunity it's given him to get involved with other activities. He invests in real estate development and start-up companies. He bought an agricultural supply business with his brother. And he has more time to take part in volunteer activities in his community.

"All in all, I'm certain it was the right move," he says. Then he pauses for a moment. "Still," he says, "it's hard to let go." **LJM**

— The author is a freelance writer specializing in the Green Industry.

R. Lee Ermey, USMC veteran, TV show host, film star

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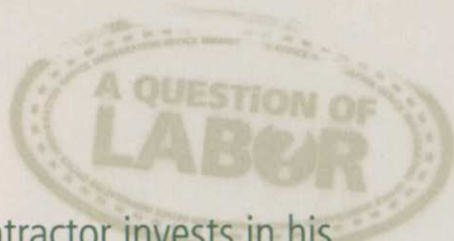


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This landscape contractor invests in his immigrant workforce and sees the payoff

BY MIKE SEUFFERT / Associate Editor

Labor INVESTMENTS

IN THE SPRING OF 2000, George Hohman met Miguel Bautista at a bus stop in Cleveland, OH. Hohman was driving a new minivan he bought just for the occasion. Bautista was one of four men who had traveled to the chilly city on the south shore of Lake Erie from Monterrey, Mexico. They left families and friends behind to do landscaping labor for \$8 an hour.

Hohman drove them to an apartment that he had rented for them on a street not far from his own home. Every morning that spring and summer he picked the four men up to work for his company. Every night he drove them back.

"It was a pain that first year, but it helped us develop a great relationship," says Hohman, president and owner of Turfscape, Inc., based in Twinsburg, OH. "Over time, we got to know each other and began to develop trust. Five years later, Miguel is not just a great worker, but I consider him a friend."

The year 2000 was the first year Hohman used the H-2B program. At that time, Turfscape em-

ployed about 18 people and was struggling to grow because the company couldn't find enough American workers.

Some workers lasted only a few days before quitting. Others never showed up at all. "It was so frustrating," Hohman says. "We had the sales, the ability to grow —

just not the people to do it. We'd hire in a bunch of workers in the spring, go through all the training and a month later, we'd have one person to show for it."

The H-2B program changed things for Hohman. This year, Turfscape will employ 30 H-2B workers. Overall, the company has grown to 67 employees. American workers have advanced into management positions. Others have been hired for administrative positions.

"H-2B stabilized my business. I know what I have, what I need and what jobs I can do," Hohman says. "And in six years, I've had one guy miss one day of work out of the entire H-2B workforce."

With the money he has earned each summer, Miguel Bautista, left, has been able to build one of the nicest — and best landscaped — homes in his village. He welcomed Turfscape's George Hohman to visit this winter.



► Many of the workers Turfscape hired had no background in landscaping but have made a living farming.



South in the winter

This past February, Hohman and his interpreter Juan Mosquera journeyed to Bautista's hometown of Queretaro, Mexico, located about five hours south of Mexico City. They went to visit Bautista and his family but also to find 12 new workers for the 2006 season.

Hohman says he was eager to learn about his workers, see where and how they lived, and experience their culture first-hand.

"I was made to feel so welcome, like I was a member of the family," he says.

Bautista and another Turfscape employee, Sabino Montoya, recruited about potential 20 workers for Turfscape. Some drove five hours to hear Hohman's presentation and interview.

"We were looking for people who were hungry and seeking opportunity," Hohman says. "Some of these guys, you could just see the sadness in their eyes. One guy had a baby with health problems but couldn't afford the medical care."

Learning the process

Hohman has learned a lot about the H-2B process since that first year. It takes a lot of patience, and at least six to seven months of planning, he says. Though he did his own recruiting, he uses Mid-Atlantic Solutions, Inc. to handle the processing and paperwork involved. Not all workers make it through the administrative process in Monterrey. And this year,

with so many workers coming through, and the Mexican consulate there overloaded, workers were arriving two to four weeks behind schedule.

Once they arrive, Hohman makes sure they have a place to stay. He now has two vans to get the men to work and wherever they need to go. A couple years ago he helped Bautista get his driver's license so he could handle the daily pick-ups.

For new employees, Turfscape begins with an orientation and basic training, though much of the learning is done in

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BREAKING THE 'FEAR FACTOR'

If there was one thing Mary Wheeler of Wheeler Landscaping in Chagrin Falls, OH, could do over again for her company, she wouldn't wait so long before using the H-2B guest worker program.

"How many years of constant turnover did we go through before H-2B? How much time and resources did we waste?" says Mary, the human resources director for her husband John's company.

"With the stability H-2B has brought us, we've been able to bring in interns, do more training and spend more time recruiting at colleges. The American workers we bring in are now of a higher quality and are able to advance to higher positions

in the company," she added.

To say that the Wheelers had some trouble recruiting is an understatement. In 1999, before using H-2B, the Wheelers hired 83 workers to fill 35 seasonal jobs. In 2000, it was 94 and in 2001 they totaled 77. Many of these employees lasted less than one month. Some never showed up at all.

But in both 2002 and 2003, with about 18 H-2B workers in place, the Wheelers only hired 14 new employees.

"We're really committed to the H-2B program," says John Wheeler. "It brings in a much higher quality worker. These people want to be here, are documented legally, pay taxes and do everything

they are supposed to do. Some of the guys come back year after year, have learned English and have become crew leaders for us."

There seems to be mutual respect between the Wheelers and the H-2B workers. Each year, Mary puts together a supply kit for the workers, filled with towels, sheets, bath supplies and other necessities. In the off-season, the company also continues to pay the rent on the apartments the H-2B workers use, so they know they have a place to come back to next year. The company also offers all employees, American and Hispanic, medical benefits.

"I'm pleased that we're the kind of company that can do these things for our employees," Mary says.

The H-2B employees have gone above and beyond their duties as well. After a hard day at work, many of the employees voluntarily signed up for English-as-a-second-language classes at a local college.

The Wheelers provide vans for transportation, and nearly two-thirds of the workers have attended the classes.

"They realize that there is opportunity here for them, and to get ahead and run a crew, they better learn English," John says.

"Speaking the same language builds trust," Mary says. "It helps them function in their communities — just being able to go to the store and buy groceries — and breaks down the fear factor."

— M.S.

THE PROCESS: START EARLY

The H-2B program permits U.S. employers to hire foreign workers to perform seasonal non-agricultural jobs if there are no qualified and willing U.S. workers willing to take them. Employers must pay the prevailing wages for the jobs. That information can be found at www.flcdatacenter.com.

Here is the process:

- 1** The employer should file for H-2B at least 60 days but not more than 120 days before the worker is needed. Earlier is better than later.
- 2** The prospective employer files a completed Form ETA 750 to the local State Workforce Agency (SWA).
- 3** The employer places an advertisement for the positions they want to fill in a newspaper for at least three consecutive days.
- 4** The employer prepares a recruitment report summarizing the effort. It contains names and addresses of applicants and reasons for not hiring the interviewees.
- 5** After the certification applications are evaluated, they're sent to the U.S. Department of Labor's National Processing Center (NPC).

partment of Labor's National Processing Center (NPC).

6 The DOL NPC certifying officer will grant certification if he/she finds that qualified U.S. workers aren't available and that the employment will not adversely affect the wages of similar U.S. workers.

7 The employer uses the certification to support his/her visa petition with the district director of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). To obtain the H-2B visa, the employer uses the USCIS Form I-1239, Petition for Nonimmigrant Worker. The Labor Certification Determination and the Form

I-129 are submitted to the USCIS along with filing fees.

8 Foreign work candidates must apply for visas at the U.S. Consulate. The employer must provide copies of the above forms to the local USCIS service center.

The temporary labor certification process normally takes about two months. There are several fees attached to the process, including a \$1,000 "premium processing" fee. It's almost a must to get workers in a timely fashion.

For more information, visit www.workforsecurity.doleta.gov/foreign/h-2b.asp.

— Ron Hall

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► The city of Queretaro is quite beautiful, Hohman says, but just outside the city, many of the homes are small and rundown.



continued from page 41

the field. The returning workers have been a huge benefit for the new workers, not just on the job, but in making their way in the country.

"You can tell the guys who are in the country for the first time from a mile away. Their eyes are huge, taking it all in," Hohman says. "There's all this basic stuff that we take for granted that they don't know, like how to cash their checks."

H-2B liaison

The most helpful thing Hohman has done is bring in Mosquera, his interpreter, for weekly sessions with his Hispanic workers. Though many of them understand English, they feel more comfortable talking with Mosquera. By dealing with issues before they become problems,

Hohman keeps his entire workforce happy.

"The biggest challenges we face are cultural," Hohman says. "We had to learn they're here to work. That first year, we let them work too much, paid too much overtime. Now we find a happy medium of about 45 to 50 hours per week."

Turfscape's crews are diverse, made up of a combination of American and Hispanic workers.

"The American crew leaders who are the most successful are the ones who make an effort to communicate," Hohman says. "That's why I made my journey to Queretaro, to better understand what my workers want, what they need, and vice versa.

"There may be issues here and there, but it's a trade-off. What you get in return is a hardworking, loyal workforce. If I couldn't bring back my workers, my friends, I don't know what I'd do. What I do know is that I couldn't run my business the way I do now." **LM**

This article is the second in *LM's* series, "A Question of Labor," investigating all sides of the **H-2B immigration** issue. Look for upcoming articles on labor statistics, workers' viewpoints and the role of the American workforce. For complete archives, visit www.landscapemanagement.net.

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Circle 145

Green Industry franchisors say they have systems that build profitable companies — but only if owners follow the plan and work hard

WHY reinvent THE WHEEL?

BY SEAN GALLAGHER

Franchising has been a part of the lawn service industry almost since its beginning a half century ago. Many entrepreneurs and would-be entrepreneurs still find it attractive. There are compelling reasons why.

When starting an independent business, you're investing completely in yourself and hoping you'll either know what you're doing or figure it out along the way. With a franchise, however, you plug into existing proven systems.

"Primarily, a franchise offers an upstart business the opportunity to take advantage of a recognizable brand," says Scott Frith, CFE, vice president of marketing and franchise development for Lawn Doctor, Inc. "With that advantage at the outset, the business reaps the benefits of immediate credibility. Additionally, a franchise allows someone new to the industry to benefit from time-tested support sys-

tems that reduce the learning curve. Essentially, a franchise mitigates risk and accelerates growth in many cases."

U.S. Lawns' Vice President Paul Wolbert agrees that operating a franchise opens the door to additional opportunities that wouldn't readily be available to most upstart businesses.

"In starting a franchise your background and previous experience doesn't matter," Wolbert says. "We can bring the technical side of the business."

Of course, franchising doesn't guarantee success. And it doesn't mean you won't work hard at building its success. When you acquire a franchise, you're not buying a job.

"You have to market your business," Frith says. "There's no storefront to work with in our industry, so don't expect to put out a sign and see business start flowing in. Actively pursuing customers is a must. However, one of the great advantages that a Green Industry franchise has

Bill Sheehan, equipment specialist for Lawn Doctor, Inc., explains the technical aspects of some of Lawn Doctor's equipment at the company's National Conference.



over many other franchise opportunities is that it allows franchisees to profit from a recurring revenue stream."

Don Dankowich, president of Weed Man, agrees and adds that the key to success in any industry is people.

"Ultimately, it still comes down to the people," Dankowich says. "It comes down to being good managers and a sense of having good skills in terms of finding the right people, training and motivating those people. You're only as good as the people around you."

How it works

In essence, franchising works like this: Once an interested party finds the franchise opportunity that seems to be the perfect fit, exercising due diligence to investigate all opportunities available,

there's an upfront cost that usually covers licensing fees, the rights to use the brand and the franchise support systems, as well as a period of training.

All systems have unique models. For example, Lawn Doctor and U.S. Lawns operate as primary franchisors, awarding and supporting each franchise location from their respective corporate headquarters. Weed Man, however, awards and support its franchise locations through sub franchisors who develop specific regions of the country. That's not to say that the formerly mentioned models don't offer local support. Rather, most of the established systems will offer regional meetings, regular training opportunities and field visits from corporate staff, among other things, to support franchisees locally.

Consider all costs

Some of the things to consider when investigating opportunities include initial costs, vehicle costs, equipment and material costs, miscellaneous expenses related to the business, as well as personal and household expenses. But the tangible costs aren't all you should be thinking about when looking to open a business, franchise or not.

"Look for something that you're going to enjoy doing, because this is going to be a lifestyle change if you're not necessarily from the industry," Wolbert says. "You have to understand what the business is about and spend some time with the business."

Dankowich agrees that finding a personal fit is vital when evaluating any opportunity, franchise or not.

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"What do you enjoy in life?" asks Dankowich. "You have to understand the plusses and minuses of each opportunity."

Frith agrees and offers the following tips on what to look out for when considering different franchise opportunities.

"A viable franchise opportunity must have an immediately recognizable brand," Frith says. "A good way to judge this is by how long the company's been in business — the longer, the better. An established base of dealers shows a strong support infrastructure in franchising. Satisfied franchisees are a great indicator of a viable opportunity. If most dealers are happy, then they're obviously profitable. Contact several franchisees to gauge their experiences before you make any decisions.

"You must be confident in the ability of the corporate headquarters or sub-fran-

chisor to support your business. The headquarters of any good franchise company should offer plenty of valuable intellectual capital and talented people in the field to help guide you as you build your business. Franchising is about communication. A relationship that doesn't seem like a good fit from the start won't be positive long-term," says Frith.

Evaluate the culture of the company, too. Ask yourself, "What kind of people am I going to interact with in this organization? Are they the kind of people I can see myself working well with?"

"A franchise system that demonstrates that it's reinvesting in itself is a good indicator of long-term stability," adds Frith. "Is the company innovating and using the lat-



Dave Reist, facilitator for U.S. Lawns, conducts field training with franchisees Bryant and Edna Jernigan.

est technology? If the company is reinvesting in itself, that means it's poised for future growth."

Build relationships

Of course, if you're going to get involved in a franchise system, you want to reap the greatest benefits from that involvement. Consider the type of relationships you'd like to have with the franchisor and your fellow franchisees.

PHOTO COURTESY: U.S. LAWN

CONTROL OF BROWN PATCH ON TURF-TYPE TALL FESCUE

TREATMENT	RATE oz/1000 sq ft	APPLICATION INTERVAL DAYS	% BROWN PATCH 6/29/2004
Untreated	—	—	48.0
Insignia 20 WG	0.50	14	0.0
	0.90	28	1.5

Cooperator: Dr. H. Couch, Virginia Tech — 2004
Variety: Turf type tall fescue
Applications: 3 (14-day)
Application Dates: 3 Jun, 15 Jun, 29 Jun
Spray Interval: 14 or 28
Spray Volume (gal/1000 sq ft): 1.1

Partial data shown.



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"Get involved with other owners and keep involved with a positive relationship with the franchisor," says Gene Robertson, owner of U.S. Lawns of Nashville and Nashville South. "Use all the tools they give you and network with the other owners. Learn and gain as much from the other owners as you can."

Dave Mlotkiewicz, owner of seven Lawn Doctor franchises in New Jersey, boasts nearly two decades in franchising. The relationships that franchisees cultivate with their fellow dealers are equally important to their relationships with the franchisor, he believes.

"Attend meetings and attend conferences and stay involved with surrounding dealers," Mlotkiewicz advises.

There are also franchise opportunities available for existing businesses inter-

NOT FOR EVERYBODY

As with any relationship, there are those who are a good fit and those who aren't. Some of the Green Industry's most widely recognized franchisors candidly admit that franchising isn't right for everyone.

"Lawn Doctor is selective about who we allow to represent our brand," says Scott Frith. "Not all entrepreneurs are a good fit for a franchise."

Paul Wolbert of U.S. Lawns agrees. If you're not interested in following the franchise system, "you're better off just hiring a consultant," he says.

"Generally, people who want to do their own thing aren't a good fit for franchising," Frith says. "A franchisee has to see the value of the franchise relationship, and they definitely can't be someone who's simply looking for a job. Operating a franchise is still running your own business. You're not just going to sit back and collect a paycheck. It

takes significant sweat equity to be successful. Also, the Green Industry doesn't typically lend itself to investor models. Most successful franchisees in our industry are of the owner/operator variety."

Adds Wolbert, "There's a roadmap to follow. If you can follow the proven business model you're going to get a comfort level and be successful."

"A person who is so independent that they like to recreate the wheel, and can't follow something that's been created by someone else isn't a good fit," says Don Dankowich of The Weed Man.

But opening a franchise doesn't guarantee success either. It takes hard work, determination and plenty of sweat to run a successful business.

"People that are a good fit for franchising are self-motivated and hard-working and don't mind wearing different hats in running their own business," says Dave Mlotkiewicz, first vice chairman of the International Franchise Association Franchisee Forum.

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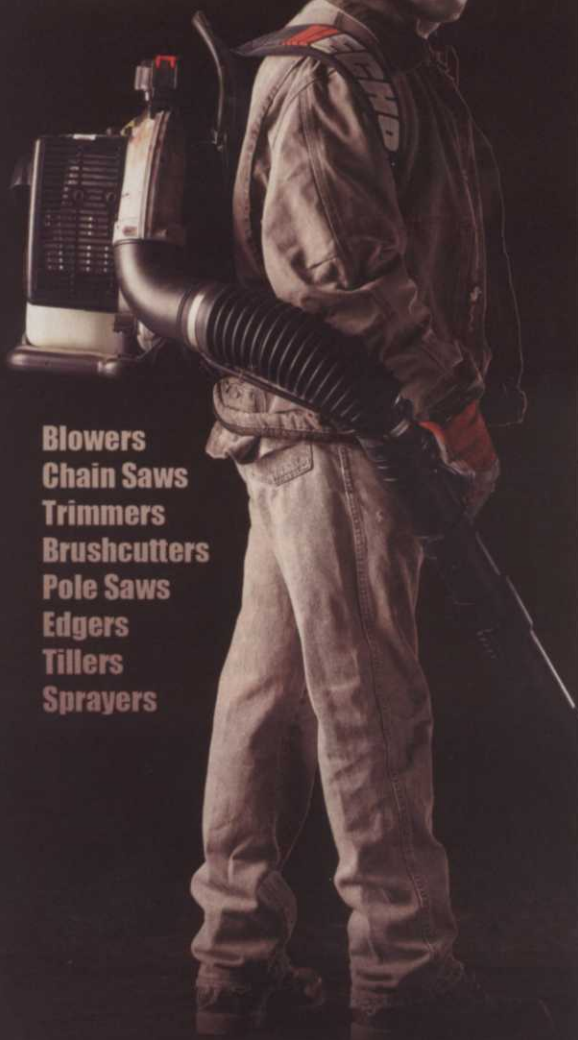
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Circle 122

BUSINESS FRANCHISE OR INDEPENDENT?



Weed Man franchisees learn the customer service values taught by the Disney Institute at the Weed Man Annual Convention in Orlando, FL.

ested in either converting to a franchise operation or in complementing their existing menu of services. For example, turning Joe's Lawn Care into Lawn Doctor of Anytown or adding a Weed Man lawn care franchise to Jane's Pest Control.

There are pros and cons to making these types of adaptations to an existing business.

"For a person that's well established, what you're really looking at is different values from a grassroots opportunity," Dankowich says. "You already have some knowledge and experience of the Green Industry. You may be looking for the brand name recognition and the ability to pool dollars on a regional or national basis. A franchising system can bring a lower cost of buying products for your business."

Although there are advantages for the independent business owner in employing a franchise system to transition or add to his or her operation, it's always challenging.

"There will likely be different equipment required to maintain a differential advantage in the marketplace," says Frith. "Proprietary software may be required. The vehicle layout may be different. Naturally, all these differences are in place to maximize efficiency for franchisees. The transition for someone set in his or her way of doing things can be difficult."

Don't just evaluate what a franchise system or independent operation can offer you in and of itself. Rather, evaluate your own needs as an entrepreneur. Take a careful look at your strengths and weaknesses, and then move forward with the opportunity that seems to complement those strengths and improve upon those weaknesses in the most advantageous way. **LM**

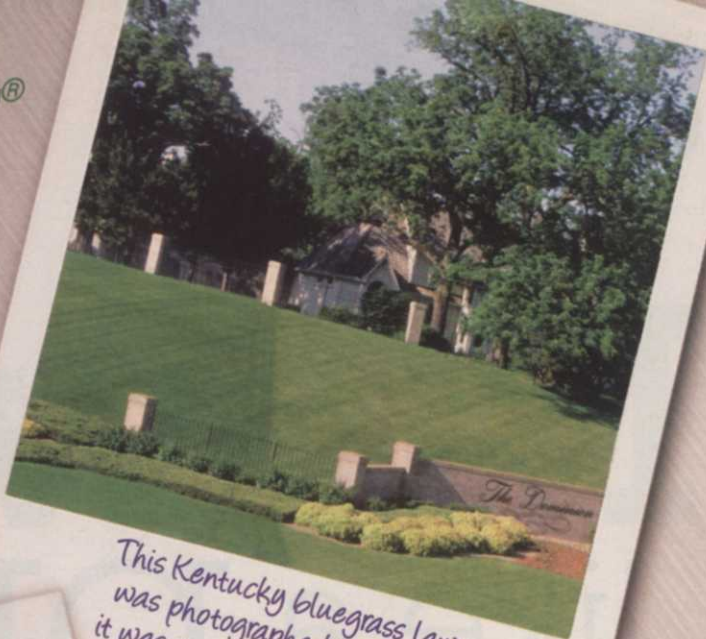
—The author is the copywriter/research analyst for Lawn Doctor, Inc., Holmdel, N.J. Contact him at 732/946-0029 or spatrickgallagher@comcast.net.

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Circle 123

Mow like a pro

Apply basic business efficiency tips to the field and you'll reap the benefits

BY STEPHANIE RICCA /
Managing Editor

Every seasoned landscape pro has a formula for achieving maximum mower productivity. It's a combination of having the right people doing the right jobs at the right time. Easy, right? We asked some company principles to share their wisdom. Turns out that a good

formula for productive mowing operations takes basic business considerations into mind: Pick the right people and establish good systems.

People first

"Having people that can make intelligent decisions, troubleshoot and be trusted in the field is crucial to having an efficient operation," says Steve Rak II, vice president of Southwest Landscape Management in Columbia Station, OH.

Good people are the first step, but training them with efficiency and productivity in mind is essential, says Wayne Volz, owner of Wayne's Lawn Service in Louisville, KY. "We often place too much emphasis on the ground speed of equipment versus overlap training," he says, referring to the amount of the cutting



Wayne
Volz

deck riding over pre-cut turf. "Excessive overlap can kill your profit margin if your employees have not been trained to understand overlap. The difference between a four-inch overlap and a six-inch can be costing your company \$100 per day or more in lost production."

It's not only how your people are doing their job, but also how many of them are doing it at one property. "Use one-man mowing crews when you have the ideal person," advises Bob Smart, president of Olmsted



Bob
Smart

Falls, OH's Yard Smart. "This is the most efficient crew, followed by a two-man crew."

Systems work

But mowing is more than just the person pushing the mower. Efficiency in the field profits from time spent establishing good systems back in the office, says Highland Outdoor chairman and founder Jason Cupp. His company recently switched all mowing crews to the same equipment brand based on some internal process checks. "We track the true direct cost versus revenue daily by route and weekly by crew," he says. "This allows us to determine if the right equipment is on the truck, the right people are on the crew and the right route is being used."

Smart echoes the idea of using common equipment for availability and efficiency. "Use 36- and 52-inch walk-behinds instead of 48-inch walk-behinds," he says. "This keeps the blades common on both machines." **LM**



Steve
Rak



Jason
Cupp



Scorpion – The Stand On

Likes:

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- The great outdoors
- Standing on two feet

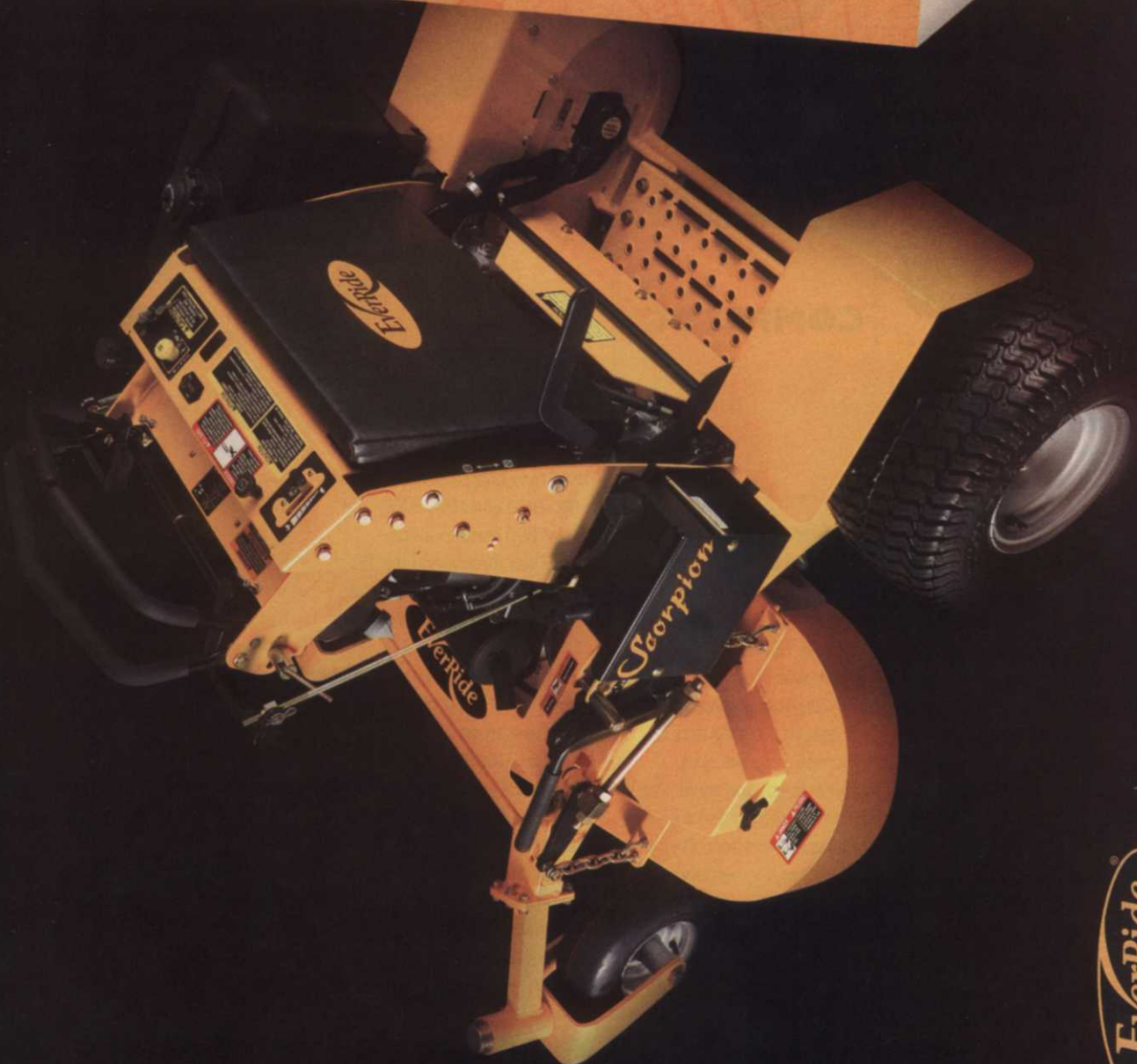
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Innovations

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1



2



1 Low rider

Wright Manufacturing's new mid-mount, zero-turn mower's engine is mounted nearly three inches lower than traditional mid-mounts, which lowers the mower's center of gravity improving balance and safety. The hydro-drive pulley is mounted on the bottom of the engine drive shaft, which allows the hydro pumps to be mounted six inches lower than most mid-mounts. The rear wheel motors can be moved fore and aft through three settings, keeping the proper weight balance with collection systems. Choose 21-, 23- or 25-hp engines, with decks of 48-, 52- or 61-in. deck width. Contact Wright at 301/360-9810 or visit www.wrightmfg.com / circle no. 250

2 Spreading protection

Andersons Golf Products' new Compass G is the first granular strobilurin fungicide — no more need to wait for a spray application. Compass G spreads to protect against brown patch, anthracnose, gray leaf spot, summer patch and more. With the proper setting and a professional grade spreader, the job can be done by any member of a grounds crew.

For more information contact Andersons at 800/253-2639 or visit www.AndersonsGolf-Products.com / circle no. 251

3



4



3 It's a blow out

Tanaka America introduced two new backpack blowers, the TBL-7800 and TBL-7800R. The TBL-7800 features a side-mounted throttle and the TBL-7800R is equipped with a tube-mounted throttle. Both units are powered by a 65 cc, 2-stroke engine and have an air volume output of 850 CFM. They are designed as everyday commercial-use blowers, but can handle the bigger jobs as well. Both models are covered by Tanaka's two-year commercial warranty.

For more information contact Tanaka America at 253/333-1200 or visit www.tanaka-usa.com / circle no. 252

4 Mini Z

Hustler Turf Equipment Mini Z 36 is a true, commercial-duty small z-rider. Its commercial-duty ZT 2800 transmissions feature the same rotating group as Hydro-Gear pump and motor combinations, as well as steel cut gears, relief valve, charge pump and spin-on oil filter. The 36- or 42-in. welded-steel decks feature Hustler's FreeFlow XR-7 deck for a high quality cut. Other features: SmoothTrak steering with automatic park brake system, lowest center of gravity in class, molded rubber discharge chute, remote air cleaner standard and 17- or 19-hp Kawasaki Kai engines.

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Air Filters – Aren't they all the same?

Landscape and mowing equipment works in harsh and dirty environments. Air used in the combustion process must be clean before it is mixed with fuel in the carburetor. For each gallon of fuel that is burned, 10,000 gallons of air must enter the system. If the incoming air contains dirt, the silica from the dirt acts like sandpaper on the carburetor, valves, cylinder wall, piston and rings. This wear will eventually cause the engine to lose its seal, leading to power loss and eventual failure.

Most commercial small engines use one of two types of air filters. Foam element filters and paper cartridge filters. Aftermarket parts manufacturers often copy OEM filters. While these filters may look the same, they typically use different methods or materials resulting in unequal performance.

For example, OEM air filters from Briggs & Stratton are manufactured using a specialized process that opens up the windows within the foam cell wall. This allows the air to pass through the filter media while holding back the dirt. Aftermarket air filters may use foam that has many of the windows closed, which would cause the engine to starve for air. A number of fit issues have been noted with non-original filters. Any of these issues can eventually lead to dirt bypassing the element and entering the engine.

Non-original paper cartridge air filters also have shortcomings. The paper used in these filters often use coarser fibers, offering less strength. This can lead to dirt passing through the fibers, or a rupture of the paper filter itself. In addition to using higher-quality filter paper, most OEM paper cartridge filters also incorporate a wire screen behind the paper media for support. Many non-original filters often omit this screen, which could lead to a collapse of the media. Additionally, the urethane foam at the edges of the filter may not be thick and spongy enough to seal the element within the air filter housing.



By **Mark Nelson**,
Master Instructor,
Briggs & Stratton Customer Education

From the Shop

TECHNOLOGY

WRENCH RULES

No matter what your preference in air wrenches, remember they are best restricted to disassembly.



Air power

BY HARRY SMITH

I recently fielded a question from a student about air or pneumatic wrenches. He wanted to know the usual information: What air wrench or wrenches did I recommend? Who had the best wrenches? What was better, a ratchet-style or gun-style wrench?

Questions about air wrenches always remind me of the technician I once hired whose toolbox contained a smattering of tools and four air wrenches from 3/8- to 3/4-in. drive. I should have been warned by that anomaly. He continually stripped bolts and nuts. He refused to believe that air wrenches were suitable primarily as disassembly tools. He eventually turned me into an expert on thread repair and broken bolt extraction. I finally did talk him into retiring the 3/4-in. wrench to his home toolbox. He left my employ after a few months and interestingly went on to work for a fastener company.

New design, materials

Several new wrenches out there are worth a closer look. Ingersoll Rand has a reaction-less 3/8-in. ratchet-style wrench (IR 111) that is known as a "knuckle saver." If you ever had your fingers

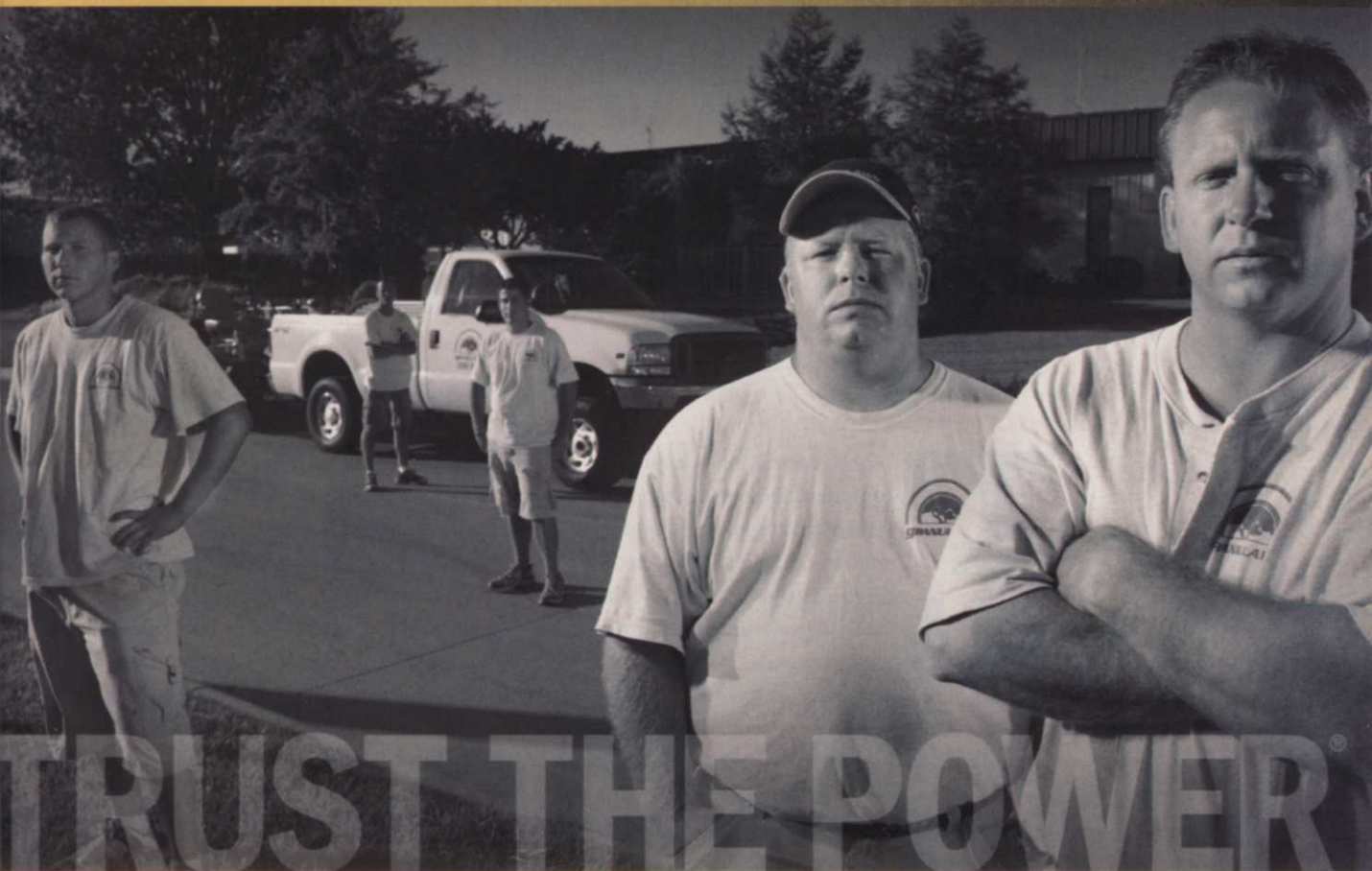
slammed in something sharp, rusty and immovable by the kick of the wrench on a frozen bolt then you can see the merit of this tool's design. I have yet to bust a knuckle using this air wrench.

The newest pistol-style 3/8- and 1/2-in. wrenches make excellent use of composite materials. These wrenches are much lighter than their all-metal counterparts. The removal torque some of these wrenches can produce is astounding. The Chicago Pneumatic Turbo 7750 is a 1/2-in. capacity tool capable of 800-ft.-lbs. of torque in a five-lb. wrench. This amount of torque in reverse is comparable to some much heavier and bulkier 3/4-in. wrenches.

No matter what your preference in air wrenches, remember they're best restricted to disassembly. You cannot consistently control the amount of torque they produce when tightening without the addition of a torque extension bar (Torque Stick is a notable brand). Make certain you have enough cubic feet per minute of compressed air reaching the tool, always use impact sockets and install a lubricator device in the air line to ensure a long service life. Air wrenches are terrific tools if you know the rules.

— *The author is turf equipment professor at Lake City Community College, Lake City, FL. Contact him at smith@lakecitycc.edu.*

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As a business owner you need to push people to be smart about the amount of e-mail they send.



Tame your e-mail inbox

BY TYLER WHITAKER

Every business is built on effective communication with customers, vendors and employees. In today's online world e-mail is fast becoming the method of choice. Unfortunately e-mail's simple nature lends itself to overuse. Now is the time to take back your e-mail and your free time.

A couple of years ago I was working alongside a talented co-worker. His leadership skills were second to none, but I noticed that his productivity had dipped and his tasks were falling behind schedule.

When I asked how I could help, he quickly agreed to forward an e-mail to me containing several small tasks that I could tackle. He began to search his e-mail. After a few minutes of fruitless searching, I noticed that he had more than 7,500 messages in his inbox! If that wasn't enough, nearly half of them were unread. He was suffering from e-mail paralysis.

Know when to delete 'em

E-mail inboxes can become clogged with corporate memos, task assignments, useless replies and forwards, jokes, and worst of all — e-mail meetings. Navigating these dangers takes individual talent and discipline.

First, let's talk about what not to do. One of the biggest problems in business e-mail is overuse of the cc and bcc lines. It's a fine line between letting others know what's going on and starting the firestorm of an e-mail meeting. This occurs when everyone feels

the need to reply to the original message and then reply to the replies, until only someone with a computer science degree can make sense of it all. A couple of basic rules of thumb are **1)** never send an e-mail when an actual meeting would solve the problem faster. And **2)** avoid sending e-mails to more than two cc or bcc recipients.

Being able to move through your e-mail quickly is another skill to master. Most e-mail programs have the ability to create folders. Move messages out of your inbox once you read them. One of the folders you should use the most is called "Deleted Items." Don't be afraid to delete early and delete often.

Inspire e-mail smarts

As a business owner you need to push people to be smart about the amount of e-mail they send. Employees often misunderstand that best use of e-mail is to get business objectives completed. Don't let them fall into using e-mail as a way to pass the buck. One of the most extreme examples to combat this is the CEO who instituted an "E-mail-Free Friday" policy. Without e-mail, his employees were forced to talk with customers and each other.

Make plans now to join the "Empty Inbox Club" and discover the empowering emotion that comes from being the master of your inbox. Less stress, more time, and increased energy are just a few mouse clicks away.

— *The author is chief technology officer for the Symbiot Business Group. Contact him at 801/307-0730 or twhitaker@symbiot.biz. Visit his blog at*

www.tylerwhitaker.com.

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- 6** Big snow on campus
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Demand for snow removal will grow

Andrew Outcalt, new president of Meyer Products, says the industry innovates even when snow is scarce

BY RON HALL / Editor in Chief

Few us look at the snowplow as a high-tech tool. But new design and manufacturing processes indicate that high-tech is the name of the snowplow game, at least in the production of snow removal equipment.

Landscape Management interviewed Andrew "Andy" Outcalt, the new president of the Louis Berkman Winter Products Co., which includes Meyer Products LLC and Swenson Spreader LLC. The interview took place during a tour of the company's 265,000-sq.-ft. manufacturing facility in Cleveland in March. The day was sunny and unseasonably warm, just like much of a mild



and unusually snow-free '05-'06 winter in the Mideast.

With or without snowy winters, Outcalt says demand for contracted and in-house snow removal will continue to grow.

"People's expectations for getting roads open and parking lots cleared are greater than ever before," he says. "Regardless if the snow is 1/2 inch, one inch, two inches or three inches, people are going to demand that it's plowed and salted."

To meet that demand, end-users will need great equipment.

"A snowplow is more sophisticated than just a moldboard and black iron," says Outcalt. "This industry is becoming

more and more technology driven."

How, we ask?

He starts by describing the sophisticated 3-D software used to simulate the performance of plow designs in different snow conditions. Then, of course, there's the plant tour that includes stops at a state of the art Whitney Plasma-Punch laser-burn table to cut steel precisely and a new robotic welding cell. His company, has invested more than \$3.0 million in capital upgrades within the past few years.

Outcalt was named president of The Louis Berkman Winter Products Co. (Meyer & Swenson Products LLC), on March 1, succeeding Robert Balogh, who retired after a 34-year-career with

SNOW & ICE GUIDE

Meyer. Outcalt served as executive vice president for the company for three years. Before that he had been an executive with MTD Products, also based near Cleveland.

History to present

Meyer Products, which is believed to have about 30% of the U.S. snowplow market, has been a supplier to the snow and ice removal industry for 80 years. In fact, the company claims to have invented the snowplow as a result of Edward B. Meyer attaching a wooden moldboard to the front of his Buick in 1926 to clear his driveway. That success gave birth to the Meyer Auto Snow Plow Company, the precursor to the

Snow removal contractors can count on increased demand for their services because society is less and less tolerant of snow-covered roads.

present company in Cleveland.

Outcalt is a "walk-around" manager. He's as comfortable on the shop floor talking with hourly workers as he is with management. He's no stranger to either the boardroom or the shop floor where the company continues in its multi-year program to update its manufacturing processes through Lean manufacturing techniques with an employee-team "cell" approach.

One of several beneficial results in the company's worker empowerment campaign was the implementation of a barcode system to allow for faster and more accurate inventory tracking. He says the company is now filling customers' orders in half the time it previously took.

"Our goal is to provide products with reliable overtime construction," says Outcalt. "A contractor might be out in a storm from 2 to 7 a.m. with 50 properties to plow out. They can't afford to be down."

Industry predictions

OK, so tell us about what you see for the snow and ice management industry in general, we ask?

"We see it being a strong business al-

though there's no question it's seasonal and there are ups and downs," says Outcalt. He says that snow removal contractors can count on increased demand for their services because society is less and less tolerant of snow-covered roads, parking lots and walkways.

Better diagnostics

For product trends, Outcalt says that contractors want plows and other snow management equipment with better diagnostics that make it easier to use.

And finally the obvious question in this season of paltry snowfall in most of the country — How has the season been for his company?

"There are two big factors that affect our business, snow and truck sales," says Outcalt. "The good news is that truck sales have been good; the bad news is there hasn't been much snow."

Even so the new president of the snowplow company remains upbeat.

"I love those weathermen who broadcast every snow, even three or four inches, like it's a catastrophe," says Outcalt, who admits that the first thing he does every day on arriving at work is to log onto the Internet for the latest weather reports. **LM**



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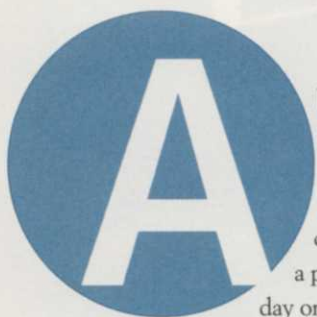
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Big snow on Campus



A blizzard can be a college student's dream: Classes are canceled, giving a precious extra day or two to get that late assignment done. But for the campus facility maintenance staff, an unexpected snow event can be a nightmare.

"Sidewalks and steps are particularly taxing because our campus sits up on a hill. They must always be kept clean because we are a transient college," says Denny Baker, lead technician in the landscape and grounds department for 9,000-student Cincinnati State Technical & Community College. Baker is responsible for year-round upkeep of the 43-acre main campus, as well as its north and west campuses (totaling about 10 acres) and the west campus' 20-acre single-runway airport complex.

Baker has been with the university five years. His job evolved from a decade of teaching classes in turfgrass maintenance, horticulture and even cemetery management, which he still does many evenings. He was manager for a national landscaping and lawn care firm before that, so he knows what to look for in a good contractor relationship.

"We perform about 98 percent of all the snow and ice control on the main campus," Baker says of his five-man team, which is responsible for all three locations. "It's a team effort be-

Snow removal at colleges and universities can be a lucrative add-on

BY HEATHER GOOCH

tween us, the contractor and the interior maintenance staff. It makes the job so much easier."

Communication counts

John Molloy, president of Boston-based Molloy Landscaping Inc., notes that he makes it a priority to establish and maintain a good relationship with facility managers at campus accounts.

"Our phone line in our office will speed-dial to my cell phone at night so I can always be reached in emergencies," he offers as an example. Molloy also advises contractors thinking about getting into snow removal at their campus accounts to spell out responsi-

bilities from the start.

"Find out what is expected: Are you going to be the 'heavy snow guys' to help out the on-site staff, or are they turning over all snow and ice responsibility to you?" he says. "With the recent light snowfall years, some firms have even gone to charging a monthly snow-readiness retainer fee for schools and other large accounts."

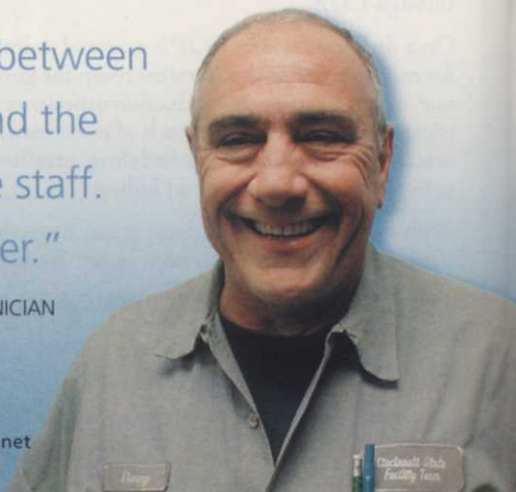
Plan ahead

Baker states that whenever he calls in his contractor, there is a pre-arranged plan in place. Everyone knows their responsibilities. "I do not have to stop and

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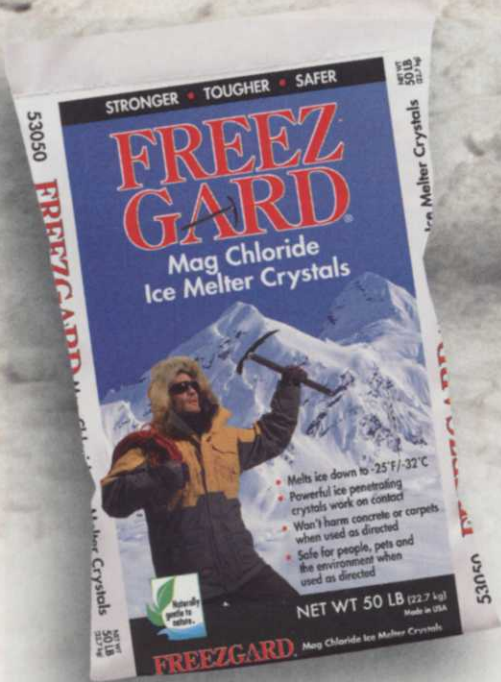
“It’s a team effort between us, the contractor and the interior maintenance staff. It makes the job easier.”

►► DENNY BAKER, TECHNICIAN





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SNOW & ICE GUIDE

continued from page s6

direct his people," Baker adds. "The working relationship is fantastic."

Molloy suggests thinking about next winter as soon as the sun comes out. "We start gearing up for the season in April," he says, admitting that he is earlier than his competition. "That's when we start designing our fliers and basically going over our game plan. By June, we start talking to our contacts because I want the sales wrapped up by September. Everything that comes in after that, unbudgeted, is gravy."

Because it makes sense to contact existing clients first, he says, it may be something to mention at campus accounts come contract time.

"These days, universities are looking

at having you fulfill the whole package, including snow removal," Molloy adds. "Don't be afraid to ask existing clients, because if you don't ask, you don't get."

Particularly for campuses, trust is a big issue, as Baker can attest. Molloy jokes that facility maintenance departments seem to have their own "clique," wherein they tell one another the local companies they like to use — and the ones they don't.

"You might be presenting to university officials, but you need to gain the trust of the facility maintenance department," he adds. **LM**

— The author is a Northeast Ohio-based writer. Contact her at 330/723-3539 or heather@goochandgooch.com.

Get in gear

John Molloy, president of Molloy Landscaping in Boston, advises lawn care operators interested in offering snow removal to first take stock of their existing equipment. This is particularly helpful when going after a large account like a college campus.

"If you're at a university and doing their sports fields already, you probably already have the basic equipment for adding snow removal attachments," he notes. "Use that liquid tank you use for weed control in the summer for de-icing in the winter. Look at the vehicles that you can put a plow attachment on. Can you put a heated cab on your



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mowers, with windshield wipers? Try to maximize your equipment for 12 months of the year."

With the winding brick walkways common on many campuses, a broom attachment is particularly handy on compact vehicles because it can remove the snow that collects in the mortar. Molloy says he has also noticed a trend of using backpack blowers in the field, to scatter light snowfall.

De-icing equipment is becoming more important, particularly for campuses concerned with slip-and-fall liability. Molloy, who also owns a snow removal equipment supply company, Winter Management, says that de-icing products like his company's

brand, Ice Ban, are increasingly being asked for by name in campus bidding specification sheets.

"Typically, the material will be owned by the university and stored on its property," he says. "They'll just grant you access to it. However, satellite campuses and smaller accounts might expect you to provide some type of de-icing service. Again, get that spelled out up front."

The most important component to preparing to offer snow services on campus is the human element, both from a liability standpoint and from sheer manpower. Let your insurance provider know that you're looking at adding this service. A typical university

will have its own insurance, but will likely want to know the status of yours in the event of a slip-and-fall claim. And, Molloy adds, a lot of problems arise from not having enough people to do the job in time. While his firm uses his technicians for snow removal, thereby having full-timers all year round, it's up to the owner whether to subcontract or stay in-house.

"I'm not a big believer in subcontracting," he says, adding that he does keep one trusted subcontractor on hand. "But I know of other firms whose entire service is nothing but subcontractors. If that's what works for you, that's fine, too."

— H.G.

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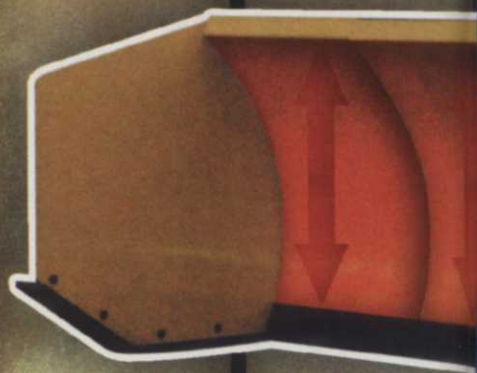
Independent moldboards trip over road obstacles up to 2 inches in height.

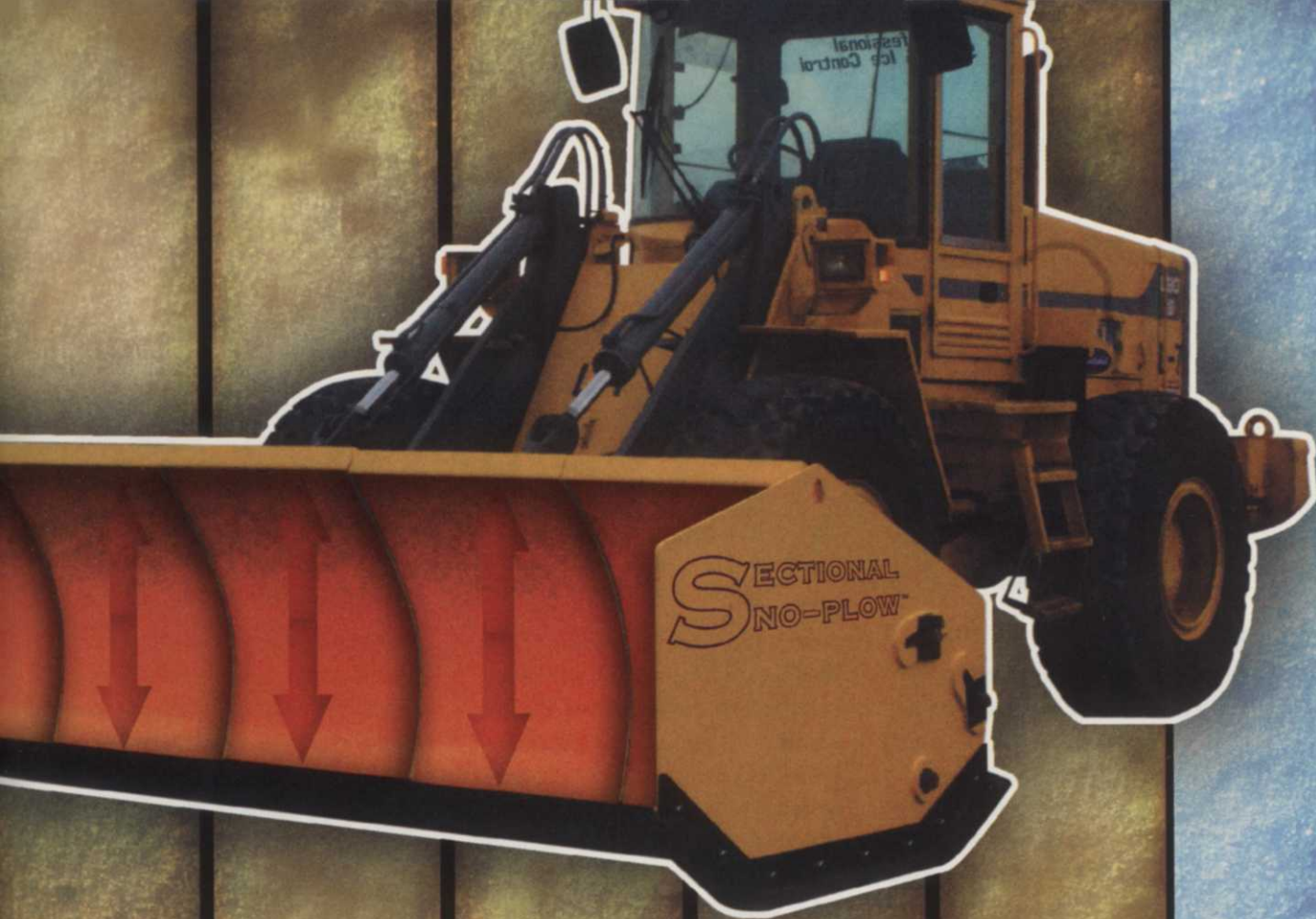


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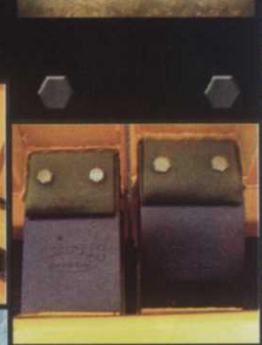




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The Snow Dragon SND 600 MiniPro Model is designed for use at strip malls, schools or restaurant parking lots and is the ideal configuration for landscapers, the company says. It's capable of economically melting 60 cu. yd. of snow per hour. It can be towed from site to site with the typical landscaper's truck, and carry a skid loader along inside.

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continued from page s12

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Bobcat Co.'s new snow pusher attachment is available in 94- and 120-in. widths for Bobcat skid steer loaders, compact track loaders, all-wheel steer loaders and Toolcat utility machines. The pusher features a free-floating blade capable of floating up to 2.3 in. vertically and tilting 12 degrees with a +/- 4.5-degree oscillation. The attachment is equipped with abrasion-resistant skid shoes and a rubber cutting edge. A read cutting edge support is also included.

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The Switchblade from Pro-Tech Manufacturing & Distribution is a reversible pusher with both a rubber cutting edge and a steel cutting edge. The rubber edge is designed for wet, heavy snow conditions with a lot of ground obstacles; the steel side is for hard-packed snow conditions on job sites with no ground obstacles.

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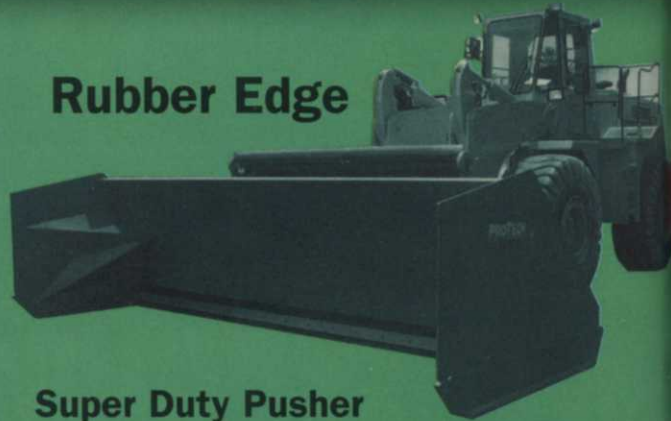
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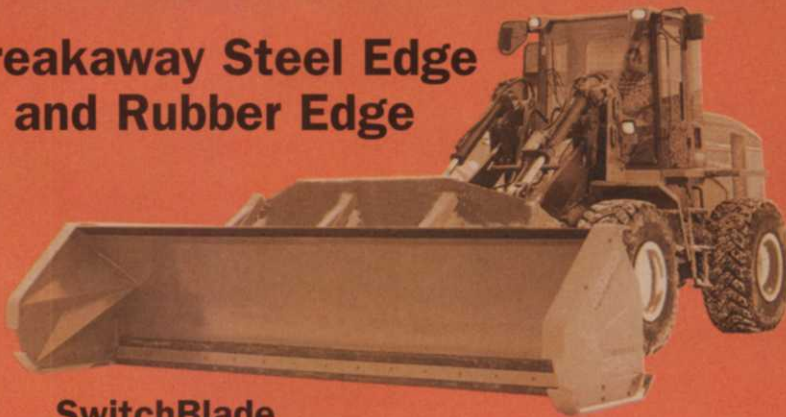
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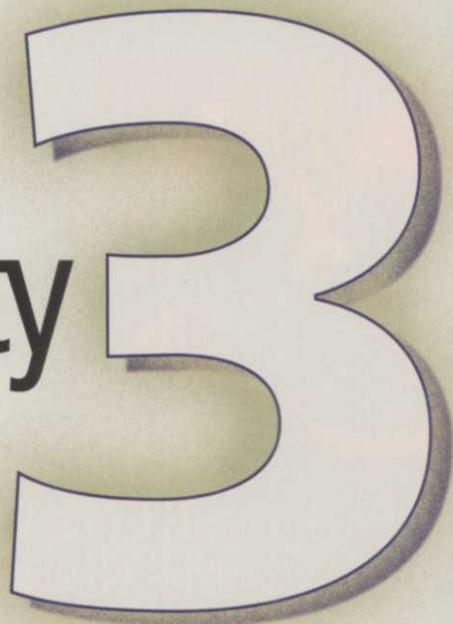
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The **big** nasty



Here's the low-down on large patch, spring dead spot and gray leaf spot and how to manage them on warm-season turfgrasses

BY DR. S. BRUCE MARTIN, JR.

A variety of diseases challenge the health and survival of warm-season turfgrasses. But three big ones stand out because of their prevalence and the harm they cause to turfgrass used in home lawns, commercial properties and sports fields. Each disease becomes established and spreads under its own unique conditions.

In fact, when investigating any suspected disease outbreak or epidemic, consider the classic disease triangle — a susceptible turfgrass host, a particular pathogen and an environment that favors that pathogen. The fourth factor that comes into play is often overlooked is time. The longer that susceptible turfgrass is exposed to a pathogen when environmental conditions favor that disease, the more harm it will cause the turfgrass.

The primary warm-season grasses used in lawns and landscapes are St. Augustinegrass (usually in coastal, sub-tropical environments), centipedegrass, zoysiagrass and Bermudagrass. Each grass has unique conditions for optimal growth. Consider shade tolerance, for example. St. Augustine is the most shade tolerant, followed by zoysia, then cen-

tipede and finally Bermudagrass. However, all of these grasses require adequate sunlight, usually six hours minimum.

Other stress factors that weaken turfgrass include poor drainage, compacted soils, over-irrigation (a big one!), foot or vehicular traffic, improper fertilization, improper mowing practices and thatch accumulation. Turf managers have to make themselves aware of all of the limitations of the sites they maintain and correct them if they can.

Maintenance and irrigation

Start by revisiting how you maintain the turfgrass, including mowing, fertility and irrigation, especially irrigation. Also consider modifying the site to improve conditions for turfgrass. This might include taking out trees, selective pruning, proper grading for drainage and installation of supplemental drainage. The better option, if given the opportunity of course, is to establish the species and variety of turfgrass best suited for the sites you'll be maintaining.

Intelligent irrigation is vital to the health of the turfgrasses. In almost all cases it's best to supply the needs of the plant and no more. In the summer you may have to water often but in winter, when warm-season grasses are dor-

continued on page 60



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Circle 128

continued from page 58
 mant or semi-dormant, little or no supplemental irrigation may be needed. Conditions will dictate when to turn on the water.

Many irrigation systems are pro-

grammed (especially by homeowners) to apply light, frequent amounts of water that may increase leaf wetness periods that promote fungal diseases. So except under high heat and drought stress, it's normally recommended that irrigation

occurs during the night, after normal dew production. Usually there's less wind at night so irrigation patterns are more exact. Also there's less evaporation of the irrigation during the evening. The worst time to irrigate is in the early morning near sunrise and at dusk, the few hours before normal dewfall and this few hours after normal dewfall. This might increase leaf wetness periods to greater than 12 hours, a recipe for disease development.

DISEASE: LARGE PATCH

► **Pathogen:** *Rhizoctonia solani* AG 2-2 'LP'


► **Grasses affected:** All warm-season turfgrasses

This disease is caused by *Rhizoctonia solani* AG 2-2 'LP'. Previously this disease was lumped into brown patch diseases that included those occurring in cool-season grasses. However this pathogen is unique and infects primarily warm-season grasses. Cool, wet conditions favor the occurrence of large patch, usually in early fall in transition zone environments (the Carolinas, Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas and again in the spring during and after green-up. In more southerly locations, the disease may occur during mid-winter when warm-season grasses may still be green but not growing due to cool temperatures.

St. Augustinegrass is very susceptible, along with centipedegrass and zoysiagrass. In zoysia, the disease is sometimes re-

This centipede turf shows damage from large patch. Infected shoots, above right.

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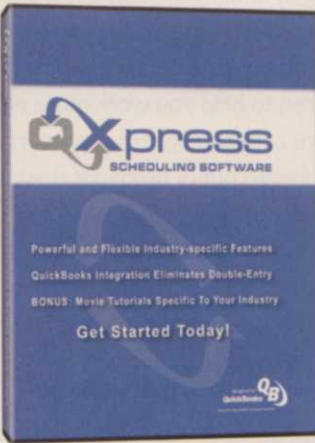


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ferred to as zoysia patch. Bermudagrass is sometimes affected, but almost always recovers quickly once temperatures favor Bermudagrass growth (night temperatures consistently into the mid-60's). Although not widely grown as a lawn or landscape turf, seashore paspalum also is quite susceptible to large patch.

The fungus survives on stolons during the summer and grows into leaf sheaths when temperatures fall and moisture is available. The lower leaf sheaths are girdled by the infections, and eventually very large patches of affected turf may be visible, with active infections occurring at the margin of the patches. The margins of the patches typically have a bronzed, wilted appearance and infected leaves are easily pulled from their attachment points to the stolons.

Intelligent irrigation and drainage are the keys to limiting the severity of the disease. Providing adequate sunlight, man-

fections can occur. Sometimes two or three applications may be needed, depending on the fungicide used and whether conditions remain favorable for disease development. Several fungicides are labeled for large patch or for brown

patch in warm-season grasses, and include azoxystrobin (Heritage), flutolanil (Prostar), triadimefon (Bayleton), myclobutanil (Eagle), thiophanate-methyl (Cleary 3336 and others), and polyoxin (Endorse).



ing thatch, providing proper fertility and mowing at the correct height of cut help limit the disease also.

Fungicides may be needed and are most effective when applied near the fall infection periods. If abundant moisture is available and soil temperatures at about the 2-in. depth approach 70 F, in-

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DISEASE: SPRING DEAD SPOT

► **Pathogens:** *Ophiosphaerella korrae*, *O. herpotricha*, *O. narmari*

► **Host:** Bermudagrasses

Spring dead spot (SDS) is the most devastating disease of Bermudagrass in the so-called transition zone. SDS is most severe in the northern part of the transition zone where Bermudagrass undergoes complete winter dormancy and is stressed by low temperatures. There are three potential causal agents (listed above). In Kansas and Oklahoma, *O. herpotricha* is a primary cause of SDS. In the Carolinas, recent research at North Carolina State and Clemson University has shown *O. korrae* to be the predominant pathogen causing SDS.

In any case, these fungi colonize roots, stolons, and rhizomes and cause a root rot that may extend into the stele of the roots.

Temperature optima that promote these infections are only broadly known and have not provided a soil temperature target for deployment of fungicides.

In fact, fungicide control of these diseases is difficult and results are erratic and often unsatisfactory. Fungicides, when used, are typically applied once or twice in the fall of the year, usually targeted with the last application at least a month prior to the first 'hard' frost.

The best control is an integrated approach of thatch management, aerification and light fertilization as Bermudagrass approaches winter dormancy. Some research has shown some suppression by the use of ammonium sulfate or other fertilizers that promote an acid soil pH.



SDS is more likely to cause havoc in the north part of the transition zone.

Their use depends on soil tests to monitor pH. Fungicides may also be used in severe cases, and labeled materials include fenarimol (Rubigan, Patchwork), propiconazole (Banner, others), myclobutanil (Eagle), thiophanate-methyl (Cleary 3336), and azoxystrobin (Heritage).

Effectiveness differs among these materials, and frequently control by fungicides alone is unsatisfactory. Another factor that may help with SDS is the use of more tolerant cultivars of Bermudagrass.

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Why Spray Nozzle Selection is Critical to Your Success

The consequences of inadequate spraying can be extremely costly. Under application can result in turf damage and the need to re-spray. Over application results in waste of chemicals. So, be sure you have the best nozzle for your specific application.

Nozzle Type	Herbicides, Fungicides, and Insecticides		Droplet Size	Nozzle Type	Herbicides, Fungicides, and Insecticides		Droplet Size
	Contact	Systemic			Contact	Systemic	
Turbo TeeJet® 	Good	Excellent		DG TwinJet® 	Excellent	Good	
Turbo TeeJet® Induction 	---	Excellent		Turbo TwinJet® 	Excellent	Excellent	
AIC TeeJet® 	Good	Excellent		XP BoomJet® 	---	Very Good	

● Very Fine ● Fine ● Medium ● Coarse ● Very Coarse ○ Extremely Coarse
 (Droplet-size categories may vary with nozzle capacity, spray angle and spray pressure.)

www.teejet.com

TeeJet: No better way to spray

Some of these may include new cultivars such as Riviera and Patriot, recently released by Oklahoma State University. Check sources of information such as the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP) for SDS tolerance ratings. Its website is www.ntep.org.

DISEASE: GRAY LEAF SPOT

► **Pathogen:** *Magnaporthe grisea*

► **Host:** St. Augustinegrass

Gray leaf spot can be a devastating disease of St. Augustinegrass. Forms of the pathogen also attack tall fescue and perennial ryegrass among other plants. Forms of the fungus have recently been confirmed to attack kikuyugrass in California, another warm-season grass.

In St. Augustinegrass, the disease is most severe in the heat and humidity of mid to late summer. Turf that's overfertilized with nitrogen, is irrigated to promote a long leaf wetness period, is injured by dull mower blades or scalping is most susceptible. New stands of St. Augustinegrass established during summer's "dog days" are highly susceptible.

In fact, sod producers and landscape professionals should be aware that the disease can kill St. Augustinegrass in the palettes. It's advisable to treat the sod with an effective fungicide before lifting and to treat it again after it's installed in the landscape. Sod laid in mid summer is always at risk. It's almost always better to wait until early fall to make the installation. But no matter when it's laid, turf

Gray leaf spot is easy to diagnose if you look closely at the turf leaf blades.

managers should advise homeowners not to overwater newly laid sod.

Apply no fertilizer, other than a low rate of a 'starter' tilled into the soil prior to laying sod, until the sod becomes established. This may be a month after laying the sod. Nutrients such as calcium, phosphorous, potassium, magnesium and micronutrients should be applied based on soil test prior to sod installation. Some new research from the University of Florida has shown that silicon, if deficient in soil, will promote some suppression of gray leaf spot in St. Augustinegrass.

Fungicides labeled for gray leaf spot include thiophanate-methyl (Cleary 3336), a combination of myclobutanil and mancozeb (ManHandle), azoxystrobin (Heritage), a combination of trifloxystrobin and triadimefon (Armada),

pyraclostrobin (Insignia), triadimefon (Bayleton), polyoxin (Endorse) and propiconazole (Banner and others, suppression). Check labels to note if they can be used in the landscape. There has been resistance in the pathogen population to some of these materials. Chlorothalonil can still be used by sod producers, and its use there should assist in the delay of resistant forms of the fungus.

There are other important diseases of warm-season grasses such as dollar spot, leaf spots and fairy ring. Proper turf management and proper diagnosis of problems as they occur are the first and foremost tools for disease management, no matter the turfgrass or the disease. **LM**

— The author is professor, plant pathology & physiology, at Clemson University. Contact him at sbmrtm@clemson.com.



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DO'S & DON'TS OF irrigating slopes

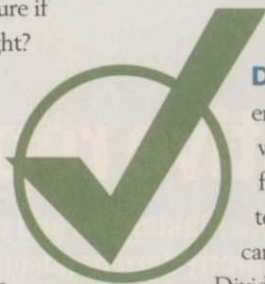
BY STEPHANIE RICCA / Managing Editor

Slope irrigation presents challenges particular to the environment. Too much water and runoff drowns some areas while leaving others too dry. Too little water renders the whole system ineffective. Not sure if you've done the calculations right? Keep these tips handy:

DO remember the run to rise ratio: This measurement of the horizontal distance vs. the rise in elevation will help you measure dimensions on an irrigation plan and calculate the actual distance of the slope (not just how big it looks on your flat plan).

DO try to use low-angle or flat trajectory nozzles for zones at the top of the slope, advises Hunter Industries. These heads will reduce wind drift and have less throw radius, so they can be spaced closer together than a standard nozzle. If you use standard-trajectory nozzles at the top of the slope, tilt the heads down to the bottom of the slope.

These tips help you navigate the ups and downs of challenging terrain



DO choose a timer with several start times. Rain Bird advises using one with at least four per program. Then determine how long a station can be on before runoff starts.

Divide the run time necessary to meet plant water requirements by this. Runoff will be reduced.

DO consider inline emitter tubing, or drip line, for low-volume irrigation, especially on steep, man-made embankments. Install the tubing horizontally to the slope on the surface. Drip irrigation is a good choice for conditions like this, especially when slopes consist of poor-quality fill dirt, according to DIG Irrigation Products, since it reduces runoff, and water loss by evaporation and windy conditions.

DON'T forget the check valve. These will eliminate water draining out of the lowest head after each irrigation.

DON'T use nozzles that have pressures that are too high or too low. You'll waste water and plants won't be at optimal health. Rain Bird advises using built-in pressure compensators to eliminate misting or wind drift common on a slope.

DON'T ruin the visual impact of a planted slope with riser-mounted sprinklers. Pop-ups cut down on vandalism and injury. **LM**



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LM Reports

TECHNOLOGY

YOUR GUIDE TO PRODUCT RESEARCH

Skid steers and loaders



Vermeer ▲

Vermeer Manufacturing Co.'s S600tx rubber track mini-skid steer features a spring-cushioned platform and two single-joystick controls with operator-handle grip that allows operators to keep their balance while operating any of the machine functions. A machine width of 35.75 in. allows the S600tx to maneuver through gates and other confined areas. The 7- or 9-in. tracks provide enhanced stability and lower operating ground pressure.

For more information contact Vermeer at 888/VERMEER or www.vermeer.com / circle no. 254

New Holland

The LS185.B and LS190.B skid steer loaders are rated at 2,500 and 2,800 lbs. operating capacity respectively. The LS185.B is rated at 78 hp and the LS190.B, which replaces the LS190 as New Holland Construction's largest skid steer model, is rated at 81 hp. Spring-applied hydraulic released brakes give reliable parking, even on slopes. A digital overhead



instrument panel provides quick reference to important indicators and service points.

For more information contact New Holland at 717/355-1371 or www.newholland.com / circle no. 255

Compact Power

Compact Power, Inc.'s Boxer Brute TRX is a track version of the Boxer Mini-Skid. With a compact footprint of 44-in. by 70-in., the Brute boasts an operating capacity of 900 lbs. The 9-in. by 42-in. rubber tracks of the Brute TRX are designed for optimum traction and flotation with minimal compaction. It is



built to handle more than 50 universal compact utility attachments.

For more information contact Compact Power at 800/476-9673 or visit www.cpiequipment.com / circle no. 256

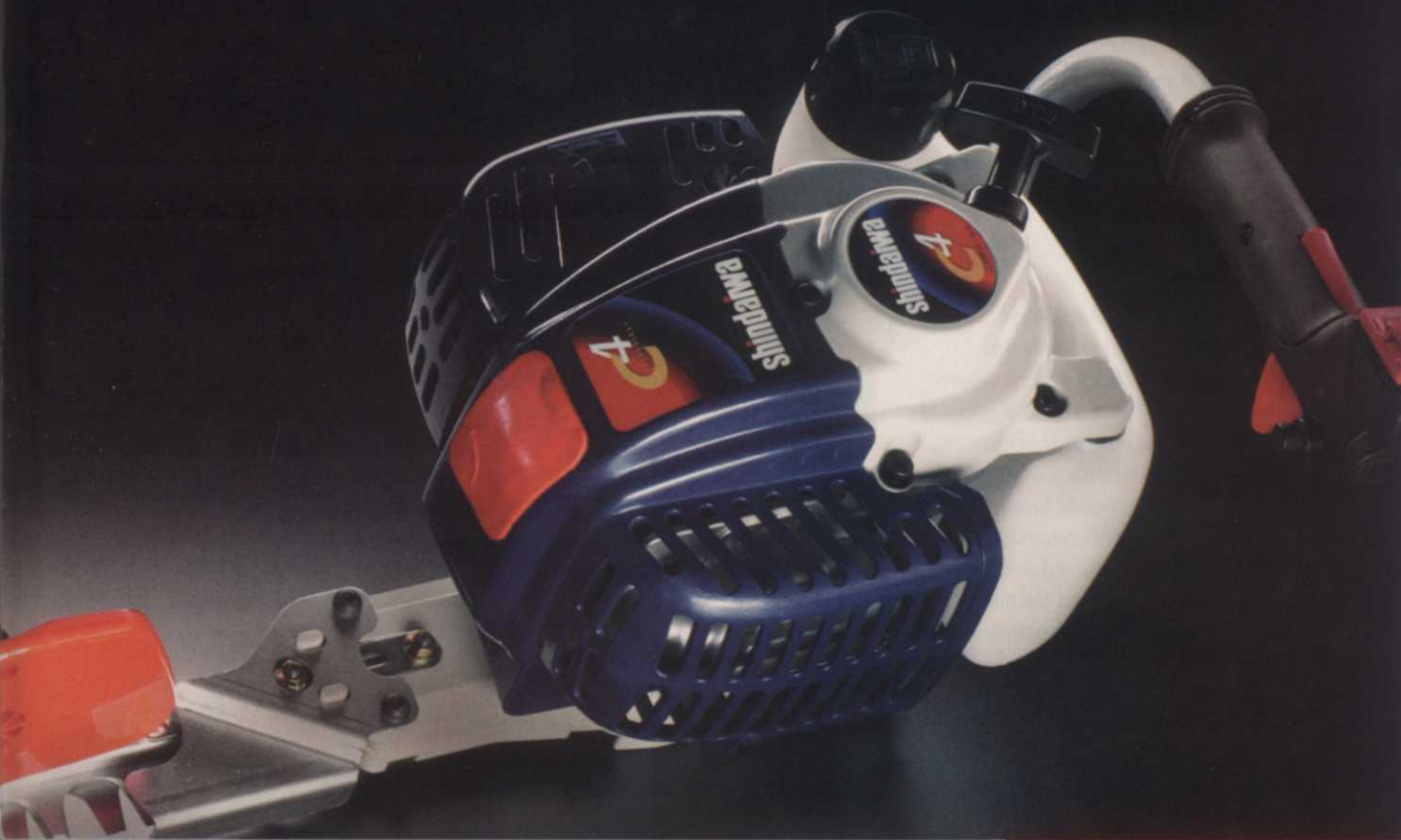
Bobcat

Bobcat's small-frame T140 compact track loader is 56 in. wide and 124 in. long with bucket, and it has a 1,400-lbs. rated operating capacity. The T140 has a turf-friendly lug track that distributes the operating weight of the 6,424-lbs. loader over a larger area. Powered by a liquid-cooled 46 hp diesel engine, the T140 has 16.9 gpm of auxiliary hydraulic flow.

For more information contact Bobcat at 701/241-8700 or www.bobcat.com / circle no. 257



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McLaughlin

The McLaughlin Horizontal Boring Attachment is attached to a mini skid steer loader using a "quick-attach" system and is powered by the hydraulics of your loader. This versatile attachment installs irrigation pipes, sprinkler systems, CATV and utility lines under landscaped areas, lawns, driveways, sidewalks and bushes without the costly surface damage and restoration.

For more information contact McLaughlin at 800/435-9340 or www.mightymole.com / circle no. 258



Toro

The Toro Co.'s new trench filler attachment allows operators to fill trenches in a single pass. Developed for use with the Dingo compact utility loader, the trench filler is equipped with two sets of opposing augers that direct the spoils from the sides of the trench back into the hole. The attachment then levels off the work area as it continues to push material forward, quickly and effectively filling the trench. The Toro trench filler has a 48-in. working width plus a 14-in. auger diameter.

For more information contact Toro at 800/344-8676 or visit www.toro.com/dingo / circle no. 259

ASV

ASV's new rubber track loader, the SR-80, is built on a new ISR-4 undercarriage with 20-in. rubber tracks, a multi-level suspension and four wheel carriages on each side that flex independently. The SR-80 has an overall width of 72 in., an all-new chassis and a 125-in. lift height for the bucket. The cab has an ad-



justable suspension seat, split lap bar with gauge package and an optional slide up door.

For more information contact ASV at 218/327-3434 or visit www.asvi.com / circle no. 260

Power Trac

PowerTrac's PT-2425 and PT-425 both have articulated steering and low ground pressure to reduce turf damage. Both are 45-in. wide with 800-lb. lift capacity and 4-wheel hydrostatic drive. The 2425 is a bucket loader with removable rear backhoe. Bucket has lift height of 84 in. while backhoe has 8-ft., 4-in. reach and digs 6 ft. deep.

For more information contact Power Trac at 800/THE-YARD or www.power-trac.com / circle no. 261



Gehl

Gehl Co.'s line of E-Series Skid Loaders includes six new skid loaders, from the compact Model 3640E with a rated operating load of 1,175 lbs. to the Model 6640E with a load of 2,900 lbs. Gehl offers a two-speed drive option with top speeds of more than 11 mph on the 4640E and 4840E, and up to 12.5 mph on the 5640E and the 6640E skid loaders. An extended wheelbase of more than 48 in. on the Model 6640E, and lower center of gravity, combined with the optional Hydraglide ride control system, deliver a smoother, more stable ride.

For more information contact Gehl Co. at 800/628-0491 or visit www.gehl.com / circle no. 262

Ditch Witch

The Ditch Witch SK650's 31.5-hp Kubota diesel engine and hydraulic system give it the muscle to do the jobs of much larger machines. Pilot-operated ground drive controls provide highly responsive steering with little or no vibration feedback. It is equipped with quick-disconnect fittings so attachments can be changed under pressure, without shutting off the machine.

For more information contact Ditch Witch at 800/654-6481 or visit www.ditchwitch.com / circle no. 263



Finn Corp.

Finn Corp.'s Eagle compact skid steer comes in three models: 204, with 20-hp Kohler Command Pro; 244D, with 23.5 hp Cat diesel; and 252 with 25-hp Kohler Command Pro. Its 3,000 psi parallel hydraulic system provides full power simultaneously to all functions.

For more information contact Finn Corp. at 800/543-7166 or www.finncorp.com / circle no. 264

Caterpillar

The Caterpillar 268B Skid Steer Loader features the high flow XPS hydraulic system, a load sensing, pressure-compensating system that delivers maximum power regardless of work tool speed or load. The 268B has a rated operating capacity of 2,700 lbs. and a maximum lift of 127 in. The Cat 3044C diesel engine has 3.3 liters displacement and produces 76 hp.

For more information contact Caterpillar at 309/675-5175 or www.cat.com / circle no. 265

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Mustang

Mustang Manufacturing Co.'s skid steer Model 2026 is designed for access to tight areas at 70.3 in. tall and 48.4 in. wide. It features 1,050 lbs. operating load, 35 hp engine, hands-only steering and hydraulic controls

and automatic brake and hydraulic lock system. The Model 2041 features a 1,350 lbs. operating load, 46 hp engine, bucket breakout force of 2,800 lbs. for extra power in tough digging conditions and Tilt-up ROPS for easy internal service access.

For more information contact Mustang Manufacturing at 507/451-7112 or visit www.mustangmfg.com / circle no. 266

Woods Equipment Co.

Woods Equipment offers a wide variety of skid steer attachments, including the Model 6500 and 7500 General Purpose, 3-Point Hitch Mounted Backhoes. These backhoes dig down to 78 and 90 in., respectively. Wide stance cast stabilizer arms with flip-over cast pad offer strength and stability.

For more information contact Woods at 866/TO-WOODS or www.woodsequipment.com / circle no. 267



Hyundai

R110-7 and R110D-7 models have an improved Computer Aided Power Optimization system that allows greater productivity through superior controls. Different modes allow for high or standard power; heavy-duty, general or breaker work. The user mode memorizes an individual operator's preferred power settings. Both units offer 94 hp and a dig depth of 16 ft., 8 in.

For more information contact Hyundai at 800/HCE-USA1 or www.hceusa.com / circle no. 268

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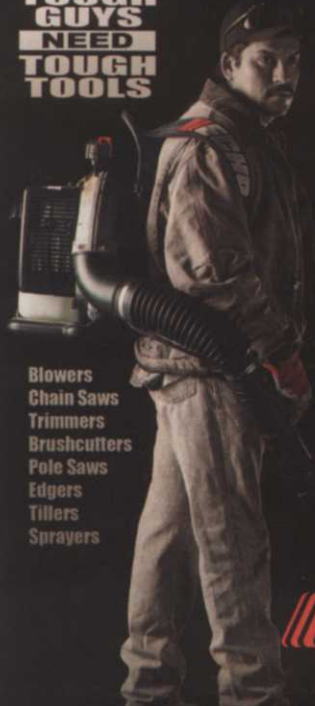
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Circle 135

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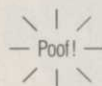
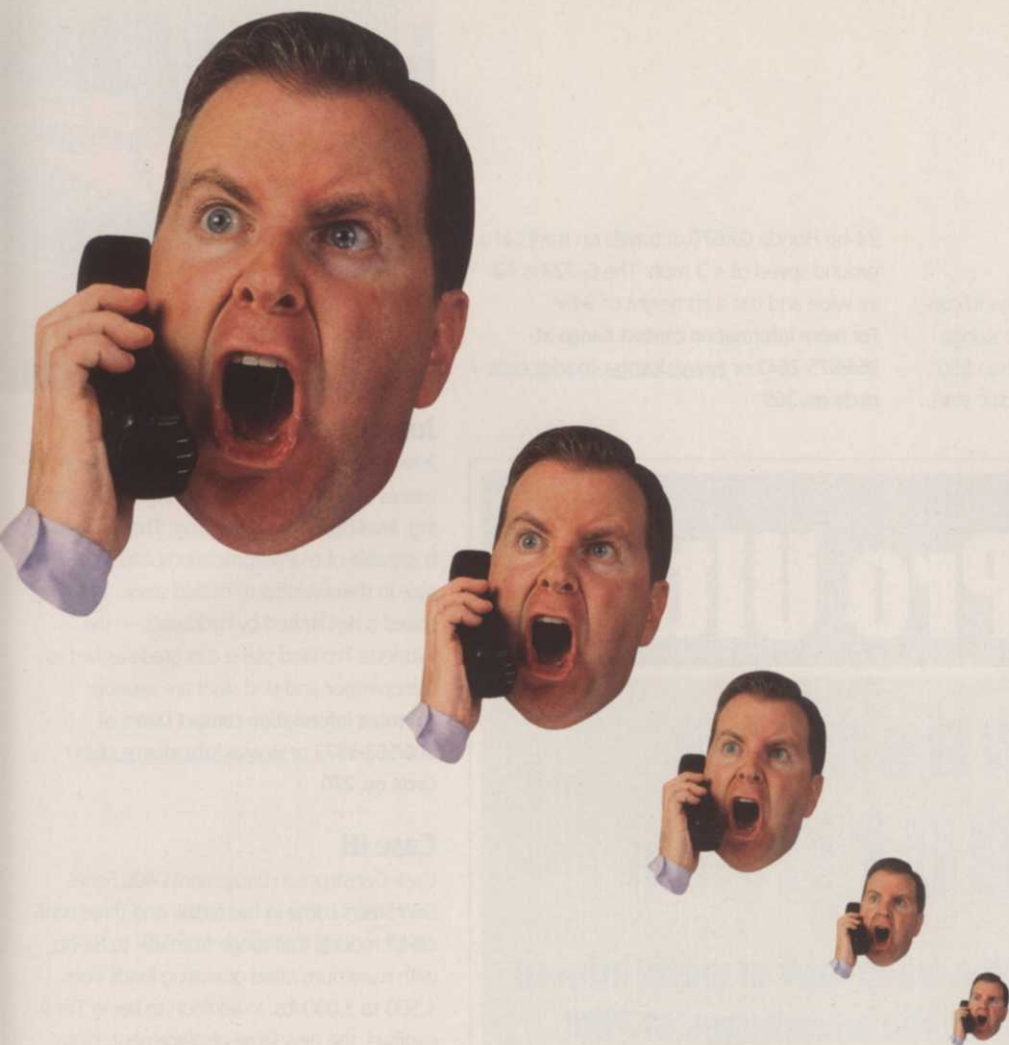
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Kanga

A self-leveling bucket and smooth hand controls make for easy operation of the Kanga G-724. It is a mini-skid with more than 550 lbs. lift capacity. Powered by an electric-start,

24-hp Honda GX670, it travels on tracks at a ground speed of 4.3 mph. The G-724 is 40 in. wide and has a lift height of 94 in.

For more information contact Kanga at 866/875-2642 or www.kanga-loader.com / circle no. 269



John Deere

John Deere's new Worksite Pro Land Plane makes short work of ground that needs grading, leveling, ripping or sifting. The land plane is capable of many applications and is available in three widths to fit skid steers. The speed is not limited by hydraulics — the Worksite Pro land plane can grade as fast as the operator and skid steer are capable.

For more information contact Deere at 800/503-3373 or www.johndeere.com / circle no. 270

Case IH

Case Construction Equipment's 400 Series Skid Steers come in five radial- and three vertical-lift models that range from 49- to 82-hp, with maximum rated operating loads from 1,500 to 3,000 lbs. In addition to being Tier II certified, the new large-displacement, high-torque, long-life Case Family III engines on the 430, 440, 445, 450 and 465 provide quiet and smooth operation. These same models feature a 95-amp alternator for reliable starts.

For more information contact Case IH Construction at 262/636-6011 or www.casece.com / circle no. 271

Yanmar

Yanmar offers two sizes of articulated wheel loaders — the .52 cu yd and the .65 cu yd. The wheel loaders offer two modes of control for multiple jobs. In fully automatic mode, the machine will accelerate smoothly and change gear speed automatically. In fixed speed mode, machine speed is fixed at low speed for powerful, smooth job operation in restricted areas. The wheel loaders also feature an auto-leveler, which places the bucket level on the ground, automatically, with a single lever operation. The bucket moves swiftly back to the scooping position after dumping.

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Circle 137

Komatsu

Komatsu America Corp.'s SK1020-5 skid steer, a 7,525-ib. unit, comes standard with Komatsu's HydraMind hydraulic system that allows simultaneous machine functions — such as loader-arm, bucket maneuvering — without sacrificing speed, engine power or performance. The SK1020-5 features a rated operating load of 2,000-lbs. and a tipping load of 4,000-lbs.

For more information contact Komatsu

at 866/513-5778 or visit

www.komatsuamerica.com / circle no. 273



Kubota

Kubota Tractor Corp.'s new L39 tractor/loader/backhoe has Category I, 3-point hitch and independent PTO capabilities. Balancers provide lower noise and vibration levels and a spark arrestor muffler is standard. The L39's loader delivers 3,560 lbs. of breakout force, 2,200 lbs. of lift capacity and 9-ft. 6-in. lift height. The auto-leveling valve automatically keeps the bucket or pallet fork horizontal as the loader boom raises and lowers.

For more information contact Kubota at

888/4KUBOTA or www.kubota.com /

circle no. 274

JCB

The new Robot 180T skid steer loader has an operating capacity of 1,800 lbs. It is powered by a tier II-compliant, 60-hp turbo-charged engine. Its track system uses a simple, reliable 3-roller undercarriage design with a low number of moving parts. Unit features servo controls governing both the loader and the machine's transmission, plus an optional high flow pump with 30.4 gallons per minute at 2,973 psi.

For more information contact JCB at

800/PICK-JCB or www.jcb.com /

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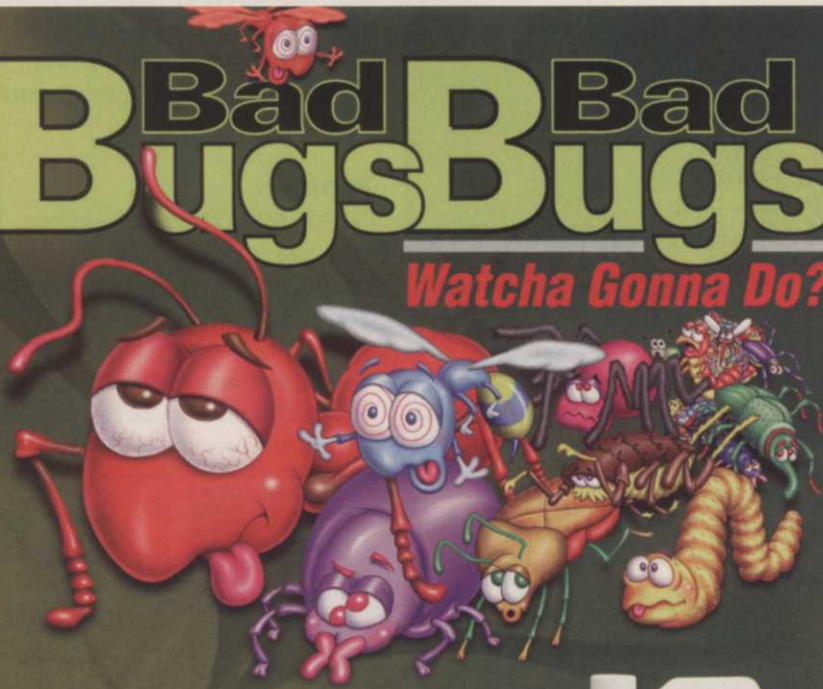
Thomas Equipment

The model T320 from Thomas offers more than 7,000 lbs. of breakout force with its 87.4 hp Kubota turbo charged diesel. The T320 features a track design that utilizes large diameter front and rear open sprockets. This



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For more information contact Thomas Equipment at 866/238-6844 or visit thomasloaders.com / circle no. 276



Volvo

With an attachment for every job, Volvo B-Series Skid Steer Loaders will help you start and finish jobs of all sizes. There are five models to

choose from, including the flexible 49.5 hp MC60B with a rated operating capacity of 1,400 lbs. or the 57.2 hp MC70B with a ROC of 1,500 lbs. There are also three large chassis models: the MC80B with a 67.3 hp engine and a ROC of 1,850 lbs; the MC90B and its 82.6 hp engine with 2,000-lbs. ROC; and the larger MC110B, which features an 82.6 hp engine and a ROC of 2,400 lbs.

For more information contact Volvo at 828/650-2000 or visit www.volvo.com / circle no. 277

Ramrod

The 905, 915, 950 and 1150 Ramrod Taskmasters handle the most demanding jobs. The 905 Taskmaster can be as narrow as 32 in. to work in constrained areas and the 915 can wide track to 44 in. There are more than 40 versatile, "quick on, quick off" attachments. From the low-step stand-on platforms, operators get a clear, 360 de-

gree unobstructed view of their work area.

For more information contact Ramrod at 800/667-1581 or visit www.ramrodequip.com / circle no. 278



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University of Cincinnati

2005 Grand Award Winner for Urban Univ. Grounds

Property at a glance

- Location:** Cincinnati
- Grounds Supervisor:** Mary Gratsch
- Category:** Urban University Grounds
- Total budget:** \$1.4 million
- Year site built:** 1819
- Acres of turf:** 100
- Acres of display beds:** 17
- Total paved area:** 32
- Total man-hours/week:** 1,600

Maintenance challenges

- ▶ Maintain 2:1 slopes of turf and ground cover
- ▶ Ongoing construction that started in 1989 as part of the university's 20-year master plan
- ▶ Fourteen years of permanent budget cuts totaling more than \$1 million

Project checklist

- Completed in last two years:
- ▶ Completed landscape renovations to the Steger Student Life Center, baseball stadium, Mainstreet West, Gettler Stadium (used for soccer and track), TUC renovation

On the job

- ▶ 40 full-time staff, 12 licensed pesticide applicators

A lot has happened since 1989. Communism fell. Personal computers, laptops, cell phones, DVDs and the Internet have become commonplace. Boy bands have come and gone, and then come and gone again.

All the while, the University of Cincinnati has been undergoing major changes too. The 473-acre campus located in a city of more than 300,000 people has been under constant renovation, as part of the campus's 20-year master plan. With just a few more years to go, the landscape has changed from that of an urban university to one with sprawling green spaces and a park-like atmosphere.

Buildings have been demolished and parking lots eliminated, all to create a university that "places students at the center." And through it all, it's been up to the landscaping crews, led by manager of grounds Mary Gratsch, to keep the campus looking clean and inviting to students and guests.

"Once projects have finished up, it's our job to maintain them," says Diana O'Connor, director of auxiliary services. "They have created mounds and hill-

sides to give the campus texture and an interesting design. But it makes it difficult to maintain when you are mowing on 2:1 slopes.

"We've tried to spruce up those sections of campus that have not gone under construction, taking out old timbers and replacing them with new plant material. We're trying to create a consistent look throughout the campus."

That "look" is natural. The campus flourishes with maples, oaks and daylilies. Open fields where students can relax or play sports are covered in ornamental grasses. There are also many picnic and food court areas for students to enjoy that are landscaped with seat walls and water fountains, as well as trees, shrubs and ornamentals.

"The transformation from the old campus to the way it looks now has been tremendous," O'Connor says. "You don't even feel like you are in a big city anymore."



Editors' note: *Landscape Management* was the exclusive sponsor of the 2005 Professional Grounds Management Awards for outstanding management of residential, commercial and institutional landscape. Winners are recognized at the annual meeting of the Professional Grounds Management Society in November. To learn more about the annual awards program contact PGMS at: 720 Light St.,

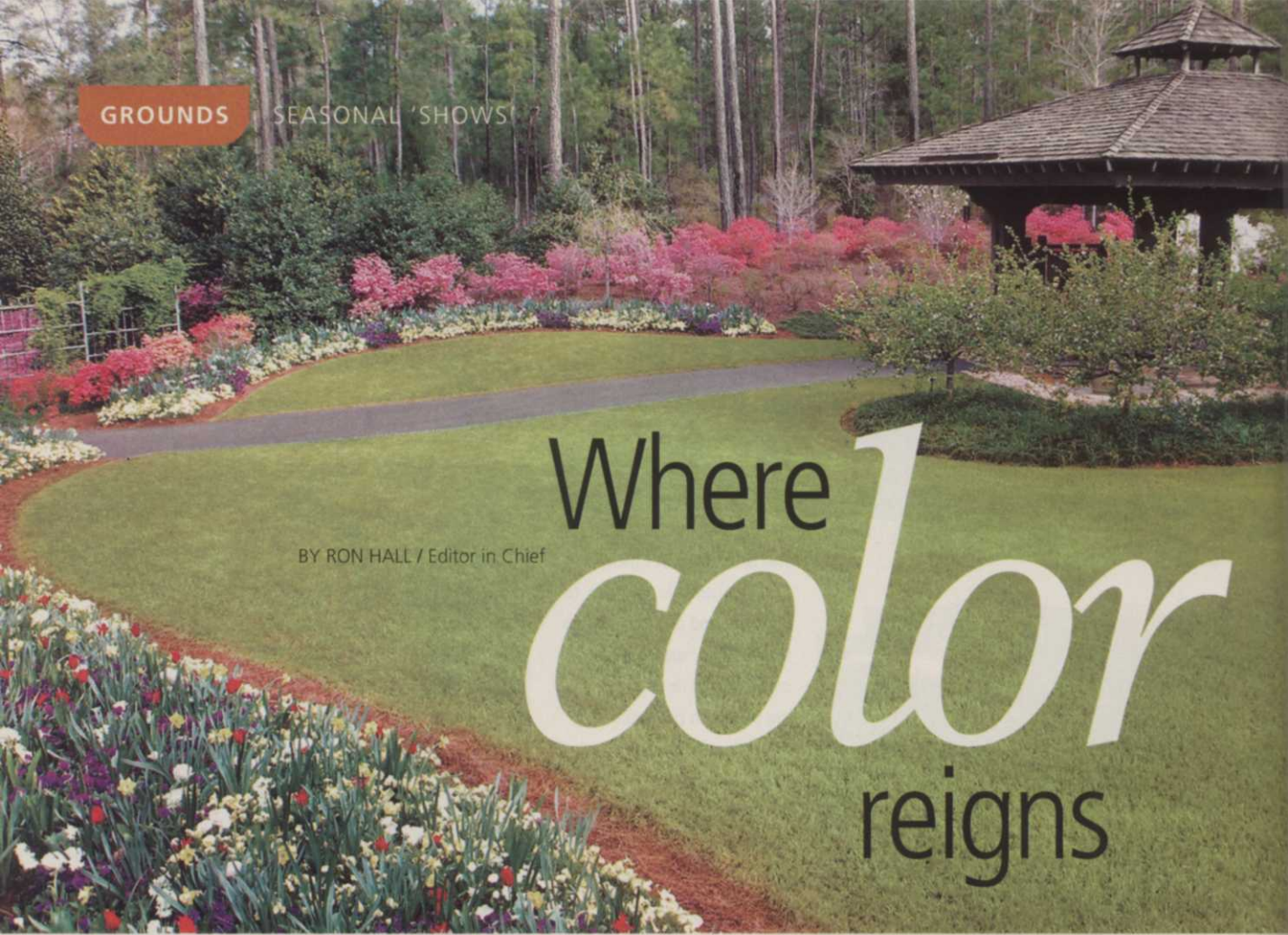
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The University of Cincinnati's decades-long effort to beautify and add "green" to its urban campus has become one of its biggest selling points to potential students, but it's also created additional responsibilities for its grounds crews. That's fine, says Grounds Manager Mary Gratsch. The results are worth it.





Where *color* reigns

BY RON HALL / Editor in Chief

Georgia's Callaway Gardens remains the South's capital of blooms thanks to Callaway's team of horticultural managers, including Tim Banks

Callaway Gardens is little more than an hour's drive southwest of Atlanta.

Peaceful yes, but there's a lot going on at Callaway too.

There is a huge spring plant fair, then a summer circus in residence, a colorful July 4th shindig, a Hot Air Balloon Festival on Labor Day and finally a Harvest Festival.

But, who would guess that the world's premiere water skiing competition is held in this tiny community nestled in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains? Callaway Gardens, located in Pine Mountain, pop. 1,000, will host, for the 47th consecutive year, the Masters Water Ski & Wakeboard Tournament.

That event, held each
continued on page 82

“People visit gardens to see color,” says Georgian Tim Banks. “It’s incredible here right now, and we’re in full mode. In fact, we’re going to be in full maintenance mode until next January when it’ll slow down for about two months and give us a chance to catch up on our equipment maintenance and some of our other chores.”

Banks, 41, is manager of garden operations at Callaway

Gardens, a man-made landscape in a unique natural setting in west central Georgia. It is comprised of about 13,000 acres of woods, scenic drives, bike trails, hiking trails, golf courses, lakes and beaches, resort lodgings and, of course, gardens with every variety of woody and herbaceous ornamental imaginable. More than 700,000 people visit annually.

They come to see flowers. They expect to see flowers. And what they experience is the serenity of verdant, quiet rural Georgia, even though

Tim Banks



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Circle 143



continued from page 80
 Memorial Day Weekend, kicks off the summer season at the Gardens. Banks and his grounds crew, who have been going full blast ever since the relatively mild winter broke,

nevertheless discovered an even higher gear as they manicured the grounds in preparation for the competition that features waterskiers and wakeboarders from around the world and attracts thou-

sands of spectators.

"We put out as much color as we can," says Banks, who designs some of the formal gardens and displays at Callaway (He calls them "shows.") at least a year before they're planted.

"We have our own greenhouse production staff, and I've already designed the show for next year," says Banks. "That gives them a year to grow the material so that it will be in full bloom when we put it out for display."

Banks has 17 "team members". They maintain much of the Callaway property, sharing garden duties with other on-site hort teams. There are 69 people on Callaway's horticultural staff. The resort's three golf courses have their own dedicated maintenance staffs.

Banks' team mows about 500 acres of turfgrass each week and installs four floral "shows" each season. Banks and his crews end the season by helping with the resort's biggest visitor draw, its winter holiday Fantasy in Lights. From the weekend preceding

Thanksgiving to Dec. 31, the dark country Georgia night at Callaway Gardens sparkle with displays featuring more than eight million festive lights.

"If we didn't mow we would still have full-time jobs taking care of all the gardens and the grounds," says Banks, adding that he's proud of the skill and commitment

▼ Once spring breaks out in rural Georgia, the horticultural crews at Callaway Gardens are hopping.



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◀ Tim Banks' crews mow every day to keep up with the 500 acres of turf at Callaway Gardens. Snapper Pro supplies all lawn and garden care equipment for the Gardens.

of his team members. They know their jobs, he says.

"Many of the people I work with have been here for many years," says Banks, who became a part of the Gardens "family" in 1996. "One employee has worked here 42 years and several have been here more than 20 years. We have a lot of good people on our team and a lot of good leadership too. I can depend upon these people, because sometimes it's hard for me to get around to all the areas every day."

Callaway Gardens was conceived and created by Cason J. Callaway and his wife, Virginia Hand Callaway. The purpose is to provide a wholesome family environment where all may find beauty, relaxation, inspiration and a better understanding of the living world.

Callaway, a public, educational, horticultural and charitable organization, is owned and operated by the non-profit Ida Cason Callaway Foundation. Its wholly owned subsidiary, Callaway Gardens Resort, Inc., a regular business corporation, operates the recreational, lodging and retail facilities at Callaway. After-tax proceeds go to the Foundation to support its efforts. **LMI**



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Circle 146

Solutions Center

GROUNDS

REAL ANSWERS TO REAL CHALLENGES

'Victory' for disease control

Knowledgeable field manager keeps the turfgrass at award-winning park green and healthy

Victory Field is home to the Indianapolis Indians, the Triple A farm team for Major League Baseball's Pittsburgh Pirates and also hosts the city's annual high school state baseball championships. It needs to look and play great almost every day from late spring to early fall.

To help prevent heavily used turf from succumbing to summer patch and other diseases and to slow resistance problems, sports turf managers know they need a solid fungicide rotation pro-

gram. Jamie Mehringer, head groundskeeper at Indianapolis' Victory Field, has got it down.

He is so proud of the disease prevention program he's developed that he believes his Kentucky bluegrass turf is the best in the minor leagues.

The problem: Heavy use and disease potential

Turf managers throughout Indianapolis battle diseases such as summer patch, brown patch and dollar spot. The turf at Victory Field was no different and would succumb to those same problems year after year. Diseases like these weaken hardy, healthy turf, which is not good for the players or the game.

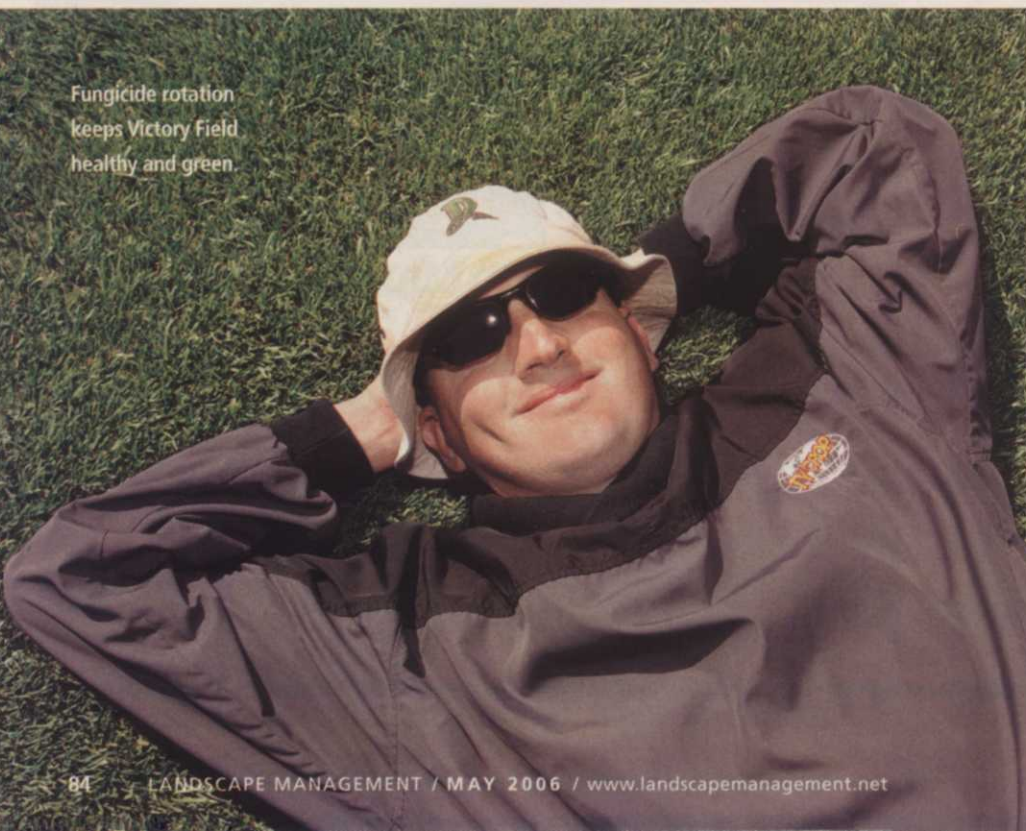
Mehringer needs to provide a playing surface that offers a firm footing as well as one that is free of seams and spots that can cause bad bounces in the course of the many baseball games played there.

The solution: fungicide rotation

"This field is too high profile of a facility not to spray preventively," Mehringer says about his disease

continued on page 86

Fungicide rotation keeps Victory Field healthy and green.



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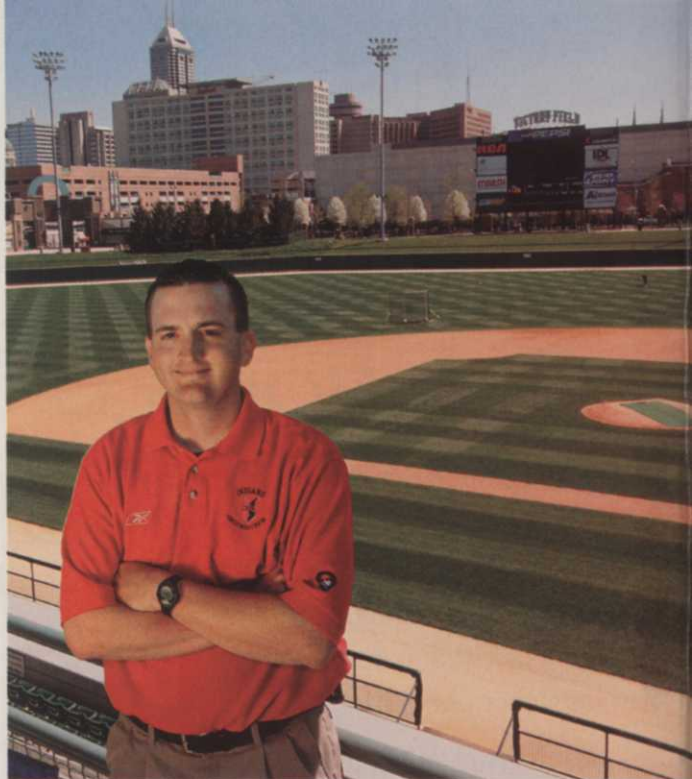
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The screenshot shows the March 2006 issue of the "Landscape Design/Build Solutions" e-newsletter. The header includes the title and date. The main feature is the "Project of the Month" titled "History in the making," which discusses a historic residence in Naperville, Illinois. Below this are sections for "Business Builders" featuring an article on web tools by Judith M. Guido, "Installation & Construction Ideas" with a "How-to: Prepare a hardscape base" article by Susan Porter, and "Design Innovations" with an article on ecological design also by Susan Porter. A "Plants & Materials Trends" section features an article on a 100% solution provider by Susan Porter. On the right side, there are three advertisements: "DynaSCAPE" for design & business management software, "EdgePro Ultra" for pond construction, and "AquaScape Designs" for pond building services.

Solutions Center



continued from page 84
prevention program. "We have two acres of turf that have to look superb for every game.

Mehringer had studied how to use turfgrass fungicides while earning his degree in turfgrass science from Purdue University. He began by looking for products with low use rates and good track records.

To prevent summer patch, Mehringer rotates myclobutanil (the active ingredient in Dow AgroScience's Eagle 20EW specialty fungicide) with azoxystrobin (Heritage, Syngenta), propiconazole (Banner Maxx, Syn-

gen) and thiophanate methyl (Cleary 3336). These are laid down in rotation at 14-day intervals.

For dollar spot prevention, he rotates chlorothalonil (Daconil, Syngenta) and vinclozolin (Curalan, BASF) on 10- to 14-day intervals.

Mehringer typically schedules spraying two days before any home game because once the spraying is finished, the fungicide should be watered in. Allowing a day between that process and a home game ensures plenty of time

for the field to dry.

"We need to have the playing surface healthy," Mehringer says. "In our program, we typically apply at

the highest labeled rates at shortest intervals in June and August. Rotating fungicides has really made things happen for us. It's our home run." **LJM**

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For more information contact Makau Corp. at 801/224-9449 or visit

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Cutting up the quarter-mile

Husqvarna, sponsor of NASCAR and Joe Gibbs Racing, introduced a new NASCAR

Tough chain saw for 2006. The saw features an 18-in. bar with the recognizable NASCAR logo imprinted in full color. In addition to the custom bar, the saw is packaged in a collector's-edition carton and includes a NASCAR authentication numbered hologram decal on the powerhead. The saw itself is a special edition Husqvarna model 350 with a powerful 3.2 hp engine. It features Husqvarna's LowVib vibration dampening system that isolates the handles from the engine using high-grade steel springs. The saw also features Husqvarna's Smart Start system for easy starting and is equipped with a snap-off cover for easy access to the spark plug and air filter.

For more information contact Husqvarna at 800/HUSKY62 or visit

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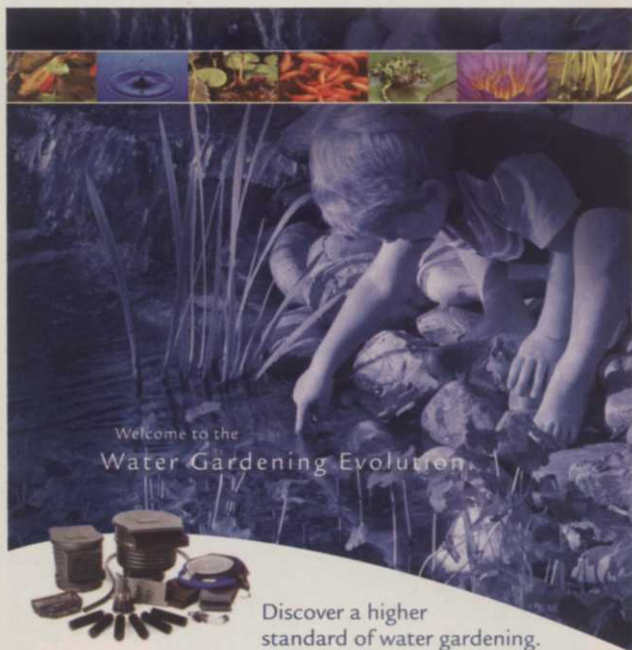


Fertilizer additive

Advanced Microbial Solutions (AMS) introduced NutriLife, a microbial-based fertilizer catalyst that has been developed specifically

for blending with fertilizers. NutriLife, as a fertilizer additive, has been shown to enhance fertilizer efficiency. University tests and

continued on page 90



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Circle 151

“Low odor is important, but Triplet Low Odor herbicide has been an even better investment than that”

– Michael Kravitsky, Vice President of Grasshopper Lawns, Inc.

Grasshopper Lawns, Inc. has been a family-owned business for more than 40 years and has built a reputation as a caring company who takes pride in their service and does not cut corners when it comes to either their customers or their employees.

When brothers Michael and Shawn Kravitsky introduced Triplet Low Odor into their weed control program this past year, they had hoped this new, high quality herbicide would live up to its promise of better performance and increased applicator and customer satisfaction. Still, they were not prepared for the positive feedback and financial benefits they eventually realized.

The low odor feature was what initially intrigued them and they were not disappointed. “Our crews first commented on the clearer color of the herbicide, but then we started to notice that there were far fewer complaints from applicators – their clothes didn’t smell after using Triplet Low Odor and the mixing/storage area didn’t have that usual lingering chemical odor,” says Shawn. “While we did not feel it was entirely necessary to promote the low odor benefit to customers, the internal benefit to us was huge.”

Michael adds, “What’s even better is that we found that the first two rounds of applications took care of most weed problems and we had significantly fewer weed calls – in fact, an average of 75 to 80% less complaints than the previous few years. The only thing different in our program has been the addition of Triplet Low Odor. The reduced callbacks actually save us quite a bit of money in the long run.”

While they both agree that they would continue to use Triplet Low Odor strictly on the merits of its low odor qualities, they are even more sold on it now that they understand the financial benefits of reduced complaints from slow or incomplete weed control.

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The only thing different in our program has been the addition of Triplet Low Odor.”

Michael and Shawn Kravitsky, Grasshopper Lawns, Inc.



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Circle 152

Products

continued from page 88

field studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of NutriLife in improving fertilizer performance, with significant growth response on turf grass, corn, cotton, vegetables and many other crops. NutriLife is available in select fertilizer blends manufactured for the agricultural, professional turf and landscape industries, and can be ordered through selected distributors.

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for perimeter seating around fire pits and courtyards. It also may be used as a lightweight retaining wall up to 18 in. tall. Four unit sizes — small, medium, large and vertical — create a random appearance in straight and curved arrangements. To vary the appearance, Mosette units can be placed forward, backward, right-side-up or upside down. Alternate tapered sides to create straight wall sections and orient tapered sides in the same direction to create curves.

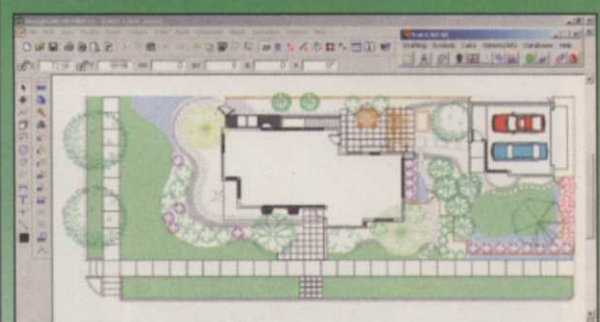
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continued on page 92

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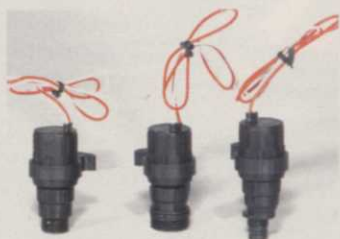
Circle 155

Products



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erating at 8-12 volts DC, and the S310, operating at 6-9 volts DC. When used with one of DIG's four adapters, the UNIMAX can operate most manufacturers' valves using DC power. Its features include encapsulated plunger and spring for reliable operation. Wire runs up to 200 feet with 14 AWG wire.



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Parker Hose Products' new Catalog 4400 US is updated and redesigned with detailed information on more than 60 hoses and 400 fitting styles, plus equipment and accessories.

continued on page 94

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Products

continued from page 92

The four-color intro section covers important topics like the use of the word "STAMP" (Size, Temperature, Application, Media and Pressure) as an easy way to specify hoses. Helpful hose hints are sprinkled throughout, as are more photos, technical data and detailed drawings. It also offers expanded information on user-oriented subjects like crimpers, custom tube assemblies, downloadable CAD drawings, the Parker Hose Web site and more.

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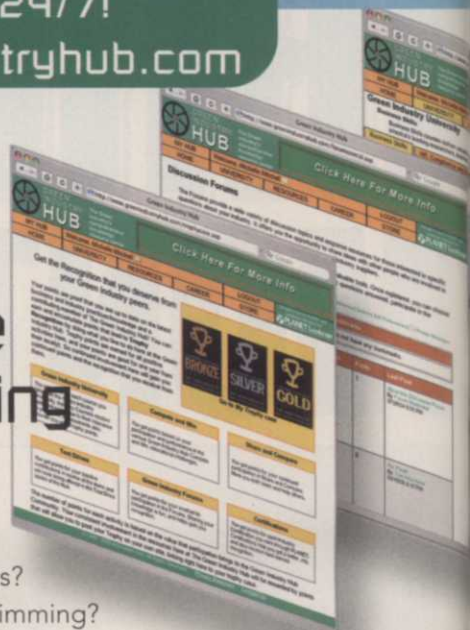
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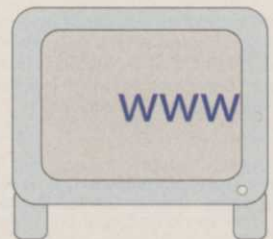
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White	65%	25%	5%	5%
Black	54%	33%	7%	6%
Hispanic	81%	9%	4%	6%
College graduate	78%	13%	4%	5%
Some college	66%	23%	5%	6%
H.S. or less	59%	30%	6%	5%
Republicans	69%	23%	5%	3%
Democrats	62%	27%	4%	7%
Independents	66%	24%	6%	4%

SOURCE: PEW HISPANIC RESEARCH CENTER SURVEY RELEASED 3/30/06



LAWN & GARDEN SALES FALLING

In 2002 sales for all types of lawn and garden products – green goods, including plants or trees, shrubs, seeds, and bulbs; hard goods lines such as outdoor power equipment and tools; bagged goods like fertilizer and soils; and lawn and garden packaged goods – totaled \$39.6 billion. Last year sales for these same lawn and garden product categories totaled \$36.8 billion. That's a decrease of 7%.

SOURCE: NATIONAL GARDENING ASSOCIATION

LANDSCAPE CREW TRAINING TIME

The average annual hours of formal training received by each employee show that most clock in less than 8 hours.

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 8 hours	162	37.2%
8 - 20 hours	161	36.9%
21 - 40 hours	71	16.3%
More than 40 hours	42	9.6%
Total	436	100.0%

SOURCE: 2005 LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT BENCHMARKING SURVEY



FATAL INJURIES UP

The construction industry recorded 1,224 fatal work injuries, the most of any industry sector in 2004, an increase of 8% over the number reported in 2003. The increase was led by a jump in fatalities among specialty trade contractors from 629 in 2003 to 752 in 2004. The fatality rate for this sector was 11.9 per 100,000 workers. By comparison the fatality rate for mining was 28.3 per 100,000 and, on the opposite end of the scale, for educational and health services it was 0.8 per 100,000.

SOURCE: U.S. DEPT. OF LABOR BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

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