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### For your eyes only

Jerry Corbett, biology manager for Bayer Environmental Science, shows the results of some semi-top-secret experiments at Bayer ES's 281-acre Development and Training Center in Clayton, NC.

## »Special issue

You're holding our biggest issue of the year, but did you know that everything in this issue is also archived online? Visit [landscapemanagement.net](http://landscapemanagement.net) and click on the "Business Planner" links in the navigation bar. From there you can e-mail feature articles and check out the Business Planner Resource Profiles for more information from your suppliers.



## »Readers respond

Clean out your suitcase and get used to wearing a badge around your neck. It's fall trade show season. We're gearing up for a tour of all the major shows over the next few months so we asked online readers, **how important are these shows to your business?**

- 36%** Very important. We send people to all major shows.
- 27%** Depends on the venue. If we can combine work with some fun, we're there.
- 18%** We'd like to have the budget to send a person or two. Maybe next year.
- 14%** National shows are a waste of time and money. No thanks.
- 5%** We're involved with our local associations so we don't care much about national shows.

*Want to weigh in? Our survey question changes every month and we publish the results here. Visit [www.landscapemanagement.net](http://www.landscapemanagement.net) to voice your opinion.*

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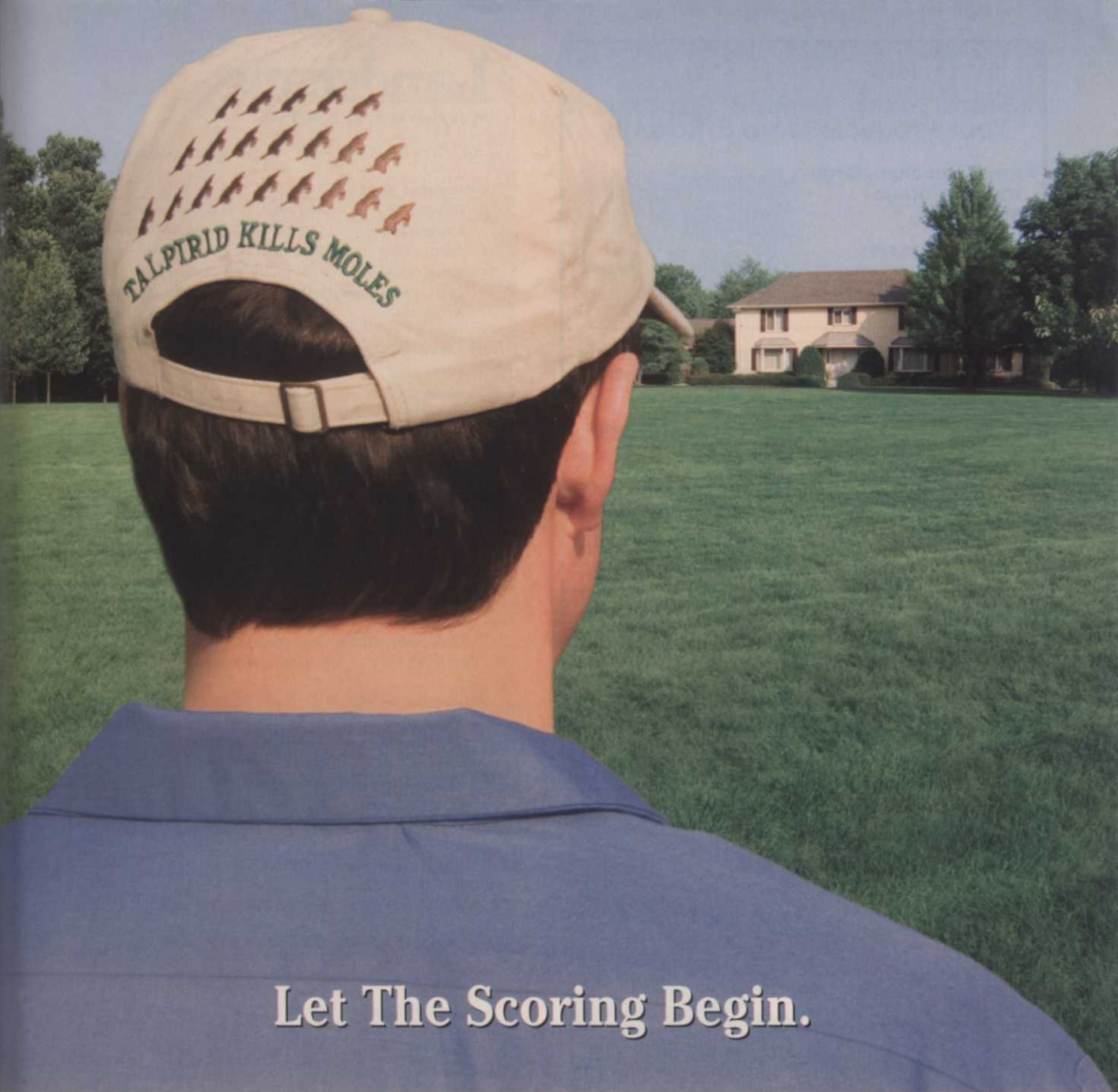
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**»Overheard** "It's important for people on the ground to be passionate in their defense of our industries without getting angry. It's also important to stay united — our opponents have used the divide-and-conquer strategy to their advantage."

— Karen Reardon, director of communications and public relations for Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE), addressing attendees at last month's RISE annual meeting.





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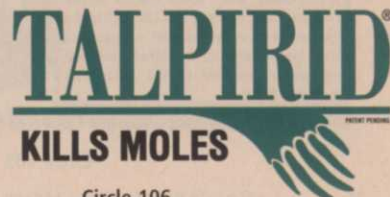
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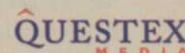
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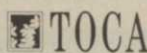
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# Contributors

BUSINESS

WHO'S WHO IN LM



Has there ever been a business owner who hasn't been asked to provide some product or do some work for family or friends? Maybe as a favor, huh? **Daniel Weiss**, president of The Elysian Design Group in Keego Harbor, MI, tells how he now handles these requests. Even though he's been in the industry for 17 years and is working on his Ph.D. at Wayne State University, he admits to still grappling with the issue. Find out more in "Family, friends ... clients?" on page 96.

Legal issues are a fact of life for any business owner. How they're handled is vitally important to the ongoing success of a company. You can't afford to overlook this advice from attorney **Kenneth Morris**, who will be sharing his legal knowledge with readers of *Landscape Management* in 2007. Morris gained his knowledge of Green Industry issues in his 30-plus years of corporate and law firm experience. You'll find "Four steps to lawsuit survival" on page 116.



**Wayne Volz**, an increasingly popular presenter at Green Industry events, is the owner/operator of Wayne's Lawn Service, Inc. in Louisville, KY, which he founded in 1979. He also offers consulting services through Profits Unlimited. Volz built and operates his full-service landscape company on the twin principles of customer service and business integrity. Read Volz's take on Green Industry ethics starting on page 126.

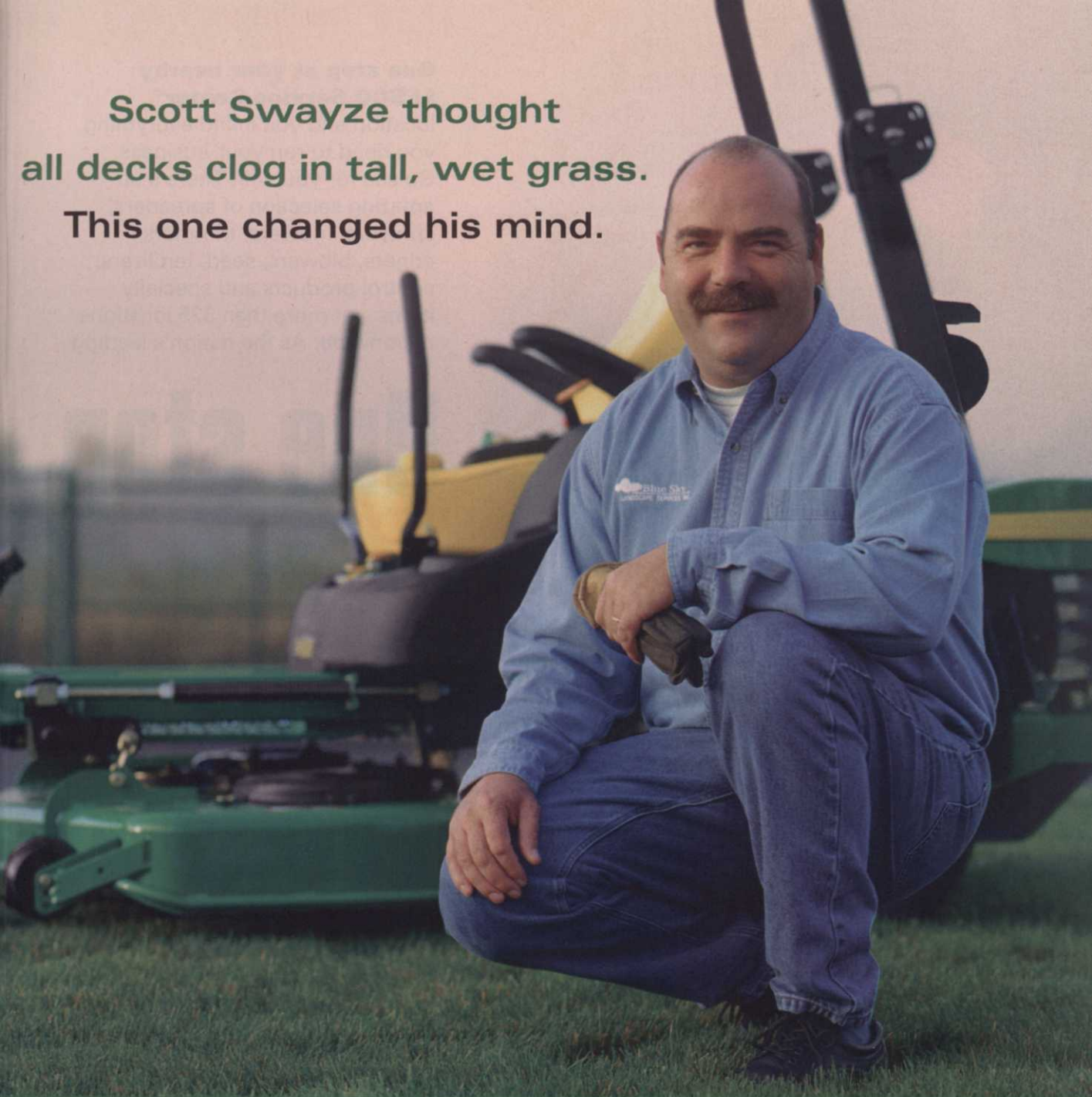
**Michael D. McShane**, president and CEO of Plantique, Inc. in Allentown, PA, started his landscaping career while he was a high school student. Since becoming president and CEO of the company in 1988, he has guided Plantique through two acquisitions and to more than \$9 million in revenues in 2005 — 350% sales growth. You can bet he couldn't have done it without a good budgeting process. McShane lays out a "Roadmap to profits" on page 74.



**Kevin Kehoe** is the owner of Kehoe & Co., which he founded in 1993, and provides consulting services to the landscape industry. A prolific author and frequent speaker at industry events, Kehoe has spent years identifying the financial factors that characterize high-profit companies. Turn to page 138 to learn what he has to say about benchmarking.



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Scott Swayze, Blue Sky Landscape Services, Inc., Puyallup, Washington



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## Trim the fat

BY RON HALL / Editor in Chief

**D**o you know what "lean" means? I'm not referring to what we would love to see in the mirror after we've lost that 20 pounds. We're talking business. In that respect lean means anti-waste — time and effort in particular.

Lean is what we feel after we start the process of slicing the fat, more precisely the waste, out of our companies. Waste? In the broadest sense, it's anything we do that doesn't in some way result in a benefit or positive action for our customers. Since we're in the landscape and grounds profession that means anything that doesn't improve the appearance (or in the case of sports grounds, safety) of our customers' properties.

### Where to start?

Creating value for our customers and meeting their expectations are where we start in the lean process. Lean doesn't mean laying people off or sacrificing quality; it means being more efficient so more work that creates value — to clients and ourselves — gets done.

We start to understand what it can mean after we observe all the different things that we do within our companies each day and ask ourselves, "Why are we doing this task this particular way?" then find a better, more efficient way to perform it. We take the time to look and learn from the people actually doing the tasks and rethink how these individual actions are performed within our operations, our administrative processes, our supply chain, everything, in fact, that affects our companies. Come up better ways to do them.

And we keep the process going.

### All about the journey

Lean is not a destination; it's a well-thought-out program that we keep building on. Ultimately it becomes a mindset and a continuing journey.

No company or organization can ever get all the waste out. That would be a company that clicked along at 100% efficiency, which is too unattainable. So we keep looking for ways to remove more waste.

A growing number of Green Industry companies are committing themselves to the process. I learned this on a recent visit to the headquarters of the Ariens Co., whose passion for "lean" is seeping well beyond its home in tiny Brillion, WI. I was among about 90 landscape company owners and managers getting educated about lean at the JP Horizons Face to Face 2006 event.

The process doesn't just work for a manufacturer, such as Ariens, whose 20-year goal is to become one of the top 50 internationally recognized brands in the world. (Its model is Toyota, which now has a market capitalization greater than GM and Ford combined.) Lean is equally valuable for a service company or, for that matter, a grounds department within a university or community.

You will be excited to learn that next month's *Landscape Management* coverage will be devoted to "lean." It will give you tools that will make your company a lean, green, money-making machine.

Contact Ron at 216/  
706-3739 or e-mail  
[rhall@questex.com](mailto:rhall@questex.com).

Lean doesn't mean laying people off or sacrificing quality; it means being more efficient.



# Best Practices

BUSINESS

MANAGE RECEIVABLES

Here are some simple best practices  
to turn your receivables to cash  
faster with less effort.



## It's your money; ask for it

BY BRUCE WILSON

**A** key component of cash flow management is proactive management of your receivables. This is well understood by successful companies, but often neglected or only passively managed by new or small companies.

Many people hate making the calls to collect money. Here are some simple best practices to turn your receivables to cash faster with less effort. It's your money once the work is performed; you do not have to apologize for asking for it. Your customers will respect you for being a good businessperson.

► **Send invoices as early as possible.** Most maintenance companies send out maintenance invoices for the month of October on October 1. The sooner the invoice is in the customer's hands, the sooner you get the money. Many commercial clients will pay prior to month's end. They get on a cycle where you may get your money by the 15th or 20th of the month.

Ask your new clients how their payment process works then plan to get them the invoice at the earliest time to ensure they can pay you on time. Get the name of the payables person.

► **Train new clients early.** When you get a new customer, make one call the day the invoice is due to remind him that you expect timely payment. If you do not, he will test you. Don't be a financing source for your customers. Train them early and right.

► **Get invoices for extras billed immediately after the work is complete.** Make sure the necessary

approvals are signed off. Many companies lose important cash flow from their extra work. Field crews are slow to turn in paperwork and owners and managers allow it. The office can't send the bill. Often people selling the extra work fail to get a signed work order or purchase order from the client. Or, the billing amount changes from the initial work order and this slows down the process. This lack of discipline allows the customer to drag out the payment or, worse yet, gives him the excuse to miss payments. It goes to 60 then 90 days. Then you call and the client has a fuzzy recollection of what was done and may engage his selective memory. You know the drill.

► **Get tough with slow-pay customers.** Many landscape companies take the passive approach and send a statement with a happy face asking for payment. You know when you receive these passive attempts you set them aside and pay when it works for you. However if the owner of your supplier calls, you usually pay right away. You should do the same thing. Set one day aside per week to make these calls. Once you start this practice you will find it takes very little time. You train your customers to pay.

► **Make sure to limit extra work for customers who have overdue balances.** Most companies do not have controls in place to even let sales people and schedulers know they are creating a larger receivable with a slow-pay client. Use the leverage that is available here. These are simple but sound best practices for your business. It just takes some self discipline.

— *The author is a partner with entrepreneur Tom Oyler in the Wilson-Oyler Group, which offers consulting services. Visit [www.wilson-oyler.com](http://www.wilson-oyler.com).*





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Do effective communications help keep customers? **Yes.** Is training required to make it happen? **Yes.** As always, it's up to you.



## Fall is client reconnect time

BY BILL HOOPES

**O**ctober is a perfect time to let your customers know that giving you their business was a wise decision. With landscapes and lawns looking great, can you think of a better time to confirm your value?

Why worry about it? Don't the beautiful landscapes speak for themselves? Sure. But reinforcing the obvious is smart business. Customers need to hear that doing business with your company was the right thing to do, especially if you want their business again next spring.

October training can make all the difference. Train your team to talk with customers. When communicating one-on-one doesn't make sense, leave a nice note. If you have a non-English speaking field team, do it from the office by phone but get the message out now.

### Telling your story

More and more operators in our industry are learning that there is measurable added value in communicating with clients. The fact that we know what to expect doesn't ensure our customers will.

I recall one particular tree/shrub customer, a man complaining that after a year on our tree/shrub service he saw no difference in appearance of his plants. Since "nothing has changed," he wanted to drop the service. I had to explain that no damage and continued healthy, vibrant growth was the expected and intended outcome! "If the program was not working,"

I explained, "You'd have drooping, dead or dying plants." I still recall his response: "Oh, I guess I didn't think about it that way. I'll stay with the service."

From a trainer's point of view, ongoing customer communications are vital. When we spend so much money winning customers and so little keeping them, we fail to take advantage of an important training benefit.

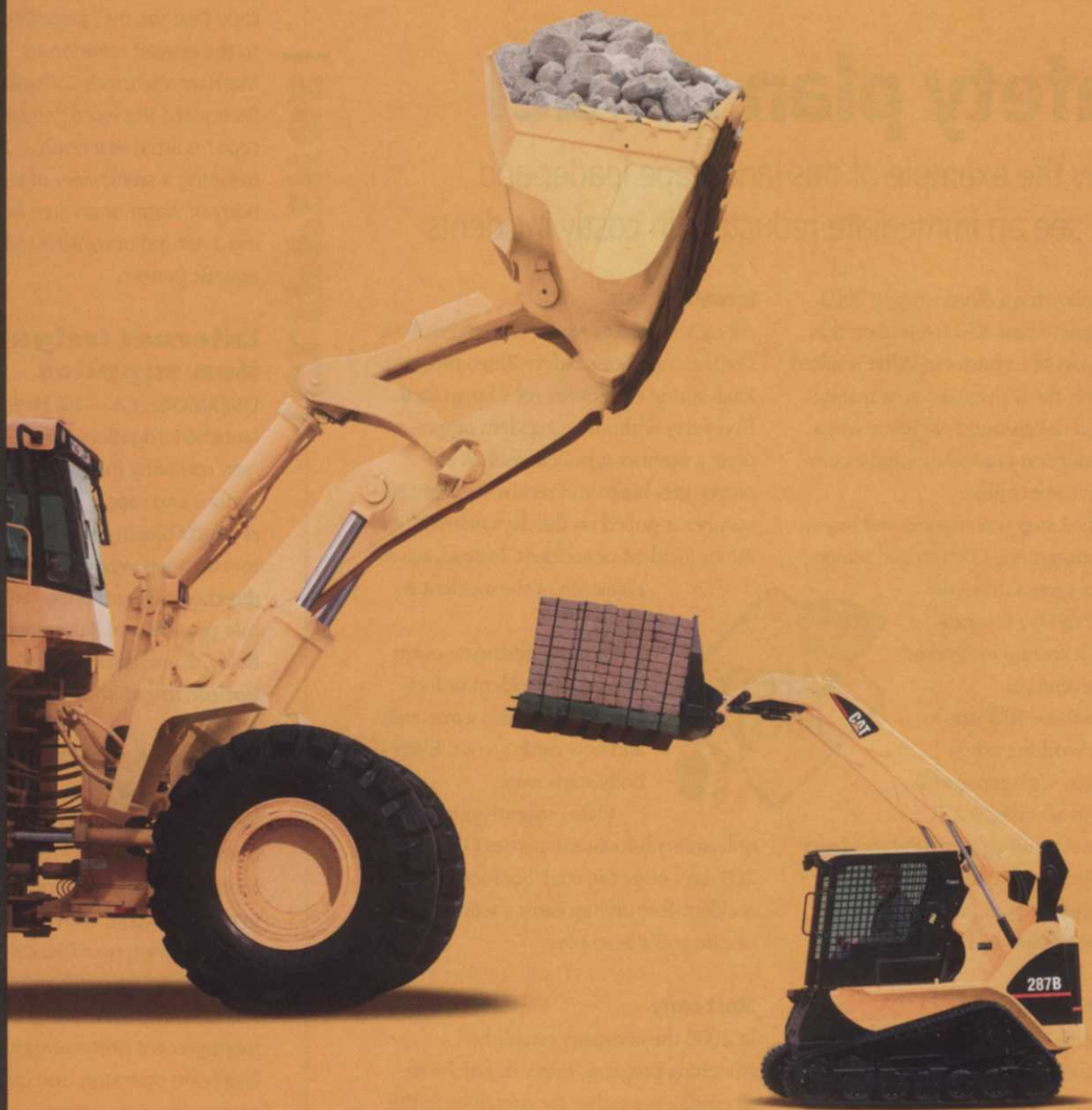
### October training checklist:

- ▶ Create the message. Managers do the planning. Bullet point exactly how you'll emphasize your value to customers and outline the messages you will have the field/office team deliver.
- ▶ Set aside training time. Don't load training on top of a full day. Spend 10 minutes every day for a week.
- ▶ Train all team members who interact with customers in the field or in the office.
- ▶ Role play major benefits points you want delivered to customers.
- ▶ Demonstrate ability to write customer leave-behind notes emphasizing values and benefits.
- ▶ Use pre-written comments for non-English speaking staff.
- ▶ Verify process in the field, on the phones.
- ▶ Provide follow up daily coaching as required.

Do effective communications help keep customers? **Yes.** Is training required to make it happen? **Yes.** As always, it's up to you.

— The author is founder of Grass Roots Training in Delaware, OH. Contact him at [hoopes@columbus.rr.com](mailto:hoopes@columbus.rr.com) or visit [www.grassroots-training.com](http://www.grassroots-training.com).





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# CATERPILLAR®

# In the Know

BUSINESS NEWS YOU CAN USE

## Safety plan model

Follow the example of this landscape leader and you'll see an immediate reduction in costly incidents

**F**ollowing a disappointing 2003 safety year, KEI focused on that part of its business. What resulted for the Milwaukee-area maintenance and design/build company was a major reduction in accidents and a comprehensive safety plan.

The first step was support and buy-in from management. Owners and senior managers agreed to devote time and money to a program built around incentives and enforcement.

From there KEI put together a working safety committee with representatives from all divisions. It would meet monthly, review incidents and accidents, and discuss prevention procedures. Its goal, of course, was to reduce accidents and incidents.

### Rules written down

In the spring of 2004 the committee reviewed, condensed and reprinted the company safety manual in English and Spanish. It enacted mandatory policies, such as all employees must wear safety glasses at all times on the job. The results were striking: In 2003 the company recorded eight eye injuries; in 2004 zero.

Other measures coming from the committee included requiring field personnel to wear steel-toed work boots and ear protection. To improve vehicle safety spotters became mandatory for service vehicles.

Policy enforcement became constant and consistent. Incidents dropped.

### Incentives help

Along with enforcement came incentives, like the company's Safety Bingo program. Each spring employees get a bingo card. Every day without an accident or incident, a number is pulled until an employee gets bingo and receives a prize. No number is pulled on the days marred by a minor incident or accident. Instead, an explanation of the incident is posted.



In the unfortunate event of a major accident or incident, the previous game ends and new cards go out. Every-body starts over.

Other incentives include milestone no-loss-time parties (100 days, 200 days, one year, etc.). Six months of accident-free driving earns a worker a certificate and a lapel pin.

### Start early

In 2006 the company established a stretching program. Every day at 7 a.m. all employees gather for stretching in the main yard. This is usually followed by a short informational tailgate meeting or safety message. Beyond the obvious benefits of loosening up in the morning, KEI found other benefits from this program, including a keener sense of safety among employees. The company also feels it fosters a sense of camaraderie, especially between its Hispanic and Anglo employees.

These factors and more allowed the company to reduce its number of incidents and accidents by 83% since the program began in 2004.

### 'Aquascape' an official noun

**ST. CHARLES, IL** — To the delight of Illinois-based Aquascape Designs, Inc., according to the newest addition to Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, the word "aquascape" is listed as a noun, meaning a scenic view of a body of water or an area having a natural or constructed aquatic feature.

### Internet irrigation supplies

**LIVERMORE, CA** — Bill Hayes launched Irrigation Direct — a new company that will manufacture and supply irrigation products directly to contractors through [www.irrigationdirect.com](http://www.irrigationdirect.com). Hayes is the former president of Automatic Rain Co. and chairman of Horizon Irrigation.

### DuPont updates Web site

**WILMINGTON, DEL.** — DuPont Professional Products recently relaunched [proproducts.dupont.com](http://proproducts.dupont.com) with a new look featuring user-friendly navigation. The redesigned site has information for pest management professionals, lawn care operators and golf course superintendents.

### New digs for Girard

**SANFORD, FL** — Girard Environmental Services recently broke ground on its new headquarters. The 4-acre facility will have 6,500 sq. ft. of office space and 3,200 sq. ft. of space for a fleet maintenance building.

[CLIPPINGS]



# Tired of losing money on every payroll?

**EMPLOYEE TIMESHEET**

NAME: Bill Kemp DATES: 9-13

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

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



**Reality?**

**Employee Report**

**Kemp, Bill** Date Range: 10/9/2006 through 10/13/2006

Day	Date	Jobsite	Start	Stop	Cost Code	Hours	Total
Mon	10/9	Brentwood	7:08 AM	12:05 PM	Irrigation	4:57	
			12:41 PM	3:22 PM	Irrigation	2:41	7:38 hours
Tue	10/10	Brentwood	7:12 AM	12:07 PM	Irrigation	4:55	
			12:43 PM	3:23 PM	Irrigation	2:40	7:35 hours
Wed	10/11	Brentwood	7:12 AM	12:02 PM	Planting	4:50	
			12:46 PM	3:49 PM	Planting	3:03	7:53 hours
Thu	10/12	Crestview	7:17 AM	12:19 PM	Irrigation	5:02	
			12:50 PM	3:46 PM	Irrigation	2:56	7:58 hours
Fri	10/13	Crestview	7:13 AM	12:07 PM	Planting	4:54	
			12:44 PM	3:39 PM	Planting	2:55	7:49 hours
<b>Total</b>						<b>38:53 hours</b>	

Signature: Bill Kemp Kemp, Bill



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## Grassroots efforts build momentum

BY FRANK H. ANDORKA JR.

**ORLANDO, FL** — Karen Reardon, director of communications and public relations, told nearly 500 attendees at the recent combined Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE)/CropLife America meeting that it's important to get involved in battling anti-pesticide legislation in their own communities.

Reardon reminded the crowd that it's critical for them to alert RISE as issues percolate through local governments so the organization can help them fight prejudicial laws.

"I can't emphasize enough the importance of rapid response when these local issues arise because getting us involved quickly can be critical," Reardon said. "We didn't have the infrastructure in place when the anti-phosphorus legislation came up in Minnesota, and look what happened."

Minnesota banned phosphorus in seven counties in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area and limits the amount of phosphorus in lawn fertilizers to 3%. Stacey Pine, member of D.C. Legislative and Regulatory Services who handles RISE's grassroots initiative, also discussed the



Minnesota example as one of the spurs for the intense focus on building a nationwide network.

Anti-pesticide regulations move much more quickly on the local level, giving the activists

more chances to see their agendas instituted, Pine said.

"At the federal and state levels, there are levels of bureaucracy to prevent issues from being discussed if the legislators don't want to discuss them," Pine said. "At the community level, however, it's much easier to find your way into the mayor's office or councilman's office. That's why the activists are shifting tactics."

RISE officials offered to help member companies and pesticide applicators prepare to discuss issues with their local governments.

"We're not Canada," Reardon said. "We must fight these local issues before we're stuck with more municipalities banning pesticides the way so many cities in our northern neighbor has."

"It's also important to stay united — our opponents have used the divide-and-conquer strategy to their advantage," Reardon added.

"This was a compromise," said Hank Lavery, president of Save Small Business. "At that moment it was either the one-year-fix or nothing."

The H-2B extension, passed as part of the Defense Authorization Bill,:

- ▶ exempts returning seasonal workers from counting against the national cap of 66,000 seasonal immigrant visas,
- ▶ creates new anti-fraud provisions, and
- ▶ ensures a fair allocation of H-2B visas among spring and summer employees.

## H-2B update

Congress passed the Milkulski-Warner-Bass Bill on Sept. 30. The action makes an expanded pool of seasonal immigrant laborers available for one more year under the H-2B guest worker program.

Save Small Business, the Bethesda, MD-based coalition of H-2B user groups, says it will push for a "permanent" extension of the Bill after the dust from mid-term elections settles.

## WSJ lauds ET Water Systems

**CORTE MADERA, CA** — ET Water Systems LLC, a 4-year-old irrigation systems supplier, was named a Wall Street Journal's (WSJ) Innovation Award winner in the Environment category for 2006.

## Seed Research names winner

**CORVALLIS, OR** — Seed Research of Oregon presented its 2006 Researcher of the Year Award to Mike Richardson of Fayetteville, AR. Richardson has done extensive work on using seeded Bermudagrass, including establishment and cold hardiness studies. His work with tall fescues has covered intensity of brown patch and rapidity of recovery as well as sod strength.

## Bobcat releases safety DVD

**WEST FARGO, ND** — Instead of having multiple safety videos for each product, Bobcat compact equipment owners and operators can now access all of the company's training resources on one DVD. The new DVD includes safety videos in both English and Spanish. Visit [www.bobcat.com](http://www.bobcat.com).

## STIHL facility going up

**VIRGINIA BEACH, VA** — STIHL Inc. broke ground on a new manufacturing facility here, continuing a \$78.4 million capital investment. It plans to add up to 400 new positions in 2006. The 60,000-sq.-ft., \$20-million structure will house manufacturing operations for STIHL chain saw guide bars.

[CLIPPINGS]



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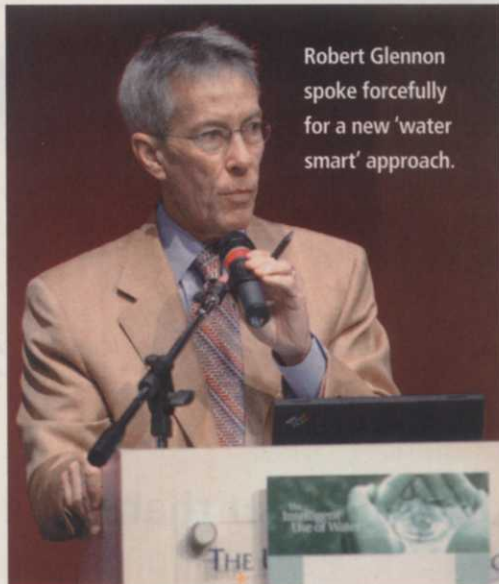
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# What price water?



Robert Glennon spoke forcefully for a new 'water smart' approach.

BY RON HALL / Editor in Chief

How much do you pay for water?

The question should be, do you pay for it at all? The answer is "no" in almost all cases.

Most of us open the checkbook to pay for monthly water bills, but what we're really paying for is the cost of the water treatment plant, the energy required to operate it, the systems storage and transmission system, and the salary and benefits of the workers who treat and bring the water to your home or business.

The water itself, with few exceptions, is free.

### Wave of change?

That must change for communities across the United States to head off an approaching crisis over the availability of fresh water, said Robert Glennon of the University of Arizona. Glennon, professor of law and public policy in the Rogers College of Law, served as moderator of The Intelligent Use of Water Summit III, sponsored by Rain Bird and held in August. The

event featured five speakers focusing on efficient water use.

Glennon spoke convincingly of the need for citizens to get water smart.

"The United States is moving toward a water crisis," he said, referencing a Government Accountability Office survey of water managers that showed that 36 states anticipate local, regional or statewide water shortages by 2013.

The usual methods of providing more fresh water to meet increasing demand — building more dams, diverting rivers, drilling more wells — are almost

tapped out, he said. Soon demand will far exceed supply if current use patterns persist. And this doesn't take into effect factors such as global warming (resulting in a smaller snow pack in the Rockies, the source of most of the water for the U.S. Southwest), increasing pollution, plummeting ground water tables and a national water capture/delivery infrastructure that a 2002 GAO report said needed at least \$224 billion in improvements and additions just to keep up with demand.

### Solutions

Part of the answer to this growing dilemma, he stressed, is to use the water we have more efficiently. This can be accomplished either through government action, such as watering bans and restrictions, or by market forces.

Glennon favors the market route — assessing a monetary value on water in addition to the related costs of treating and delivering it. He also believes prices should be tied to usage. In other words, the more water we use, the more we pay.

## Weathermatic 'Smart' site

DALLAS — Weathermatic launched [www.SmartLine.com](http://www.SmartLine.com), a new resource site that updates landscape contractors on the benefits of smart irrigation and helps them sell this water-saving technology to homeowners and property managers.

## Trucks covered by GM warranty

DETROIT — For lawn care professionals and consumers, General Motors now offers a 5-year, 100,000-mile powertrain warranty for its entire 2007 car and light-duty truck lineup in the U.S. and Canada. GM also expanded its roadside assistance and courtesy transportation programs to match the powertrain warranty term.

## Speeding up sod growth

SYRACUSE, NY — With funding from the New York Farm Viability Institute, Inc., Cornell University researchers and New York turf producers are evaluating ways to speed up the production and sales of sod. Cornell University Turfgrass Science Professor A. Martin Petrovic and Senior Extension Associate Joann Gruttadauria are working with growers in Orange County and western New York to evaluate the speed, efficiency and costs of various production systems. Growers estimate that speeding up the sod harvest by six months can produce a 40% gain in crop value. Results will be shared with sod growers throughout the state.

[CLIPPINGS]



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Circle 121



# In the Know

## People & companies



**David Rowles** has been appointed president of **Bobcat Americas**. Bobcat Co. is a business of Ingersoll Rand. Rowles replaces **Scott R. Nelson**, who

recently accepted the position of president, Bobcat European Served Area.

**BASF Corp.** appointed **Michael Kropp** as a sales specialist for the company's

Turf & Ornamentals business in Northern California and the Pacific Northwest.



**David Clarke** was named vice president of **New Holland Agricultural Business**. In his new position, Clarke oversees the sales, marketing and support functions of New Holland agricultural products in North America.

Cary, NC-based **Etigra** announced the addition of **Jeff Sorrell** as director of business development.



**Tony Massey** was named president and chief operating officer of Maitland, FL's **Massey Services**.

The **Florida Turfgrass Association** named **Casey Wohl Pace** as its new executive director. She will manage the 900-member organization's daily operations and direct the association's strategic long-term direction.

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## Dig it

**NEW PRAGUE, MN** — Dig into a bright green future with the **SHOVELS ArtWork** project, Project EverGreen's groundbreaking new fundraiser. With a \$1,000 donation, contributors receive a shovel to paint to reflect their company and how it enhances green spaces at home, work and play. Project EverGreen will exhibit the artwork at the **SHOVELS** reception and at individual booths at Green Industry Expo in Columbus, OH, next month.

"There is a Chinese proverb that says 'enough shovels of earth - a mountain. Enough pails of water - a river,'" says Den Gardner, executive director of Project EverGreen. "That is the perfect analogy for our mission with the **SHOVELS Art-**

Circle 122





**Keith Lucier** was promoted to director of quality control for **Girard Environmental Services, Inc.**, of Sanford, FL.

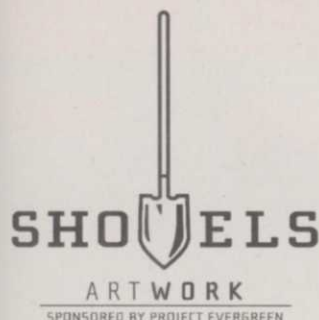
**Ewing Irrigation Products** appointed **Pete Gumas** as agronomic sales representative for the San Francisco Bay Area.

**Grigg Brothers** hired **Gordon L. Kauffmann III**

to coordinate university and independent research trials and new product development. He will also serve as the technical sales representative for Florida and the Northeast.



**Peter Mueller**, executive vice president of operations for **STIHL Inc.**, was named Honorary Consul of Germany for Virginia. Mueller was recently appointed in a ceremony held at the German Embassy in Washington, D.C.



Work campaign. With every new Green Industry business and individual that adds their contribution, Project EverGreen is able to build the mountain of consumer awareness about the benefits of our industry a little higher."

For more information call Project EverGreen at 877/758-4835 or visit [www.projectevergreen.com](http://www.projectevergreen.com).

**Bryan Kotwica** of **The Davey Tree Expert Co.** received the International Society of Arboriculture Award of Achievement for his role creating graphics for ISA educational and training materials. **Ward Peterson**, manager of utility and urban resources at the **Davey Resource Group**, received the Arborist of the Year

award from the Society of Commercial Arborists at the International Society of Arboriculture conference.

**Stephen Sheppard** joined **Naturalawn of America's** corporate headquarters in Frederick, MD, as the central regional operations manager.

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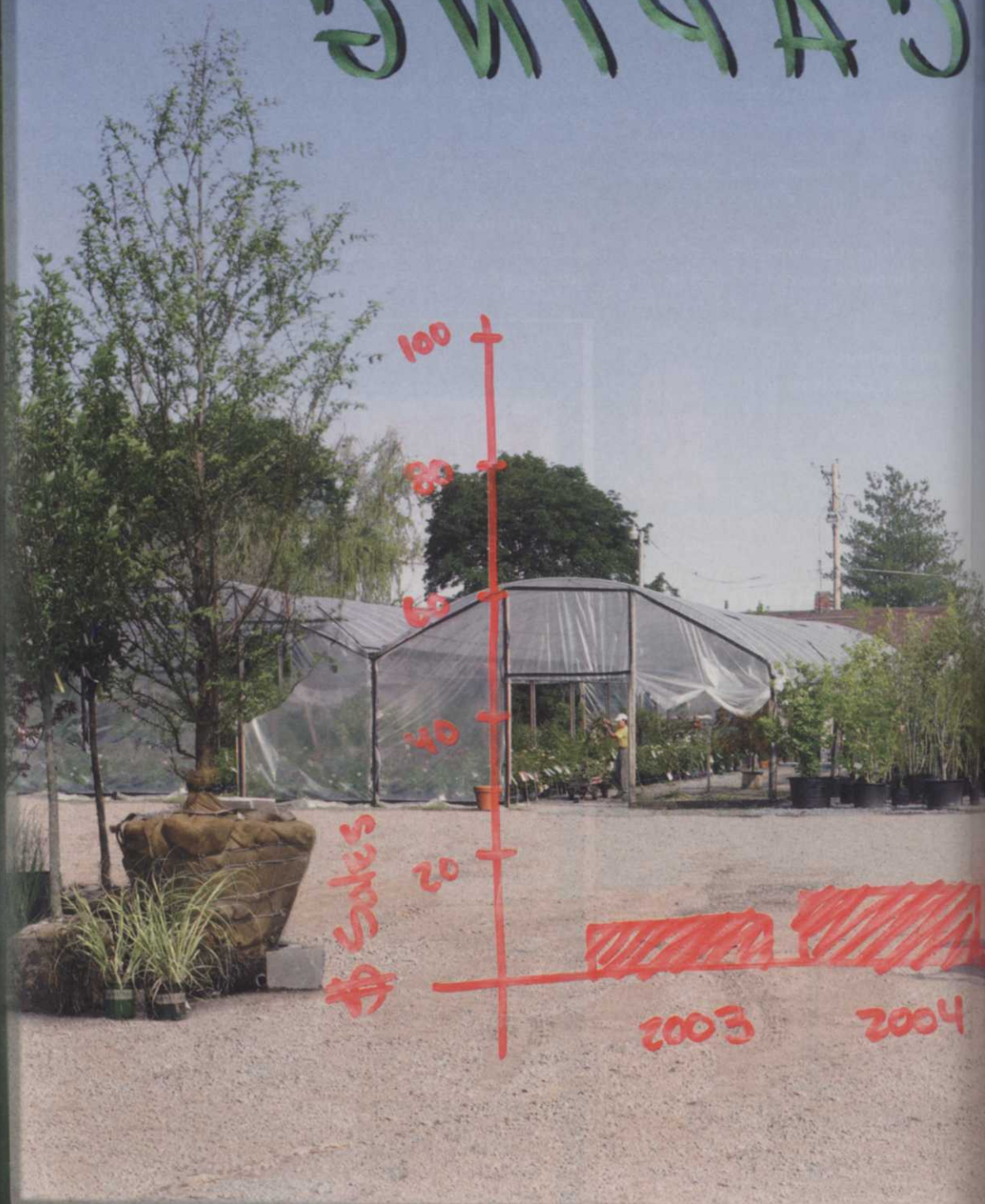
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# Add-On Biz

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## Christmas decor

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BY JANET AIRD

Some companies have all the fun. At Christmas Décor by Senske Lawn and Tree Care, Chris Senske and his employees get to play Santa's helper every year.

Senske had been looking for a way to keep his landscape crews working during the long, cold inland Pacific Northwest winters. He discovered Christmas Décor, a franchisor that installs Christmas lighting and decorations, and bought his first franchise in 1998. He now has franchises in three states: Washington, Idaho and Utah.

"It fits in with the seasonality of landscaping," Senske says. "It keeps employees employed." Being part of a fran-

chise eliminated a lot of the risk of starting a new business, and Christmas Décor supplies most of the essentials to make his company a success.

Christmas Décor provides Senske's company with design consultants — sales people who create lighting and decorating plans for each property. Customers choose the style they want and Senske's company installs it. Christmas Décor also sells his company the products.

### The holiday timeline

Thanksgiving is the peak time for installations. "A lot of folks want theirs up by the time family comes by for Thanksgiving," Senske says. His company does two maintenance checks, but if something as minor as a light bulb burns

out between visits, they'll be over to replace it.

They begin taking decorations down the week after New Year's Day. Some customers leave their lights up all year round and pay a service fee for maintenance. Senske's company stores all the rest in built-in storage spaces and shipping containers.

About 80% of Senske's clients are repeat customers who tend to add a little more décor each year. There's some crossover between his landscaping and Christmas clients, he says, "but for the Christmas décor, we market to a little higher-income customer."

### Find your customer

A significant challenge, Senske says, is attracting new cus-

tomers. Christmas Décor helps out here, too, by developing advertising pieces companies can use. Companies can use their own advertising and can choose how to advertise.

Since most of Senske's customers are residential, he focuses on consumers, mainly with direct mail and newspaper inserts. He also advertises with a Christmas Décor sticker on the sides of his trucks. "Sometimes it's on year round, sometimes it isn't," he says.

Installing Christmas décor fits in well with the skills that Senske's employees already have. Most of the work is outside and on the ground, although there is more work on ladders during the holidays.

"Most of the folks that do Christmas décor for us don't work on ladders in the summer," Senske says. "One of the biggest challenges is the safety issue, making sure people are protected from falling."

Christmas Décor provides training in ladder safety and fall protection. Employees are also trained in how to handle power and apply power correctly. Senske's company uses safety gear and has worker's compensation and liability insurance.

"It's a good counter-cyclic business," Senske says. "This has really worked for us." **LM**

— The author is a freelance writer in Altadena, CA.

Contact her at

[janet.aird@earthlink.net](mailto:janet.aird@earthlink.net)



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Circle 124



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# Welcome to the 2007 Business Planner

Now's the time to get ready for business growth next year.  
Here's everything you need to compete

By **Stephanie Ricca**  
Managing Editor



Just talked to a part-time landscaper last week. He lives near our editorial offices in Cleveland and found the magazine's Web site. He's been taking care of landscapes and tree work on the side and is thinking about branching out (pardon the pun) into full-time. I sent him to the 2006 Business Planner's articles archived online.

Not long before that, I ran into another landscaper at a Professional Land-care Network (PLANET) event who has been in business about 10 years and needed information on finding and hiring good people. That's his biggest challenge, he said, and one that only gets harder as the company grows. I sent him to the Business Planner archives online, too.

**[www.landscapemanagement.net](http://www.landscapemanagement.net)**  
Visit all year for Business Planner articles and supplier profiles.

## Something for everyone

My point? This issue has something for everyone, no matter what stage of business you're in. We plan this issue during the whole year and we refer to it for that long too.

The 2007 Business Planner is *Landscape Management's* biggest issue yet, and in this case, biggest does mean best. We divide our coverage into three, easy-to-reference areas:

Your Profits, Your Employees and Your Operations. Got questions on how to make the jump from residential services into commercial? Wondering how to get great employees at a low cost? Trying to figure out how to weed out the bad seeds (ok, another pun) from your team? The answers are here.

These articles are industry specific, with great case studies from companies like Borst Landscape and Design, CoCal Landscape and The Elysian Design Group, among others.

We've got a checklist for blowing the doors off your residential sales goals ("Sell millions? Yes you can," on page 42), win-win stories about partnering with your Hispanic staff ("Why not Hispanics as managers?" on page 80) and an excellent primer on how to face legal problems ("Four steps to lawsuit survival," on page 116).

## But wait, there's more

In addition to the articles, the Planner includes a quick-hit guide of our industry's top vendors (page 35) and a series of supplier profiles (starting on page 162).

All of this information is archived on our Web site so when you read an article you like, find it online and send it to your co-workers or supervisor. Looking for the latest product information from manufacturers? The supplier profiles are also online all year.

With that, I'll let the experts (many of them readers like you) share their strategies for success. We hope this issue helps your business along your path to success, and as always, keep calling and e-mailing with new ideas.



# IT'S HAMMER TIME!



## Introducing the new imidacloprid option that can't miss



Mallet™ is Nufarm's newest insecticide using the proven technology of imidacloprid to provide residual control of a wide variety of insect pests, such as white grubs, cutworms and billbugs in turf and aphids, beetles and other troublesome pests in ornamentals.

While others have rushed out the door to take advantage of off-patent opportunities, we have taken time to ensure that our supply source is secure, that our registrations allow us to be innovative and that our formulations have been extensively tested, ensuring that you get the premium quality and service that you've come to expect from Nufarm Turf & Specialty.

- ▶ Mallet™ 2F is a 2 lb. flowable concentrate containing 21.4% imidacloprid
- ▶ Long-term curative and preventive action with just one application
- ▶ Available in 2.5-gallon or 60 ounce jugs

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™ Mallet is a registered trademark of Nufarm Americas Inc.  
Always read and follow complete label instructions.

  
**Nufarm**  
Turf & Specialty

“I hardly noticed”

“I sure did!”

### No unpleasant odor

Everyone wants weed-killing power but no one wants a lingering odor that makes being near treated turf an unpleasant experience.

Your nose and eyes will notice the real difference when you open a jug of Triplet® Low Odor – less odor and a much clearer liquid. The reason is the addition of 2,4-D TIPA, a highly refined ingredient available only from Nufarm.

In fact, odor studies have shown that the formulation is preferred 30% more than Trimec® Classic. Imagine, turf and chemical storage areas that don't stink!



### Outstanding performance

The best thing about Triplet® Low Odor is its performance. This unique formulation of 2,4-D, Mecoprop-p and Dicamba delivers the proven triple-whammy you need to control dandelion, clover, henbit, plantains and other broadleaf invaders.

An improved **proprietary surfactant** package enhances penetration and uptake into the plant for quicker results.

**pH buffering** makes more active available to ensure complete weed kill and long-lasting control.

The **optical chemistry** provides the advantage of using half the traditional active to achieve the same level of control, meaning less pesticide impact on the environment.

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Always read and follow complete label instructions.

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**MORE INFO** Let these companies send you great information about their products. Circle the company's number on the Reader Response cards near pages 223 and 224 and mail or fax it to us today.

## ASSOCIATIONS

**PLANET**, the Professional Landcare Network, is an international association serving lawn care professionals, landscape management contractors, design/build/installation professionals, and interior landscapers.  
AD PG 147 / PROFILE PG 208

## FRANCHISING

**US Lawns** is a franchise commercial landscape maintenance company with more than 150 offices open across the United States.  
CIRCLE # 130 / AD PG 51 / PROFILE PG 222

## HORTICULTURE

Family-owned and operated for more than 40 years, **Goldsmith Seeds** is a multi-national company that has an outstanding record for consistently breeding award-winning bedding plants that offer outstanding landscape performance.  
CIRCLE # 121 / AD PG 23 / PROFILE PG 185

## IRRIGATION PRODUCTS

Supplying innovative, quality products supported by outstanding customer service is what **DIG** strives to provide to the commercial landscape industry. DIG is an outstanding source of drip irrigation products and alternative power controllers such as LEIT ambient light-powered controllers.  
CIRCLE # 153 / AD PG 103 / PROFILE PG 175

**Hunter Industries** is among the world's leading manufacturers of irrigation equipment for turf, landscape and golf. Hunter produces water efficient products for residential and commercial use, including pop-up gear driven rotors, spray sprinklers, valves, controllers, central con-

trollers and weather sensors.  
CIRCLE # 137 / AD PG 63 / PROFILE PG 189

**Little Giant Pump Co.** manufactures and sells quality pumps and accessories predominantly into the plumbing, HVAC, industrial and lawn and garden markets. Whether for residential or commercial markets, Little Giant's products are designed and engineered to meet the changing needs of its end users.  
CIRCLE # 133 / AD PG 55 / PROFILE PG 198

**R&K Pump & Equipment** manufactures professional quality sprayers for the lawn care, pest control, aquatics, nursery & tree care industries.  
CIRCLE # 169 / AD PG 149 / PROFILE PG 210

As the leading manufacturer of irrigation products and services, **Rain Bird** offers the industry's broadest range of irrigation products for farms, golf courses, sports arenas, public parks, commercial developments and homes in more than 130 countries.  
CIRCLE # 112 / AD PGS 9, 67-70 / PROFILE PG 211

## MOWERS & EQUIPMENT

**Bobcat Company** is the worldwide leader in the development of compact equipment, including job-matched attachments. Products include skid-steer loaders, compact and mini track loaders, compact excavators, utility vehicles and other labor-saving landscaping and construction equipment.  
AD PGS 94a-94j / PROFILE PG 168

**Case Construction Equipment** sells and supports the world's No. 1 loader/backhoes, excavators, wheel loaders, crawler dozers, skid steers, compact track loaders, rough-terrain forklifts, motor graders, compaction rollers and articulated trucks.

Through Case dealers, customers have access to a true professional partner.  
CIRCLE # 105 / AD PG 3 / PROFILE PG 169

**Caterpillar** offers for sale and rental through dealers and The Cat Rental Store a complete line of compact machines for landscape construction — skid steer loaders, compact track loaders, mini excavators, compact wheel loaders, small dozers and more.  
CIRCLE # 118 / AD PG 17 / PROFILE PG 170

**Compact Power, Inc.** manufactures and distributes PowerHouse, Boxer, ProHauler equipment and a wide array of accompanying attachments.  
CIRCLE # 122, 123 / AD PGS 24, 25 / PROFILE PG 172

**Corona Clipper, Inc.** is the premier provider of forged quality pruning and long handle tools for the retail, consumer and professional markets. Corona's legendary reputation is built on classic design, handcrafted forged quality, and superior customer service.  
CIRCLE # 139 / AD PG 73 / PROFILE PG 173

**Dimex LLC** is one of the leading manufacturers in North America for professional-grade landscape edging and paver restraint systems. All of our products are manufactured from high quality materials that are compounded in-house to the most stringent specifications.  
CIRCLE # 144 / AD PG 83 / PROFILE PG 176

**Dixie Chopper** makes the most productive zero-turn lawn mowers in the industry. More than 25 years and still the fastest in the industry.  
CIRCLE # 164 / AD PG 123 / PROFILE PG 177

**ECHO Bear Cat** offers 4-in. to 12-in. capacity chippers and 1.5-in. to 5-in. capacity chipper/shredders in a variety of configurations including PTO, skid steer and highway towable models. A vast selection of engines and hydraulic or self-feed models results in one of the widest product ranges available.

CIRCLE # 166 / AD PG 129 / PROFILE PG 174

**Express Blower** is the manufacturer and distributor of the premier blower truck equipment available. Apply mulches, aggregates, composts, soil blends quickly and efficiently – even to remote or inaccessible areas.

AD PG 133 / PROFILE PG 181

**Ferris Industries'** extensive commercial mower line promises a perfect fit with a wide range of rugged walk-behinds, reliable three-wheel riders and innovative zero-turn mowers ranging from 44- to 72-in. Our exclusive suspension systems paired with powerful engines achieve maximum productivity.

CIRCLE # 129 / AD PG 49 / PROFILE PG 183

**GMC** engineers have worked hard at crafting professional-grade vehicles – including the Sierra and Savana – for more than 100 years.

AD PG 41 / PROFILE PG 184

**The Grasshopper Co.** manufactures a complete line of FrontMount and MidMount True ZeroTurn mowers. The company's products are engineered for comfort, speed and durability while delivering a manicured cut. Turf renovation and snow removal implements turn these mowers into year-round grounds maintenance machines.

CIRCLE # 142 / AD PG 79 / PROFILE PG 186

**Hustler Turf Equipment** manufactures a complete line of high-end residential and commercial mowing equipment. All units

feature true zero-turning radius steering for the ultimate in maneuverability.

CIRCLE # 150 / AD PG 93 / PROFILE PG 190

**The John Deere Construction & Forestry Co.** produces more than 120 machine models used in all facets of earthmoving, including road building, underground utilities construction, site development, and commercial and residential construction.

CIRCLE # 103 / AD PG CV4 / PROFILE PG 192

**The John Deere Worldwide Commercial & Consumer Equipment Division** manufactures and distributes a full line of lawn care products for residential, commercial, and golf and turf applications.

CIRCLE # 115 / AD PG 11 / PROFILE PG 191

**Komatsu Zenoah** manufactures a complete line of RedMax commercial, handheld power equipment. RedMax products include string trimmers, hedge trimmers, edgers, handheld and backpack blowers, chainsaws and pole saws.

CIRCLE # 170 / AD PG 137 / PROFILE PG 212

**LT Rich Products** manufactures stand-on fertilizer/spray systems, aerators and turf renovators for the commercial lawn care industry. All units are zero-turn and feature a pump/wheel motor transmission. Sprayers feature all stainless-steel construction with large fertilizer and liquid spraying capacity.

CIRCLE # 159 / AD PG 113 / PROFILE PG 194

**Marsan Turf & Irrigation Supply, Inc.,** offers a complete line of wholesale turf and irrigation products — everything you need to get the job done right, at the most competitive prices.

CIRCLE # 163 / AD PG 121 / PROFILE PG 199

**Oregon Cutting Systems Group** of Blount, Inc. is a world leader in providing high quality original equipment and replacement parts to the outdoor power equip-

ment industry. OCSG offers over 7,000 parts, having one of the largest assortments of replacement parts available.

CIRCLE # 109 / AD PG 7 / PROFILE PG 205

**Shindaiwa, Inc.** markets its full line of handheld power equipment around the world. Shindaiwa products meet the highest industry standards for quality and performance, typically with more engine power and less weight than other comparable units.

CIRCLE # 171, 177 / AD PGS 141, 154-155 / PROFILE PG 215

With more than 60 years of leadership and commitment, **Spraying Systems Co.,** Mobile Systems Division's TeeJet brand continues to provide the most innovative, highest quality service and spraying products, including spray nozzles and tips, boom components, valves and manifolds, strainers, spray guns and electronic controls.

CIRCLE # 147 / AD PG 89 / PROFILE PG 216

**Toro** is committed to providing environmentally responsible products of customer-valued quality and innovation. Together with its distributors, Toro provides innovative products, agronomic expertise and exemplary service that helps consumers and professionals maintain their landscapes.

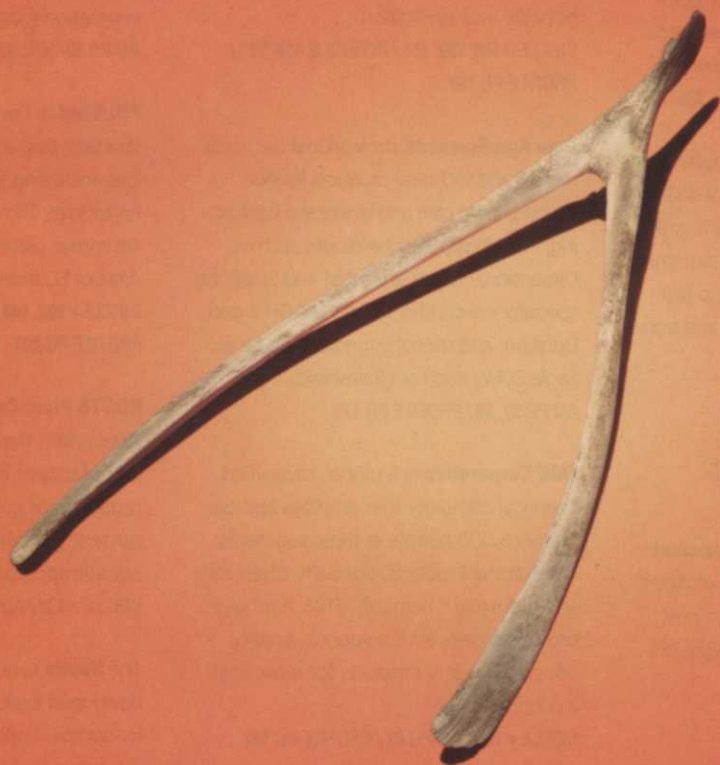
PROFILE PG 220

With more than 50 years of experience building renovation equipment, **Turfco Direct** understands your need for durable, effective equipment, as well as quick, accurate answers on anything relating to turf renovation.

CIRCLE # 138 / AD PG 65 / PROFILE PG 221

*continued on page 38*





**DON'T COUNT ON THIS.**

*continued from page 36*

**Venture Products Inc.** is known for Versatility by Design. We manufacture all-wheel-drive center-articulating compact tractors. The Ventrac engineers designed a tractor without equal. No other compact tractor gives you more power, productivity and versatility than Ventrac.  
CIRCLE # 125 / AD PG 30 / PROFILE PG 225

**Vermeer Manufacturing Co.** manufactures a full line of horizontal directional drilling systems, compact excavators, mini skid-steer loaders, pneumatic boring systems, track and utility trenchers, tub and horizontal grinders, tree equipment and agricultural products.  
PROFILE PG 226

## **TURF & PEST MANAGEMENT PRODUCTS**

**BASF Professional Turf and Ornamentals** develops and markets chemical solutions for improving turf quality through pest management, which includes weed, disease and insect control.  
PROFILE PG 164

**Bayer Environmental Science** manufactures a full line of turf and ornamental products for use on golf courses, home lawns, sports fields, commercial landscapes, nurseries and greenhouses. Bayer Environmental Science continues a tradition of innovative research and top-of-the-line professional products, backed by highly trained sales and field development representatives.  
CIRCLE # 117, 181 / AD PG 15 / PROFILE PG 165

Founded in 1982, **Becker Underwood** is a rapidly growing international company that develops cutting-edge bio-agronomic products, colorants, specialty products and new technologies for a wide range of applications in the turf, greenhouse, seed, agriculture and mulch markets.  
CIRCLE # 127 / AD PG 45 / PROFILE PG 166

**Bell Laboratories** is a world leader in pest control products and manufacturer of Talpid and Rodent Rid. From initial product inception and development to manufacturing and subsequent support in product use, Bell focuses on quality, functionality and innovation.  
CIRCLE # 106, 182, 158 / AD PGS 5, 105, 112 / PROFILE PG 167

**Dow AgroSciences'** professional turf, ornamental and technical products for golf courses, lawn care and landscape contracting, include specialty herbicides such as Dimension, Gallery, Snapshot and Spotlight; specialty insecticides such as MACH 2 and Dursban; and specialty fungicides such as Eagle 20EW and Fore Rainshield.  
AD PG 37, 39 / PROFILE PG 178

**FMC Corporation** is a global, diversified chemical company that employs approximately 5,000 people in three segments: Agricultural Products, Specialty Chemicals and Industrial Chemicals. FMC has been providing innovative solutions, applications and quality products for more than a century.  
CIRCLE # 136 / AD PG 61 / PROFILE PG 182

**Horizon** has everything for the landscape and golf course professional including irrigation, fertilizer, landscape, erosion, equipment, lighting, ponds, & more. Buying from one supplier saves time, reduces costs, & increases efficiency for higher profits for your company.  
CIRCLE # 152 / AD PG 99 / PROFILE PG 187

The **Liquid Fence Company** makes earth and family friendly animal and insect repellents, and plant growth accelerators. The effective and economical product line includes Liquid Fence Deer & Rabbit Repellent, Liquid Fence Mole & Vole Repellent, Liquid Fence Goose Repellent and Speedy Grow Plant Growth Accelerator.  
CIRCLE # 151 / AD PG 98 / PROFILE PG 197

**Nufarm Turf & Specialty** manufactures and formulates leading plant protection products for weed and disease control. Dedicated to the professional turf market, Nufarm serves the golf, residential and commercial turf, forestry, aquatic and vegetation management markets.  
AD PG 33-34 / PROFILE PG 204

**PBI/Gordon Corp.** is a national leader in specialty pest management products services, including SpeedZone, Surge and Q4 herbicides, Trimec herbicides, Embark and Atrimmec plant growth regulators, and Azatrol EC insecticide.  
CIRCLE # 102, 148 / AD PGS CV3, 91 / PROFILE PG 207

**ROOTS Plant Care Group**, a division of Novozymes Biologicals, develops and manufactures biotechnology plant care products for golf, turf and ornamental, nursery, greenhouse, tree care, and aquatic applications.  
CIRCLE # 132 / AD PG 54 / PROFILE PG 203

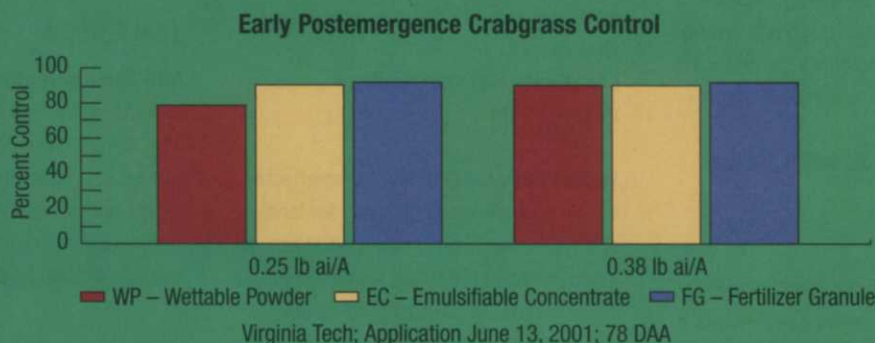
The **Scotts** Landscaper PRO series was developed exclusively for the professional landscape market and provides landscapers with a highly reliable and cost in use source of turf and ornamental nutrition, all backed by Scotts' heritage of plant nutrition experience.  
CIRCLE # 141 / AD PG 77 / PROFILE PG 213

**SePRO Corp.** is an industry leading, specialty agrichemical company headquartered in Carmel, IN. It provides plant protection and plant management products and services that fit specialized niche markets, such as aquatic vegetation management, ornamental and turf management, tree growth regulation, and humane Canada goose control.  
CIRCLE # 175 / AD PG 151 / PROFILE PG 214

*continued on page 40*



# COUNT ON DIMENSION<sup>®</sup> TO CONTROL NEWLY EMERGED CRABGRASS.



 **Dow AgroSciences**  
**Dimension<sup>®</sup>**  
Specialty Herbicide

**WORKS ALL SEASON | CONTROLS NEWLY EMERGED CRABGRASS | NEVER STAINS**

Visit [www.DimensionHerbicide.com](http://www.DimensionHerbicide.com) for more university trials.

\*Trademark of Dow AgroSciences LLC. State restrictions on the sale and use of Dimension apply. Consult the label before purchase or use for full details. Always read and follow label directions.  
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*continued from page 38*

For lawn care operators, **Syngenta** offers industry-leading products for weed and disease prevention and control, and growth regulators to help manage turf. Syngenta also offers lawn-care operators a variety of resources and services to help them manage their operations more efficiently and profitably.

**CIRCLE # 134 / AD PG 56-57 / PROFILE PG 217**

**Target Specialty Products** is the West's leading wholesale distributor of pest management products, fertilizers, application equipment, safety equipment, services and education. Target is headquartered in Santa Fe Springs, CA, with multiple branch offices in Arizona, California and Oregon.

**AD PG 126a-126b (REG) / PROFILE PG 218**

## SEED

**Oregon Fine Fescue and Tall Fescue Commissions** promote quality Oregon-grown turf and seed through advertising and trade shows, and conducts research on behalf of Oregon fine fescue and tall fescue seed growers.

**CIRCLE # 156 / AD PG 109 / PROFILE PG 206**

## SNOW PLOWS

**Pro-Tech** has been the nation's leader in commercial snow removal attachments for over 10 years. We have a commitment and focus on researching and developing products that will continually make you more profitable and efficient in your snow contracting business.

**CIRCLE # 143 / AD PGS 81 /  
PROFILE PG 209**

## SOFTWARE

GroundsKeeper Pro by **Adkad**

**Technologies** is business management software for people in the landscaping

and lawn care service industries. Features include billing, scheduling, routing, estimating, accounts payable & receivable, service contracts and much more.

**CIRCLE # 176 / AD PG 153 / PROFILE PG 162**

**CLIP** gives you the ability to route, schedule, estimate and job cost your jobs and projects. CLIP also contains contact management software with all of your customer's information and history of all services rendered since your first uses of CLIP!

**CIRCLE # 162 / AD PG 119 / PROFILE PG 171**

**PRO Landscape** is the standard in design software for landscape professionals. PRO Landscape includes photorealistic imaging, night and holiday lighting, CAD and estimating in one easy-to-use and easy-to-learn program.

**PROFILE PG 179**

**QXpress** is the scheduling, job costing and batch-invoicing software of choice for Green Industry companies using QuickBooks.

**CIRCLE # 145, 146 / AD PG 85, 87 /  
PROFILE PG 163**

**VectorWorks Landmark** is a cost-effective, easy-to-use design application for landscape designers. Automated plant lists, an extensive plant database, extensive site detail libraries, a hardscape tool and hand-drawn rendering capabilities help to create accurate plans, presentation drawings and models quickly and easily.

**CIRCLE # 135 / AD PG 59 / PROFILE PG 202**

## TIME & ATTENDANCE / FLEET MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

**Exaktime** eliminated inaccurate handwritten timecards with the portable, weather-proof, battery-powered JobClock System designed exclusively for the construction and landscaping trades. The award-win-

ning JobClock System provides you with 100% accurate attendance reports, simplifying the payroll process and saving you time and money every week.

**CIRCLE # 110, 119 / AD PG 8, 19 /  
PROFILE PG 180**

**Modeco Systems, LLC** is a Midwest-based firm and a developer of business efficiency systems. The latest product, TimeScope™, is designed for gathering employee and job time as a mobile time tracking system. Paper timesheets and manual data entry are both eliminated. "It's about time!"

**CIRCLE # 131 / AD PG 53 / PROFILE PG 201**

**Teletrac FleetDirector** is an automated, real-time, vehicle location, fleet management and communications system. All information is delivered via the Internet. Detailed management reports provide the tools needed to significantly reduce costs.

**CIRCLE # 167 / AD PG 131 / PROFILE PG 219**

## TRADE SHOW

**Mid-America Horticultural Trade Show**, scheduled for January 2007, at Chicago's McCormick Place, features equipment, products, and services from nearly 600 exhibitors, educational conferences before and during the show and more.

**CIRCLE # 180 / AD PG 227 / PROFILE PG 200**



# SIERRA.

OnStar



## TOWS THE LINE. AND EVERYTHING ELSE. PRESENTING THE GMC® SIERRA®.

Where do you turn when the job demands all the strength you've got? Look to the most powerful lineup of V8 pickups available on the road today.\* The GMC Sierra, the first full-size pickup professionally engineered with Tow/Haul mode.† It gives automatic transmissions like the optional Allison® a dual-mode shift program that holds gears longer, transferring torque where it's needed most. So you can tow up to 16,700 lbs.‡ depending on the engine you choose — the Vortec™ 6000 V8, the Vortec 8100 V8, or the DURAMAX™ 6600 diesel. And with the innovative Dynamic Brake Proportioning system (standard on all models), you'll have great stopping power. The mighty GMC Sierra. Pulls its weight. And then some. Visit [WWW.GMC.COM](http://WWW.GMC.COM) or call 1-800-GMC-8782.

\*Excludes other GM® vehicles. Based on 2005 model-year available engine torque.

†Excludes other GM vehicles.

‡Maximum trailer weight ratings are calculated assuming a properly equipped base vehicle plus driver. See the GMC Trailing Guide for details.

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OnStar is a registered trademark of OnStar Corp.

Vehicle shown with equipment from an independent supplier. See the owner's manual for information on alterations and warranties.

# GMC

WE ARE PROFESSIONAL GRADE.®



# Sell millions? Yes you can

By Tom Wiechecki

Follow this easy-to-implement 10-step program and you'll blow the doors off your residential landscape sales goals

**T**oday's marketplace is competitive. Consumers are tired of poor customer service and they demand the best. Companies that provide top-level service stay ahead of the pack.

Start with the first impression, answering the telephone. Never underestimate the importance of that initial contact with your company. Next send out polite, well-organized, efficient sales professionals with clean, detailed proposals that can be presented with style.

Jack Nicklaus coined the phrase "Ready Golf." His approach to the game was to move quickly when approaching the shot, but once the club was in his hand he was focused and ready to perform. The same concept applies to "Ready Sales." Rush all you want to get to the appointment, but once you're there, focus and give the client what they need.

With that in mind, here are 10 common-sense steps to make you a sales champion.



## ●●●● FIND OUT

Why first impressions matter ► What to bring to your presentation ► How to close the deal

**1 Dress to impress.** Your company has an identity; display it clearly on your shirt or jacket. It shows that you're proud of what you do and who you represent. It also identifies you as a member of a strong, unified team. Check your hygiene. If you're dirty from a hard day's work by all means get cleaned up. The client won't miss a thing. From head to toe you are representing what your company has to offer.

**2 Be on time.** You have made an appointment with your potential client and he's excited to see you. Show up five minutes early to make a great impression. If you're going to be late and can't avoid it, let your client know as soon as you can. He will appreciate it.

**3 Be prepared.** Have all necessary sales tools available at your fingertips. This includes:

*continued on page 44*



# WHEN DEVASTATION STRIKES YOUR HORTICULTURAL BUSINESS

## option 1:



fig. 1

Bravely hold back tears.



fig. 2

A noble effort. However, noble only gets you so far. Go ahead and let 'em rip. Hope that someone takes pity.



fig. 3

Dry your eyes. Abandon all hope. Accept your fate.

OR

## option 2 (the wiser decision):

## CALL HORTICA

Hortica is the insurance company that can guide you to identify your business' evolving risks and needs, as well as provide finely-tuned insurance and employee benefit solutions. Our 119 years in the horticultural world have made us experts in recognizing risks to your company before they can hurt your business. Of course, if something does happen we will pay your claims quickly to get you back on your feet as soon as possible. Hortica is the only insurance company you can trust with every aspect of your business.

To get a quote, visit [hortica-insurance.com](http://hortica-insurance.com) or call 800.851.7740.

  
**hortica.**  
INSURANCE & EMPLOYEE BENEFITS  
To guide and provide

*continued from page 42*

business cards, calculator, tape measure (25 ft. or longer), a measuring wheel, notebook or clipboard, pencil and pen for sketching and contract signing, two-part 1/8th ruled graph paper for design work (even nicer if the company logo is displayed) and two-part estimate sheets displaying the company logo.

Also have on hand a digital camera to take images for future reference, samples of the product you're selling, product catalogs for the client to keep, a portfolio of your work and a complete price list for all services and products that your company offers.

You can be really impressive if you pull out your laptop computer and mobile printer.

Take **mental notes** on the client's personal interests and **write them down** for later. **Clients like** to know that you're interested in more than **just the project.**

**4 Arrive with style.** Drive up to the client's house slowly in your sparkling clean vehicle. Park on the street and don't block the drive. Organize all of your sales materials before you get out. Take 30 seconds to relax and focus. You may want to take a drink of water or pop in a breath mint at this point. Jump out of your vehicle, walk briskly to the door and knock with enthusiasm. Assume that the client and maybe even the neighbors are watching.

**5 Be genuine and observant.** When the client answers the door give him a genuine greeting. Put a smile on your face and extend a firm handshake. Introduce yourself and say it is a pleasure to meet you. Address him using only his last name until he tells you to do differently. Once he invites you in, say

"thank you" and ask him to lead the way. As you walk through the client's house pay attention to special items like a picture on the wall, a new car or a renovated kitchen. Show genuine interest in these items. You can often tell what the family enjoys by the décor within the home.

**6 Break the ice.** Spend a few short but important minutes getting to know the client. Use the items that you identified in the house as topics of conversation. Take mental notes on the client's personal interests and write them down later. Clients like to know that you're interested in more than just the project. Use this time also to give a short but well-thought-out advertisement for your company. Tell the client what your company is all about. Give him the sense of security that you're serious about taking care of his needs and making him happy. If you can make this personal connection the job will be twice as easy to sell.

**7 Listen.** Ask the client to explain his ideas about the project. Have this conversation outside where the work is needed. Listen intently and take notes. Take pictures of special points of interest. Focus on the special areas of the project that are the most important to them. Ask questions. Don't give creative ideas or opinions at this point. Let the client talk.

Once they've finished, review your notes with him to make sure that you have all the information you need. Focus special attention to the areas that seemed to be most important to him. This will let him know that you really care about his needs.

**8 Create the proposal.** Once you have accumulated all of the client's ideas you are ready to create your proposal. Let him know that you will need a few minutes to measure and put a proposal together. Take this opportunity to give him your portfolio so he can

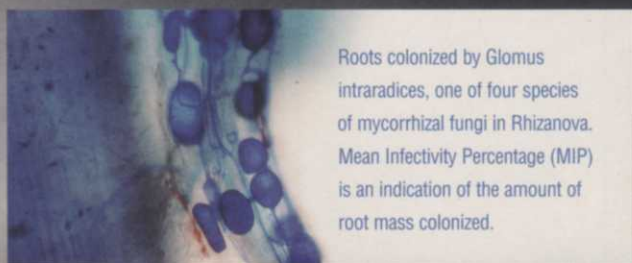
*continued on page 46*



always thinking ahead.



**You already dug one hole.  
You shouldn't have to dig another.**



Roots colonized by *Glomus intraradices*, one of four species of mycorrhizal fungi in Rhizanova. Mean Infectivity Percentage (MIP) is an indication of the amount of root mass colonized.

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*continued from page 44*

review your work and get excited about the project. Excuse yourself and proceed with your measurements.

Use your two-part graph paper to make a scaled drawing of the project that the client can understand and that your crews can use later when installing the project. This might seem like a tall task but with practice it becomes easy. Once your drawing is complete put a price on the project. This can be hand written on a two-part contract or typed up on your laptop computer. The key ingredient here is your complete price list of services and products you offer. Trust your proposal. You have been organized and efficient with your time so have confidence in your pricing. The client is ready and excited. Get in there and close the deal!



**9 Present the proposal.** Knock on the door again before re-entering the house. Thank the client again for taking this time to meet with you. Now is your time to shine. Present your drawing to the client first. Pay special attention again to how you have addressed his most important concerns. Ask more questions and make sure that he's happy with your ideas. You probably have come up with some





Connect with your potential client early on and you get the sales advantage.

creative ideas of your own. Now is the time to share them. Be gentle though — you might be changing some of his ideas and

he might be sensitive to that. Once you both agree that the project is a winner, present your proposal. Read through the details and make sure that the client understands everything. If something is missed make sure that you add it to the contract at this point.

**10** **Ask for the business.** You have given your best presentation so ask for the business. Let the client know that you're excited about the project and are ready to get started. Be persuasive, let him know that you stand behind all of your work and you will make

sure he is 100% happy. Give the client a moment to think. If he needs a little more time gladly accept the decision, but make sure you set up a timeline for follow up. The sale does not end here. Most often, the key to success is found after the appointment is over.

Ready Sales might seem a little extreme, but the world is full of sales professionals ready to compete for your client's business. Make the connection on the spot and give the client what he needs. Chances are you will come away with the sale. ■

The author is vice president of DiSabatino Landscaping and Tree Services Inc., Wilmington, DE. A residential sales specialist selling more than \$2.5 million annually, he can be reached at [Twiehecki@DiSabatinoInc.com](mailto:Twiehecki@DiSabatinoInc.com).

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# Make your move into commercial

**By Ron Hall**  
Editor in Chief

Discover how Borst Landscape used its expertise in the residential market to make the jump



## FIND OUT

- ▶ How to ease into commercial accounts
- ▶ Which businesses to target
- ▶ What challenges commercial accounts bring

**R**esidentially focused landscape company owners that look wistfully at the commercial market might want to take some pointers from Borst Landscape & Design. This award-winning northern New Jersey outfit is carving itself a nice little slice of the commercial market after years of providing exemplary service to homeowners.

"We started getting into commercial maintenance probably for the same reasons everybody else does. It can be profitable and you generally only have one boss to please compared to the many you have to please when you do residential services," says owner and president Mark C. Borst.

That answers the why question.

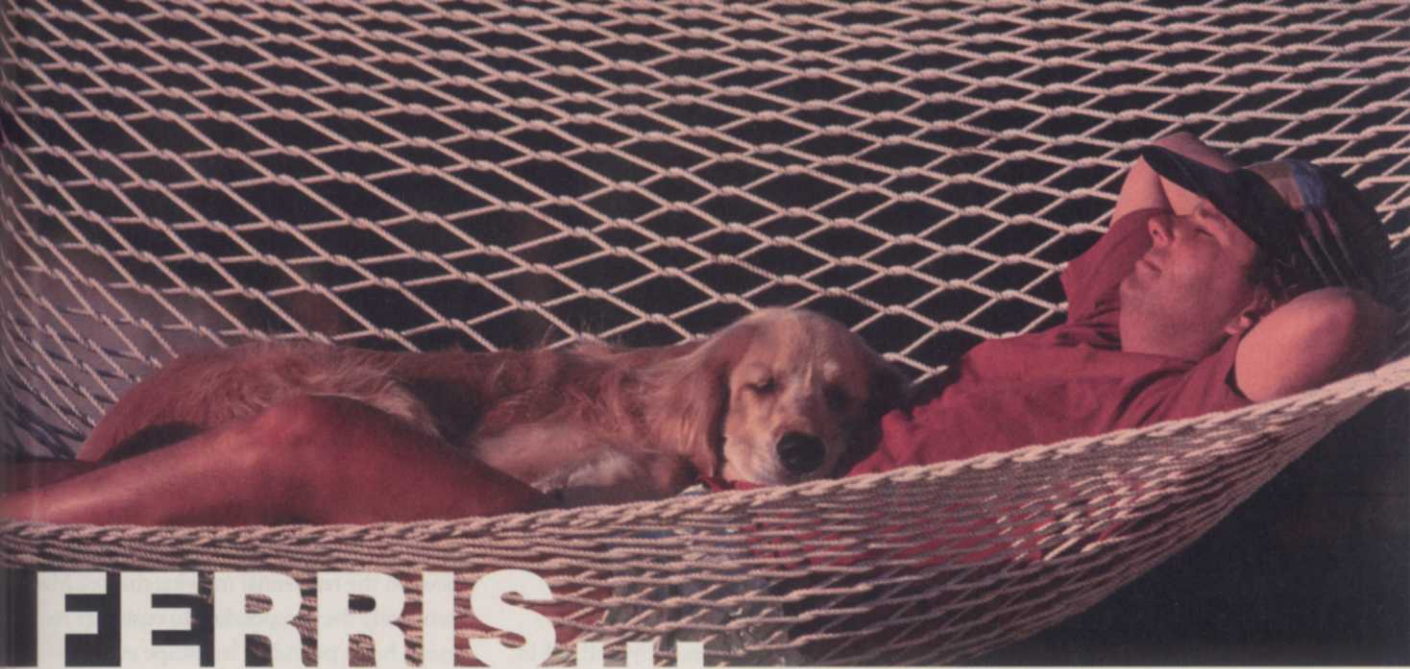
The bigger question, however, is how.

Borst Landscape & Design is targeting commercial properties and projects that are similar in size and scope to the company's residential services. He and his Maintenance Sales Manager Mike Cioffi prospect for commercial clients that fit their company's capabilities and operational structure. They're not interested in making major extra investments in manpower or equipment just to take on commercial work, at least for now.

"The objectives for commercial landscaping are the same as high-end residential landscaping, but on a larger scale," explains Borst. "Commercial customers want green lawns;

*continued on page 50*





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*continued from page 48*

clean, trimmed hedges and bushes; and attractive, weed-free flower beds. They want vibrancy, which can be achieved with seasonal plantings such as bulbs in the spring, annuals during the summer, and mums and cabbages in the fall."

### Business background

Borst established the business in Syckoff, NJ, in 1989 on a part-time basis while earning his degree in landscape architecture and ornamental horticulture. He built it into a fulltime opera-

tial properties, usually on the seat of a commercial mower. If they're persistent, offer good service and pick up business acumen along the way they grow. They increase their revenues and acquire more employees, equipment and customers.

Some owners are content to remain in and focus on the residential mowing market. More commonly they, responding to customer requests, begin providing landscape enhancements. In fact, some may even begin design and constructing landscapes as yet another service. Or perhaps they decide to specialize in residential design/build.

The point is, they know the residential market, their operation is structured to serve it and they're content with its rewards.

Borst Landscape & Design, in a sense, slipped into the commercial market through the back door. Shortly after hiring Cioffi two years ago to build up the commercial snow business, Borst said it became apparent that many of these same customers were interested in landscape maintenance, seasonal color and some design/build work too.

"Probably most landscape businesses do it the other way around. They're doing maintenance and then they're asked or forced to do the snow," says Borst. Either way, once you've proven that you're a competent contractor, getting additional business becomes easier.

But Borst Landscape & Design has several other things going for it.

Apart from its successful and unique "organics" turf care program (which it started in 1995), the company boasts experienced "plant" people. Its three 3-person, high-end garden maintenance crews work as efficiently on commercial and retail properties as they do in homeowners' estate gardens. They're knowledgeable with annuals and perennials.

"We found it to be a good niche for us, in particular some of the banks that we take care of," says Borst. "In the spring we will install annuals. Then we will go back every other week

*continued on page 52*



Maintenance Sales Manager Mike Cioffi, left, opened Mark C. Borst's eyes to the opportunity of expanding into commercial landscape services.

tion in 1993, and in 1995 introduced the company's unique organic lawn care program. As the client base expanded, Borst expanded his company's service offerings. In the fall of 2002 he moved his company to Allendale, NJ. His company concentrates its services in a 15-mile ring around Allendale.

The shift from residential to commercial services can be a tough one, even for an established company. For less experienced residential companies it can be especially painful if they don't enter the market with a well-thought-out plan.

In most cases newcomers join the professional landscape market by caring for residen-





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Mark Borst discovered that property managers of small commercial and retail sites like many of the same touches he offers residential.



*continued from page 50*  
to maintain the annuals and the perennials. One bank in particular wanted better curb appeal so we came in and did the design for them. Then we did the flower installations. They were blown away with how nice it looked. Now they have us doing changeouts and maintenance."

In general, Borst Landscape targets modest-sized projects for one very good reason — there are so many of them.

"When colleagues talk about commercial maintenance in other parts of the United States there's a lot of lawn to mow, particularly on large corporate sites," says Borst. "We don't have such large areas of green space here in northern New Jersey. A commercial account here might be something on a local highway. It could be a 300,000-square-foot office complex with just 10,000 square feet of turf. There could be some parking lot trees and some ornamentals but most of the property is building."

He adds: "What we've found ourselves getting into is more of what I describe as, B-level properties; strip malls and apartment buildings. A lot of this business is off the radar screen of the big, big companies."

Even so, a contractor has to provide the same level of service and beauty it gives its most demanding homeowner client. These commercial and retail properties are visited or seen by thousands of people daily.

"In New Jersey, where the suburban office is such a strong focus, landscaping plays a big part in creating outdoor spaces that enhance an employee's workday. In many cases, employees



stay on site during lunch, and great landscaping provides the backdrop for an outdoor respite or lunchtime break," says Borst.

"As in residential landscaping, it's important to work around a commercial property's topography, maximizing slopes and using certain types of plants and trees to screen less attractive areas," says Borst. "Often, retention basins can be transformed into attractive man-made ponds with fountains that can be surrounded with seating."

Because his company isn't dealing with big acreages of turf, his 2-man maintenance crews can use the same equipment they use on residential properties, including their 36-in. and 52-in.-cut zero mowers. "Our crews adapt well to these sites because they're

*continued on page 54*



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*continued from page 52*

using the same equipment they've been using," says Borst. In fact, they often work on commercial and residential properties the same week, maintaining the commercial sites

**Borst Landscape**  
targets **modest-sized projects** for one very good **reason** — there are **so many** of them.

early in the week and the residential customers later in the week. (What homeowner doesn't want their property mowed and freshened up on a Friday?)

#### **Challenges? You bet.**

For one thing, Borst has discovered that commercial, apartment or retail property managers can be just as demanding as homeowners, especially when they want something done. Requests for a particular service sometimes come with the words "as soon as possible."

And then there's the matter of contracts. In his market, basically a 15-mile radius extending from his headquarters, property managers are cautious about agreeing to more than a seasonal or one-year contract. "Obviously, they want to see how you will perform. They want to build a level of trust before they agree to something longer," says Borst.

The Rutgers graduate says these challenges are small compared to the opportunities he sees in the commercial arena, and the move from strictly residential into commercial too has gone about as smoothly as he could have hoped for.

The key, he's convinced, is targeting and contracting with accounts that his crews and equipment can service without major operational changes within Borst Landscape. ■



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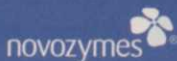
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# The value of interns

By Keryn E.I. Means

Internship programs help companies grow and add professionalism to the industry



## FIND OUT

- Where to recruit
- How to train new interns
- What benefits interns can bring to your company

Interns can help your business grow. Aside from the extra help they provide during the busy months, they can also increase your company's visibility and prepare talented students to become career employees in the future. Interns even bring new ideas and life into your business with their eagerness to learn. "Offering internships makes us focus on putting our best foot forward, focusing us to sharpen our skills and consistently improve our company," says Jay Long, partner of Rupert Nurseries in Laytonsville, MD.

### Find them first

So where do you find interns? Start by looking at the schools your current employees attended and at the schools in your area, then narrow down your search. "There are many more good programs than we can get to, so

we visit a select group of schools based on the strength of the program," Long says.

Take advantage of the career days hosted by associations, universities and community colleges. Adriana Barrios, human resources manager at Gibbs Landscape Company in Smyrna, GA, says she likes to attend career fairs to initially meet students. If Gibbs is interested, she invites a student to visit the offices for a day, meet the managers and see if there is a good fit. "We make the decision together," Barrios says.

Lunch presentations are also a valuable source for recruiting future interns. You can go into the college, present your company to students and have more one-on-one time with a smaller gathering than at a career fair. Forging connections with different schools is an important element to finding interns. Building relationships with the professors and the people who run the internship programs can help steer students toward your company, says Area Supervisor Randy Stoiber of ValleyCrest Denver.

The Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) hosts Student Career Days annually, and the Mid-America Horticultural Trade Show has a career fair. Students come from all over the country to participate in both of these events. PLANET's annual three-day event in March presents opportunities for employers to see students in action through a variety of competitions. Employers, faculty and students can interact in a social and professional environment. "We get a lot of hits that way," Barrios says.

*continued on page 60*



A black and white photograph of two hands, palms facing forward, with visible dirt and grime on the skin. The hands are positioned on the left side of the frame, with the fingers spread. A thin white line extends from the text box above down to the software box below.

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*continued from page 58*

#### **Intern expectations**

Internships are generally paid. "It is expected that an intern receives a wage in a manner similar to a temporary/part-time employee," according to Colorado State University internship guidelines.

Housing poses another big issue for students. Whether you provide an apartment for a small fee like Gibbs or offer a one-time housing allotment for apartment deposits like ValleyCrest Denver, your interns will need assistance when looking for a place to live. "Going to a city I have never been to before, I didn't even know where to start," says Tyler Peterson, a student at Ball State University who interned with PSB&J in Orlando, FL. Peterson later found out that people in his office had spare rooms they would have rented out, but by then it was too late. Even if you can't give your intern extra money for housing, sending information about the city that includes the best and safest areas to live is one way to make your intern feel welcome.

#### **It's a job but it's also school**

Besides wages and housing, students want variety in their workplace. Colleges don't want their students to just run for coffee or pull weeds all day; good ones require real-world professional experience. "This is not just a job; this is a learning experience," says Joe Blalock, internship coordinator for the landscape architecture department at Ball State University. "So [interns] need to find a position that will stimulate that learning experience."

Since internships may be part of their curriculum, interns will have to report back to school and do some homework. Students from Colorado State University and Ball State University have to file weekly or bi-weekly reports describing their assignments. Colorado State students must write a final paper and give an oral presentation on their internship once they are back at school, while Ball State students write a paper and create a poster about their experience.

#### **The need for variety**

One problem encountered by some students is that they get confined to one task. While Peterson's fellow classmates were stuck doing CAD work all day, he went on site visits, did field work, created hand and computer graphics and assisted on a number of different projects. Being treated as an entry-level employee "gave me a better feel for the day-to-day operations in the real world," Peterson says.

Internships are meant to be a learning tool for both students and employers. "A lot of the companies unfortunately use people just as labor and not as training," Barrio says. Interns at Gibbs are given a full overview of the company and they are required to work one week in each of the company's eight departments during their 10-week internship. Interns interested in design spend their last two weeks with the vice president and sales department. If an intern wants to learn more about a specific department of the company, he can shadow someone in that area of the company instead.

ValleyCrest Denver also exposes students to all areas of the company. "The expectation is for them to learn," Stoiber says. "So we want them to get a good education with their time at ValleyCrest, but we also expect them to work."

A positive work experience will educate interns and further their career, but it also helps your business's reputation, says Barrios. Put simply, word-of-mouth is a powerful tool.

#### **Orientation**

When an intern first arrives, he will need to be oriented to company safety procedures and workplace rules. At James Martin Associates, Inc. in Vernon Hills, IL, interns are given a full-day orientation to company policies, safety issues and the equipment they will be using, says Beth McElroy, general manager of business administration. ValleyCrest Denver also introduces its interns to the different department heads, and interns spend a few days

*continued on page 62*



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By Susan Porter  
It wasn't that long ago that most Americans preferred to do things themselves. Kip Creel (left), president of NQuery Research in Atlanta, GA, recently reported the results of his consumer research gauging the buying trends of younger homeowners. [\(More...\)](#)



Bail

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Visit for more information and schedules for the Professional Landcare Network's annual Student Career Days recruiting event.

*continued from page 60*

with the superintendent visiting some of the company's latest projects. As interns go into different departments at ValleyCrest Denver, they get additional instruction from the department head on safety and equipment.

Interns at Gibbs are required to go to all training employees of the company attend, including management training, plant identification and drugs in the workplace presentations. Gibbs is also holding Spanish-language classes, generally in the winter when business is slower. Speaking Spanish is definitely a skill Barrios looks for when hiring interns.

### Mentors

Providing mentors allows students one-on-one time with an employee and creates a point person for them to go to with questions. The purpose of a mentor at Ruppert Nurseries is "to guide the intern through their internship schedule, to provide regular feedback on their progress and to assist with the myriad of work and related issues that come up," Long says.

Even if your internship program does not have a dedicated mentor, your students will still learn from the people around them. "Everyone I worked with served as a mentor," Peterson says. Younger company employees who had

only been out of school a few years became role models Peterson observed by working side-by-side with them. College life was still fresh in these employees' minds and they knew what would be most valuable for Peterson to learn.

### Accidents happen

Everyone hopes accidents won't occur in the workplace, but it is important to be prepared. Start by checking with your company's workers' compensation insurance provider and the intern's school to see if and how interns should be covered.

James Martin Associates' insurance covers interns if they get in an automobile accident, but "we learned long ago to not let the interns drive unless they have had lots of experience with driving trucks," McElroy says.

At all ValleyCrest locations, interns get workers' compensation if they are injured on the job. "They are covered as if they are employees," says Christine Soderline in human resources at ValleyCrest's corporate office. Colorado State requires employers to cover workers' compensation if the internship is paid. The university covers interns that do unpaid internships, but only if the internship fulfills a program requirement.

*continued on page 64*

Interns at Ruppert Nurseries, shown here, participate in company outings. Several company managers started with Ruppert as interns.





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— **Beth McElroy,**  
**James Martin**  
**Associates**

*continued from page 62*

### **Employee misconduct**

Harassment, drugs and other conduct guidelines need to be addressed with new interns. If students encounter a problem, it is important for them to know where they can go for help. ValleyCrest gives guidelines covering everything from appearance to appropriate employee interaction to employees and interns alike.

If an intern has a problem "they usually go to their mentor first, unless it involves the mentor; then they go to the branch manager," Soderline says. Students at ValleyCrest branches also receive a business card with an 800 number on it so they can speak confidentially to corporate human resources personnel if they feel unsupported or just want to talk through an issue.

Colorado State encourages its students to speak to their supervisor first. "Several times this past summer this happened and with some encouragement, the student was able to resolve the problem," says Bonnie Schilling, administrative assistant in the department of horticulture and landscape architecture at Colorado State. If a student is still having a problem his advisor will get involved, and in more serious cases the student will leave the internship.

### **The season ends**

Being an intern isn't just about having another new employee; it can be a lot of fun, too. "I think everyone in the branch looks forward to it," Stoiber says. "Interns infuse a little more life into the branch." Many landscaping companies include interns in annual outings or coordinate special events so interns can get to know company members better.

Stoiber and the employees at ValleyCrest Denver get together every summer for an "Intern Roast." Toward the end of the summer, once employees have gotten to know the students better, the company will gather at an employee's house and poke gentle fun at all the interns. Long's interns join the employees of Ruppert Nurseries at Washington

Nationals games, branch barbecues and the company picnic.

Even if your company doesn't have special outings while your interns are around, find other ways to involve them socially. Peterson was able to join the PSB&J bowling league when a regular member couldn't make a game. He also joined the company soccer team.

When your intern is getting ready to head back to school, it is the perfect opportunity to see how he felt his internship went and talk about what he wants for the future. Barrios talks to students about their career goals and what classes they will need to take to get into a desired specialty.

"We give them an outline of what they need to do so they can prepare themselves for life after graduation," Barrios says. Once your interns are gone, keeping in touch is key to getting a great intern back as an employee. Barrios does this through regular e-mails and sending Christmas gifts to former interns. Long also e-mails past interns, checking in now and then to see how they are doing.

### **Future recruits**

Ultimately an internship program should create a great source for employee recruitment. "We find that if they interned with us they are usually successful full-time hires because we know what they can do and they know how we do things," McElroy says.

After 20 years of working with interns, Ruppert Nurseries has seen its investment of time and training pay off. "A number of our key managers in the old Ruppert Landscape and at the new Ruppert Nurseries started with the company as interns and have been instrumental in our ability to grow," Long says.

Even if your interns do not come back to work for you right away, a positive internship experiences will create more knowledgeable employees for the industry. ■

The author is a freelance writer based in Seattle. Contact her at [kerynmeans@gmail.com](mailto:kerynmeans@gmail.com).



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# Credit: Friend or foe?

By William J. Lynott

How to use credit — to your credit



for you to get credit when you need it. If your score is "bad," you may find it impossible to get credit from anyone.

To learn more about how your credit score is calculated, see the Federal Trade Commission's information site at [www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/credit/scoring.htm](http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/credit/scoring.htm).

## 2 Take advantage of the free annual credit report.

The CRAs are required by law to provide you with a free copy of your credit report, at your request, once every 12 months. You can order your free annual credit report online at [annualcreditreport.com](http://annualcreditreport.com) or by calling 877/322-8228.

## 3 Improve your credit score.

A good score will make it easier for you to obtain credit and to qualify for loans at advantageous interest rates. You can improve your score by:

- ▶ **Paying your bills on time.** This is the smart way to handle credit. Late or missed payments are a sure way to lower your score.

- ▶ **Avoiding large credit card balances.** Outstanding balances larger than about 25% of your credit limit are a red flag to financial institutions.

- ▶ **Not bothering with balance transfers.** Closing out an account and transferring the balance to another credit card is likely to lower your score. Each time you close an account, you lower your overall credit limit. So, the same

*continued on page 71*

**U**sed sensibly, credit can be a major asset in your business and personal life. Use it carelessly and it can become your worst enemy. Here are 10 ways to help you put credit to work for you and your business, not against you:

### 1 Know the importance of your credit report.

If you have ever applied for credit — business or personal — the three credit reporting agencies (CRAs), Equifax, Experian and TransUnion, have compiled a detailed report about you and your credit history.

If your credit score is "good," it will be easy



Fall 2006  
New Product Guide



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ET Manager™



Root Watering System (RWS)



Rotary Nozzle



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Pressure Regulating  
Stems (PRS)



Control Zone Kits  
With Pressure  
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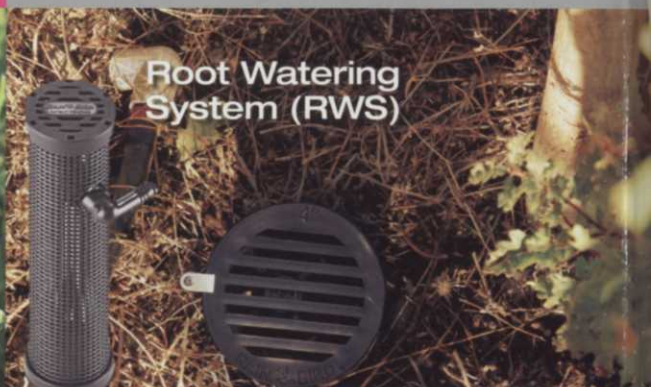


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### Root Watering System (RWS)

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**Challenge:** Poor root development, resulting in unhealthy trees, plants and shrubs.

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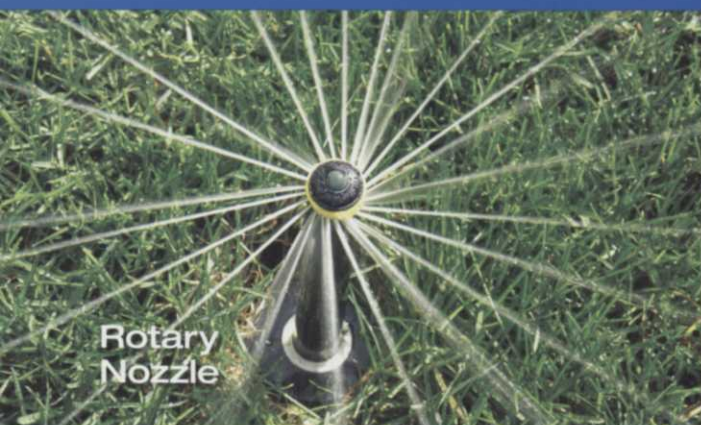
## Controllers



## Valves



## Rotors and Sprays



### Rotary Nozzle



### 5000/5000 Plus PRS

### Efficient Water Distribution from 13 to 24 Feet.

**Challenge:** Gaps in coverage between spray heads and rotors.

**Solution:** These nozzles can be zoned with Rain Bird® 5000 MPR Rotor Nozzles, for uniform distribution between all heads. Designed to fit Rain Bird Spray Heads.

### Get Even Pressure and Distribution.

**Challenge:** Misting and head-to-head pressure variations.

**Solution:** The in-stem PRS reduces operating pressure to 45 psi (3,1 bars), leading to optimal nozzle performance and even distribution.







## Rain Bird RWS Improves Tree Health and Survival Rate.

At a 20-acre Folsom, California housing and commercial development site, Greg Houck installed Rain Bird RWS with the planting of 200 valley oak seedlings. One year later, Greg reports the trees showing "extremely good vitality." In a typical transplant project like this, as many as 20% of the trees do not survive, but Greg lost only one tree, thanks to the RWS. "If you're looking for long-term vitality and healthy trees," Greg concluded, "this is an excellent tool."

## Rain Bird Control Zone Kit Helps Installers Dig Fewer, Smaller Holes.

To save installation time, Rain Bird combined a low-flow valve with a pressure-regulating filter into a pre-assembled, compact kit. Al Luchterhand, owner of Sun City Landscapes in Las Vegas, appreciates the kit's efficiency: "Because they are already assembled, the new kits are a definite time saver during installation, and have resulted in faster production rates and better reliability."



### Landscape Drip



### Rotors and Sprays



### Accessories



### Resources



## Landscape Drip

### Control Zone Kits with Pressure Regulating Filters



### Compact, All-in-One Control Zone Kit.

**Challenge:** Many parts lead to labor-intensive installations.

**Solution:** Filter and pressure regulator in one means fast and simple installation, increased reliability and less digging. Four Control Zone Kits fit in one standard valve box.



Fall 2006  
New Product Guide

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**5000/5000 Plus PRS:** Eliminates water loss due to misting and fogging by maintaining a constant outlet pressure.

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Report Fraud	800/525-6285	888/397-3742	800/680-7289

— W.L.

continued from page 66

amount of debt is now a larger percentage of your credit limit.

► Reviewing your reports from all three credit bureaus for accuracy once a year. When you find an error such as a payment wrongly labeled as late, notify the CRAs of the error and make sure that it gets corrected.

**4 Use other people's money to make your routine monthly purchases.** Whenever possible, don't charge more than you can pay off in full when your monthly bill arrives. When you pay the full balance on your credit card bill each month, you are taking advantage of an interest-free loan from the card issuer. That's a huge financial advantage.

On the other hand, if you make only the minimum payments on a significant balance, it can take years — and sometimes decades — to pay off the full debt. Once you fall into the "minimum payment trap," it can be difficult, if not impossible to dig your way out. For a look at how minimum payments might work in your situation, log onto [www.online-loan-calculator.com](http://www.online-loan-calculator.com).

**5 Don't carry a pocket full of credit cards.** The more credit cards you have in your

wallet or purse, the easier it will be for you to spend more money than you can afford. A pocket full of credit cards, each with a spending limit of several thousand dollars, can sweep you up in the illusion that you have more money than you actually have, and that's where trouble begins.

It's more **difficult** to make **frivolous purchases** when you have to reach into your pocket **for cash**.

**6 Beware of canceling unused credit card accounts all at once.** If you have many credit card accounts but are only using a few of them, you should close out the unused ones. However, try to keep the cards that you've had the longest and cancel the newest cards. The agencies that monitor your credit history like to see a long record of prompt payments. Too many new cards tend to lower your credit score.

In addition, if you have more than one or two unused cards, spread out the cancellations

over a period of several months. A rash of card cancellations in quick succession is another red flag for the monitoring agencies.

**7 Think twice before opening new credit card accounts.** Don't apply for new credit card accounts unless it's absolutely necessary. If you don't already have a long and favorable credit history, opening a new credit line will tend to lower your score because you don't have a proven track record. In addition, new accounts lower the average age of your accounts and that, in turn, will affect your credit score.

## NEED HELP MANAGING YOUR CREDIT?

The National Foundation for Credit Counseling is the nation's oldest and largest nonprofit organization providing education and counseling services on budgeting and credit with nearly 1,500 member agency locations across the United States and Puerto Rico. Many NFCC member agencies use the Consumer Credit Counseling Service trademark. To contact the NFCC member office nearest you, call 800/388-2227 or visit [www.nfcc.org](http://www.nfcc.org).

— W.L.

**8 Eliminate pre-approved credit card offers from your mailbox.** Those pre-approved credit offers that find their way into your mailbox represent a temptation for identity thieves who might try to open new credit accounts in your name or the name of your business. Once they get their hands on such a piece of mail, they can complete the offer by listing a different address. Then they will have an account opened in your name without your knowledge.

Fortunately, there is a way for you to opt-out of these credit offers. You can opt-out by visiting the official Consumer Credit Reporting Industry website at [www.optoutpre-screen.com](http://www.optoutpre-screen.com) or by calling 888/567-8688 to opt-out via telephone.

**9 Be aware of the differences between debit cards and credit cards.** When you charge a purchase on your credit card, you have a minimum of 30 days to pay the bill. That's what money managers call taking advantage of the "float." You are using the card issuer's money as a no-interest loan, provided you pay the balance in full each month.

When you charge that purchase on a debit card, your bank will debit your account almost immediately. There is no "float" time between the time you make your purchase and the time you pay for it, and no time for you to get to the bank to make a deposit to cover to a purchase larger than your bank balance.

Also, it's easier to incur costly bank fees by overdrawing your checking account when you use a debit card. When you write a check, you have the register to enter the transaction. When you use a debit card, you must rely on your memory to deduct the purchase later.

**10 Carry a reasonable amount of cash to pay for small purchases.** It's more difficult to make frivolous purchases when you have to reach into your pocket for cash. A pocket or purse full of credit cards makes it too easy to lower your financial inhibitions. Don't be like the shopper observed recently putting two magazines and a newspaper on a credit card, or the college student who regularly charges a half-dozen candy bars to take back to his dorm room. Small purchases made regularly can grow quickly to mammoth proportions.

Credit in itself is not harmful. In fact, used skillfully, credit can be a profitable tool for managing your business and personal financial affairs. Observance of these tips will help to make credit one of your assets, not one of your liabilities. ■

The author is a freelance writer specializing in business. Contact him at 215/886-3646 or [lynott@verizon.net](mailto:lynott@verizon.net).





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Circle 139



# Roadmap to profits

By Michael McShane

Scrutinizing your numbers and projecting where you want them to be next season should top your 'to-do' list this fall

## FIND OUT

- ▶ Why make a budget
- ▶ When to budget
- ▶ What information you need to budget

If you've ever planned a long-distance road trip, you know that you need a good map to get you from where you are now to where you want to be. Without one, you'll probably end up getting lost or wasting time, energy and resources. You might be late, run into avoidable difficulties or, worse yet, not get to your destination at all.

A budget is essential in financial planning and is your company's fiscal "roadmap." It will help you stay the course with regard to purchasing and hiring decisions. Yes, budgeting takes time and it requires that you scrutinize your company's financials, but it will help guide you on your journey to growth and profits.

### Who needs a roadmap?

Every owner should develop a budget and track it on a regular basis. It will help you keep your business going in the right direction. If you see that you're getting too far off the budget you can take action to bring your company back in line. This will help you gain financial control of your business and keep expenses from cutting into revenue.

Some owners see budgeting as a difficult, stressful chore, but it needn't be. You certainly don't have to be an accountant or financial expert to prepare a budget. Accounting software such as Peachtree or Quicken is not difficult to master and can take a lot of drudgery out of the process.

Budgeting is essential for the operation of a well-run company in today's business environment. View the process as an exercise that

lets you plan the upcoming year in greater detail. Then, as the year unfolds you can track the actual numbers to your projections, spot trends, monitor margins closely and make adjustments in operations.

### Chart your own course

Budgets reflect planned outcomes for the future. They map out how you plan to get there, in a fiscal sense. Budgets can be prepared for yearly, seasonal, quarterly or monthly analysis. You or your financial analysts/accountant decides what works best for your company.

That said, most owners start with an annual budget. In the landscape industry, owners generally start the process three months prior to their next fiscal cycle. For most of us, this means late summer or fall. Many owners have every intention of being done by Christmas. Sometimes our best aren't enough, however, and budgets aren't completed until a couple of weeks into the New Year. I recommend making the budget a top priority during that last quarter. Having an annual sales forecast, showing monthly projections, will be the holiday present that you give your company.

### Know what it costs to tank-up

Do you know what it will cost to "fuel" your company for next year's growth? Know your numbers; that's crucial to building a workable budget. To accurately estimate revenues and forecast your planned sales for the budgeting period (perfection isn't possible), you have to

*continued on page 76*



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## PICK YOUR BUDGETING METHOD

In the broadest sense, there are two approaches to budgeting with some companies using one and some using the other. Neither one is right or wrong, but being consistent throughout the year with whatever method you choose will keep things simpler and less chaotic for everyone.

► **The Top-Down Approach.** In this approach members of upper management prepare budgets and pass them down to individual departments to follow. As I said earlier, knowing what things cost and where sales numbers are now is crucial to laying down the budget law for next year. Handing your employees unrealistic figures doesn't help anyone meet next year's goals.

► **The Bottom-Up Approach.** This relies upon each department supplying data. The budgets are passed up to the next level of management until all budgets reach an individual who is responsible for the budgeting process. This approach requires managers in each department with good financial recordkeeping skills. —MM

## WHY A BUDGET?

- Helps you plan for the future
- Helps plan and manage your money
- Helps you meet objectives
- Helps you identify problems before they occur
- Improves decision-making
- Increases staff motivation
- Monitors performance
- Helps minimize costs
- Provides confidence that you will make a profit

*continued from page 74*

understand what it costs to run your business.

What types of information will you need to do this? You will need past and current performance figures obtained from profit and loss statements, balance sheets and cash flow forecasts. This information will help guide you. One method I use to prepare a budget is to look at the last two years sales figures and factor in any planned growth, inflation or market conditions that might affect future sales.

For many landscape companies, purchasing large amounts of goods in advance is a way of life. For them, an inventory plan may also be incorporated into the budget. The inventory plan earmarks expected expenditures for the year and keeps them manageable from a cash flow perspective.

Break down your budget by divisions or by lines of business or service and track those areas. This will allow you to spot profit centers and develop those profitable areas into bigger parts of the overall business. On the other hand, spotting areas where margins are tight will alert you to pricing structure changes that may be needed.

## What's the forecast?

Just as weather conditions affect how you plan a road trip, external variables in our industry can affect how you formulate your budget — things like competition, shifts in the market and changes in economic conditions in your service area.

## Be prepared for detours

Can budgets be adjusted? Of course although some owners insist on sticking with the original budget, win or lose. Most owners, however, realize that they will have to adjust their budgets, perhaps quarterly, because of unforeseen occurrences, either positive or not so positive.

Actual figures compared to budgeted figures can be favorable or adverse. These differences are known as variances. Watch them closely to monitor performance and look for trends. Some factors are out of your control, such as interest rates, weather and changes in demand and market conditions.

If sales fluctuate up or down, the corresponding expense items should follow. This will help maintain the margins that you set in your budget. It may be too late to recover from a difference, but if you figure out the cause of an issue, it will help prevent the problem from occurring again. It may be that demand has fallen creating fewer sales. If you recognize this in time, you may decide to pump up your marketing efforts or change your pricing to meet market conditions.

Making a budget is one thing, using it is quite another. In other words, use it. It's your financial roadmap for the upcoming year, and you can rarely get where you want to by simply driving in a straight line. There are going to be some out-of-the-way scenic routes and some detours, but using a good chart won't let these things set you off course to profits. ■

The author is president and CEO of Plantique Inc., a full-service landscape company/nursery founded in 1948 and headquartered in Allentown, PA. Contact him at [mmcshane@plantique.com](mailto:mmcshane@plantique.com)



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# Step-by-step sales success

Basics count, says industry consultant

By Ron Hall  
Editor in Chief

**N**othing happens until there's a sale. That's one of the maxims of our free enterprise system. But sales just don't just drop into our laps. We have to prepare and execute a plan to get them.

► **Show enthusiasm.** Chat up your qualifications. Let the prospect see how excited you are to be considered as his or her service provider.

► **Be clean. Be organized.** You want to look sharp and you don't want to be fumbling

## ●●●● FIND OUT

What customers want ► How to spice up your proposal ► Why the first quote is the most important

Marty Grunder, president of Grunder Landscaping in Dayton, OH, and a popular motivational speaker, shared his sales strategy with approximately 100 lawn care and pest control company owners at a recent "Healthy Lawns, Health Business" summit. The summit was one of 10 sponsored by Bayer Environmental Science in Texas and Florida this winter.

Borrow the following strategy from Grunder and you will improve your sales program:

► **Be on time for all appointments.** If it takes leaving earlier than normal to scope out the neighborhood and make sure of the location, do it.

► **Mail your prospect a confirmation letter.** Tell a little bit about yourself and your company. Briefly describe what the prospect can expect from your service.

► **Prepare a marketing pack.** It doesn't have to be elaborate but it does have to be professional. Include literature that describes company strengths and customer testimonials. In today's digital age it's easy to get good photography so don't forget the before and after images of some of your work.

around for sales literature.

► **Have a little showmanship.** Do you have a laptop? Consider putting together a brief and professional-quality DVD that tells the potential client about your company and some of its great work.

► **Listen carefully to the prospect.** Often they will tell you why they will do business with you — if you give them the chance.

► **Ask questions,** such as, "Is this proposal about what you thought it would be?" Or, "What are some of your concerns?"

► **Hustle.** If you can, prepare a quote on the spot, or after excusing yourself to your vehicle to run some numbers on your laptop. As often as not, prospects go with the first quote they get if it seems reasonable to them.

► If you can't close the sale then (Never be afraid to ask for the business.), make sure you **follow up with the prospect promptly as you promised.** Make sure you have a good system to do this.

► **Remember the "thank you."** Whether you get the business or not, send the individual a short, personal thank you acknowledgement. It's polite and it's good business etiquette. ■



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# Why not Hispanics as managers?

By Ron Hall  
Editor in Chief

Jesus "Chuy" Medrano tells what works for his company and what can work for yours too



Jesus "Chuy" Medrano

visors and managers (often cited as the industry's greatest challenge) is to identify and develop leaders and managers from their Hispanic work force.

And yes, it can be done, in spite of language difficulties and cultural differences.

If you're looking for confirmation, look no further than Medrano himself, and the experiences of companies, such as ValleyCrest, the huge California-based nursery/landscape company that, for decades, has trained and promoted ambitious Hispanic workers to positions of ever-increasing responsibility and authority.

## True story

A case in point is Medrano, who migrated from Chihuahua, Mexico, in 1970 and began working as a "gardener" in Denver. In 1974 ValleyCrest hired him as a field laborer. Learning the landscape trade, building his leadership skills and improving his command of English, he moved up the ranks at the company. Eventually, Bruce Wilson, who was then building Environmental Care Industries (ECI) into ValleyCrest's multi-million dollar maintenance operation, selected him to train employees at other ECI branches. In 1992 Medrano left ValleyCrest and, with partner Tom Fochtman, founded CoCal in 1993. Today, his Denver-based company is a landscape services leader in the Rocky Mountain region, with 470 employees at four locations.

He never forgets what it took to get to

*continued on page 82*

## FIND OUT

- ▶ How to ID leaders
- ▶ When to encourage promotions
- ▶ Why training is essential

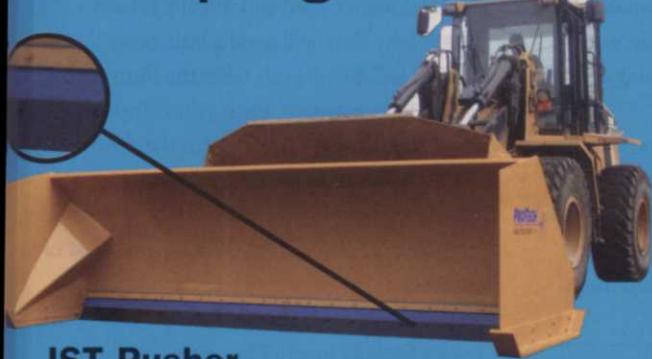
**W**hen we promote we give the job to the right person no matter who he is," says Jesus "Chuy" Medrano, CLT, co-owner and president of CoCal Landscape, Denver, CO. Often as not that person is a Hispanic employee at CoCal, which Medrano operates with partner Tom Fochtman.

Even so, the number of Hispanic employees advancing as leaders and managers at established landscape companies (never mind actually co-founding and running a company as Medrano did) remains low considering the tens of thousands of them working as landscape laborers in the United States. In that light, the dilemma facing landscape companies desperately in need of competent super-



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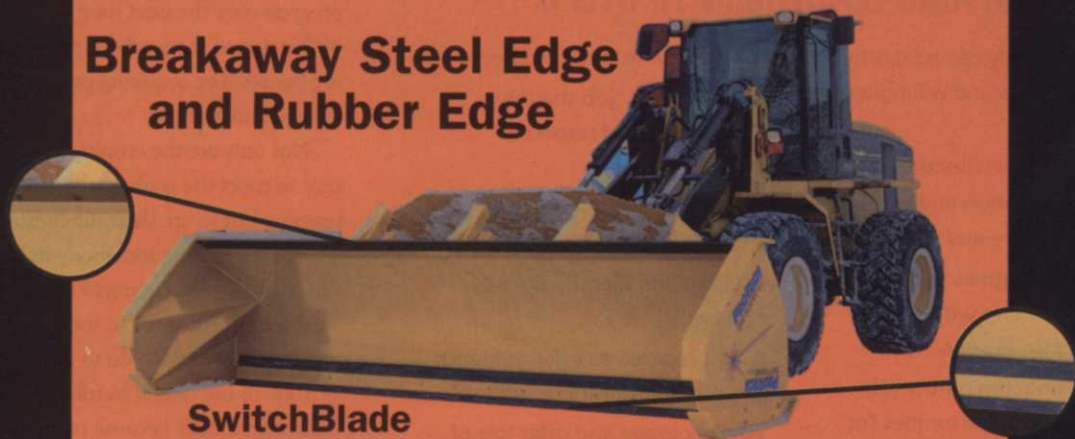
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*continued from page 80*

where he is. He looks for similar ambitions in other employees working within CoCal. He knows that Hispanics can, and do, make excellent foremen, field supervisors, account managers and, given the right training and encouragement, branch managers.

But, he insists, company owners must be committed to the process of building their workers' skills, starting with identifying potential leaders. Then the company needs a defined process to nurture and develop them.

ranks or being laughed at by their peers or their employers.

"Yes, some do get scared," Medrano admits. "They think it's hard and it really is hard. That's why they will need a little push."

At CoCal that push takes the form of its Rising Stars program. Each year company supervisors identify workers with the drive and ability to advance as a leader and manager — whether Anglo or Hispanic.

The candidates are then presented a list of individualized skills they must work on to earn their promotions. This usually takes place over a friendly lunch. The company's human resources person documents the employees' progress over the next six months. At the end of this period the workers' progress in meeting the goals or acquiring particular skills is reviewed and assessed.

Not only are the employees under pressure to meet the goals established in the initial meeting but so are their supervisors.

"If I'm bringing somebody in I'm pretty sure that person is going to succeed," says Medrano. "It forces us to train them, to do whatever we need to do to get them ready."

One of the largest hurdles is the language challenge, mostly because promotions often lead to more client interaction.

Potential leaders and managers sometimes identify themselves by how eagerly they seek to learn English and acquire other client-contact skills. CoCal encourages their efforts to become better English speakers. Each winter the company ramps up its training efforts, including extensive role-playing exercises among employees.

But even then these handpicked candidates aren't turned loose. They're paired with experienced supervisors. It's only after they've demonstrated proficiency and confidence in working on their own can they progress to the next level.

"This is one of the toughest parts of making leaders," says Medrano. But who said being a leader is easy in the first place? ■

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7. Establish reasonable and attainable responsibilities.
8. Listen and identify signs of distress.
9. Be prepared to offer guidance and problem-solving solutions.
10. Encourage and offer lots of positive feedback.

"Pay attention to the employees who ask a lot of questions, the ones who volunteer, the ones who show up for training on a Saturday morning, the ones who are sitting up front during your meetings" says Medrano. "They're the most likely ones you can work with."

### Follow through

But identifying potential leaders and managers among an Hispanic workforce is merely the first step of a long process. "For one thing, there are significant cultural differences between Anglos and Hispanics, who tend to be more group oriented," Medrano says. "Often they won't step forward for fear of breaking



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# Licensing for landscape pros

By Thomas G. Dolan

In most parts of the United States all you need is a business license (maybe) to call yourself a landscape pro. Is that enough?

**U**nlicensed contractors represent a big and growing problem. And it's getting worse and worse," says Larry Rohlfes, CAE, assistant executive director, California Landscape Contractors Association, Sacramento. Rohlfes is speaking only for California, and it's true that some states don't regard unlicensed contractors as that serious an issue. But it's also true that California often acts as a harbinger of future trends. In any event, Rohlfes says that the problem has grown to such dimensions in California that there are indications that it may be seriously confronted. "The unlicensed contractor represents a big danger to the homeowner or any consumer," Rohlfes says. "If something goes

wrong with the job, the only resource the homeowner has is the court system. The problem is that with most unlicensed contractors, you can never find them, so good luck."

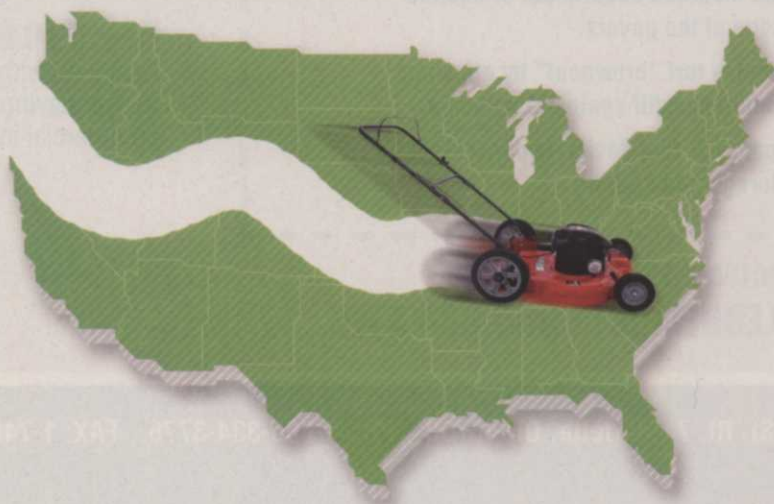
On the other hand, continues Rohlfes, if a homeowner hires a licensed contractor, he is under the jurisdiction of the Contractor State Licensing Board, which regulates the construction industry. "If the consumer complains to the licensing board, and is right, the board has incredible leverage over that contractor, for he can take away his license," says Rohlfes.

## Cracking down

The irony here though, he explains, is that the licensing board only has real leverage over the

## FIND OUT

How rules vary ▶ Consequences for violations ▶ The national perspective





licensed contractor, who, almost by definition, is a responsible professional, but not over the unlicensed operator who, also almost by definition, is a fly-by-night not adhering to professional standards. "The board's record on collection fines from unlicensed contractors is dismal," Rohlfes says. "It turns these accounts over to collection agencies. But these operators can't be found. They move around, don't own anything and are on the fringe."

Unlicensed contractors who run into problems in California, says Rohlfes, often don't pay workers' compensation insurance, violate labor laws, pay their employees in cash, don't carry liability and other insurance and don't pay social security or income tax. This means that their expenses are much less than the legitimate contractor, so they undercut them on price. The legitimate contractor trying to match that price can easily end up working for no profit.

Yet the problem is much bigger than the landscaping industry, Rohlfes explains. It's endemic throughout the construction industry, and in fact, most others as well. "Here's another bit of information," Rohlfes says. "The Economic Round Table has reported that 28% of all businesses in Los Angeles County operate underground. This means that 28% of businesses are not paying workers' comp, payroll or other taxes. The state knows it has a problem."

Yet the state has known this for some time, and has, in fact, made efforts to correct it. Two strategies the state has used in the past, Rohlfes says, are sting operations and sweeps.

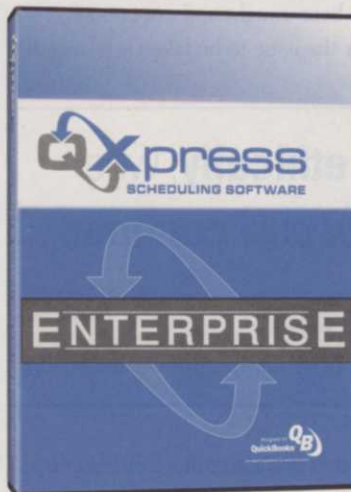
Typically, in a sting operation, law enforcement will rent a house for a day or a weekend, then call 20 or so contractors from the phone book and set up appointments. When they come by to make a bid they will be asked to show their li-

cense. If one is not forthcoming, handcuffs are applied and the contractor cited. Sweeps take place in new development areas where there is a lot of construction going on. Busts are typically made on several things.

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These sound like effective measures. "If you get caught not paying workers' compensation, this is serious and you get jail time. If you get caught without a contractor's license, you get cited. If you get cited three times, you can get jail time. How many people does that happen to? Not a whole lot," says Rohlfes.

Another problem with these measures is that they tend to ebb and flow, Rohlfes says. Under Davis and the start of the Schwarzenegger administrations, there wasn't enough money in the state budget. But now real attention is being paid. Schwarzenegger has budgeted \$5.5 million for 62 additional auditors. There is a push toward multi-agency cooperation, called the California Economic and Employment Coalition, to crack down on enforcement. "Unions are behind this, for unlicensed contractors usually pay miserably, and this is an issue which is uniting both Democrats and Republicans," Rohlfes says. "We hope this will change things. But so far not enough people have been caught and not enough punished for the issue to be taken seriously. It

workers' compensation or other taxes, this makes it difficult for the legitimate contractor. On the other hand, she says, "sometimes someone is new to the industry and doesn't know how it works. That's why an organization like ours can be helpful to an emerging company."

There is no state licensing for landscapers in Ohio, Munley says. Various municipalities might require licensing and bonding, but this is done on a local level.

And Munley doesn't necessarily think that state licensing would be a good thing. "I think that people who are doing the right thing now would step up to the plate to get the license if it was required, but unfortunately, the folks not working ethically, who don't have the quality, would continue not doing a good job," she says. "I would hope that enforcement would not come knocking at the door. It's difficult to legislate, and licensing would just add more red tape for the good contractor. The bad apples would continue to be bad apples."

The public relations effort that the OLA makes in lieu of licensing is to encourage homeowners to check out the credentials of landscapers they are thinking of hiring, in terms of liability insurance, workers' compensation and the like. Not to have these qualification is often illegal, but, as says Munley, "There's not a large arm out there enforcing it. Sometimes somebody will be caught, but it's not high on the radar screen."

Price cutting by unqualified contractors is, Munley says, "a significant problem. But it's not the biggest issue out there. We keep telling our members that good contractors need to stop selling on price, but instead sell on quality and service. That's the way an owner can compete against low prices. The good contractor offers more. Value is more important than price."

Taking a national perspective, Tom Delaney, directory of government affairs for the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET), points out that a significant licensing issue has to do just with pesticides, herbicides and fer-

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Visit for more information on PLANET's certification programs.

**"The folks not working ethically, who don't have the quality, would continue not doing a good job."**

— Sandy Munley, Ohio Landscape Association

puts legitimate contractors at a tremendous disadvantage, and makes them feel like suckers by paying taxes when they see their competitors getting away with not paying them."

#### Different state, different rules

By contrast, however, in Ohio, licensing is not that big an issue, says Sandy Munley, executive director of the Ohio Landscape Association. Munley agrees that because some contractors work under the table and don't pay



tilizers. These licensing requirements are enforced. "Every landscape contractor who uses these chemicals has to have one licensed applicator," says Delaney. "There are standardized tests of the formulations for different applications and there is a lot of coordination now between states and Environmental Protection Agency. You need to buy the manual, study it and pass the written test."

Some contractors avoid this process simply because they can't pass the test, Delaney says. On the other hand, he adds, it's not enough simply for the owner or one person to have the license. That person has to properly train his employees. If he doesn't, not only is that company liable, but he creates problems for the rest of the industry.

"In New York State an application drifted from the yard sprayed upstairs to a neighboring baby's bedroom. There was no real exposure. But the media got hold of it, and as a result, now there is a law that the applicator has to notify the entire neighborhood before spraying," says Delaney. "This happens in a lot of different situations. Whenever someone is not careful and neglects training an employee, the entire industry gets stuck with new laws and regulations."

Landscapers can contract out to chemical specialists, but, as cautions Delaney, "you want to be very clear as to what the application is and that the subcontractor has the proper license. There are more regulations coming out for the use of fertilizers. Some are being banned because of the phosphorus."

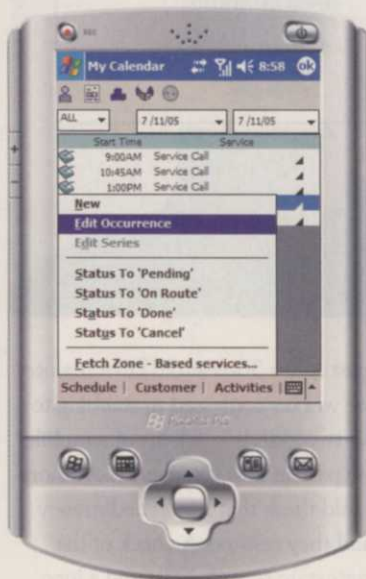
Delaney says that one good way to resolve the competitive conflict with price cutters is to take the matter further and become industry certified in any one of a number of different ways.

"Having a professional certification shows you are a leader in your industry

and differentiates you from the crowd," says Delaney. ■

The author is a freelance writer who lives in Anacorte, WA.

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# The case for background checks

By Lance Frederiksen

Is that new hire someone you would want taking care of your family's property?



mittee but she vows to keep fighting for its passage in Florida.

## High stakes

The stakes have never been higher for landscape and lawn maintenance contractors when it comes to finding the right employees.

Not only do they face the traditional challenges associated with hiring and keeping dependable workers, but they also have to deal with the threat that a single bad hiring decision can cost them their company's reputation and bog them down in lengthy and costly litigation.

"Hiring relatively low-skilled workers in labor-intensive jobs has always been a risky proposition because of the high percentage of applicants with criminal history, driving record and workers' compensation issues," says Bob Mather, president of the Web-based background search company Pre-employ.com. "However, our increasingly litigious society has made hiring decisions of even more critical importance.

"These days, contractors can't rely on resumes or gut feelings. They have to really know their employees, especially those who could have contact with the young, elderly or disabled."

That's because lawsuits based on negligent hiring practices are at an all time-high.

Daniel Haskins, general counsel and executive vice president for Pre-employ.com, explains that "courts have ruled that employers have a general duty to investigate the back-

*continued on page 90*

## FIND OUT

- ▶ What checks uncover
- ▶ How employers factor in to the process
- ▶ High-risk candidates to watch out for

**T**his past July a 36-year-old lawn maintenance worker confessed to stabbing to death two elderly residents of a mobile home park in Port Orange, FL. Authorities say he told them that he needed money for drugs and they resisted. A check of the lawn worker's state records indicated a long history of drug abuse and robberies.

The deaths gave impetus to a small but growing campaign for a law requiring background checks for service technicians. Lucia Bone, whose sister was murdered by an air conditioning repairman in 2001, is president of Consumer Awareness of Unsafe Service Employment (CAUSE). "People need to know who's coming into their homes to work for them," says Bone. Her efforts to get the legislation passed in 2005 stalled in com-



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



















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AIC TeeJet® 	Good	Excellent	     
DG TwinJet® 	Excellent	Good	     
Turbo TwinJet® 	Excellent	Excellent	     
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 Fine

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 Very Coarse

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*continued from page 88*

ground of workers who will interface with the public, or who could have a foreseeable opportunity to commit a violent crime against someone in the course of their employment."

Furthermore, employers lose almost four out of every five negligent hiring cases, with the average jury plaintiff award being in excess of \$1.6 million.

"Damages are awarded against employers because of the employer's negligence and failure to perform a reasonable search into the employee's background prior to hiring," Haskins says.

**"Managers today need to be armed with numerous tools to protect both their clients and their workers."**

— Daniel Haskins

Cases have affected a broad range of industries. Here's just a sampling:

► After driving for a telephone company for a single week, an employee was involved in a traffic accident. The jury learned that the company never saw the employee's driving record, which had five tickets within 18 months. They awarded the injured party \$550,000.

► A medical company was ordered to pay \$26.5 million to the family of a murdered patient because the court ruled the business "should have known of the employee's unfitness" and was liable because it didn't conduct an adequate background search.

► A car rental company recently paid \$750,000 to an employee who was raped by a fellow worker who had a history of sexual assaults.

► An appellate court awarded \$4 million to

a woman who was raped by an employee whose application indicated no criminal convictions. However, the employer didn't conduct a background search to confirm that information.

Mather also says, "Managers today, whether they be landscape and lawn maintenance contractors or high-tech entrepreneurs, need to be armed with numerous tools to protect both their clients and their workers. Many employers spend little time verifying the accuracy of job applications. Although they would like to do a thorough job as in the past, the cost has often been a factor. Now, companies can't afford not to perform background checks."

Gus McEntire, owner of McEntire Landscaping, Inc. in Redding, CA, started using Pre-employ.com about a year ago to screen job-seekers for criminal histories. He also reviews driving records and requires applicants to take a drug test.

"We've got people working at schools and in people's backyards," he says. "We don't want someone who just got out of prison on those jobs."

McEntire says he worries every day about potential lawsuits. "Employers are liable for whatever their workers do," he says. So, even though hiring is "really, really tough right now," it's a decision that helps him sleep at night.

As an added benefit, McEntire says, he's finding that "when people know we are doing background checks, they tend to be a lot more honest on their applications."

The Northern California landscape contractor noted that a criminal history does not automatically disqualify an applicant, but that certain categories of crimes require special attention.

### **Beware certain groups**

One criminal group that is intensely under the journalistic and legal microscope these days is the estimated four million pedophiles

*continued on page 92*





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continued from page 90  
in the United States.

Mather, who started his career as a private investigator licensed in California and Nevada, says, "convicted sexual offenders can

look like anyone. They're able to blend into the neighborhood once they've done their time in prison, and, odds are, a good percentage will re-offend.

"Many of these criminals will seek employment where they will be in contact with children — working in parks and schools. Any workers with direct access to minors should, without a doubt, have to undergo a thorough background check."

Other potential problems that require attention include workplace violence and employee theft, Mather says.

"There are six million threats of violence and two million workplace assaults each year," he says. "On average, 13 people die due to workplace violence every week."

In addition, a third of employees admit to stealing a product or money from their workplace in the previous three years.

"The U.S. Chamber of Commerce estimates dishonesty by employees costs 1% to 2% of gross sales," Mather says, "and that an estimated 30% of business failures are directly related to employee theft."

Surveys show that 96% of employers value background searches as a hiring tool, but that only 26% conduct investigations.

However, the trend has been toward more and more pre-employment checks, especially with the explosion of information available through the Internet.


Numerous companies now offer background screening. Employers, however, would be wise to check whether the company they are considering regularly gathers its criminal search information directly from court records or whether they use databases that can often be outdated. ■

The author is with Pre-employ.com, a company that specializes in providing help in background checks.

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# Five steps to lower workers' comp costs

By Rob Wilson

Keeping one of your fastest growing expenses under control isn't so tough if you follow this plan

One of the biggest expenses affecting small businesses, particularly in the landscaping industry, is workers' compensation insurance, which covers expenses associated with injuries to employees while on the job. In fact, 33% of small business owners identified workers' compensation as a critical problem in 2004, according to the National Federation of Independent Businesses (NFIB).

Workers' compensation includes medical bills as well as payment for lost time and for



## FIND OUT

How to take action ▶ When to outsource ▶ Why experience mods count

any permanency of injuries. Coverage is required by all states and rates vary. In 2004 rates ranged from 5% to 40% of payroll depending on the state where coverage is provided. Average premiums continue to rise in most states just behind labor costs and health insurance while coverage availability decreases. In most cases, the rate is charged against all payroll, including double time. This is a fast growing expense across industries, and one that cannot be ignored.

So what can a company do to protect itself? Keep your claims to a minimum and be diligent about your policy's coverage.

**1 Make safety a priority.** Develop a written safety control program. Better workplace safety leads to fewer claims, and fewer claims directly affects your workers' compensation rate.

Include a disciplinary section in your written plan. You have to make employees accountable for breaking the rules. Your plan should also provide rewards for correctly following safety procedures.

Even if you put together an excellent written program, it will not work if top management doesn't endorse and implement it. Managers and lead workers have to take responsibility for safety enforcement of each work area. This includes scheduling and conducting regular safety meetings and discussions of specific work environment hazards.

You might also consider conducting random drug testing for all employees. Be upfront about telling all potential employees that submitting to random drug tests is a requirement for employment, which should decrease any potential drug-related claims.



**2 Take action when a claim occurs.** When an employee experiences an injury on the job require a drug test. While a positive drug test will not allow you to deny a claim in most states, it will certainly help.

Complete an accident report with as much detail as possible. Take photographs of the scene and talk to any potential witnesses about what happened. Send the first report of injury within 24 hours to the insurance company to ensure prompt handling and to help fight fraudulent claims. If you suspect fraud, inform the insurance company.

**3 Take action behind the scenes.** Review your workers' compensation policy for accuracy and ensure the claimant is not a repeat offender. Is the payroll correct? Are the class codes correct?

Second, check your experience modification factors (or "experience mods"). Every business that spends more than \$5,000 on workers' compensation has an experience mod. Each company starts at 1.00 and it goes up or down depending on its claim experience. The lower your claims, the lower your experience mod. Your rate is typically multiplied by your experience mod to arrive at the final rate. For example, if your rate is \$10 and your experience mod is .8, your rate becomes \$8. Make sure your experience mod is correct. Are the claims listed actually yours? The "mistake" ratio in the insurance industry is higher than 27%, so review everything carefully. Errors that go unnoticed can cost you.

Third, explore a deductible. Most deductibles vary from \$1,000 to \$500,000 per claim and are charged from the first dollar incurred. Premium is typically reduced by 4% for a \$1,000 deductible per claim.

**4 Be aware of possible fraud.** Again, review your policy for accuracy of the claim. Realize that sometimes it pays to investigate what you suspect is a fraudulent claim. For example, a recent case of a worker who

**Be aware of possible fraud. Review your policy for accuracy of the claim. Realize that sometimes it pays to investigate what you suspect is a fraudulent claim.**

claimed a bad back was later photographed digging out a tree stump. It's unlikely the employer could have won the suit without the photographic evidence.

**5 Consider a PEO.** With all this to worry about, it is not hard to see why there is a growing trend in small businesses to outsource these functions to a professional employer organization (PEO). Advantages for the business owner include reduced premiums, safety and loss control expertise, nationwide coverage, and professional payroll processing and tax filing.

By outsourcing to a PEO, a company becomes part of a much larger purchasing entity and thereby receives the benefits of its buying power. PEOs handle payroll processing and payroll tax filings, and are experts on the latest updates and changes in this arena. Additionally, they provide human resources services.

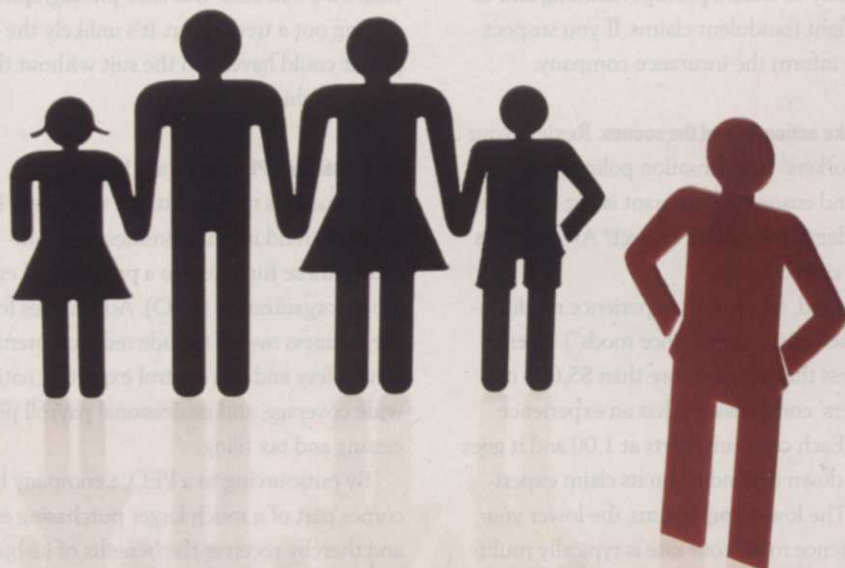
Since the majority of small businesses do not have a fulltime HR professional on staff, they often need advice on issues ranging from loss control and safety, to hiring and firing, employment practices, performance appraisals and wage issues. A good PEO will be able to provide you coverage and assistance in any state where you do business. This way, you can concentrate on what you do best – running your business. ■

The author is president of Employco Group, a professional employer organization that serves clients in more than 30 states. Contact him at [robwilson@employco.com](mailto:robwilson@employco.com).

# Family, friends ... clients?

By Daniel Weiss

If you're in a quandary about doing work for family members or close friends, maybe it's time to set some rules



## FIND OUT

- ▶ How to set boundaries
- ▶ When to ask for money
- ▶ Who is considered family and who isn't

**W**orking for friends and family can be touchy. Some contractors refuse to work for friends and family and others embrace it.

When it comes to providing services to family and friends, who's right and who's wrong?

More than a few contractors feel uncomfortable or avoid providing professional services for family and close friends. They fear being reminded of projects all the time. Or they think about those things that can go awry with a project, problems or disagreements that could threaten a long-term friendship or cause strains within their family. But a contractor needs customers; that's what keeps him in business. And family and friends constitute a pool of possible work.

My opinion, formed over 17 years in the business, is that the contractor who draws a well-defined line about who gets a "deal" and who doesn't, is happier in the long run (and in the end has more true "friends") than the contractor who feels the need to discount their services to friendly acquaintances.

### It happened to me

Before we get into the subtleties of doing favors for those who are closest to us, see if the following story sounds familiar to you. I'm almost embarrassed to tell you it happened to me, but I think it's instructive.

A "friend" who lives in a large residence out of town, a person who can afford professional landscape services, employed my company to





do a project for him. He put up my employees at a hotel and I stayed with him and his family. The project was going to last a few days. We hardly went over the project, but I was giving him a "good deal" even though I would be working onsite with vendors that I had never worked with before to purchase plants, stonework and other materials. I was between projects at the time. The job — bed preparation, plantings and stonework — required us to drag several pieces of equipment to my friend's property some distance away.

I wasn't planning for this particular project to make any profit, but I fully expected to recover my costs. I spent a considerable amount of time getting his project ready and doing preparation for the project. I felt this was repayment for things we had exchanged over the years. He was my friend and this was fine with me.

When the job was finished, my friend seemed quite happy. I asked for payment. He responded: "Gather up all your receipts and labor hours and submit them to my wife for review."

This surprised me, but I followed procedure. When I called him the next day from our offices, I was even more surprised and a bit mystified that the message on his cellular phone indicated that he would be gone on vacation for two weeks.

Was I happy about how this played out? Are you kidding?

Needless to say, our relationship is not so cozy anymore. But don't get me wrong. I'm not heaping all of the blame on my friend for taking advantage of my generosity. Most of the blame belongs to me. I wasn't thorough, clear and upfront about what it would take to do the project and how and when payment was to be made afterwards.

That event convinced me that I needed to set boundaries and treat everyone (except in rare cases) the same. My philosophy became: When we provide a service for payment, we have entered into a business relationship.

### Draw the lines

The stickier question is, what's the relationship between being a customer and a close family member?

Start by looking at the universe of people you might do business with: immediate family members, extended family, friends of the family (both familiar and unfamiliar), friends, family members of employees, existing customers and new customers acquired from referrals and other sources. Where do you draw the line when it comes to "customers"?

Many contractors draw the line right after immediate family members. Beyond that, they treat everyone the same. They're in business to make a profit, after all. And they wouldn't provide a lesser level of service because they had given these customers a deal.

Does that mean that a contractor must require a social security number from an uncle who he's going to do work for? That depends on the uncle. But the contractor would be wise to at least get a deposit and go over a specific payment schedule if he or she is going to put together a plan and agree to do a renovation or landscape project, for example. And get it in writing.

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The contractor who draws a **well-defined line about who gets a "deal" and who doesn't**, is happier in the long run.

---

The fact is that most of us have extended family that we don't really know. While it's often said that "blood is thicker than water," it's equally true that, "a family that pays together, stays together." A job entails the highest level of performance from the contractor, and in return, for the customer to pay for your work. As soon as the relationship, no matter how familiar, undertakes the exchange

of services for money, the relationship changes and it must be handled in a professional and responsible way by both parties. In other words, if they want your services, they pay.

The best time to clear up any misunderstandings is before you get started. Be thorough about the services you're going to provide, when you're going to provide them and how much it is going to cost, including terms, before you begin the work.

There are other issues involved with doing business with family members and close friends. Often they have more access to you. While your customers may only call your office or cell phone, family and friends may have no qualms about calling you and asking for special work or favors on weekends.

Have you established guidelines for when you'll be available — even to them? And when

it's off limits to contact you about business?

Many of us gladly do work for family members and close friends; in fact, it gives us pleasure. And, many times they're excellent customers. When we see them at family gatherings such as birthday parties and anniversaries we're pleased to discuss our work.

And there are times when they need our help, say after a bad storm or when somebody drives over their property and leaves ruts in the turf. Yes, we can and will help them out. Even then, it's probably wise for all parties to agree upon what needs to be done and all the other details of the project, especially the financial details. ■

The author is president of The Elysian Design Group, Inc., Keego Harbor, MI. Contact him at Elysian-design@aol.com.

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## Bad seeds

By Baylee Simon

Just like weeds, problem employees can keep your business from growing



### FIND OUT

- ▶ When to C.Y.A.
- ▶ How to uncover the real issues
- ▶ How to have "the talk" with problem employees

**S**hawn Kelly was in a bind. Last January the owner of Mirror Lakes Landscapes, Pools & Waterfalls in Spring, TX, found out his superintendent of seven years had stolen \$2,000 worth of materials at wholesale cost to do an outside job five months earlier. Though Kelly's immediate instinct was to have the employee arrested, his anger and shock weren't enough to blind him to one simple fact: He needed this guy on his team.

"We're a design and building company, and we do very custom work that has to be watched over really closely," Kelly says. "Here I

was with our main guy who was caught stealing, and what do I do about that? If I hold onto him, I lose the respect of my other employees. If I let him go, I'm letting my main guy go." What's more, Kelly knew the superintendent well, had brought him up from minimum wage to a \$70,000 salary and thought he was a great worker with a good heart.

"When you work with people in this line of work, you spend more time with them than with your family," Kelly says. "If he would have come to me and asked for the materials, I would have given them to him. That's why it was so hurtful."



### The buddy-boss balance

When dealing with problem employees, business owners often find themselves in situations that force them to weigh what's right versus what's right for their companies.

Though personal relationships formed on the job build morale and create an enjoyable workplace, business relationships are what ultimately sustain profits and balance the checkbook. So how do you decide which ties to keep and which to sever?

As an employer, "you want to be friendly but need to have a sense of distance so people are aware you're the boss," says Gini Graham Scott, author of *"A Survival Guide to Managing Employees from Hell,"* which comes out in November 2006. How an employee behaves at work may be influenced by many outside pressures, so you may want to deal with someone who acts out due to a family crisis or personal problem differently than you would with someone who is merely opportunistic. "There has to be a period where you can be sympathetic," Scott says, "But if [the problem] continues, realize that you're not a charity operation."

Adopting the attitude that everyone screws up now and again, Kelly severely demoted his superintendent, who quit two weeks later, causing a slew of problems for the business owner. "It really handcuffed us; suddenly I had to run out to jobs and check up on everything, and I was already working 70-hour weeks," says Kelly, who received a call from the employee two months later, begging for his job back. After checking with his crew leaders and senior employees, Kelly brought the superintendent back for half of his salary and with restrictions in place, slowly allowing him to take on more responsibilities and re-ceiving his wages every four months.

"I've been in this business for 25 years and that was the worst two months I've ever had," Kelly says. "What he stole from us monetarily, I lost more than that in one week of him not being here."

### Find the "why" behind the will

When a star employee or loyal veteran strikes out at work, it may be in retaliation to an injustice they feel they incurred while on the job. Though it's no easy task, it's the business owner's job to stop the leak before the whole ship goes overboard. In the case of the superintendent, Kelly realized he had been neglecting the long-time employee when he hired an outgoing landscape architect from New Orleans to become the company's closer on jobs.

"This new guy was a tremendous help and relieved me of so many things," says Kelly of the landscape architect, who received benefits and worked fewer days than the superintendent. "It was a jealousy thing. The [superintendent] felt like he had been cut out of the picture; he figured [stealing] would be a way to show people he was boss and still had power," Kelly says.

Though **part** of being a boss is also **being a mentor** to your employees, a business owner is **neither a babysitter nor a psychologist**.

From now on, the business owner says he'll always consult with his current employees before bringing in new ones and, though he hasn't hired anyone new since the theft incident, he vows to be more conscious of his workers and make sure everyone feels appreciated.

"The biggest lesson is that when you bring somebody in who is a savior for your company, just remember that you have other people working there who have been helping you for a long time," Kelly says. "Don't let them get lost in the shuffle."

Scott also suggests reducing the potential for employees to steal by creating a system of checks and balances or incentives for workers

## TURN A HARD CONVERSATION INTO AN EASY ONE

Calling an employee into your office to address a problem may seem like a daunting task, especially when a conversation can quickly escalate to threats and shouting. Gini Graham Scott, author of "A Survival Guide to Managing Employees from Hell," offers these strategies for approaching problem employees and resolving conflicts in a calm and effective way.

► **Be clear.** "Clarify to the employee what the problem is and point out that you're dissatisfied with how he is performing," Scott says. "Let him know you want to help him improve." It may be helpful to keep a record of workers' behavior to have documentation in case the problem becomes a pattern that may be grounds for termination.

► **Offer help.** Sometimes the problem may be that an employee needs more training or detailed instructions on how to do his job. Scott suggests being a role model by showing the correct alternative to employees who are doing something wrong. Tell the employee you want to see him improve and pair him with a more experienced worker as his on-the-job mentor.

► **Present the consequences.** While you want to make this conversation as friendly as possible, you still must play the role of boss and let the employee know his behavior, if continued, will not be tolerated. "Make it clear to the person that he messed up and has to prove himself again," Scott says. "Let him know that you want to bring him up to speed, but that he's not being productive and is costing you money." If the problem doesn't improve, take further action.

► **Visualize the meeting.** This tactic works especially well for more tense employee confrontations. "Imagine different approaches and sense which is going to work. In your mind, play out different activities and responses, and visualize what you might do or say," Scott says. You can also have a written outline of topics to address in the meeting. And always have a mediator present if you think the situation could become potentially dangerous.

— B.S.

to keep watchful eyes on their colleagues.

"Make each employee responsible for a certain number of items to make sure the materials are there at the end of the day," Scott says. "Or have one person designated to observe things; that way employees know they'll

be held responsible if productivity goes down." Offering incentives or bonuses to hardworking employees, dropping in for periodic check-ins and staying in touch with workers may also help bolster productivity and lower the risk of theft.

### It's not personal, it's business

Though part of being a boss is also being a mentor to your employees, a business owner is neither a babysitter nor a psychologist, and when a worker's personal life begins to interfere too much with his on-the-job performance, it may be time to let him go.

"I'm sure a lot of company owners wish employees would just leave their personal problems at home," says Tim Lake, owner of T. Lake Environmental Design in East Dublin, GA. "We inherit those problems and though you have to try to separate business and personal life, we counsel people and help them manage their lives better," he says.

Lake would know better than anybody — he's had several issues with past employees who couldn't leave their personal lives at the door when they came into work, eventually leading Lake to develop a personnel policy, employee manual and discipline sheets to have written guidelines for acceptable work behavior and documentation of when those rules were breached.

"Earlier in my career, I felt like I should try to save the world, and I still do, but I've come to a different place in my life. You're responsible for your own actions, and if things aren't going well, it's because of what you are or are not doing," says Lake, who put pressure on one very qualified and likeable employee whose personal problems led him to do mediocre work and eventually leave the company. "I instituted sales tracking and found that he was putting out hundreds of thousands of dollars per month in propositions, but his closing ratio was next to nothing," Lake says. "When we started measuring closing

*continued on page 104*





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*continued from page 102*

ratio and the profitability of the jobs he was doing, measuring gross profits sold and produced instead of gross dollars, it became evident that he wasn't doing anything but breathing the air here for free."

Though not every employee problem can be measured or tracked, often those issues become the most difficult and awkward to handle.

"I had a guy who was a manager of one of our divisions, who was super intelligent and I really liked him, but somehow the chemistry never worked. He became a 'well-poisoner,'" says Lake. "He didn't respect the people who worked under him and was negative about everything in the world. When he came in [to work], it was like the black hole of happiness in the halls; everyone would go in their of-

fices." Lake struggled with how to handle the situation since the employee was very qualified for his job, though his negative energy was damaging the company's morale. Eventually, the business owner brought him into his office and invited him to find another job where he would be happier.

"I didn't outright fire him. I gave him sources for help and told him to change his life, come in tomorrow a different person and he'd have his job here," Lake says. "If [he couldn't do that], I said go home, wash your face, look in the mirror and think hard about what you need to do. Now he's in another industry and he's flourishing."

#### "C.Y.A."

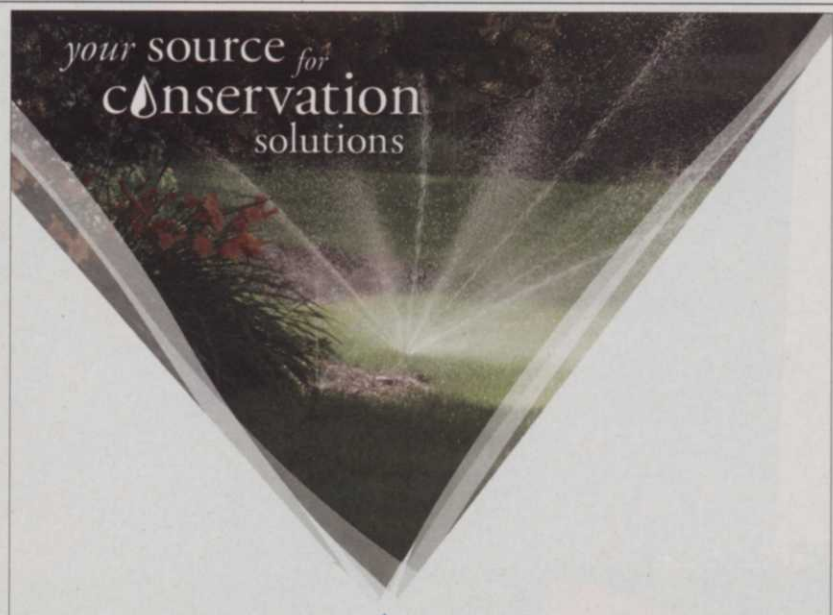
Of course there are tools and practices business owners can use to try to prevent

problem employees from poisoning their companies. One motto Joe Pollina, owner of Tommy Pollina Landscape Co. in Park Ridge, IL, has come to live by is "C.Y.A.—cover your a\$%."

"I've learned to use as much technology as possible; I don't trust an employee until we've established a relationship and I know who he is," says Pollina, who carries a BlackBerry, pocket word processor and two cell phones on him at all times, and has GPS tracking systems installed on each of his company trucks. "You can never keep too much information and you never know if there's an issue with unemployment or on a job site," Pollina says. "I keep notes on employees and clients and I can track my crews; I can tell you where all of my trucks are at any time. Some people call that micromanagement, but I call it supervising." Others would just call it running a successful business. ■

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# Talpirid: The Better Business Bait

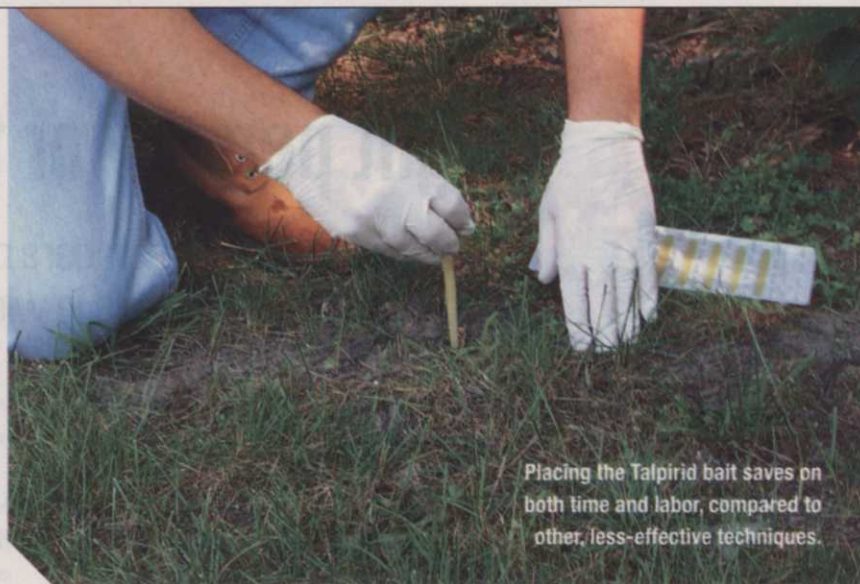
**J**eff Cooper, president of Lawn Connection in West Berlin, N.J., takes an "old-school" attitude when it comes to customers. "We take care of the customer's lawn, tree and irrigation needs. We do what it takes to make them happy," he says.

That's why he was so frustrated to never have a viable solution to mole problems: "We had many years of 'There's nothing I can do, Ma'am,'" Cooper recalls. But two years ago, that all changed.

"Our Bell Laboratories representative, Brad Herman, approached us about trying Talpirid Mole Bait," he says. "I was skeptical, but willing to give it a try. And let me tell you, if I didn't see the results with my own eyes, I wouldn't believe it!"

Results were so great that Cooper is using the bait in nearly 200 accounts. He sees it as a great alternative to trapping, which was his previous hit-or-miss solution.

"Who wants 20 traps hanging around on their property?" he says. "Plus, while we don't offer mowing service, we know the mowing guys appreciate working on a baited account a lot more than trying to navigate around traps."



Placing the Talpirid bait saves on both time and labor, compared to other, less-effective techniques.

## THE RIGHT FOOD SOURCE

Cooper says that Lawn Connection used to heavily market its grub control program as helping control moles. "But really, earthworms are moles' No. 1 food, not grubs," he says, praising Talpirid's worm-like attributes.

"We still offer grub control, knowing that it will cut down on mole activity, but with Talpirid, the bottom line is, you follow the label and you get results, period," he says.

Cooper notes that beyond the aesthetics — no unsightly traps or telltale fogging — his customers appreciate the safety aspects of Talpirid. "We explain to customers that non-target poisoning is a negligible issue, and we are always able to bury the 'worms,' so they're not easily picked up by children or pets," he says. "We stress the safety precautions we take, and we have had no problems at any of the accounts."

## ANOTHER SERVICE OPTION

Now that he is comfortable with the results Talpirid gives his customers, Cooper's task is to devise a formal mole service program into his company's offerings.

"Right now, we have three ways of sell-

ing to homeowners: We sell the product directly to them, or we do it and tell them what to expect, or we do it and provide follow-up monitoring," he explains. "By next year, we'll have something more firmly in place. Bell has been very good in this regard, providing us with literature and assistance as needed."

While Lawn Connection is a 16-technician company, Cooper notes the mole service has been a pet project of his own. Only he, his brother, Jon, and his salesman, Mark Wainwright, are involved. However, down the road, he can envision letting his techs provide the service or even creating a specific mole route.

"Moles are such a problem here because there's a lot of growth in this area. Woods have been cleared to make way for trailer parks, retirement homes and other development," he says. "I wanted to make sure Talpirid was up to my standards, because I wanted to protect my reputation."

"I knew that if we were going to go forward with mole service, we'd better have a method to back us up. And now we do."

Mark Wainwright, shown here preparing a hole in which to place Talpirid, and the Lawn Connection team see a profitable add-on service taking shape.







# Right person for the job

By Eric Hurst

Determining a team member's natural instincts will help you place key people in winning positions

**F**inding the right person for the right job challenges almost all small businesses. Are instincts a solution to your staffing quandaries? Don't shrug them off.

There is solid evidence suggesting that defining an employee's or candidate's natural instincts will often provide the information you need to make your best job placement decision. While employers can choose from many assessment tools, the Kolbe Index is a simple and accessible tool to outline and reveal a person's initiating and supporting instincts.

## Facts on Kolbe

Kolbe Corp. began 30 years ago when Kathy Kolbe set out to help elementary and high-school students navigate the educational system, learn more and achieve personal goals no matter their abilities. After several years the information and expertise Kolbe Corp. had developed working with children became the basis upon which the Kolbe Index was developed for use with adults.

The Kolbe Index is the first-ever devised tool that measures "the instinctive action and problem-solving styles of individuals." This tool focuses on the conative dimension of the mind, which determines how a person is most comfortable and successful when performing a particular task.

Kolbe is more than theory; it returns positive results — enough positive results to warrant implementation in companies like Intel, Volkswagen, Honeywell, Accenture, Pfizer and IBM. Fortune 500 companies are not the

only businesses employing Kolbe methods; an increasing number of landscape firms are too.

Jason Cupp, CLP, COB and co-founder of Highland Outdoor, a landscape design/build firm near Kansas City, MO, was proud of his staff's skills and the evident passion it showed for the company and its customers. But he didn't know how to implement them properly to rise to the level of success he felt that his team could achieve. He felt the team was misaligned with respect to job responsibilities, resulting in forced and unreal expectations on each teammate.

Frustrated, he investigated Kolbe as a way to harness employees' natural instincts for better job performance and satisfaction. What he learned led Highland Outdoor management to begin a process of identifying each team member's natural instincts so that it could rework the company's organizational chart with the goal of giving each team member the freedom to act naturally in his/her position day in and day out.

Cupp says the results have been startling. Efficiency is at an all-time high, resulting in higher sales with less payroll expense.

## It works for landscapers

Michael Becker, CLP, CEO and president of Estate Gardeners, Inc. in Omaha, NE, felt his company "had hit a ceiling." It seemed that company leaders had taken on too many roles. Frustrated, he turned to the Kolbe Index early this year.

*continued on page 108*



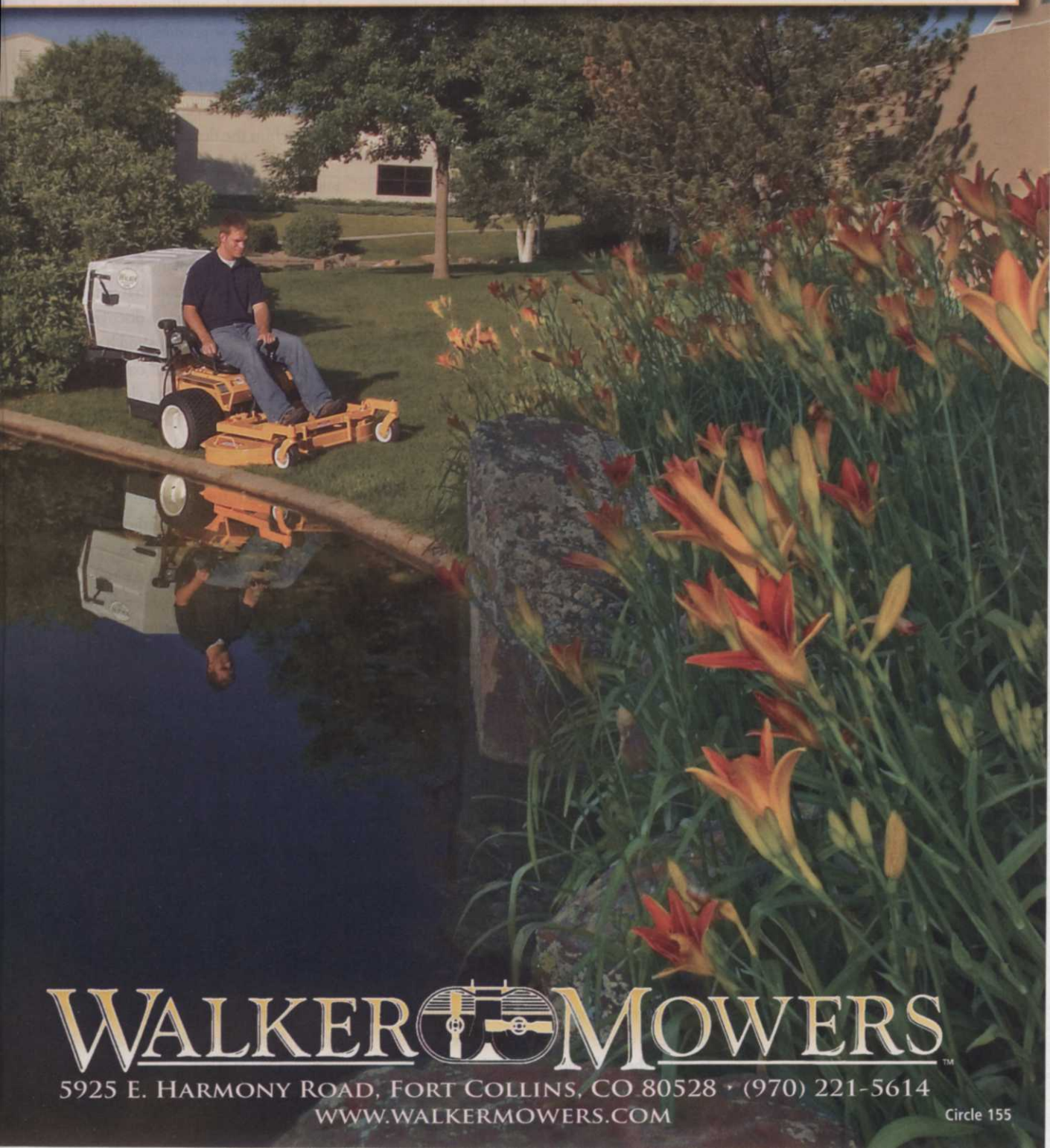
## FIND OUT

- ▶ How Kolbe testing works
- ▶ Why instincts matter
- ▶ How landscapers get the advantage



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**2. Determine.** The Kolbe B Index measures one's self-expectations of a job. This is valuable when examining if an employee's or applicant's expectations concur with the businesses expectations.

**3. Decide.** The Kolbe A Index measures an individual's instinctive (natural) strengths. Using this tool allows the employer to hire the right person for the right position.

To investigate Kolbe further visit [www.kolbe.com](http://www.kolbe.com).

— E.H.

*continued from page 106*

He said it revealed how he and his partner, Patricia Burleson, each were "wired" and in what capacities they could most strengthen their company. The knowledge let them focus their specific roles within their business. It also gave them confidence to identify the right people to fill gaps in their management team.

To his mild surprise, Becker also discovered that practicing Kolbe principles improved his problem-solving skills. He feels he now better recognizes and anticipates how each key team member will operate under duress. He feels he is now better able to identify the same tendencies in new hires.

This newfound knowledge helps him identify the root causes of workplace stress, he says, and helps he and Burleson communicate more effectively with each other and other team members.

Employees that feel out of place generally do not perform well and often become apathetic in their positions. They may feel that they are in "over their head" or that they're just wasting their time because the job does not allow them to use their instinctive talents.

By contrast, when team members are fit into the right positions, everything improves — the employee, the company and service to the company's customers. Staffing a company properly is the base upon which its success rises.

While the Kolbe Index may be new to most of the industry, it isn't to Jeff Korhan, CLP, ASLA, president of Tremendous Landscape Company in Plainfield, IL. He has been using it for nearly 10 years to staff his company. His goal is to maximize team efficiency and performance.

He offered the example of a college-trained landscape designer seeking a designer/sales position in his company, Korhan administered a Kolbe A Index to determine the applicant's natural instincts. Though trained in design, the Index suggested that the applicant would struggle to create new and innovative designs, a must for the high-end residential market. The

Index, however, suggested the applicant had a strong inclination toward implementation.

Trusting this information, Korhan offered the applicant a position as a field superintendent. Although the applicant was, at first, reluctant to accept the position, he did

Recently the young man, who has advanced to the position of field superintendent, approached Korhan and thanked him for not offering him the designer/sales position.

Clichés, although time worn, usually contain a core of truth — you are only as good as the people around you. For the most part, each person in your office or who walks through your door looking for a job has (or may have) a skill and trait that will benefit your company. The trick is discovering that trait and then tapping into and harnessing it for the betterment of your company, the employee and, of course, your clients.

But what about personality testing, a tool that many progressive landscape companies use to staff key positions? While this may keep the chemistry balanced within the office, it often doesn't reveal whether the candidate is a good fit for a particular job.

The same can be said of aptitude tests, which again provide valuable information about a candidate's makeup but do not validate whether the candidate has the natural tendencies necessary to accomplish the job efficiently.

Keep in mind too that many of these tools are geared toward job candidates, not your current staff. While it may be necessary to hire on a new team member, using a tool such as the Kolbe Index to determine a person's natural instincts gives you a tool to better your company with your existing team.

You will not struggle with putting the right person in the right position anymore. ■

The author is the COO of Viridian Group ([www.viridian-group.com](http://www.viridian-group.com)) the only Kolbe Certified consulting firm serving the landscape design/build industry. Contact him at 800/635-6826 ext. 702 or [Eric@Viridian-Group.com](mailto:Eric@Viridian-Group.com).



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# Golden years, golden opportunities

By Laura Weldon

Seniors bring experience, patience and communications skills to your business

**Y**ou can expect major changes in the workforce. Within the next few years, senior citizens will make up a much larger percentage of available employees than ever before. In fact, the over-65 population will increase by 70% between 2010 and 2030 while in the same time period the total labor force will rise by 4%. Young workers will be harder to find.

Sound like bad news for the landscape industry? It's not. Understanding the benefits of hiring or retaining older people on your staff will put you ahead of this trend. Let's check common arguments against older workers with the actual facts.

## Dispelling the myths

► **Seniors are a health burden.** Actually, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, those 65 and up are healthier than ever before with fewer

than 20% suffering from a chronic condition such as arthritis or heart disease. In assessing risk, it's important to recognize that the youngest workers are the least likely to use correct safety procedures or remain cautious when operating equipment.

While statistically full-time older workers can cost companies that offer employer-paid health services more, they return greater assets in the experience and expertise they provide.

► **Job skills diminish with age.** This depends on the job description. A worker over 50 can be more likely to be productive due to work experience and skill than a younger worker, although less likely to perform well in tasks of strength. But research indicates that cognitive functioning and long-term skills improve with age. In other words, they may not be as strong but their reasoning is superior. Employees who performed physical labor in their youth

## FIND OUT

Stats on the senior sector ► When to employ retirees ► Why employee retention matters

KEI employs several people with at least 30 years of experience. "Their experience is wonderful," says CEO Ron Kujawa.





have most likely developed on-the-job skills, which translate to other areas of the business such as sales or training.

► **Older workers are no longer ambitious.** The opposite is true. A 2003 study of 35,000 employees looked at "employee engagement," which measures a worker's willingness to put extra time, energy and personal dedication into the company's success. The results found that those over 50 were more motivated to exceed their job expectations than younger workers. This study also noted that companies with highly engaged employees had better cost containment and revenue growth with less overall turnover.

► **Seniors are not open to new ways of thinking.** Actually their reasoning is more complex in many ways. The same 2003 study cited above found workers over 50 were superior in a form of creativity valuable to employers known as "experimental innovation." For example, based on years of observation and learning, they formulate more efficient modes of business operation. They are also eager to learn new tasks when shown how they relate to company success.

► **Patience declines with age.** False. More life experience often translates to deeper understanding of human nature — what works and what does not. Studies indicate that people over 50 often have better interpersonal skills. They are more patient and less likely to react with anger, qualities valuable in every business situation.

### What about retirement?

Those who are retiring don't intend to stay that way. The first of the Baby Boomer generation turned 60 this year. A survey of nearly 2,400 people by Merrill Lynch indicates that most retirees intend to keep on earning. Three-quarters plan to work, many in a different career. While some need to augment their incomes, others have full medical benefits and pensions. More than 65% told pollsters that new challenges and continued mental stimu-

A study found that currently **78%** of people ages 55-59 are either **working or looking for work**, as well as **60%** of 60-65-year-olds and **37%** of 66-70-year-olds.

lation are what motivate them to look for work beyond retirement.

That's what Bonnie Wendell, office manager of Zergott Landscaping & Garden Center in North Olmsted, OH, has found. "I've had a lot more retirees apply," she says. "They're looking for something different and they don't want to sit at home."

### Proactive steps to take

► **Retain employees as the years go by.** It makes good sense to hang on to older workers who have accumulated that invaluable capital known as wisdom. It's a selective matter and doesn't apply to every employee, but business owners know that even lengthy training of a new worker cannot make up for what is lost when a good long-term employee has left.

Ron Kujawa, CEO of KEI in Milwaukee, WI, has found that older workers connect well with people and have a sterling work ethic. "I have at least six people on staff who have over 30 years," he says. "As a result their experience is wonderful."

► **Hire based on cross-current skills.** Thinking of offering landscape installations? Out there are retired builders who would enjoy the opportunity to guide your crew as they learn to construct gazebos and sheds. If you want help with paperwork, consider someone with decades of secretarial experience in an unrelated field. When you need sales staff, remember the techniques used to sell cars or vacation packages are the same ones necessary to convince potential customers that there's a



By 2030, nearly  
one in five  
people will be  
65 or over.

— U.S. Census  
Bureau

unique value to using your company.

Using these professionals part-time may be the most cost-effective approach for you. Chances are you will be delighted to find that the skills brought into your company will stimulate it to grow in new directions. Wendell notes that the retirees employed by Zergott in the garden center have come from non-landscape backgrounds.

► **Design a senior-friendly business environment.** The business model that has the greatest success in attracting older employees is flexible. It provides options — full or part time, extended or seasonal breaks, comp time, etc. It offers reasonable compensation and perks including discounted products and services when applicable.

Other factors to remember include the quality of the job itself. When surveyed, sen-

iors say want new opportunities. They appreciate a challenge. Most say they have excellent communication skills and enjoy working with the public. And naturally, the business needs to afford respect for each employee's knowledge and skills.

As Kujawa recognizes, attitude goes a long way toward making work fulfilling. "What we are finding is some older people seek out what they enjoy," he says. "We've found some excellent people in that respect. They come for more than just the remuneration."

What golden opportunities can a seasoned outlook bring to your business? ■

The author is owner of Weldon Equipment and a conflict resolution trainer with Affirmative Outcome. Contact her at [www.weldonequipment.com](http://www.weldonequipment.com) or [www.affirmativeoutcome.com](http://www.affirmativeoutcome.com).

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# Building the team

By Bill Hoopes

These can't-fail strategies to find (and keep) great people will ease your management cares in '07

**W**hat's your most vital resource? Here are your choices: products, equipment, operating capital, credit, marketing programs, people.

In almost every instance, owners of landscape and lawn service businesses answer the same — people. They say that people are the key resource in building a successful business. It's not that other resources aren't required; it's that they are more easily acquired and managed.

Even so (and strangely), rare is the owner or manager that doesn't struggle with people. This part of managing has to be the biggest frustration that the owners and managers of small businesses face.

The sequence of events goes like this:

- ▶ Plan the year. Develop marketing strategies and details.
- ▶ Create the annual budget with all known costs and revenues.
- ▶ Set a timeline for activities, marketing, sales and production.
- ▶ Oh yeah, people! Do we have enough of them?

And the story repeats itself to a greater or lesser degree in 90% of all landcare businesses. In other words, everything is nailed down except for people. The team.

Smart people plan and strategize. Owners and managers with valuable experience lay out the year and deal with banks and vendors. We know it pays to contact customers and confirm their business for next year, so we make the time to do that. Before you know it

it's December. Time to get the ad in the paper for some people.

By now you get the point of this article. It's all about developing your team. It's about putting people on the top of your resource-planning list and doing it now. The intended result will be to begin 2007 with the best-prepared core of people you've ever had.

Does it take time? Yes.

Will you invest more labor dollars up front? Yes.

Is it a smart business move? Yes, if you do it properly, as part of an overall people strategy that builds teams vs. just filling chairs.

## Build a strategy

Adopt the following strategy you'll solve many of your "people" problems as you head into next season and beyond:

▶ **Assess your staff.** Don't assume you know a person's mind. If you want to build a team of loyal, committed players, begin by confirming that the veteran leaders are "on board" and supportive of your business philosophy and practices. If not, they will sink your ship, guaranteed.

Have a one-on-one with core team members. How did the year go for them? Are they getting bored, need a challenge or expanded responsibilities? What can you do for them that will motivate them to help you?

▶ **Designate a competent person to handle new hire recruiting and onboarding.** Get serious about bringing on the best new hires. You cannot develop someone who is simply doesn't have

## FIND OUT

- ▶ How to build teams, not just fill chairs
- ▶ When to start
- ▶ How to interview and on-board



what it takes or who has taken the job for invalid reasons. You can control this process and, to a large degree, the results will be predictable. The days of finding the best new people in the classified ads are gone. You have to be more proactive.

► **Sales reps find jobs on the internet.** Go to monster.com or careerbuilder.com. Reach out. Be active. Scan the resumes there and contact them. This takes time. Assign the responsibility or do it yourself. Don't sit, waiting and hoping your ad works. Pesticide applicators and field techs look at hortjobs.com, and other Green Industry sites for opportunities.

► **Use your best Hispanic or non-English speaking leaders to find additional labor.** Create incentives for successful in-house recruiting.

► **Never let incompetent people interview.** Prepare and role-play the hiring questions in advance. Look at past performance as the best indicator of future results. For most Green Industry jobs, I place a candidate's attitude above all else in scoring the interview.

► **Show candidates your "best face" but present the job honestly** with clear expectations and rewards. A candidate will be asking him/herself "Why should I work here?" You must answer the question in their mind.

► **Don't forget the interview setting.** What are the physical surroundings like? Are they clean or are disorganized after a long season? The physical environment means a lot. Walk outside and come back in. Would you want to work here? Is your office private, uninterrupted? Desk cluttered? All this matters.

► **Make new hire on-boarding positive.** Bring new hires into a positive, organized and well-planned training, learning environment. Show the new team member how he/she is now an important team member. Introductions are first. How does the new hire fit into the group? Give the new person an opportunity to spend some time with each veteran unsupervised. Socialization takes time. Plan each day of the first few weeks to ensure a positive start and finish. Give the new person limited

goals, followed by honest but consistent positive reinforcement as they learn and gradually take on more responsibility. When new people feel important, respected and succeed, they don't quit.

► **Provide hands-on daily coaching after the initial training.** Hands-on coaching is an investment of time and is key to the new person's success. You or your designated recruiting/training person can be this coach. Or, the immediate supervisor can do the job. Someone must maintain consistent daily contact, coaching and reinforcement of early learning. To throw new people out on the job without initial training and follow-up coaching simply does not work.

► **Provide visible examples of positive leadership.** Practice what you preach. If you truly want to build a team of loyal, can-do players, your people must see those traits in you. Telling people to be considerate of customers' feelings and needs, then failing to do the same with your staff, sends a double message. If your people feel you value your customers but treat the staff with less caring and concern, they will leave. Think about how you treat customers as compared to your people. Be honest. If you place the same priority on your employees' feelings about you as you do the opinions of your best customers, your turnover will drop.

Don't assume that you can't attract or keep good people. You can if you follow the suggestions above. Good people stay and prosper in a rewarding and motivating workplace environment. ■

The author offers consulting on employee development through Grass Roots Training. Contact him at [hoopes@columbus.rr.com](mailto:hoopes@columbus.rr.com).

## 5 PEOPLE MISTAKES TO ELIMINATE

1. Assuming your best people, your core employees are satisfied and will be there when you need them this coming spring
2. Assuming staffing is pretty much a 'roll the dice', run the ad and see what happens game you play without predictable results
3. Assuming you can start new hires and bring them up to speed in a week or two
4. Assuming training and daily coaching will happen without specific, focused plans in place
5. Assuming you can't control new hire turnover

— B.H.



# Four steps to lawsuit survival

By Ken Morris

Taking these measures can help ensure a favorable outcome

**W**hen you learn you may be faced with a lawsuit, it is important not to panic. Clear thinking now may not only help your defense, but may also prevent you from inadvertently augmenting the case against you. Even if you believe the case to be wholly unjust, there are four immediate actions you can take to get through the process as painlessly as possible.

**1 Ensure all documentation is preserved.** Federal and state rules say that all parties must preserve all potentially relevant evidence as soon as it is "reasonably anticipated" that a lawsuit might materialize. Therefore, you need to take immediate steps to preserve your business documentation at all locations, including offices, warehouses and ship-to sites. This includes all digital documentation



## ●●●● FIND OUT

Who to contact ► What to ask a prospective attorney ► Why you can't shred those files yet


found on individual computers and IT infrastructure (servers, storage disks, etc.). If your firm's continued use of computers, files or databases may possibly alter existing files or be relevant to the litigation, the plaintiff may be able to obtain a court order barring further use until the relevant information can be retrieved.

On the day you are served with that unexpected lawsuit, a "hold" must be placed on document destruction of all types, and all employees will need to be informed of the policy. Otherwise, you may be faced with court sanc-

tions for inadvertent destruction of files and documents, failing to ensure that a preservation order is implemented and followed, or any other misconduct that shows a clear disregard for evidence.

**2 Get a good lawyer.** Typically, smaller companies will not have the luxury of hiring their own counsel because the first obligation is to report the case to an insurance carrier, who will retain, control and pay for the defense. If, however, you are fortunate enough to be able to retain your own counsel, hiring





a competent and effective defense team is your next step. When served, your attorney will have 20 to 30 days to prepare and file an answer. If done correctly, your attorney will interview the relevant employees and any other witnesses — so the sooner you engage counsel the better.

Never choose an attorney randomly through the phone book or solely on a friend's recommendation. He or she may have never handled a case like yours before. Or, he or she might not understand the significance of state and federal regulatory regimes, or know the defenses available in your jurisdiction. (See sidebar below.)

### **3 Notify your insurance carrier immediately.**

Liability insurance written by companies these days will typically be on a "claims made" basis. The days when policies were "occurrence based" and claims could first be filed with the carrier a year or two after the incident occurred have long since passed.

A "claims made" policy will generally mean that notice of the lawsuit or claim (even if it never becomes a lawsuit) should be given to your carrier when the lawsuit or claim arises. Failure to provide notice will typically mean the carrier will deny coverage. Notification when the claim is made preserves your rights to insurance coverage when the lawsuit does arise — if it arises.

Because applicable statutes of limitation may be several years, depending on the jurisdiction, the actual lawsuit may not arrive until a year or two later — and after plaintiff's counsel has had ample time to conduct a thorough investigation and determine the appropriate defendants to sue.

Once you have been served in a court proceeding or administrative action, your attorney will want to promptly tender the case to the insurance carrier for defense (unless of course, the terms of your policy required this already). The carrier will usually control the defense of the case in exchange for payment

of defense costs and any liability assessed. Naturally, the exact coverage depends on the wording of your policy. If you have a good relationship with the carrier, with regular communication, including a visit from the adjuster to see that your company is well-run, you or your counsel may be able to negotiate the retention of counsel of your choice.

**4 Contact any suppliers involved.** Only where you can demonstrate the supplier or basic manufacturer's product(s) was applied in full compliance with all label precautions will you be likely to dispel any negligence on your part. Manufacturers will typically maintain vendors endorsement coverage so that, if you are a distributor, for example, you will be entitled to coverage under that policy (assuming you can demonstrate satisfactorily that the product was resold as-is). In addition, if you are a lawn care operator and can

## **ATTORNEY: FOR HIRE**

When interviewing attorneys, ask the following questions:

- ▶ Do they charge by the hour or a flat fee? You can negotiate — alternative fee structures are usually available. For example, a lower hourly rate might be charged in exchange for the promise of a bonus in the event of a successful outcome.
- ▶ What sort of cases have they tried, and what is their success track record with these cases?
- ▶ What do they know about the lawn care industry, or, if it is a state administrative action, what experience do they have with the particular state agency? Given the choice between someone who knows his or her way around the courtroom or agency and who has tried many cases, and someone who is a regulatory and agribusiness expert, choose the former. Competent trial counsel can always learn the aspects of your business he or she does not know.
- ▶ Do they know the judge assigned to your case? Or, if the claim is the result of some state enforcement (perhaps deceptive and misleading advertisements, consumer fraud or other harm to the public), do they know the state enforcement process and its key players?
- ▶ Are there any conflicts of interest?

— K.M.



adequately demonstrate with documentation that the product was applied strictly according to label directions, the manufacturer will frequently either assume your defense or agree to indemnify you in the event of an adverse verdict.

Regardless, you need to make the supplier or manufacturer aware of your situation so that the lines of communication can quickly flow from the business head to their counsel.

In addition, if your relationship with your supplier is positive, you will typically find that the supplier or basic manufacturer can also offer technical assistance and support, or refer your counsel to consultants who can offer expert testimony in your defense.

In closing, I must note that your trial's

outcome depends in large part on your past and current business practices. If you document all job processes and customer complaints, strictly adhere to manufacturer labels, and have good relationships with suppliers and insurance carriers, you are in a good place to adequately defend a lawsuit. If not, start working now to ensure these processes are in place. (See "Avoid Litigation," *Landscape Management*, April 2006). ■

The author is an attorney specializing in Green Industry issues. Contact him at [www.kenmorrislaw.com](http://www.kenmorrislaw.com).

**Author's Note:** This article should not be interpreted as offering legal advice in any jurisdiction where such practice is not authorized. When legal issues arise, competent counsel familiar with your jurisdiction should be engaged, as your situation may vary depending on the facts and local statutes.



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**Bar Code Scanner** - print bar coded sheets for the crews and scan as they get to each property.

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**Link with Scanner** - Save the signed contract right inside the customer file.

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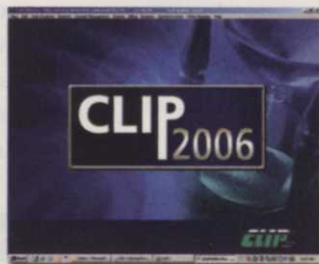
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# Talk up the positives

By Tom Delaney

Yes, we enhance the environment and add value to the economy; let's make a better effort to get the word out

**G**reen Industry professionals sometimes face tough questions from the media, elected officials and even customers about their efforts to increase environmental responsibility. Rather than talking off the cuff, prepared talking points can help you when challenged with thought-provoking questions about the industry and the environment. The following points from the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) might help you the next time you are dealing with such questions:

**1 We take our environmental responsibility seriously.** While many talk about the environment, we are actually improving it physically. Our industry's work depends on the environment, so we are dedicated to enhancing and protecting it. In fact, our code of ethics includes a "Commitment to Our Environment":

- ▶ Protect and preserve our most valuable resource, the environment.
- ▶ Operate in an environmentally safe manner.
- ▶ Follow vendor recommendations for products, chemicals and equipment.

**2 We believe in public service — volunteering our skills to enhance the environment.** For more than a decade, PLANET members have enhanced the environment at Arlington National and historic Congressional cemeteries. On July 24, more than 250 PLANET landscape, lawn care and tree care company members (representing

companies from around the Washington region and 27 states) worked in heat and humidity to give the 600-acre Arlington National Cemetery the gift of "green."

The Arlington Renewal & Remembrance service project was the largest Green Industry day of service ever held. Members of PLANET spent the day mulching, pruning, cabling trees and installing lightning protection, liming, planting and aerating throughout the entire cemetery. This gift is valued at more than \$204,000, and more than \$1 million over the past 10 years.

**3 Our industry is a value to the economy, which allows us to work on improving green spaces and the economy.** Our industry services are in much demand by the public. According to the recently published report, "Economic Impacts of the Green Industry in the United States," the economic impacts for the U.S. Green Industry in 2002 were estimated to be:

- ▶ \$147.8 billion in output;
- ▶ nearly 2 million jobs;
- ▶ \$95 billion in value added;
- ▶ \$64 billion in labor income; and
- ▶ \$6.9 billion in business taxes.

In addition, the largest individual sector in terms of employment and value-added impacts was landscaping services, which provided 704,875 jobs and \$35.6 billion in value added, expressed in 2004 dollars.

*continued on page 122*



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*continued from page 120*

**4** Partnerships and joint initiatives help everyone reach a higher sense of environmental responsibility. We are currently involved with the Lawns and the Environment Initiative (L&E). L&E is a voluntary coalition of lawn care and landscaping industry organizations, environmental groups and government agencies that are involved in residential landscaping issues. The coalition is developing a common set of environmental guidelines for responsible lawn care and landscaping.

**"Our industry's work depends on the environment. We are dedicated to enhancing and protecting it. — Tom Delaney**

The coalition includes:

- ▶ Agronomy and Horticulture Services, LLC
- ▶ American Nursery & Landscape Association
- ▶ Audubon International
- ▶ Business for the Bay/Chesapeake Bay program office and Alliances for the Chesapeake Bay
- ▶ Center for Resource Management
- ▶ Golf Course Superintendents Association of America
- ▶ National Arbor Day Foundation
- ▶ National Gardening Association
- ▶ Professional Landcare Network
- ▶ Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment
- ▶ Rutgers Cooperative Extension
- ▶ The San Antonio Water System
- ▶ The Scotts Miracle-Gro Co.
- ▶ The Toro Co.
- ▶ TruGreen Cos.
- ▶ University of Florida
- ▶ U.S. Department of Agriculture — CSREES

- ▶ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- ▶ Wildlife Habitat Council

We are also part of a coalition that is working on a turfgrass initiative. The National Turfgrass Research Initiative proposes a coordinated research program for the turfgrass industry, to be funded through the USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS), and conducted through a coalition including national Green Industry associations, the university research community and other members of the turfgrass industry. The Turfgrass Research Initiative has been developed with much discussion among industry, academic and government researchers, and fine-tuned through the recent efforts of a joint working group of industry leaders. The initiative, which is the exciting result of a new alliance, proposes a new level of cooperation among industry, academia and the federal government for research in an area that, up until now, has not been federally supported.

Six research priority areas were identified. These areas include:

- 1) improvement of water management strategies and practices;
- 2) collection, enhancement and preservation of turfgrass germplasm;
- 3) improvement of pest management practices;
- 4) understanding and improvement of turfgrass' role in the environment;
- 5) enhancement of soil and soil management practices; and
- 6) development of integrated turf management systems.

We also sponsor industry certification to raise the standards of the profession and to improve performance within the profession by encouraging participation in a continuing program of professional development.

Additionally, PLANET was the first Green Industry organization to join the EPA's Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program (PESP). PESP is a voluntary program that

*continued on page 124*





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*continued from page 122*

forms partnerships with pesticide users to reduce the health and environmental risks associated with pesticide use and implement pollution prevention strategies.

**5 Research is the key for a science-based approach toward improving the products and practices we use.** Turfgrasses affect Americans in many ways on a daily basis. Millions of acres of turfgrass on home lawns, commercial landscapes, roadsides, parks, athletic fields, golf courses and sod farms improve our quality of life by providing open space, recreational and business opportunities, and enhanced property values, as well as conserving important natural resources. Rapidly expanding urbanization profoundly affects the economic and environmental future of turf use and management.

The U.S. turfgrass industry is already a \$40 billion annual business that provides hundreds of thousands of jobs and promises even more in the future. The rapidly expanding uses of turf can create challenges, however, as our urban areas try to do more with finite natural resources. We acknowledge that there are concerns about levels of water use, fertilizer, pesticides, fossil fuels and machinery on turf establishment and maintenance.

In some locations, these turf inputs are being restricted severely, if not eliminated altogether. For instance, severe drought conditions in many regions have resulted in government-imposed water restrictions or the use of lower-quality effluent water sources.

At the same time that inputs for turf establishment and maintenance are increasingly less available, a growing, more prosperous population is demanding more from our turf on current recreational facilities.

Simultaneously, our nation's awareness of safety is at an all-time high. Turfgrass provides multiple benefits to society, including child safety on athletic fields, protection of groundwater, reduction of silt and other contaminants in runoff, and green space in home

lawns, parks and golf courses. New facilities will have to be constructed, and many of these new facilities will need to be located on abandoned sites, such as landfills, industrial brownfields, gravel pits or mine spoils. Turf in these areas will play an important role in both reclamation and recreation.

Balancing multiple economic, aesthetic and environmental goals for turf requires new technologies and management strategies. PLANET supports the research needed to discover and integrate the knowledge, plant varieties and technologies required to meet these goals. These goals will require a sustained, cooperative effort among federal, state and private sectors.

PLANET supports the need for long-term research to achieve economic and environmental sustainability for the use of turf.

**6 We support reasonable and responsible laws and regulations.** PLANET's code of ethics also includes a commitment to the law:

- ▶ Adhere to all contractual obligations in essence and spirit.
- ▶ Abide by all laws and regulations affecting the Green Industry and support the enforcement of these laws.

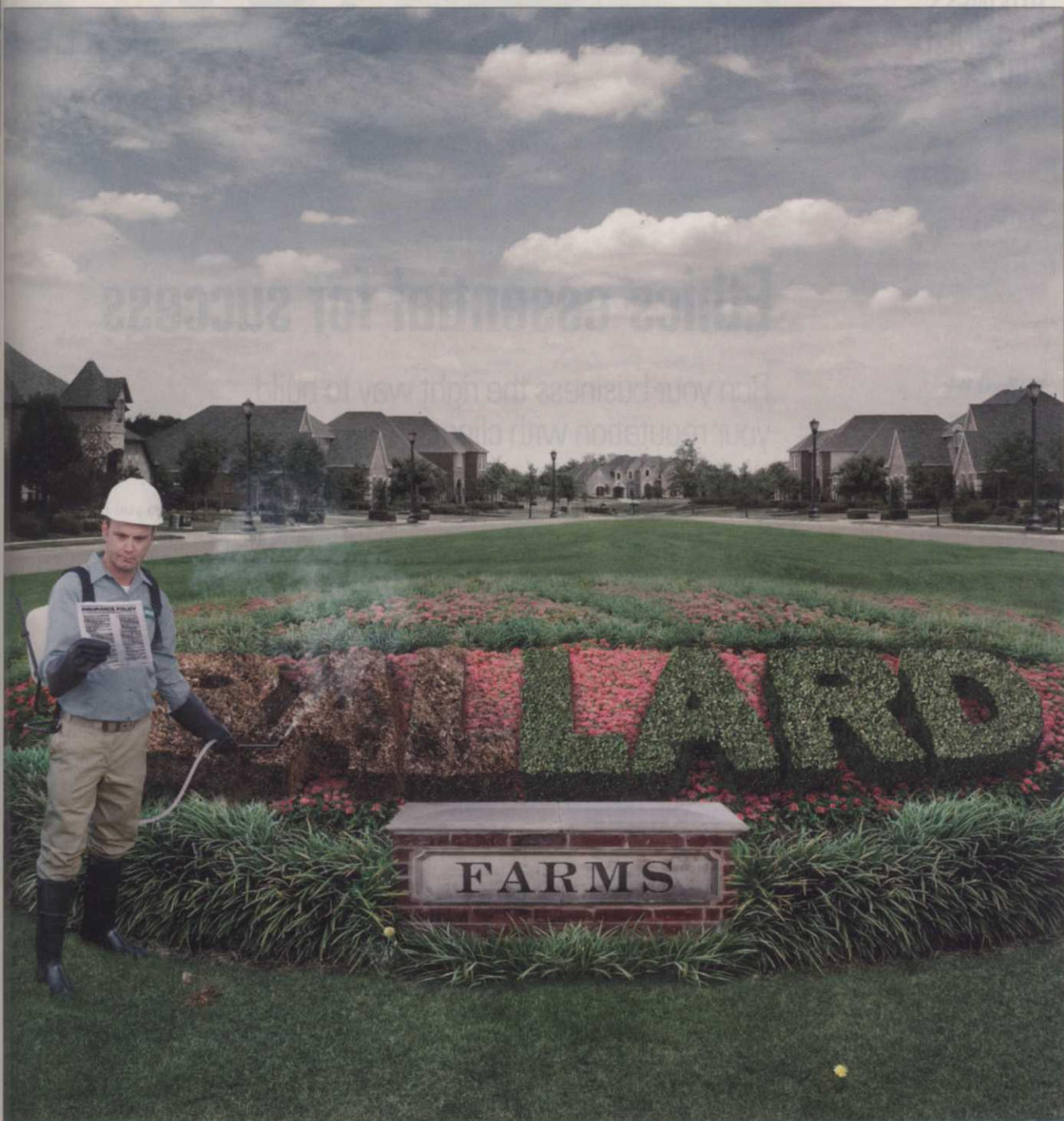
### Final thoughts

I am sure if you were asked how your company or state association is increasing environmental responsibility, you may have some special points you could share. Consider taking these points as a starting position and filling in what you and/or your state associations do in those areas.

As the cold weather sets in and business winds down, it might be a good time to think about your message, put it in writing and share it with your customers, the media and your legislators. ■

The author is director of government affairs for PLANET. Contact him at 866/831-1109 or [tomdelaney@landcarenetwork.org](mailto:tomdelaney@landcarenetwork.org).





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# Ethics essential for success

By Wayne Volz

Run your business the right way to build your reputation with clients



an ethical level. However, do you have checks and balances in place to ensure that you actually are operating this way? Ethics by definition is "the study of the nature of morals and moral choices."

## Easy way out

Too many times, people try to circumvent the system, or the standard way of doing things. Yes, it may be easier, more convenient, less or more time consuming, but is it the right way?

Don't forget that the customers we keep are the key to our success and profitability. These are a few things to consider from your customers' point of view concerning your business ethics. For example, can you honestly look back at last year's business and say with conviction that you:

- ▶ Treated customers with respect.
- ▶ Listened to and solved customer problems.
- ▶ Took care of customer complaints in a timely fashion.
- ▶ Gave your best advice as to how customers could achieve their goals and objectives.

▶ Took pride in doing the best job you could do, even if that sometimes meant telling the customer someone else could better serve them.

▶ Touched base with customers to ensure they were satisfied with your products and services. (Just because they paid the bill does not ensure satisfaction or, more importantly, repeat business.)

## FIND OUT

- ▶ How training improves ethical behavior
- ▶ Why to respect competitors
- ▶ Why low-balling fails

I believe that too few landscape and lawn care contractors perceive their business as a "real" business. Yet by not doing so, they are positioning their companies to be less successful, less profitable and less professional than other companies. We must believe in our own companies.

As landscape and lawn care professionals, we are all attempting to survive in an industry for which the odds for success and profitability are stacked against us. Our chances for failure far outweigh our opportunities for success. What, then, can we do to set our companies apart from the competition and attempt to be different, better, more successful and more profitable in the end?

There are many different things that we must do better than our competition to be successful in this industry. One of them is operating ethically.

What is your interpretation of ethical business practices? I believe that the majority of companies in our industry strive to operate on



## Professionalism matters

Can you look back into recent history and say with conviction that you and your team have always acted in a professional manner? Do you even offer training and education for your employees on professionalism? Too many contractors talk about being professional when in fact they lack the day-to-day skills demonstrating such a belief.

Professionalism goes way past clean trucks and uniforms. Training, education and business knowledge are three very important factors that will set you apart from your competitors.

I treated my competition with respect both in person and when estimating new jobs. Contractors, on occasion (and I know you will not believe this), ask their potential client what the other bids are for the job. This tactic not only represents a lack of professionalism, it also demonstrates to your potential client that you have no idea why you charge what you charge. If they were happy with the quality of work being offered, why did they call you?

Another fact to consider is this: If you can depend on your competition as being the "authority" on pricing jobs, why are the failure rates so high for this industry?

Take a giant leap forward and set your company apart from your competition. Do not ask clients how much they were paying the last contractor. Inform them why you are going to be different and better than their previous lawn service. If your potential client wants to volunteer the price he has been paying, I challenge you to try something different. Tell them you appreciate them offering such information, but you would rather they keep that unknown to you. Let them know you want to estimate the job based on your credentials, not the expectations of the fired company before you.

I think you will see great respect for your company from most potential clients. If they do not appreciate that fact, they may be shopping price only — and as you know, a price-

## SURVEY SAYS

A recent survey in *USA Today* asked, "Would you prefer to purchase products and services from a company with ethical business practices and higher prices, or from one with questionable business practices and lower prices?" Of the 2,037 adults 18 years and older who answered the survey, 72% said they would pay the higher price. They represent the value shopper and the type of client to which your marketing efforts should be directed.

The other 18% are price shoppers — and we all know what they care about.

— W.V.

driven account is generally not a long-term relationship for anyone.

I sell my services based on my company's credentials, not by criticizing my competitors. Regardless of whether the criticism is justified — or makes for a quick sell — it is not an ethical business decision to do. Would you (do you) appreciate your competition doing that to you? Why play their game? You are different and better than that. You have business ethics.

You can appreciate your competition and realize that they fight the same battles you fight every day.

You can understand that competition among your peers is a good thing for everyone.

### Moral — and making money

Yes, it is possible to be both profitable and ethical at the same time. Good, competitive, ethical business practices will help increase success rates and profit margins for all those who believe in the benefits of operating ethical businesses.

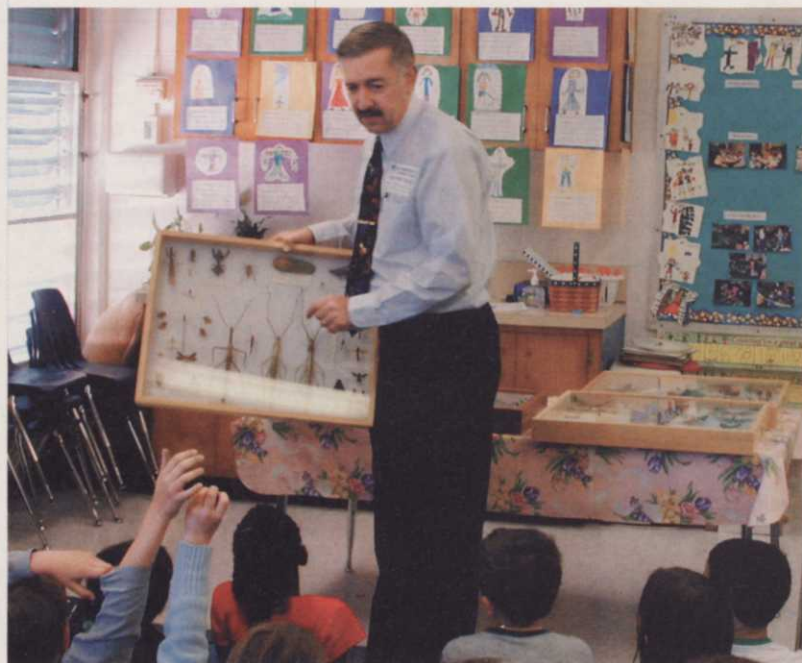
Although the short-term benefit will not always be the ethical choice for some, the long-term success and profitability for your company will always hold ethical solutions. ■

The author is the longtime operator of Wayne's Lawn Care, Inc., and president of Profits Unlimited, a consulting firm dedicated to the Green Industry. Contact him at 800-845-0499 or [www.profitsareus.com](http://www.profitsareus.com).

# Use the media to build your business

By Stacey Himes

Why spend more on advertising when PR can be equally (if not more) effective?



Community relations events can be simple or complex, from educational events like Massey Services, Inc.'s Bob Belmont's in-classroom presentation (photo above) to large events like the company's press conference and ribbon-cutting ceremony for the opening of a zoo attraction.

Every company has a story to tell. Lawn care companies are no different; in fact, most have valuable information that the public wants to know. Using some simple public relations tactics you can convince the media to tell your story, and, at the same time, promote your business, build a positive image and gain new and loyal customers. And you can do it by spending your time and expertise — not a lot of cash.

PR is powerful because it gets your name in front of a large number of potential customers quickly and efficiently. If you partici-

pate in a 60-second evening news story or are mentioned in the Sunday paper's Home & Garden column, your name may be seen or read by thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of local residents or businesses. And if you're lucky enough to be mentioned on the Today Show or in *Better Homes and Gardens*, you can reach millions.

Large organizations like ValleyCrest Companies, a \$750-million-dollar landscape business based in Calabasas, CA, have long understood the value of PR to reach new customers. "The average article has about six times the readership of the average advertisement," says Caroline Weilert, director of marketing for ValleyCrest. "So not only are you reaching more people, you are 'paying' far less for it."

"In addition, PR provides a valuable third-party endorsement of your company," Weilert adds. "It can have more impact than traditional advertising because people know that you're not paying for this coverage."

## How it's done

Traditionally, PR programs incorporate two primary activities: media relations and community relations. Media relations is promoting oneself through the use of non-paid coverage in newspapers, magazines, on radio or television, and on the Internet, while community relations involves gaining community "goodwill" through donations, educational seminars

*continued on page 130*



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## WHERE TO GET PR HELP

Establishing a PR program can be daunting but help for landcare business owners may be closer than you think. Find information and guidance from:

► **Professionals.** PR consultants and firms know how to work with the media and how to protect your reputation. Visit the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) at [www.prsa.org](http://www.prsa.org) or the Council of PR Firms at [www.prfirms.org](http://www.prfirms.org). Both sites let you search geographically and by industry.

► **Associations.** National lawn care associations like Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE) and the Professional Land Care Network (PLANET) may also provide helpful guidance. "An association such as RISE is a valuable resource for information specific to pesticides and fertilizers," says Angela Bendorf Jamison, owner of Communicopia, a PR agency serving Green Industry clients. "Most associations have limited staff but they will try to help, especially if there's a local issue brewing that could show up in other communities."

► **Manufacturers and suppliers.** Syngenta, Dow AgroSciences, DuPont, John Deere, Bayer Environmental Science and other manufacturers usually welcome the chance to help their customers get more media coverage, especially when you're promoting their products. Many manufacturers provide sample press releases, fact sheets, talking points and other resources.

► **Your local library.** A better understanding of PR and how it's done can save you from wasting precious time and money. Try "Public Relations for Dummies" by Eric Yaverbaum and Robert Bly, "The Handbook of Strategic Public Relations and Integrated Communications" by Clarke L. Caywood, "Full Frontal PR" by Richard Laermer, or "The New PR Toolkit" by Deirdre Breakenridge.

—S.H.

*continued from page 128*  
or other public service events.

Many mid-sized to large landcare firms have a dedicated PR staff or use an outside agency. In general, the larger the company, the more PR activities it pursues. ValleyCrest, for example, is involved in local and national activities — from in-market press releases announcing new hires and awards to magazine coverage of unique projects to high-profile events that bring national TV exposure.

Recently, several of the company's landscape architects and contractors donated their time to "Design/House: The Green Home" project, a state of the art environmentally friendly home in southern California. After construction, the home was opened to tours, with proceeds given to local charities. The result was widespread broadcast and print media coverage for ValleyCrest's design and construction teams. Other ValleyCrest makeover projects earned coverage on Discovery Channel's *Movin' Up* and ABC's *Extreme Makeover Home Edition*. "We could not have paid for that kind of positive exposure," says Weilert.

Orlando-based Massey Services, Inc. also takes advantage of the power of positive media relations. Massey, which provides pest prevention and lawn care services throughout Florida, Georgia and Louisiana, has a multi-tiered PR program that includes community relations activities such as employee-driven charity events, donations and educational seminars. "Our goal is to let the community know what we do and why we are different in a positive, balanced way," says MPB Communication's Andrea Massey-Farrell, who coordinates Massey's PR activities.

One of Massey's largest projects involved partnering with the Central Florida Zoo on a new attraction. Designed to teach children about insects from around the world, the "Insect Zoo" exhibit was the first of its kind in the Southeast. Working with zoo personnel, Massey promoted the new attraction with a press conference, a ribbon-cutting ceremony and follow-up press materials. "The resulting coverage was a huge success," says Massey-Farrell.

Smaller, locally based events are equally important to Massey's PR efforts. "Our team members will go into schools to teach children about insects," she explains. "This is just as viable a news story as our bigger events, especially in small- to medium-sized markets."

And even brief press mentions are valu-

*continued on page 132*



Circle 167

ValleyCrest's participation in a recent "Design House: The Green Home" project (pictured here) received extensive regional media coverage and was prominently featured in *Los Angeles* magazine. Jim Hellinger, ASLA, was the ValleyCrest landscape architect; ValleyCrest Landscape Development did the installation.



*continued from page 130*  
able, explains Massey-Farrell. Recently, Massey's Tom Jarzynka was quoted in a story

about rat control in the *Orlando Sentinel*. With a single 5-word quote, Jarzynka positioned himself and the company as pest control experts to the *Sentinel*'s 250,000 readers — all potential customers.

### Getting started

PR programs can be simple or robust — depending on how much of a commitment you are willing to make in time and money. Weilert and Massey-Farrell offer the following tips for those who are just getting started:

**1 Issue press releases.** One of the easiest ways to start getting media coverage is to distribute press releases to local media outlets. "Announce what's new with you and your organization," says Massey-Farrell. "Provide information about new hires, new services, company milestones or charitable events such as donations or sponsorships."

Press releases should be e-mailed or faxed to the news department of newspapers and TV stations, but it helps if you can target a specific reporter or assignment editor. Such names are usually available on a newspaper or station's Web site, in bylines or on a newspaper's masthead. "It helps to call and introduce yourself first," suggests Massey-Farrell.

**2 Become your region's local expert.** If you don't have any news to report, you can create your own story. Massey-Farrell says providing lawn care and pest control tips for local homeowners is a great option for lawn care operators. "Talking to reporters about what to do during recent weather conditions like droughts or heat waves are great angles," she says.

Problem/solution stories also resonate. For example, if you see an increase in red thread or a new type of grub, alert the media to the problem and then offer solutions. "The media is open to these stories because your advice directly affects a large number of their viewers or readers," says Massey-Farrell.

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**3 Donate your services or expertise.** Most newspaper and TV news programs usually have space reserved for "feel good" stories and charity events. Consider donating your services to a needy organization and then invite the media to attend, or send a follow-up press release and photo.

**4 Consider the risks.** Though the vast majority of interviews are non-threatening, both Weilert and Massey-Farrell agree you have to protect your image at all times. This is a challenge because, unlike advertising where you pay to control your message, PR offers no guarantees.

To mitigate risks, prepare thoroughly and set ground rules with reporters prior to the interview. "It is very important that you are strategic about what you will and won't say," explains Massey-Farrell.

**5 Prepare during slower months.** Finding the time to build an effective program is a challenge. Winter downtime provides a good opportunity to research media or write template news releases.

**6 Get outside help.** The quickest way to get started on a PR program is to hire an outside PR consultant or firm with established media relationships. A PR professional can coach you in preparation of potentially tricky interviews, and help ensure your company retains its positive image.

"It takes an experienced professional to deliver an effective PR program," says Weilert. "Not only will they oversee the program, but they can manage expectations within the organization."

**7 Don't give up.** Contacting reporters and pitching your story ideas is not easy, but persistence is key. Massey-Farrell recommends calling or e-mailing reporters to check in periodically. "When a reporter is ready to do a story on lawn care or needs an expert opinion, you want them to remember you, not your competitor," she says. "It may take many months but

give it time, and you will see the rewards outweigh the challenges." ■

The author is a freelance writer and PR consultant based in Philadelphia. Contact her at [staceyhimes@comcast.net](mailto:staceyhimes@comcast.net).

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# How's your form?

By Ellen Lamel and Janet Aird

Keeping your company's business forms up to date can prevent lawsuits and build a professional image

**M**any companies operate with a stack of forms that no one has reviewed for years. They're outdated or copied from somewhere else, and so far have been good enough to get by. Could those forms spell serious trouble — a huge fine, bad publicity or legal problems — for your company? Are you omitting forms that are legally required?

Job applications are a good example. Eli Kantor, a Los Angeles lawyer representing employers in matters of labor and immigration law, says that many employers ask illegal questions on applications. The law allows up to \$150,000 for violations in California. Most states have similar laws.

"A lot of companies do way too much paperwork. And then they don't keep any of it up," says Bruce Wilson, a partner with the Green Industry consulting firm Wilson-Oyler Group.

Wilson suggests checking periodically to make sure you're using the latest forms. When he ran Environmental Care, Inc. (now the landscape maintenance division of ValleyCrest), he says, "We actually audited our own offices."

## Key forms

The key forms are job applications, time sheets, and those required by local, state and federal law. These include eligibility to work forms (I-9s), and, for companies that use pesticides and herbicides, Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) and pesticide applicator logs. Some states and localities may require addi-

tional licenses or paperwork.

The information below tells which forms you need, how to be sure you're using the latest ones and where to find them online.

► **Employee applications.** Check your application form for discriminatory questions. The law forbids asking marital status and race, for example, as well as most questions about mental and physical health.

A safe way to address fitness to work is to list the job requirements and ask, "Do you have any health problems that would prevent you from doing this job?" The Business Owners Toolkit (see sidebar on pg. 136) has a sample job requirements checklist and job applications.

► **Physical exams.** Companies that require applicants to take a physical exam after an offer of employment — the "post-offer physical" — and supply their own form, should be careful. Most occupational clinics have an appropriate form, but a standard doctor's office exam is too comprehensive for employment physicals.

Some employees need the state Department of Transportation (DOT) form for a commercial driver's license exam. Many doctors have them and they can be downloaded from the DOT Web site.

► **Eligibility to work (I-9 forms).** Possibly the most important form for a landscape business today, the I-9 form verifies that an employee has the legal right to work in the United States. It must be completed for every employee, regardless of national origin and citizenship. Kantor has seen stepped-up enforcement recently. "As of April (2006), the government is cracking

## FIND OUT

- Forms you must have
- Sources of businesses forms you need
- Why you should audit your paperwork



down really hard on employers who knowingly employ illegal aliens," he says.

► **Time cards or logs.** An employee can cause problems if an employer doesn't maintain accurate time records, Kantor says. "The employee can say that he worked 12 hours or 14 hours. The employer has the burden to maintain these records."

Wilson agrees that disputes over hours can be a big issue. "A complaint of not getting paid right starts an investigation. Most of the time the employer will lose the case." He suggests that employers require employees to sign their time cards, especially if either party has made changes to the card.

► **Employee bonuses.** Another common error is not documenting bonus plans, Wilson says. "Often an employee will leave the company then try to collect on a bonus," he says.

It can be a real headache to prove the employee isn't eligible. Bonus plans should be in writing and employers should detail when the plan takes effect, which employees are eligible and when it will be paid out.

► **Employee performance.** Wilson also emphasizes the importance of documenting performance regularly. "Landscape companies don't document poor performance well enough," he says. "If you don't have good documentation as to why you terminated an employee, they can build a case that you're discriminating."

► **Liens.** If you need to file a lien against a non-paying customer, know your state lien laws; they vary wildly.

Some states allow you to simply file the lien. Others, such as North Dakota, require you to warn the delinquent customer with an "intent-to-lien" notice first. In contrast, Oregon mandates that you send every customer a notice that you have a "right-to-lien," whether or not you ever intend to file one. In Indiana, you have a set time period from the start of the job to send a right-to-lien notice. If you don't send one, you lose the right to file a lien later.

► **Pesticides and herbicides.** Federal law requires that Material Safety Data Sheets

## WHERE TO FIND THE RIGHT FORM

State landscape professional associations are an excellent place to find state requirements and the forms to satisfy those requirements

- **State landscape contractors associations:**  
[www.lcamddcva.org/resources/state.cfm](http://www.lcamddcva.org/resources/state.cfm)
- **State landscape and nursery associations:**  
[www.apld.com/resources/associations.asp](http://www.apld.com/resources/associations.asp)
- **The American Nursery & Landscape Association**  
(hazard communication manual): [www.anla.org](http://www.anla.org)

(MSDS) be available to employees. MSDS detail the chemical properties of the substance, safe handling and emergency treatment in case of exposure. Suppliers are required to send MSDS with the initial shipment of any hazardous chemical and to send updated sheets with the next shipment after any change in the information.

In workplaces where employees could be exposed to hazardous chemicals, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) mandates a written hazard communication plan. Such plans don't have to be lengthy or complicated. If you're not sure your MSDS are current or if you need a communication plan, see the sidebar on page 136 for where to find them online.

► **Contracts and invoices.** The appearance of your contracts and invoices is important to your professional image. They should be current, crisp and businesslike. Names, addresses and phone numbers should be correct and legible. If you update prices, have new paperwork printed. Customers are not impressed when prices have been crossed out and replaced by higher, handwritten ones.

Contracts protect you by spelling out your responsibilities and limits. Again, know what your state law requires. State associations can be a real help here. Some states, such as Oregon, require written contracts for landscape installation. California requires contracts when the contract price exceeds \$500. Idaho

## OTHER SITES FOR USEFUL FORMS

- ▶ **Business Owners Toolkit** (includes sample hazardous communication plans, employee applications and timesheets, disciplinary action forms and others): [www.toolkit.cch.com/tools/tools.asp](http://www.toolkit.cch.com/tools/tools.asp)
- ▶ **What landscape contractors should know about I-9 forms:**  
[www.ilca.net/legislative.asp#Immigration](http://www.ilca.net/legislative.asp#Immigration)
- ▶ **DOT physicals for commercial drivers:**  
[www.fmcsa.dot.gov/documents/safetyprograms/Medical-Report.pdf](http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/documents/safetyprograms/Medical-Report.pdf)
- ▶ **Material Data Safety Sheet database:**  
[www.msdssearch.com/Default.htm](http://www.msdssearch.com/Default.htm)
- ▶ **Lien laws for all 50 states:**  
[www.traditionsoftware.com/constlienbystate.php](http://www.traditionsoftware.com/constlienbystate.php)

— E.L. and J.A.

requires a several-part notice when the contract is over \$2,000.

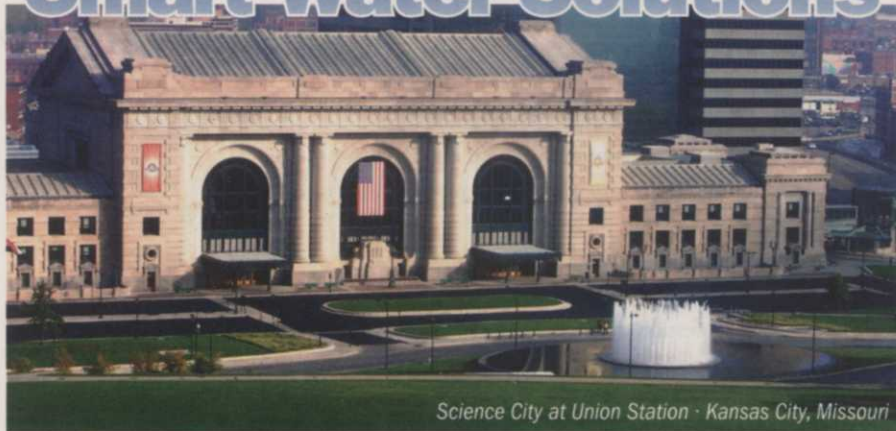
▶ **Advertising (or photos).** Your brochures should look up-to-date and inviting. If you include photos, are they of your best work or of sites you were proud of ten years ago and have since surpassed?

Keeping forms updated isn't just efficient, it's a necessity to protect your business against lawsuits, government investigations and employee claims. The more efficient and professional your material appears, the more likely your customers will have confidence in the professionalism of your services. ■

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Janet Aird is a freelance writer in Altadena, CA. Contact her at [janet.aird@earthlink.net](mailto:janet.aird@earthlink.net).

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By Kevin Kehoe

# Hit the benchmark

Comparing your operations to "best in class" reveals what you can do to deliver more profit

**D**oes it matter what the other guy is doing? If you want to improve your profits it does. That's why benchmarking is an essential tool for running a contracting business today. Comparing your results and practices to the other guy's can help you get better faster.

The dictionary says to benchmark is "to measure a rival's product or service according to specified standards in order to compare it with and improve one's own product or service."

How do we go about benchmarking in such a competitive industry? Don't fret, it can be done, and you'll find much of what you need to know in coverage planned within *Landscape Management* magazine in 2007.

But let's look at right now.

Financial performance results are fairly readily available. There are cost studies and industry financial comparisons published in the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) Cost Study (available at

[www.landcarenetwork.org](http://www.landcarenetwork.org)) and at [www.kehoe.biz](http://www.kehoe.biz). Getting information on practices is harder and requires involvement in industry peer groups, attendance at industry conferences (like PLANET's Green Industry Conference), visits to high-profit companies and, at times, working with consultants.

## Profits skyrocket

Take the example of a grounds maintenance company that increased its profits from 4% of sales to 10% of sales in 24 months. The dramatic turnaround started with benchmarking. The owner compared his financial results with those of several high-profit companies in the industry. This shed light immediately on several key areas where his ratios were far below those of the "high-profit" gold standard.

Based on these benchmarks, further "drill down" analysis and a visit to a high-profit (geographically non-competitive) company, the owner set out to fix problems in his pricing model, customer selection strategy, estimating

## FIND OUT

- ▶ Why benchmark?
- ▶ Which line items to compare against others
- ▶ How to use this new-found information

## KEY RATIOS

- ▶ **Gross profit to sales.** Gross profit dollars divided by sales dollars. Compare to the benchmark percentage.
- ▶ **Fixed cost to sales.** Fixed cost dollars divided by sales dollars. Compare to the benchmark percentage.
- ▶ **Sales to fixed assets.** Sales dollars divided

by "net" fixed asset dollars. Compare to the benchmark sales per asset dollar rate.

- ▶ **Sales to labor hours.** Sales dollars divided by production labor hours. Compare to the benchmark dollars per hour rate.

- ▶ **Sales to fixed-cost fulltime equivalents, FTEs.** Sales dollars divided by number of non-production FTE personnel. Compare to the benchmark staffing numbers.



process, time keeping methods and organization structure to drive the turnaround. The owner will tell you that the changes they made were not without pain.

### The benchmarking process

► **Apples to apples comparison with a high profit "standard":** Compare your P&L, payroll and balance sheet ratios with the best in class. Do not compare your results with the average company results unless of course, average is what you desire to be.

Conducting an accurate benchmarking analysis may require you to recast your financial statements to match the "standard" chart of accounts used by the benchmark source. If you do this you will be comparing "apples to apples." You may want to refer to the standard chart of accounts used on [www.kehoe.biz](http://www.kehoe.biz). It is not possible to benchmark properly if the comparison is apples to oranges.

► **Ratio analysis of better than / worse than the best in class "standard":** Use key ratios to conduct the benchmarking analysis. Ratios are the most reliable way to make a benchmarking comparison because they remove many of the variations that occur from region to region, city to city, and even within the same city when it comes to sales, costs and investment. The analysis must include financial, investment and operational ratios (see "Key ratios" sidebar). It's essential to know where you are performing worse than the gold standard.

► **Cause and effect analysis of the worse-than results:** Identify the sources of the worse-than ratios. These can be best understood by using the Profit Box. (See "Profit box" sidebar.). The Profit Box is a drill-down tool that can help you focus on which of the four drivers of profit – sales volume, direct cost, fixed cost and fixed assets – is your primary pain. You cannot determine the right improvement plan without a solid diagnosis of your condition.

## PROFIT BOX

- **Asset investment:** Low-sales-to-fixed-assets ratio indicates too few sales per the fleet/equipment cost. The causes can be poor preventive maintenance, an out-of-control shop, poor routing, poor field management and schedule control.
- **Direct costs:** Low-gross-profit-to-sales and low-sales-to-labor-hour ratios indicate high job cost. The causes can be low labor rates, poor estimating process, lack of purchasing controls and poor labor/clock management.

► **Fixed costs:** High-fixed-cost-to-sales and high-sales-to-FFTEs ratios indicate high overhead. The causes can be lack of internal systems, ineffective organization structure and too many non-managers in management positions.

► **Sales volume:** Low-sales-to-fixed-assets, high-fixed-cost-to-sales and high-sales-to-FFTEs ratios indicate "slow" sales volume. The cause usually is lack of defined sales staff and pipeline reporting systems.

### Turnaround plan

Prioritize your pains. Avoid the trap of addressing too many pains at once and attacking just the low-hanging fruit. Instead, fix the primary pain first. The truth is all companies have pains and, to a very large extent, still function every day despite them, albeit at a lower level than best in class. By applying an 80/20 approach you can focus on one issue at a time. Don't worry, the rest will be there when you finish the first fix.

These are the basics of benchmarking – a powerful management tool. What's next for the company that went from 4% to 10% net profit in 24 months? Well, 15% is next. Of course that will be harder than the 4% to 10% leap. But the owner prefers that kind of pain to the low-profit kind. ■

The author is president of Kehoe & Co., a business management consulting firm, and will partner with *Landscape Management* magazine on a comprehensive benchmarking study this winter. The study will be published during 2007 so you can compare your ratios with the "best in class."



# Keep your service vehicles rolling

By Robert Johnson

Review these five key components of your fleet maintenance program and reduce downtime caused by breakdowns

**A** solid preventive maintenance program can help landscape companies keep vehicle repair costs and downtime to a minimum. But an inefficient, poorly designed program can cost time and money. Company fleet managers should review several areas to evaluate the effectiveness of their preventive maintenance programs.

operating in specific applications. Remember, one generic preventive maintenance program may not work equally well for all fleets, or even for all vehicles within a particular fleet.

## FIND OUT

- ▶ How to spot trends
- ▶ Why you should set maintenance intervals
- ▶ How to perform "predictive" maintenance

### 1 Analyze your fleet maintenance records.

Are you tracking enough of the right information to make informed maintenance decisions? For example, simply recording that "front-end work" was completed on a vehicle does not give you enough information to detect failure trends for individual front-end components. Your records should indicate at least the make and model of vehicle, date and mileage at time of service, and services performed to specific components. But remember, all the records in the world won't do a thing for you if you don't analyze the data.

### 2 Examine any unexplained incidents of demand maintenance that were required between scheduled preventive maintenance intervals.

Look for trends. If a number of particular failures occur on certain vehicles, determine if it is possible to adjust your preventive maintenance program to eliminate those failures in the future. Some vehicles will be more prone to problems with certain systems than others. You may need to develop a different preventive maintenance schedule for certain makes and models of vehicles in the fleet or for those

**3 Monitor and record the number of "touches" technicians have on a vehicle.** For example, you may have a vehicle scheduled for preventive maintenance three times a year but find that it was actually pulled in for service six times — the three scheduled services plus another three times for various other services such as government-required safety and emissions inspections. Proper scheduling would have enabled these inspections to have been handled at the same time as the preventive maintenance.

Every time a technician touches a vehicle it costs you money and represents possible downtime. On average, every vehicle "touch" takes a minimum of an hour of labor. Proper planning can minimize these costs.

**4 Determine whether you could be doing a better job of predictive maintenance.** Use your records to calculate your fleet's average service life for various components so you know when to proactively replace them. For example, say you find that Brand X alternators on Brand Y vehicles fail at around 85,000 miles on average. Your preventive maintenance schedule calls for 8,000-mile service intervals. Your service schedule should include an alternator replacement as part of the first preventive maintenance service after 77,000 miles.



Replacing the alternators at the proper and predetermined intervals lessens the chance of breakdowns.

**5** It is possible to set preventive maintenance intervals too close together. Intervals should be based on the type of vehicle application, usage (mileage, hours, operating environment, etc.), OEM warranty requirements and regulatory requirements.

Far too many companies have one preventive maintenance schedule. But what's right for one vehicle may be too much for another vehicle and not enough for a third. There is no one magic number for every vehicle in your fleet. And just because you've always done it doesn't mean you have to continue doing it.

Start your review by going back to the manufacturer's recommendations for the type of service for which you are using the vehicle.

If your preventive maintenance intervals for the vehicle are more frequent than the manufacturer recommends, try conducting a lubricant analysis, primarily of engine oil. Also check to see how much residual lubricant is present in unsealed joints at each service visit. If the oil analysis shows the oil is still good, there is still plenty of lubricant in each joint and you have a good failure history, you may want to consider extending the service interval by a month and checking the same factors again. It's a combination of science with trial and error. ■

The author is fleet management liaison for the National Truck Equipment Association (NTEA). He will discuss these techniques in greater detail at The Work Truck Show 2006, Feb. 28, at the Georgia World Congress in Atlanta. To learn more, visit NTEA.com.

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For more information contact New Holland at 717/355-1371 or [www.newholland.com](http://www.newholland.com) / circle no. 250

### 2 A new Dimension

Dimension 2EW herbicide is a new formulation from Dow AgroSciences that offers early post-emergence control of crabgrass and can be sprayed over the top of landscape ornamentals. This new formulation provides broadleaf and grassy weed control on established lawns, landscape ornamentals, turf, including golf course fairways, roughs and tee boxes, commercial sod farms, noncropland and industrial sites. Dimension 2EW, which contains the active ingredient dithiopyr, is a water-based formulation. It is effective at a lower rate and has less odor than the current formulation.

For more information contact Dow at 800/255-3726 or [www.DimensionHerbicide.com](http://www.DimensionHerbicide.com) / circle no. 251

### 3 Propane powered

The 61-in. Z Series commercial mower from EnviroGard is powerful and low polluting, and is powered by a clean-burning propane engine. Manufactured by Encore, the EPA- and CARB-certified engines carry a two-year warranty and provide precision cutting worthy of the jobs that matter most. Features include a 30-hp Kohler engine, 10-year deck warranty, extra deep true floating deck, foot pedal height adjustments, full suspension seat with padded armrests, 19,000-rpm blade tip speed, cutting speeds up to 10 mph, running time hour meter, low profile and side discharge.

For more information contact Onyx Environmental Solutions at 800/858-3533 or [www.onyxsolutions.com](http://www.onyxsolutions.com) / circle no. 252

### 4 Water wise

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## COMMERCIAL POWER

## Fleet Winter Maintenance and Execute Checklist

As the winter months approach, technicians and operators breathe a sigh of relief knowing that the workload may soon decrease. But before that happens, it's important to properly service your equipment going into storage. This month we'll discuss the importance of executing the plan and why it's critical to get started soon.

**1. Out of sight, out of mind?** How often does equipment in need of repair get put into storage? Even with the best intentions, since it has been stored where it is not visible, the urgency to address the problem soon fades away. Instead of rushing around trying to fix it in the spring, fix the problem before storage. Your memory will be fresh — you'll know what the problem is, what caused it and how to fix it.

**2. Fresh equipment fluids promote equipment longevity.** Contaminants including water, dirt, sludge and acids get into engine oil during engine use. Water and other contaminants also get into equipment hydraulic fluids and the fuel supply over time. Storing equipment with used, contaminated oil for long periods can reduce component life and make the eventual service more expensive. It's best to flush these contaminants from the engine and replace with fresh, clean fluids prior to storage.

**3. Workload efficiency.** Getting an early start on maintenance allows technicians to spread the maintenance work out. They'll be better able to quickly respond to unexpected repair needs, and your equipment will be prepared whenever the weather breaks. You won't be caught off-guard if spring comes early.

**4. Parts availability.** Getting an early start on maintenance gives you more time to procure the replacement parts you need — even hard-to-find parts.

Overall, the best situation for winter maintenance is to be ready with a plan, and then execute it as the equipment is pulled out of regular service for the season. Next spring may seem like a long way off, but with equipment serviced and ready to go, you will be ready, even if the weather breaks early.



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

# From the Shop

TECHNOLOGY

SMART SHOPPING

Yes, you have to have heart  
in this business, but use  
your head when you  
choose equipment.



## Fad Factor

BY HARRY SMITH

**N**one of us likes to believe we are influenced by fads. It happens anyway. How often have you seen a competitor with a new piece of equipment and thought, "Gee, I have to get one of those"? We are not thinking, "Is that piece of equipment suitable for my operation? Is that the best choice for me?" We try to stay practical and Spock-like in our logic but we get caught up in the moment. Here are a few things to think about when these impulses hit you:

### Run down the list

Do I really need a machine like that? Is my current equipment not doing the job? More realistically, perhaps the color and shape of a new piece of equipment are what got your attention in the first place.

Is it profitable or will it be more profitable than what I am using? What will be the long-term cost? What about depreciation, parts cost and trade-in value? Does it do a better job than what I am using? Is it more fuel efficient and does it have sufficient power, torque and maneuverability?

### Grabbed by the number

It's easy to be swayed by the big numbers. Often we hear something like, "Wow, the new XYZ 250 has 25 horsepower." We are grabbed by the number. But remember, raw horsepower is not a useful yardstick for comparison. Always look at torque and horsepower curves where the engine will actually be operating.

A high horsepower number 1,000 rpm above the governor-controlled rpm is of no comparative value. A high torque number that only occurs within a narrow rpm band is not as useful as a lower pound-feet number that stays pretty consistent over a 400-plus rpm range.

Remember this: Peak torque a little below the top governed rpm is most desirable. The engine will "fall into the peak torque range" as engine rpm drops due to high load. The torque will "catch" the engine and keep it from stalling.

If you stay within these guidelines you will save time and money too, of course. Look at the facts; do not just follow the fad.

Yes, you have to have heart in this business, but use your head when you choose equipment.

— The author is turf equipment professor at Lake City Community College, Lake City, FL. Contact him at [smith@lakecitycc.edu](mailto:smith@lakecitycc.edu).



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I used to spend hours printing out mailers, folding, stapling and collating. Not anymore.



## Tech tips to speed sales

BY TYLER WHITAKER

**Y**ears ago a friend introduced me to a quote by George S. Patton: "A good plan violently executed now is better than a perfect plan executed next week." Over the years I've learned that every business has a business plan. How the plan is executed on the battlefield of business makes all of the difference. I've also learned that technology can help you turn that plan into reality.

Sales and marketing are the front lines in most businesses. Nothing slows down the sales process more than having your reps busy working on mailers, sending and receiving faxes, or cold calling.

### Outsource your mailings

You can speed up sales by outsourcing your outbound mass mailing. I've grown fond of FedEx Kinko's ([www.kinkos.com](http://www.kinkos.com)). I used to spend hours printing out mailers, folding, stapling and collating. Not anymore. FedEx can do it all. They even have software that allows me to print from my computer straight to their nearest store. I can select all of the options right from my desktop.

Another option is to work through the U.S. Postal Service's NetPost services ([www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com) then search for NetPost). They can design, produce and send professional mailers with little time and effort required on your part. Mailers can be very effective, especially when you spend the least possible amount of time producing them.

### Stop the faxing nightmare

Let's face it, faxing is a time-consuming activity. Consider using a "fax through e-mail" service ([www.premierewebpages.com](http://www.premierewebpages.com)). Faxing information and receiving orders can be as easy and quick as sending or receiving e-mail. With 800 and local numbers available, your days of changing toner cartridges and stocking paper will quickly become a thing of the past.

### Advertise wisely

Cold calling is the crutch a sales rep leans on when he doesn't have good marketing. Great marketing provides the air cover required to soften up your target market. Hopefully you already have a good Web site, a proven ad in the Yellow Pages, and your logo and phone number plastered on every truck and employee you have.

Next, consider advertising on the Internet. You might be saying to yourself, "I need local customers, not people 500 to 5,000 miles away." There is a big push in the Internet right now to move advertising from worldwide to a carefully targeted local and regional approach. Large companies like Google and Yahoo are providing locally targeted advertising so your marketing dollar is spent on the people you want to attract most. The goal is to stop cold calling and start a flood of inbound calls.

A CEO friend once told me, "business is war." Take some time to look at your business plan. Arming yourself with technology will help win the war.

— The author is a freelance technologist focusing in business automation. Contact him at 801/592-2810 or visit his blog at [www.tylerwhitaker.com](http://www.tylerwhitaker.com).



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# Keeping in time

Historic landscape preservation requires a technical attention to detail

BY TRACY POWELL

**B**y default, the need for historic property preservation becomes more necessary as time passes. For the landscape manager, it follows that offering services for historic properties such as grounds maintenance and design is as important as preserving the buildings and monuments themselves.

There's good reason for professional landscape firms to pursue historic landscaping. Dean Norton, Mount Vernon's director of horticulture for 26 years, says the market is ripe for these contracts.

"Many historic properties are still on significant acreage, except for most city properties," Norton says. "Those that have acreage typically don't have a lot of money."

That means they usually don't have a lot of staff. "For properties just trying to keep their heads above water, it's cheaper for them to contract out, particularly for services such as mowing and trimming," Norton says. "Sometimes they can't even afford to do that, and so they will hire a master gardener to take care of hedges and other herbaceous materials."

At George Washington's Mount Vernon, the most popular historic estate in America with nearly one million visitors each year, preservation has been the buzzword since the late 18th century. Maintaining that property follows protocol that has been long established, which benefits Norton and his team in many respects: period plantings

## Mount Vernon

Among the curved beds of the brick-walled upper garden at George Washington's Mount Vernon, you'll find bulbs, annuals and perennials for every season: hollyhocks, peonies, primroses, heliotrope, larkspur and dozens of other specimens, all of which were grown here by the Washingtons.

Inset: Tucked away between the upper garden and the north lane of Mount Vernon is a small, enclosed plot of ground, where Washington quietly experimented with growing a variety of plants, including the Parrot Tulips shown here.







## Arlington National Cemetery

Above: Bob Dobson (right) reviewing site plans with a cemetery groundskeeper. Dobson led the irrigation effort, directing 23 volunteers who installed six irrigation zones along a path near visitor parking.

Above left: Irrigation volunteers arrived for an opening program at Arlington National Cemetery on July 24, 2006, with the Color Guard in the background. The historic property is amidst renewal.

have been maintained throughout the years; original site records remain on the property. But new additions to the 500-acre estate, part of a \$95 million campaign, called for careful planning and proves an ideal example of the sensitivities involved in historic site work.

Mount Vernon's regents wanted to ensure that the new facilities did not overwhelm or detract from the historic mansion, so the construction firm tucked 65% of the new 66,700-sq.-ft. complex under the 4-acre pasture just inside Mount Vernon's main gate. EDAW, an international landscape, architect and design firm, took on the site's landscape design initiative beginning in 2002.

"A technical issue that came up was drainage," says Roger Courtenay, principal and vice president at EDAW. "Because the buildings are built into the ground, they create hollows, which meant there had to be a lot of civil engineering on the site. The landscape design had to respond to, mitigate, work around, incorporate and work with all those needs."

Similar drainage and irrigation work was recently completed at Arlington National Cemetery. As part of a massive volunteer effort to beautify the grounds, 23 volunteers from The Irrigation Association installed six irrigation zones along a path to visitor parking. The effort was part of the Professional Landcare Network's Renewal and Remembrance volunteer campaign, now in its 10th year.

"Installing irrigation on a historic site

can be tricky," says Bob Dobson, president of Middletown Sprinkler Co., who led the irrigation effort at Arlington. "There was an extensive system just put in the Botanical Gardens in New York City, where you had to work around plant material that may be the only species left on the planet. The entire design of the system was done to protect the plant material, including the use of air tunneling underneath the plant."

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### Wide range of sensitivities

Construction on land with a historic context is all about preservation, according to Courtenay.

"Working around existing historic trees can be a sensitive issue, as well as working around archeological remains," Courtenay says. "These historic landscapes may have a physical expression to a greater or lesser extent, but the historic context may be spatial. It may be the shaping of the space through plants and topography as much as a particular garden layout or walks and walls. What defines an historic landscape is pretty broad."

For instance, a Civil War battlefield appears to the average visitor as a just a big field. "But it's really much deeper than that, because of how that topography and

vegetation was when the battle took place," Courtenay says. "Not only that, but it influenced how the battle took place."

Many public universities incorporate buildings and landscapes of historic significance. The University of New Mexico is one such case, with some of the earliest non-residential interpretations of the Pueblo Revival style on its campus. The university's Business Policy and Procedures Manual provides guidelines that are applicable to anyone working around historic sites. The decisions concerning landscaping on historic sites should consider the relationship between a building and the landscape, the use of landscaping to enhance historic sites and the historic merit of the landscaping and importance of maintenance.



### Fort Ticonderoga Garden

In 1908 the Pell family constructed a large formal garden behind their summer home at the foot of Fort Ticonderoga in New York. Prior to the garden's restoration, the ghost outlines of the paths from the first garden design appeared on the turf during a July drought in 1993. After years of research and planning, the garden was restored to its 1920's appearance and reopened to the public in 2003.



### Key resource

For landscape preservation definitions and operational information, check out "Protecting Cultural Landscapes: Planning, Treatment and Management of Historic Landscapes," by Charles A. Birnbaum, coordinator of the Historic Landscape Initiative, Preservation Assistance Division, National Park Service. Visit [www.cr.nps.gov/hps/TPS/briefs/brief36.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/TPS/briefs/brief36.htm) for the online version or contact the Publication Order Information Desk at 202/783-3238 to order a printed copy for a nominal charge.

"What I love about the business is that every single project offers its own challenges," says Lucinda Brockway, owner of Past Designs, a historic landscape research and design firm located in Kennebunk, ME. Past Designs provides land use history and management reports, master plans, and historic and contemporary landscape design services.

"As code issues become much more stringent — soil codes, handling hazardous waste, handling conservation and riverfront permitting — as towns have gotten better at controlling change that happens in the landscape, many of these properties I work with fit in very tender areas that have huge histories that go along with them," Brockway says. "There's a lot more permitting involved, which I think is a good thing. It just means that completing a project takes more time."

One of Brockway's current projects is a riverfront property that was built in the early 1700s. It has a tiny front yard, which needs re-grading because of topographical changes over the years and to prevent water from backing into the house and the fill. The garden is also overgrown, necessitating rejuvenation.

"To get permission to take up all these plants, re-grade the space and put them

*continued on page 152*



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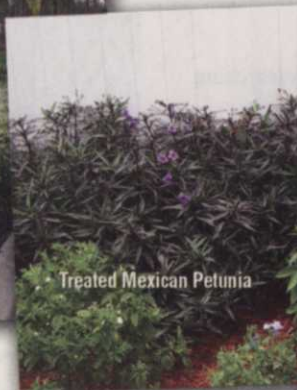
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continued from page 150

back in, because this tiny yard fits within a riverfront protection zone, we have to get a DET permit to do all this," Brockway says. "It's that kind of thing that I'm finding more often. There's never a problem, it just means that I need to explain to clients to be patient."

### Historic how-tos

Norton suggests thoroughly researching the property, as well as the property's original owners to understand what their feelings were toward the landscape. For instance, an owner may have preferred a formal landscape, or a more natural landscape. There may have been a particular interest in flowers or kitchen gardens.

A variety of primary and secondary sources may be consulted. Primary archival sources can include historic plans, surveys, plats, tax maps, atlases, U.S. Geological Survey maps, soil profiles and aerial photographs. Secondary sources include published histories, theses, National Register forms, survey data, local preservation plans, state contexts and scholarly articles.

"Beyond initial research, what were the tastes of the individual?" Norton asks. "Some of these people years ago just didn't care for flowers, so they wouldn't have had a flower garden. Research the best you can, then try to stick with what you have found, what seems to be common within the region, then plant or landscape appropriately. There's a fatal flaw — everyone wants a beautiful garden, and if they don't find what they're looking for, they go ahead and do everything: a kitchen garden, a flower garden, an orchard. If you're not sure, keep it as simple as possible."

Consult contemporary documentary resources too. This may include recent studies, plans, surveys, aerial and infrared photographs, Soil Conservation Service soil maps, inventories, investigations and interviews.



"The Internet is an incredible resource," says Norton. "If you know of a property that has some history to it — and I'm talking about those sites that are less well-known — then go to that site, get the contact information and make the call. Do not hesitate to get in your truck and go to the front gate and introduce yourself."

In addition to learning as much as possible about a property, it's important to use plant materials appropriate to the era. And those materials aren't necessarily native plants to the area.

"Depending on who lived at that property, natives may not have been something they were going for," Norton says. Thomas Jefferson is a prime example. At Jefferson's Monticello estate, one would have been hard pressed to find native plants among his exotic collections.

A key to any historic preservation work is the Cultural Landscape Report, or CLR. A standard CLR is the accepted methodology for developing a graphical representation of research conducted that shows how a landscape has been used and changed over the years. The CLR also identifies the importance of these changes and uses of the landscape.

Brockway, who also writes CLRs for other clients, believes that the most successful designs are built out of collabora-



### Cushing House Garden

Owned and operated by the Historical Society of Old Newbury in Massachusetts, this village property features a series of intimate dooryards and gardens. Cobbles, granite stone, brick, gravel and sand are featured throughout the property. Fences of varied designs and details separate each of the spaces. The house was built in 1801. The garden dates to the 1860s.

tion, between client, contractor, designer and resident.

"The challenges are funding and education," Brockway says. "I spend about 90% of every project educating everybody about what it is we're doing. There's also educating yourself. Each site has its own stories."

For anyone undertaking historic landscape preservation, Brockway cautions that there's "tons" of hand holding involved.

"And if you're dealing with a museum or a historic site, you have a board to deal with, and sometimes three different committees," Brockway says. "That multiplies the number of hands you need to hold through the process and have it all come together."

"There's a lot of patience that's involved. But if anybody has done anything with gardening or landscaping, they know that patience becomes a huge critical factor in the personalities that are part of the business." **LM**

— The author is a freelance writer based in Charlestown, IN. Contact him at [tracewriter@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tracewriter@sbcglobal.net)



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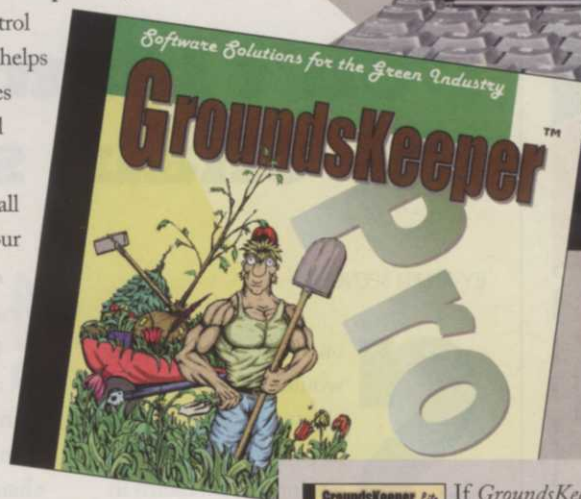
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TECHNOLOGY

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## Don't blame the chain saw

BY ALLEN SPENCE

**S**ound like something you  
would say immediately  
after your chain saw fails  
to perform? Head off  
equipment problems in  
the future by completing  
the simple 6-step checkup  
described below.

Remember, for your own safety, do  
all these checks with the engine off and  
disabled. Never compromise safety in  
order to save time.

**1 General check up:** After removing  
your chainsaw from storage, inspect  
the overall condition. Now is a good  
time to make sure the cooling passages,  
fins, clutch cover and bar oiling passages  
are free of debris.

**2 Chain condition:** Are the cutter teeth  
dull? Are the drive links, cutter  
teeth, tie straps or rivets broken or  
loose? If so, replace the chain.

**3 Bar condition:** The bar and the chain  
groove should be straight. Are the  
bar rails flat? The nose sprocket should  
turn freely.

**4 Clutch and cover:** Are the gear teeth,  
rim sprocket and drum in good shape?

**5 Chain tension:** Are you setting the  
chain tension according to the  
owner's manual? If you can't find your  
manual, here are some general rules on  
chain tension: For a solid nose bar,  
loosen the bar nuts, pull up on the nose  
and hold it. Tighten the tension until  
the chain just touches the bar, retighten  
the rear bar nut first then the front. For  
a sprocket nose bar the only change  
you make is to tighten the chain until it  
makes contact with the bar then  
tighten an additional 1/4 to 1/2 turn.  
If you are in doubt, check with your  
servicing dealer.

**6 Now to the engine:** The spark plug is  
clean and gapped right? The fuel is  
fresh with the correct mixture ratio?  
Remember that gasoline has a short us-  
able life span. You should be using fuel  
stabilizer already. If not, you need to  
start soon.

As always, your dealer has a wealth of  
information. Just ask!

— The author is turf equipment  
management instructor at Hinds  
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# Post Spring Apartments

2005 Grand Award Winner for Condominium or Apartment Complex

## Property at a glance

**Location:** Smyrna, GA  
**Crew Supervisor:** Dylan Gilbert  
**Category:** Apartment Complex  
**Total budget:** \$138,555  
**Year site built:** 1999  
**Acres of turf:** 26,000 sq. ft.  
**Acres of display beds:** 7,755 sq. ft.  
**Total paved area:** 11.3 acres  
**Total man-hours/week:** 64

## Maintenance challenges

- ▶ Boston ivy that covering the walls must be maintained using arbor trucks and ladders
- ▶ Maintaining six irrigation systems throughout the property
- ▶ Major elevation change, which makes it difficult to get around property, especially with equipment

## Project checklist

- Completed in last two years:
- ▶ Replacement of a large Allee Chinese elm at the leasing office
  - ▶ Upgraded the Southwest Garden with large ceramic pots, adding annual color

## On the job

- ▶ Three full-time staff, two seasonal workers, one licensed pesticide applicator

**T**he motto at the Post Spring Apartments in Smyrna, GA, is "Every day is beautiful." Though the warm weather, picturesque views and amenities like the fitness center, tennis courts and pool help, it's the landscaping that really supports that motto.

Post Spring is a garden-style apartment community located in Cobb County's "Platinum Triangle," consisting of 452 apartment units spread over 40 acres. The property features seven different themed gardens, which reflect the influences of the Southeast, Northeast, Southwest and Northwest, as well as a "kitchen" garden, the knot or sculpture garden and urban vegetable garden.

Under the clematis-covered arbor of the kitchen garden, residents can clip fresh herbs for cooking. The urban vegetable garden gives residents an opportunity to be hobbyist gardeners. This garden planted with three seasonal themes annually and grown using organic fertilizers.

Within the 40 acres of space available for landscaping, less than 10% of the property is under irrigation. The use of drought-tolerant plants, the right plant in the right area and soil preparation have

reduced the need for watering. Boston ivy covers the walls, enhancing their appearance and providing a cooling effect.

Post Spring has a steep elevation change from the front to the back of the property, which creates maintenance challenges. No riding equipment of any kind can be used; all equipment must be pushed or carried by the landscape team.

The team of three full-time gardeners maintains 7,755 sq. ft. of annuals and perennials, which are planted in "Post Mix" compost and organically fertilized. As part of the integrated pest management (IPM) program, only organic pesticides are used. The annual color beds and more than 20 posts and baskets are replanted in the spring and fall with more than 8,000 annuals per year.

"The frontage of Post Spring is over a quarter mile long and must be perfect at all times," said Crew Supervisor Dylan Gilbert. "Each annual bed cannot be left unplanted for more than 24 hours. Every attention is given to detail."

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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Residents at Post Spring Apartments enjoy landscaped amenities including a kitchen garden, urban vegetable garden and lots of seasonal color.





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**For more information contact Husqvarna at 800/HUSKY62 or [www.usa.husqvarna.com](http://www.usa.husqvarna.com) / circle no. 255**

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terials to be installed without concrete and over wood decks and flooring. The Vortex system is ideal for patios, sidewalks, sun rooms, porches and pool decks. The system provides durability due to an engineered formulation that uses a reinforced resin matrix that allows for superior strength and flexibility. The system can expand and contract with whatever base it is laid upon, including bare ground and wood decks. The Vortex formulation resists ice, skids, grease and oils and can correct uneven floors.

**For more information contact GoldenLook at 817/540-3000 or visit [www.goldenlook.com](http://www.goldenlook.com) / circle no. 256**

## Free downloads

Nemetschek North America is offering a new module that automates the process of creating location plans for environmental graphic designers to all VectorWorks 12 users for free on its Web site. Called the Location Planning Module, the module allows designers to import EPS, DWG/DXF, image, and PDF files; create sign tags and add sign data and messages with an exclusive sign tool; choose signs quickly from an editable catalog of sign types; customize sign symbols with a built-in library; keep track of your signage with auto-incrementing sign IDs and an automatic re-sequencing



## It takes two

Tanaka America, Inc. announced that the TEA-500 two-man auger has returned to its auger lineup. The TEA-500 joins Tanaka's one-man auger, the TIA-350S, in the auger product category. The TEA-500 features a 50 cc, 2.5-hp Tanaka two-stroke engine; 33:1 gear reduction ratio; fold-up handles for easy storage, dual safety throttle system, and a one-year professional warranty. In addition, the TEA-500's 1-in. diameter round output shaft can accept up to 12-in. earth bits and an optional 15-in. extension is available.

**For more information contact Tanaka at 253/333-1200 or [www.tanaka-usa.com](http://www.tanaka-usa.com) / circle no. 254**

capability; update drawings with a series of pre-formatted sign schedules that link to drawings and automatically update as drawings change; export data in the sign schedule to database programs; and more.

**For more information contact Nemetschek at 410/290-5114 or [www.nemetschek.net](http://www.nemetschek.net) / circle no. 257**

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**For more information contact Nufarm Americas at 800/345-3330 or [www.turf.us.nufarm.com](http://www.turf.us.nufarm.com) / circle no. 258**

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The line of Ingersoll Rand compact equipment attachments has grown with the addition of two new attachments for land preparation and trenching applications. These trencher and tiller attachments are designed

*continued on page 160*





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# Products

continued from page 158

for use on any manufacturer's skid-steer loader or compact track loader. The tiller attachments mix compost and other materials into existing soil, making the attachment ideal for landscaping applications. Two models are available in working widths of 62 and 75.5 in. Eight different trencher attachments are available for digging depths of three or four feet. A choice of manual or hydraulic side-shift models allows trenching to the edge of the trencher frame. A large diameter drive sprocket increases clearance to the carrier, and a grease cylinder provides the ability to adjust chain tension.

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For more information contact Ball at 800/879-Ball or [www.BallLandscape.com](http://www.BallLandscape.com) / circle no. 260

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**200** Mid-America Horticultural Trade Show / **201** Modeco Systems LLC / **202** VectorWorks  
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**210** R & K Pump & Equipment, Inc. / **211** Rain Bird / **212** RedMax/Komatsu Zenoah America, Inc.  
**213** Scotts Co. LLC / **214** SePRO Corp. / **215** Shindaiwa, Inc. / **216** Spraying Systems Co.  
**217** Syngenta Professional Products / **218** Target Specialty Products / **219** Teletrac, Inc. / **220** The Toro Co.  
**221** Turfco Direct / **222** U. S. Lawns, Inc. / **225** Venture Products Inc. / **226** Vermeer Manufacturing Co.

SPECIAL ADVERTISING  
SUPPLEMENT TO

**Landscape**  
MANAGEMENT



### Mission Statement

Adkad Technologies, Inc. has been in business since 1993. Our mission was simple; create business software for the landscaping and lawn-care industries that was easy and useful. We achieved our goal with amazing success. Probably because our software was not just designed for landscapers, but by landscapers! We know that you don't want to spend your time with difficult software. Our slogan is "Software doesn't get any easier than this!" Check out our Web site for some of the testimonials we have received.

**ADKAD  
Technologies**

**Adkad Technologies, Inc.**  
565 Herrick Road  
Delanson, NY 12053

**Toll-free customer service:**  
800-586-4683  
**Fax:** 518-875-9276  
**Web site:** [www.adkad.com](http://www.adkad.com)  
**E-mail:** [info@adkad.com](mailto:info@adkad.com)

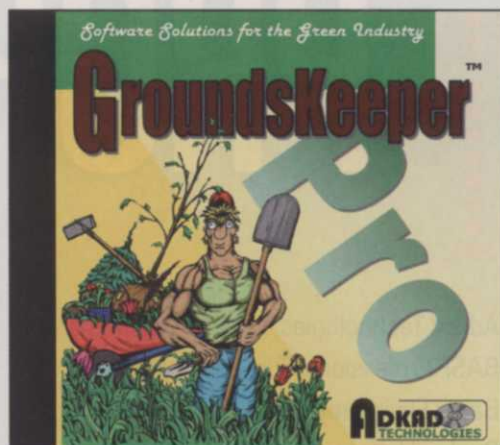
# Adkad Technologies, Inc.

### Product focus

GroundsKeeper Pro is business management software for people in the landscaping and lawn-care service industries.

### Features

- ▶ Enter up to 10,000 customers
- ▶ Charge for regular services
- ▶ Charge for special services
- ▶ Charge for time and materials
- ▶ 1,000 character service descriptions
- ▶ Print bills/invoices
- ▶ Print mailing labels
- ▶ Change bill colors
- ▶ Option to print bills on pre-printed paper
- ▶ Your logo on bills
- ▶ Determine late-paying customers
- ▶ Late statements
- ▶ Charge late fees
- ▶ History of past bills sent
- ▶ Enter customer comments and conversations
- ▶ Customer account history
- ▶ Customer service contract
- ▶ Set up service schedules
- ▶ Print daily service schedules
- ▶ View daily assigned manhours
- ▶ Job cost estimates
- ▶ Routing
- ▶ Wizard to auto apply charges
- ▶ Print bills for schedule or route to drop-off
- ▶ Pesticide/Herbicide application tracking/reports
- ▶ Archive and backup data
- ▶ Income statistics
- ▶ Track business expenses
- ▶ Taxes collected report
- ▶ Password protect program
- ▶ Customer lists
- ▶ Accounts receivable
- ▶ Globally increase prices



View an audio/video guided tour of GroundsKeeper Pro at <http://www.adkad.com/groundskeeper/gkprotutorials.htm>

### Technical support

Technical Support is a FREE service. If you need help with our software, simply call us at 518-875-6342 or send us an email at [support@adkad.com](mailto:support@adkad.com).



**Paul Jackson**  
Founder

### Mission Statement

Alocet Incorporated is built on the belief that solid business processes create solid companies. It is our mission to be the leader in accounting software add-ons by challenging our customers to adopt software systems that free up time from administrative tasks in order to focus on what makes them profitable.



### QXpress Scheduling Software

57 Spadina Ave., Suite 210  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5V2J2 Canada

Phone: 877-529-6659

Fax: 416-640-6027

Web site: [www.qxpress.com](http://www.qxpress.com)

E-mail: [info@alocet.com](mailto:info@alocet.com)

# QXpress

### Product focus

QXpress is the scheduling software of choice for green industry companies who use QuickBooks. QXpress is a true QuickBooks add-on that turns your favorite accounting package into top-rated, industry-specific management software by adding scheduling, job costing and invoicing capabilities. You don't have to learn a whole new system — you can just add industry-specific functionality to your existing QuickBooks.

QXpress is flexible enough to handle all the needs for the green industry:

- ▶ **Lawn maintenance** businesses save hours by automatically printing route lists for weekly services, and turning completed services into QuickBooks invoices at the end of the month.
- ▶ **Irrigation businesses** easily dispatch spring start-ups,

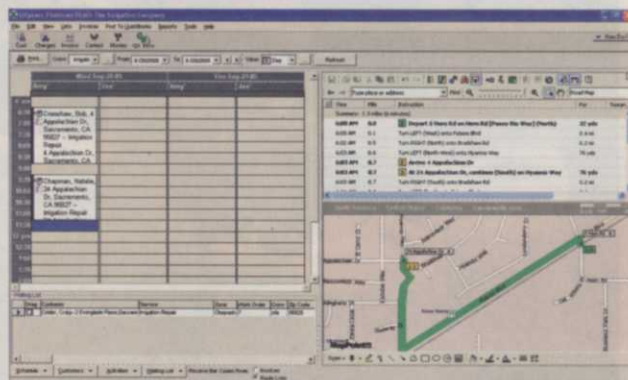


winterizations, repairs and installs by easily seeing what availability technicians have on their calendar.

▶ **Landscaping businesses** easily turn QuickBooks estimates into multi-day, multi-task projects, and track detailed job-costing information.

▶ **Fertilization businesses** calculate lawn care program prices by square footage and route their services according to geographical zones.

In short, QXpress can be as simple or as powerful as you need it to be!



### Technical support, sales, training and customer service

Telephone support is available Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Eastern Time by calling 877-529-6659.

Movie tutorials are available at [www.qxpress.com/MovieTutorials](http://www.qxpress.com/MovieTutorials).

### Major product lines

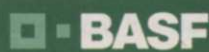
- ▶ **QXpress 6.0** — For small- and medium-sized green industry businesses using QuickBooks.
- ▶ **QX Enterprise** — Runs on SQL server, for medium- to large-sized green industry businesses using QuickBooks.
- ▶ **QX Mobile** — A Pocket PC version of QXpress that allows supervisors, crews and estimators to take QXpress with them on a small handheld unit and synchronize wirelessly from home or in the field.
- ▶ **QX Mapping** — Has new functionality for accurate routing, such as the ability to calculate and display a job site's exact proximity to existing services.
- ▶ **QX Forms** — Free for all QuickBooks users, QX Forms features industry-specific route list, work order, invoice, renewal letter and proposal templates to be used with QXpress or QuickBooks.



**Dr. Toni Bucci**  
Business Manager

### Mission Statement

Leveraging science from the world's largest chemical company, BASF Professional Turf and Ornamentals business adds value to the lawn care market with a solutions-based offering to help customers choose the right product mix to meet lawn and landscape challenges. BASF is committed to the following values: innovation for the success of its customers; safety, health and environmental responsibility; personal and professional competence; sustainable profitable performance; mutual respect and open dialogue; and integrity.



**BASF Professional  
Turf & Ornamentals**  
26 Davis Drive  
Research Triangle Park,  
NC 27709

**Phone:** 800-545-9525

**Web site:** [www.turfacts.com](http://www.turfacts.com)

**E-mail:**

[bryan.brochin@basf.com](mailto:bryan.brochin@basf.com)

# BASF Professional Turf & Ornamentals

### Product focus

Better turf comes from better science. As the world's leading chemical company, BASF invests millions in R&D each year, applying for 1,000 patents a year and literally creating innovations on a daily basis. In the last five years alone, BASF has invested more than \$1.5 billion in agricultural-products R&D, as well as several hundred million dollars in plant biotechnology. BASF Professional Turf & Ornamentals has a young portfolio with a high proportion of patent-

protected products as well as a strong late-stage R&D pipeline.

Based in Research Triangle Park, NC, the BASF Professional Turf and Ornamentals business group develops and markets chemical solutions for improving turf quality through pest management, which includes weed, disease and insect control. Its goal: to provide customers the most effective solutions available, helping solve their turf problems with a portfolio of proprietary and post-patent products.

### Manufacturing facilities

BASF is represented with production and sales facilities worldwide.

### Major product lines

The BASF Professional Turf and Ornamentals portfolio includes Insignia®, Emerald®, Curalan®, IprodionePro and PropiconazolePro fungicides; Pendulum® AquaCap™, Image®, Drive®, Basagran® herbicides; and Amdro® insecticide.








**Neil Cleveland**  
V.P.  
Chipco Professional Products

### Mission Statement

Our focus at Bayer Environmental Science is the development and creation of innovative technologies and solutions for the challenges our customers face every day. Field development, sales and technical representatives located throughout the country offer regionalized support for all Bayer Environmental Science products.

 Bayer Environmental Science

### Bayer Environmental Science

2 T.W. Alexander Drive  
Research Triangle Park,  
NC 27709

**Phone:** 800-843-1702

**Fax:** 877-229-3769

**Web site:**

[www.bayerprocentral.com](http://www.bayerprocentral.com)

**E-mail:** [bcs.gpcinfo@bayercropscience.com](mailto:bcs.gpcinfo@bayercropscience.com)

# Bayer Environmental Science

## Product focus

Bayer Environmental Science, a business division of Bayer CropScience LP, manufactures a full line of turf and ornamental products for use on golf courses, home lawns, sports fields, commercial landscapes, nurseries and greenhouses. Bayer Environmental Science continues a tradition of innovative research and top-of-the-line professional products, backed by highly trained sales and field development representatives.

## Backed by Bayer™

Backed by Bayer™ is a primary focus of our organization and a way to ensure success for our lawn care customers. Backed By Bayer means you purchase more than products when you do business with Bayer — you get the confidence that you'll succeed. Our customers receive the assurance that comes from value-added programs, services and an ongoing commitment to the industry.

Backed by Bayer offers:

► **Dedication** — In terms of our field and technical representatives, our industry stewardship, and our training, research and interaction with regulatory agencies.

► **Guaranteed Satisfaction** — We stand behind every Bayer product and guarantee our

customers are satisfied.

### ► Superior Solutions —

We help customers gain and maintain superior results through our training seminars, face-to-face marketing, and industry programs.

### ► Added Value — Our

products lend themselves to increased revenue through add-on services. Our Accolades™ program rewards customer loyalty.

### ► Vision for the Future —

Our investment in the future gives customers tools to meet today's challenges and achieve their goals for growth.

## Manufacturing facilities

With manufacturing facilities worldwide, Bayer Environmental Science produces premier products for use in the turf and ornamental marketplace. U.S. facilities are located in Pasadena, TX; St. Louis, MO; and Kansas City, MO.

To develop and support these products, Bayer Environmental Science maintains one of the premier turf and ornamental research facilities in the country. The Clayton, NC, Development and Training Center allows for year-round testing of innovative technologies using greenhouses and field locations. Formulations, spray techniques and the influence of rainfall/irrigation on product performance are just some of the details evaluated.

Numerous turf problems can be tested under a variety of conditions. The facility also adds significant value in allowing Bayer to respond to customer questions and input promptly.

## Major product lines

From trusted standards like Merit® and Tempo Ultra® insecticides and Acclaim® Extra herbicide, to new launches like Allectus® insecticide, Forbid™ miticide and Armada™ fungicide, as well as Revolver® herbicide and TopChoice® insecticide, Bayer Environmental Science offers products that help our customers meet their challenges.



TopChoice is available only through professional application services.



**Peter Innes**  
CEO

### Mission Statement

Global leader of innovative non-pesticide products for seed enhancement, landscape, horticulture and agriculture



**Becker Underwood**  
801 Dayton Ave.  
Ames, IA 50010

**Phone:** 800-232-5907

**Fax:** 515-232-5961

**Web site:**

[www.beckerunderwood.com](http://www.beckerunderwood.com)

**E-mail:**

[request@beckerunderwood.com](mailto:request@beckerunderwood.com)

# Becker Underwood

## Major product lines

Becker Underwood has established itself as a leader in the bio-agronomic industry, best evidenced by the development of its Rhizanova™ brand of mycorrhizal fungi inoculants that help establish newly planted trees, shrubbery and ornamentals.

The mycorrhizal fungi in Rhizanova are of the highest quality and effectively colonize root mass as documented by its Mean Infectivity Percentage (MIP). By the extension of fungal growth into the soil, the effective absorptive area of roots is greatly increased. Unlike other mycorrhizal inoculants that only quantify what goes into the package, MIP is a new quality benchmark that assures the highest level of product performance.

- ▶ Becker Underwood's bio-agronomic line also includes:
- ▶ **Bio-Gain® WSP®** and **VigaROOT™** biostimulants for rapid growth
- ▶ **Canteen®** natural wetting agent and soil penetrant
- ▶ **New – Affinity** and **Capacity**, a complete line of soil wetting agents to correct hydrophobic soil conditions in turf and landscape.
- ▶ **Sprint® 330** and **Sprint® 138**



- iron chelates for protecting plant-available iron in turf, trees, shrubs, field-grown plants and container plants
- ▶ **Admiral™** for growth control of algae and aquatic vegetation in lakes and ponds
- ▶ **New – Black Onyx Lake Colorant™** creates a unique, reflective appearance to high-profile water features
- ▶ **Tree Guard®** odorless deer repellent for trees, shrubs and flowering ornamentals.

## Manufacturing facilities

- ▶ Corporate Headquarters Ames, IA
- ▶ Becker Underwood UK Littlehampton, West Sussex
- ▶ Becker Underwood Canada Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
- ▶ Becker Underwood Saint Joseph, MO
- ▶ Becker Underwood France Toulouse, France

- ▶ Becker Underwood Australia Somersby, Australia
- ▶ Seed Biotics, A Becker Underwood Company Caldwell, ID
- ▶ Nitral Urbana, A Becker Underwood Company Pinhais, PR Brazil

## Technical support, sales, training and customer service

Becker Underwood prides itself on providing top-notch customer service and technical support for its many diverse product lines. We have a tenacity to do whatever is necessary to get the job done and a genuine desire to meet our customers' needs. Every member of our highly skilled sales team has been thoroughly trained and is eager to help solve our clients' toughest challenges.





**Steve Levy**  
President and CEO

### Mission Statement

To be the market leader by developing, producing and marketing innovative rodent control products of uncompromising quality. To commit to excellence in customer service and to conduct our business with the highest integrity. Bell's mission can only be achieved in a stimulating work environment that supports personal growth, individual contribution and teamwork.



**Bell Laboratories, Inc.**  
3699 Kinsman Blvd.  
Madison, WI 53704

**Toll Free Customer Service:**  
800-323-6628  
**Fax:** 608-241-9631  
**Web site:** [www.talpid.com](http://www.talpid.com)  
**E-mail:** [talpid@belllabs.com](mailto:talpid@belllabs.com)

# Bell Laboratories, Inc.

### Company focus

Bell Laboratories is a world leader in pest control products. From initial product inception and development to manufacturing and subsequent support in product use, Bell focuses on quality, functionality and innovation.

### Manufacturing facilities

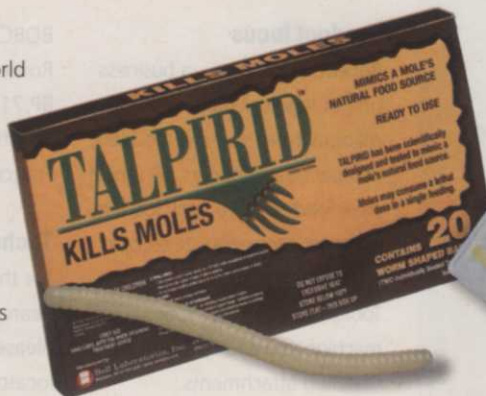
Bell is a vertically integrated manufacturing company. All of Bell's products are designed, tested and manufactured in its modern facility in Madison, WI, which houses its manufacturing operation, offices, and biological and chemical testing laboratories.

### Technical support, sales, training and customer service

Bell's dedicated staff is committed to providing quality pest control products and superior customer service at every stage – from product manufacturing to proper field use. This support includes internal and external technical expertise and technical representatives in the field that consult on difficult control problems.

### Major product lines

► **Talpid Mole Bait** is the result of years of groundbreaking



research in Bell's biology and chemistry labs and in the field. It is the first and only mole bait designed, developed and scientifically proven to kill moles. Talpid's optimal size, shape and feel allow the bait to be consumed in the same manner as moles consume their natural food source, the earthworm. Special enhancers help ensure immediate attraction and excellent product acceptance. The active ingredient, bromethalin, capitalizes on the mole's physiology. One worm can kill a mole in 24 hours. Talpid is easy to use and is proven to be extremely effective.

► **Rodent Rid** controls outdoor pests, including voles, pocket gophers and ground squirrels.

Its active ingredient, 2% zinc phosphide, is formulated with human food-grade ingredients for a highly palatable bait that competes well with food in the animals' natural environment.

A restricted-use pesticide, Rodent Rid has a broad label for use on lawns, golf courses, parks, ornamental and non-bearing fruit tree plantations, nurseries and other non-crop areas. Depending upon the location, the pelleted bait can be either broadcast or hand applied. Once consumed, the bait acts quickly, killing pests in as little as 24 hours.

Rodent Rid was developed for small applications on a select number of outdoor pests. It comes in a convenient 3-lb. pail that is easy-to-carry and reseals tightly to keep bait fresh and free from odor contamination.



**Richard Pedtke**  
President of Compact  
Vehicle Technologies

### Mission Statement

Our mission is to be recognized as a world leader in the engineering, manufacturing and marketing of compact industrial, construction and agri-business equipment, attachments and related services.

# Bobcat Company

### Product focus

Bobcat Company — a business unit of Ingersoll Rand — manufactures skid-steer loaders, compact track loaders, all-wheel steer loaders, mini track loaders, compact excavators, telescopic tool carriers, utility vehicles, the Toolcat 5600 utility work machine and a long line of job-matched attachments.

### Manufacturing facilities

#### Bobcat Company

210 First Ave. NE  
Gwinner, ND 58040

#### Bobcat Company

521 S. 22nd St.  
Bismarck, ND 58506

#### European Facilities

BOBCAT CR, S.R.O.  
U Pivovaru 600  
263 12 Dobr  
Czech Republic

BOBCAT FRANCE S.A.

Route de Nantes  
BP 71  
F-44160 Pont-Chateau  
France

### Technical support

For the name of your nearest Bobcat dealer, please use the dealer locator on [www.bobcat.com](http://www.bobcat.com).

### Major product line

#### ► Compact Track Loaders:

A Bobcat® compact track loader's strongest asset is its low ground pressure. By distributing the operating weight throughout the tracks, these machines carry heavy loads while causing minimal turf damage. The track undercarriage also provides maintenance crews with the traction they need to work in wet and muddy conditions

where other loaders don't perform as well. With rated operating capacities of up to 3,000 pounds, they are capable of handling pallets of sod, seed and fertilizer. The Bobcat track design provides great digging performance and is easy to maintain — idlers and rollers are permanently lubricated, and no special tools are required to change or adjust the tracks.



**Bobcat Company**  
250 E. Beaton Drive  
West Fargo, ND 58078-6000

**Phone:** 866-823-7898  
**Fax:** 701-241-8704  
**Web site:** [www.bobcat.com](http://www.bobcat.com)  
**E-mail:**  
[infocenter@bobcat.com](mailto:infocenter@bobcat.com)



**James Hasler**  
Vice President-North  
America

### Mission Statement

More than a vendor, Case is the professional partner to equipment users, providing a full line of premium products, with a wide range of options and attachments, services and support, and ideas to help customers achieve business success.

### Product focus

Nearly 50 years ago, Case became the first manufacturer of a factory-integrated tractor loader/backhoe. Since then, Case has manufactured more than 500,000 loader/backhoes, a favorite among landscape contractors the world over. Case has also long offered a durable, versatile lineup of skid-steer loaders and, more recently, compact track loaders. All can accommodate a wide variety of attachments designed to provide maximum versatility.

### Technical support

Through its network of more than 350 Case dealer locations across North America, customers have access to a true professional partner — with world-class equipment and aftermarket support, industry-leading warranties and flexible financing. More information is available at [www.casece.com](http://www.casece.com).

### Major product lines

Case Construction Equipment sells and supports a full line of construction equipment, including:

- ▶ The world's No. 1 loader/backhoes
- ▶ Skid steers
- ▶ Compact track loaders
- ▶ Compact excavators
- ▶ Compact wheel loaders
- ▶ Loader tool carriers
- ▶ Compact crawler dozers
- ▶ Rough-terrain forklifts

Case also offers full-sized wheel loaders, excavators and crawler dozers, as well as articulated dump trucks, motor graders and vibratory compaction rollers.



**Case Construction Equipment**  
700 State St.  
Racine, WI 53404

**Phone:** 262-636-6011  
**Fax:** 262-636-0876  
**Web site:** [www.casece.com](http://www.casece.com)

# Caterpillar Inc.

## Product focus

Through its network of Caterpillar dealers and more than 450 Cat Rental Stores throughout North America, Caterpillar offers a full range of equipment for landscape construction and site preparation. All Caterpillar products are supported by local Cat Dealers, which provide superior customer service.

Caterpillar designs and manufactures 10 models of skid-steer loaders and five models of multi-terrain loaders, which feature rubber tracks. Several of the machines feature vertical lift, and several have high-flow hydraulics systems for powering high-demand tools. A diverse line of Cat Work Tools equips the machines for a wide range of jobs — buckets for every application, forks, blades, landscape rakes, tillers, augers, trenchers, backhoe attachments, hammers, stump grinders, brush cutters, mulchers, brooms and more.

Six models of mini-excavators can handle trenching and digging tasks in tight spaces. The newest models feature variable displacement hydraulic pumps for unmatched ability to dig through tough conditions. A variety of work tools equip these machines to do more than digging.

For jobs requiring high mobility, three models of



Caterpillar compact wheel loaders are up to the task. Long reach and dump height make them ideal for truck loading. And for site preparation work, Caterpillar offers three models of small track-type tractors that are well suited to tough dozing on a smaller scale.

Caterpillar Financial Services can work with you to facilitate purchases and leases. The Cat AccessAccount provides the convenience of a card-less, revolving charge account that enables customers to pay for parts, service and rentals at any participating Cat Dealer in the United States.

For jobs requiring machines for a shorter period, look to the Cat Rental Store. Cat Rental Stores are a growing network of locally owned Caterpillar Dealer stores. They have a full range of Caterpillar and other brand-name equipment along with specialized tools to meet all of your jobsite needs.



## Manufacturing facilities

Caterpillar products and components are manufactured in 50 U.S. facilities and in more than 60 locations in 23 countries around the globe.

## Sales, training and customer service

Caterpillar's global dealer network provides a key advantage — customers deal with people they know and trust. Almost all dealerships are independent and locally owned. Many have relationships with their customers that span at least two generations. Cat dealers serve equipment, service and financing needs.

**Caterpillar Inc.**  
100 N.E. Adams St.  
Peoria, IL 61629

**Phone:** 1-888-OWN-A-CAT or  
1-800 RENT CAT

**Web site:**  
[www.cat.com/landscaping](http://www.cat.com/landscaping)



**Dave Tucker**  
President

### Mission Statement

Our mission is to facilitate the success of business organizations by providing quality products and uncompromising customer service that significantly increases their performance capability.

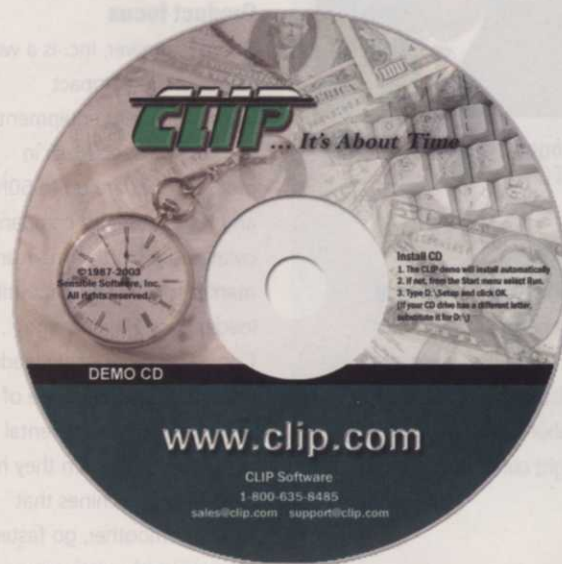
# CLIP Software

### Product focus

CLIP continues to be the service industry leader for more than 18 years. CLIP gives you the ability to route, schedule, estimate and job cost your jobs and projects. CLIP also contains contact management software with all of your customer's information and history of all services rendered since your first uses of CLIP!

You can track all your crews and the time spent on each job/location. CLIP produces employee efficiency reports and revenue tracking reports showing the profitability of each job and each customer.

With more than 10,000 copies sold and 18 years in business, we are ready to help you eliminate paperwork and become more productive. CLIP uses palms, bar codes, GPS technology and WAP technology to keep track of your crews, equipment and to easily update completed field work for rescheduling, billing, and revenue tracking.



In addition, CLIP links with Quick Books, Peach Tree, Word, Excel, MapPoint and Outlook.

### Technical support

CLIP offers nine ways to support you during your setup and continued use:

- ▶ Live telephone support with our support team
- ▶ E-mail support

- ▶ Fax support
- ▶ Printed training and reference manuals
- ▶ Training CD
- ▶ Classes throughout the United States
- ▶ Onsite training
- ▶ Online training
- ▶ Annual CLIP Conference.

Nobody else comes close for training and support.



**CLIP Software**  
9639 Dr. Perry Road  
Suite 123  
LJamsville, MD 21754

**Phone:** 800-635-8485  
**Fax:** 301-874-3613  
**Web site:** [www.clip.com](http://www.clip.com)  
**E-mail:** [sales@clip.com](mailto:sales@clip.com)



**Roger Braswell**  
CEO

### Mission Statement

To become the world's premier developer and distributor of compact, labor-saving equipment for light construction.

# Compact Power, Inc.

### Product focus

Compact Power, Inc. is a world leader in the compact hydraulic power equipment market and specializes in products that are up to 50hp and 5,000 lbs. The company created the North American market for the compact utility loader over 10 years ago. Compact Power utility loaders are sold to a wide range of industries and major rental accounts. Since then they have introduced machines that operate smoother, go faster, lift more and create more hydraulic power. They manufacture a wide range of compact equipment including: Boxer mini-skids, PowerHouse equipment, ProHauler trailers,



and Compact Power attachments.

### Manufacturing facility

Mertz Manufacturing  
Ponca City, OK

### Major product lines

► **Boxer equipment** — Since the Boxer was introduced in 2000, it has given new dimension to the compact loader industry. This legacy has continued to permeate through the equipment industry, and the Boxer is now one of the most sought-after products on the market.

**COMPACT POWER**

**Compact Power, Inc.**  
P.O. Box 40  
Fort Mill, SC 29716

**Phone:** 800-476-9673

**Fax:** 803-548-2762

**Web site:**

[www.cpiequipment.com](http://www.cpiequipment.com)

**E-mail:** LMCarley@  
cpiequipment.com





Steve Erickson  
President

# Corona Clipper

## Product focus

Corona Clipper, Inc. is the premier manufacturer of superior forged quality pruning and long handle tools for the retail, consumer and professional markets, including hand pruners, shears, loppers, pruning saws, garden tools, shovels, rakes and wheelbarrows. Corona's legendary reputation is built on classic design, handcrafted forged quality, and superior customer service. This reputation has made Corona America's first choice for generations for more than 80 years.

Corona Clipper was established in the late 1920s, manufacturing orange clippers in an old "Corona Foothill" packing house. In the early 1930s, the company relocated to a larger facility and expanded the product line to include lemon clippers, grape shears, hand and pole pruners, and later, loppers, hedge shears, and grass shears. During World War II, Corona was a defense subcontractor, diverting production from garden tools to wrenches, which were required for the war effort.

Corona's customer base includes the professional landscape, irrigation,

horticultural, agricultural, forestry, construction, maintenance and public works markets, as well as the consumer retail markets, among others.

## Manufacturing facility

The company is headquartered in Corona, CA, 60 miles south of Los Angeles. Corona has three manufacturing/assembly/warehouse sites in the United States and Mexico, employing approximately 200 people.

## Technical support

Many distributors and dealers rely on Corona's expertise in managing the entire hand tool category. Corona offers comprehensive dealer/distributor support from our factory and home office.



Corona field representatives are your first line of assistance.

## Major product lines

Shovels, loppers, hand pruners, hoes and cultivators, hedge shears, rakes, hand and garden tools, striking tools, wheelbarrows, tree pruners and accessories.

**CORONA**  
CLIPPERS  
A BELLOTA Company  
FIRST CHOICE FOR GENERATIONS.

### Corona Clipper

22440 Temescal Canyon Road  
Corona, CA 92883

Phone: 1-800-847-7863

Fax: 951-737-8657

### Website:

www.coronaclipper.com

### E-mail:

sales@corona.bellota.com

**Chuck Crary**  
President

**Mission Statement**

Crary Industries' mission is:

- ▶ To manufacture quality products that serve customers in the agricultural, outdoor power equipment, marine and custom manufacturing industries and are priced to represent a fair value to the customer.
  - ▶ To offer employment that is stable with opportunities for personal fulfillment and occupational enrichment and development.
  - ▶ To operate the company in an effective and efficient manner with concern for the best utilization of resources: people, material, and time.
  - ▶ To provide stockholders with equitable and consistent long-term return on their investments.
- Crary Industries has shared values that are the directing force for all phases and aspects of our business dealings.

**Crary Industries Inc.,  
a subsidiary of ECHO Inc.**  
237 NW 12th St.  
West Fargo, ND 58078

**Phone:** 800-247-7335

**Fax:** 701-282-9522

**Web site:**

[www.bearcatproducts.com](http://www.bearcatproducts.com)

**E-mail:**

[sales@bearcatproducts.com](mailto:sales@bearcatproducts.com)

# Crary Industries Inc., a subsidiary of ECHO Inc.

**Product focus**

Crary Industries, Inc., a subsidiary of ECHO INCORPORATED, manufactures ECHO Bear Cat chippers and chipper/shredders, Lockwood potato planing and harvesting implements, and Crary agricultural equipment. ECHO INCORPORATED acquired the Crary assets from TerraMarc Industries in April 2006.

**Manufacturing facility**

As demand for its products increased, Crary Industries grew and required more space. In 1981, a new 6,000-sq.-ft. building was erected at its current location in West Fargo, ND. The company doubled its size about every five years. The most recent and largest addition was made in 1999, when Crary Industries began manufacturing the Lockwood product line in West Fargo. This addition increased the building size to 202,000 square feet.

**Technical support**

Guided by its mission statement and propelled by its employees, Crary Industries continues to develop new products and improve its existing products. Crary Industries embraces a culture



in which the most valuable asset of the company is the employee and the most valuable asset to the company is the customer. With this corporate philosophy, Crary Industries is looking forward to a long relationship with customers and a lasting presence in the industry.

**Major product lines**

ECHO Bear Cat offers a full range of 4-in. to 12-in. capacity chippers and 1.5-in. to 5-in. capacity chipper/shredders in a variety of configurations

including PTO, skid steer and highway-towable models. A vast selection of engines and hydraulic or self-feed models results in one of the widest range of products available. The large capacity 12-in. chipper features a hydraulic feed system and an easy feeding 14-in. x 20-in. opening. The 8-in. chipper features a 360-degree turntable design for convenient roadside use. The company also offers a commercial stump grinder, EZ TrimMowers and Bear Vacs.





**Rick Heenan**  
National Sales Manager  
Commercial Division

### Mission Statement

**Vision:** Intelligent Irrigation Solutions

**Mission:** DIG is defined by our commitment to our customers. We strive to exceed customer expectations by providing superior customer service through our national sales team and technical expertise that is just a phone call away.



**DIG Corporation**  
1210 Activity Drive  
Vista, CA 92081

**Phone:** 800-322-9146  
**Fax:** 760-727-0282  
**Web site:** [www.digcorp.com](http://www.digcorp.com)  
**E-mail:** [sales@digcorp.com](mailto:sales@digcorp.com)

# DIG Corporation

### Product focus

DIG celebrates 25 years of supplying quality low-volume irrigation products to the landscape industry. An extensive line of drip emitters, micro sprinklers, poly tubing, dripline, filters, foggers and fittings are offered for installing water-wise irrigation systems. Low-volume irrigation has extensive applications anywhere conserving water and healthy plants are important: specifically for non-turf areas such as shrubs, trees, flowerbeds, groundcover and foundation plantings.

Alternative power irrigation controllers that do not require conventional AC wiring are a cornerstone of DIG's product offering. Battery-operated controllers offer irrigation control anywhere necessary for projects with 1-6 stations. The LEIT ambient light-powered irrigation controllers provide a permanent solution to power problems and are available in 1-28 station configurations.

### Technical support

With a sales team and sales representatives positioned across the United States, DIG provides technical knowledge and support as part of every sale. Technical service is led by Stuart Spaulding, an IA Certified Landscape Irrigation

### Pop-Up Micro Sprayers MP Series



Auditor (CLIA). Call the team with product questions and issues from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. PST at 800-322-9146.

### Major product lines

#### LEIT Controllers

- ▶ Ambient light-powered irrigation controllers operate day or night in all weather conditions.
- ▶ No power supply needed.
- ▶ Controls up to 28 stations.
- ▶ Can be used with most brand name valves.
- ▶ Bilingual programmability.
- ▶ XRC: remote control capable using LEIT Link.



#### Drip Irrigation and Micro Sprinklers

- ▶ Dripline and poly tubing.
- ▶ High quality, high impact compression and barb fittings.
- ▶ Adjustable, take-apart and button drippers in variety of flow rates.
- ▶ Multi-outlet pressure compensating and flow adjustable heads.
- ▶ Wide range of micro sprayers, foggers and micro sprinklers.

#### Battery Operated Controllers

- ▶ Affordable, easy to install and use.
- ▶ Can be used with most brand name valves.
- ▶ Available with 3/4-in. through 2-in. in-line valves
- ▶ Waterproof construction, can be used above or below grade.
- ▶ Digital display with simple four-button programming.

**Steve Schumaker**  
President

# Dimex LLC

## Product focus

EdgePro®, our original and most successful line of landscape edging and paver restraint products, features products that possess unique characteristics for easy installation and strong reliability.

EdgePro® comprises a growing variety of products including three landscape edging profiles, five paver restraint profiles and our newest addition, EdgePro Ultra™, an innovative PVC Landscape Border System that is a viable option to competitive metal edging products currently in the market.

## Manufacturing facility

Dimex LLC, based in Marietta, OH, is one of the leading manufacturers in North America for professional-grade landscape edging and paver restraint systems. All of our products are manufactured from high quality materials that

are compounded in-house to the most stringent specifications.

## Technical support

Dimex LLC prides itself on world-class sales support and customer service. Stock orders usually ship within 24 hours. Dimex also offers a wide array of free marketing materials including product samples, brochures and displays.

## Major product lines

Dimex LLC manufactures the following products:

- ▶ EdgePro® Paver Restraint
- ▶ NovaEdge® Paver Restraint
- ▶ EdgePro® Landscape Edging
- ▶ EdgePro Ultra™ PVC Landscape Border System
- ▶ ProLock® Heavy Duty Poly Chain Lock



**Dimex LLC**  
28305 State Route 7  
Marietta, OH 45750  
  
**Phone:** 800-334-3776  
**Fax:** 740-374-2700  
**Web site:** [www.edgepro.com](http://www.edgepro.com)  
**E-mail:**  
[inquiry@dimexcorp.com](mailto:inquiry@dimexcorp.com)

<b>EdgePro® Paver Restraint</b>		<b>EdgePro Ultra™</b>
<b>We're taking EdgePro® to New Heights</b>		<b>PVC Landscape Border System</b>
<b>EdgePro® Professional</b>	<b>EdgePro® ProLip</b>	
<b>Define Your Planting Bed</b>		





**Art Evans**  
Founder, President & CEO

### **Mission Statement**

As the first commercially built, completely hydraulically driven, belly-mounted, zero-turn radius mower in the industry, Dixie Chopper developed the concept of a compact unit with superior horsepower, quality and speed of cut in a user-friendly machine. Our attention to speed, quality and reliability has ensured Dixie Chopper's ability to deliver a unit that has many years of dependable, reliable service at a reasonable price. That reputation has earned the respect and loyalty of thousands of commercial lawn care professionals. Dixie Chopper is proud to be family owned and operated, and American made!

**Dixie Chopper**  
1701 Indianapolis Road  
Greencastle, IN 46135

**Phone:** 765-246-7737  
**Fax:** 765-653-4180  
**Web site:**  
[www.dixiechopper.com](http://www.dixiechopper.com)

# **Dixie Chopper**

### **Product focus**

Speed, quality and reliability are still the Dixie Chopper hallmarks as it marks its 26th year in 2006. Those traits translate into productivity for our end users, meaning more leisure time for homeowners and more money in the pocket of commercial cutters and landscapers.

### **Manufacturing facility**

Dixie Chopper's new assembly plant on Greencastle's east side opened in September 2005. It is located approximately seven miles from the national headquarters and original plant in Fillmore, IN. The Fillmore plant is on the site of the old Evans family farm, where Art Evans perfected the zero-turn mower and helped revolutionize the lawn care industry. The very first production mower, completed



on April 15, 1980, was still used weekly to mow grass until last May, when it was retired and put on display in the Putnam County (IN) Museum.

### **Technical support, sales, training and customer service**

One of the things that sets Dixie Chopper apart is its nationwide base of highly

skilled authorized dealers. End users can count on the service and support of those dealers, as well as the Dixie Chopper parts and service organization that offers service schools throughout the year and supplies its dealers with quarterly DVDs that feature tech tips on servicing its mowers.

### **Major product line**

Dixie Chopper is the maker of the "World's Fastest Lawn Mower." A Dixie Chopper with a 72-inch deck can mow a football field in nine minutes. Proof of the company's respect and success is embodied in the recent selection of President/CEO Art Evans as Indiana Entrepreneur of the Year for 2005. He will compete for the national honor in Palm Springs, CA, Nov. 19.







**Jerome Peribere**  
President and CEO

### Mission Statement

All that we are and everything that we do is driven by our commitment: commitment to agricultural and specialty markets; to innovation in science and technology; to proven, reliable solutions; and to responsible stewardship. We diligently follow this series of commitments so we can fulfill our final key area of focus: our commitment to customer success. Every scientific breakthrough, every technological invention, every innovative product — they are all developed with the customer in mind. Our customers are at the core of everything we do. In fact, we believe our job is to make our customers successful.

**Dow AgroSciences**  
9330 Zionsville Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46268

**Phone:** 800-255-3726  
**Fax:** 800-905-7326  
**Web site:**  
[www.dowagro.com/turf](http://www.dowagro.com/turf)  
**E-mail:** [info@dow.com](mailto:info@dow.com)

# Dow AgroSciences

## Product focus

Dow AgroSciences delivers innovative technology that exceeds market needs and improves the quality of life of the world's growing population. We are a wholly owned subsidiary of The Dow Chemical Company. That strength and stability plus the passion of more than 5,500 of the industry's most talented people ensures we meet our customers' needs. We will continue to pursue innovative solutions using science and technology to meet the ever-changing needs of our customers and the demands of new marketplaces. This is clearly evident in the examples of innovative products we have recently introduced, and the several new products and technologies in our pipeline. That's our commitment to the industries we serve and most importantly, that's our commitment to you.

We have a comprehensive T&O portfolio with proven solutions for every problem.

## Major product lines

► **Dimension® specialty herbicide** — Provides premium season-long pre-emergence control of crabgrass, spurge and oxalis and other grassy weeds, along with early post-emergence control of crabgrass. Never stains and



won't harm turf. Great for use on overseeded turf. Available in 2EW, WP, EC, SC, and on fertilizer.

### ► Gallery® specialty herbicide

— Most-effective pre-emergent herbicide for broadleaf weeds labeled for cool- and warm-season turf. Can be applied in spring or fall, and helps minimize costly callbacks due to weed breakthrough. Provides control for up to eight months.

### ► MACH 2® specialty

**insecticide** — At an easy-to-remember 2-lb. rate, provides unbeatable control of all grubs all season long. Performance is guaranteed.\* Wide window of application (apply early and up to second instar) provides route scheduling flexibility. Does not require immediate irrigation; controls surface feeders, too. Available in liquid, granular and on fertilizer.

### ► Eagle® 20EW specialty

**fungicide** — A liquid systemic fungicide for preventive and curative control of 19 turf-destroying diseases, including dollar spot and brown patch. Available in convenient, easy-

to-use containers ideal for use on home lawns and backyard fruit trees. Won't harm popular turfgrass and ornamental species.

## Technical support, sales, training, customer service

Eighteen sales representatives, three technical sales representatives, three sales managers, four product technology specialists and various product and marketing specialists provide training, stewardship and solutions to formulators, distributors, university researchers and end users nationwide. Specimen labels and MSDS are available from the Customer Information Center or online at [www.dowagro.com](http://www.dowagro.com).

\*Trademark of Dow AgroSciences LLC  
State restrictions on the sale and use of Dimension, Eagle 20EW and MACH 2 apply. Consult the label before purchase or use for full details.

\*Guarantee applies to professional use only. Other limitations and conditions apply. Guarantee payment is limited to the cost of the MACH 2 component of the formulation used. See [www.dowagro.com/turf](http://www.dowagro.com/turf) or your supplier for complete details. Always read and follow label directions.



**Pete Lord**  
President

# Drafix Software

## Mission statement

Our mission is to always provide the landscape professional with the most innovative, feature-rich and easy-to-use landscape design software in the marketplace.

## Product focus

Take your business to the next level using PRO Landscape design software. PRO Landscape is very easy to learn and even easier to use. Create stunning visual landscape designs including night and holiday lighting, 2D site plans and accurate estimates through three integrated modules. PRO Landscape makes it fast and easy to sell, plan and bid your landscape designs.

► **Image Editor:** Do your customers have trouble visualizing your landscape designs? Use PRO Landscape's Image Editor to create a "life-like" before-and-after image of your proposed landscape using a digital photograph of the customer's house or building. The image library includes more than 5,000 of the industry's highest quality images of plants (by climate zones), grass, mulch, hardscapes, water features, night and holiday lighting and more. Create a design in just minutes that your customer will easily understand!



► **Planner:** Tired of drawing by hand, then spending extra time labeling your drawing and doing quantity take-offs? Use PRO Landscape's Planner to quickly create a scaled 2D-site plan that accurately represents the installation of plantings, hardscapes, even irrigation systems. While you are drawing, Planner keeps track of all the plant materials, calculates the area of pavers and other hardscapes, and volume of materials such as

mulch or rock. Even creating plant callouts or a legend is quick and easy.

► **Proposal:** Would you like to improve the professionalism of your estimates? PRO Landscape's Proposal generates an accurate bid directly from your Image Editor or Planner file, eliminating errors and duplicated efforts. Simply put in your prices and tax rate and Proposal will do the rest. Once you create your estimate, put together a professional-looking customer presentation including the cover sheet, estimate, material list and plant information in just seconds!

## Technical support

PRO Landscape comes complete with a tutorial/training CD and free technical support. Classroom and one-on-one training is also available.



**Drafix Software**  
114A W. 3rd St., Suite 301  
Kansas City, MO 64105

**Phone:** 1-800-231-8574

**Fax:** 816-842-5554

**Website:**  
[www.prolandscape.com](http://www.prolandscape.com)

**E-mail:**  
[sales@prolandscape.com](mailto:sales@prolandscape.com)

**Tony Pappas**  
CEO/President

### Mission Statement

At Exaktime, we understand the value of time and attendance management as the difference between profit and loss.

Our products and services help thousands of customers save time and money by managing their employees' time on the job more effectively.

Exaktime is dedicated to providing the finest products and services in the industry while assuring that we are the easiest company to do business with.

Our purpose is to innovate, lead and serve our customers by ensuring that Exaktime helps make businesses better year after year. Exaktime is: Innovation At Work.

**Exaktime**  
22801 Ventura Blvd.  
Suite 310  
Woodland Hills CA 91364

**Phone:** 888-788-8463  
**Fax:** 818-222-6148  
**Web site:** [www.jobclock.com](http://www.jobclock.com)  
**E-mail:** [info@jobclock.com](mailto:info@jobclock.com)

**Key contact:**  
Val Doran

# Exaktime

### Product Focus

The JobClock System is the leading timekeeping product used in the landscaping and construction trades. It is designed to easily track employee attendance at multiple, remote jobsites. The JobClocks are rugged, weatherproof and are designed to be locked down at any work site 24/7.

Exaktime has now added to the JobClock System with an exciting new product – The PocketClock. The PocketClock is designed for crews on the move and travels with them wherever they go. If you have workers that regularly visit multiple jobsites during the course of a day, or service regular customer routes, then the PocketClock is ideal for you.

The PocketClock is special software that runs on a Palm



Pilot and allows multiple workers to easily clock in and out directly on a Palm. Individual workers can clock in themselves with their own PIN or it can be put in "Supervisor Mode" where a supervisor clocks in and out for them. The PocketClock can track hundreds of labor codes and will automatically display in English or Spanish depending on the language preference for each worker.

You can use the new PocketClocks by themselves or together with JobClocks, depending on the needs your business. All of the attendance records are passed into your office PC the same way – with the touch of one button – where you can print tabulated employee timecards or full attendance

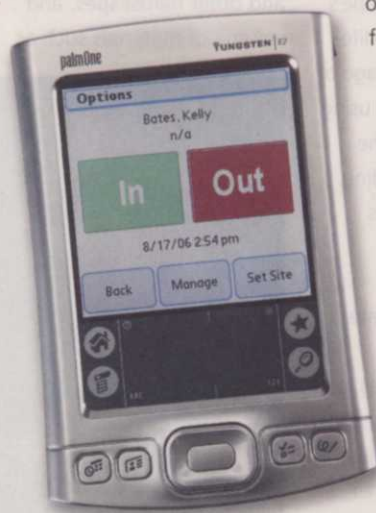
reports for any work site or crew. The JobClock time records can also be automatically exported into the leading accounting software and payroll services, including QuickBooks, ADP and Paychex. Find out why 275,000 workers clocked in today with the JobClock System.

### Manufacturing Facility

The JobClock System is made in the United States. Exaktime is based in Woodland Hills, CA.

### Technical Support, Sales, Training and Customer Service

Product specialists are available to answer questions and customize a JobClock System to fit your needs. Contact us at 888-788-8463 Monday-Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Pacific time. Product support is provided free for the first year.





**Mission Statement**

An Express Blower™ truck is an exciting and professional addition to any landscape, erosion control, or construction business. It increases productivity and efficiency and can improve your bottom line profit. Not only will an Express Blower™ add value to your business, but its versatility opens markets and applications you may never have imagined.

# Express Blower, Inc.

**Product focus**

The Express Blower™ is the only blower equipment designed and manufactured to quickly and efficiently apply aggregates, compost, mulches, sand and soil blends to remote or inaccessible areas. With a wide variety of models available, there is one to suit any need, including fully integrated box and chassis units or trailer mount units. Express Blower™ equipment is perfect for the erosion control, landscaping and construction industries, as labor requirements are reduced while profitability and efficiencies are increased.

**Manufacturing facilities**

We operate using a manufacturing process that maintains the highest quality standards using the most reliable and durable components available and allows us the flexibility to meet our customer's needs.

**Technical support, sales, training and customer service**

Every customer is provided comprehensive operator training. Besides the equipment, this is probably the most valuable tool we provide. Our customer service technicians are the most experienced in the industry.



Not only have they worked in the manufacture of the EB units, they also are practiced equipment operators. Each thoroughly understands the equipment, and they quickly and patiently troubleshoot most problems over the

phone—whether it's a service or operational issue. We also offer an array of marketing and advertising materials. Much of the material is free with purchase, and some of the material is even personalized.



**Express Blower, Inc.**  
1275 Bailey Hill Road  
Eugene, OR 97402

**Phone:** 800-285-7227  
**Fax:** 541-349-8161  
**Web site:**  
[www.expressblower.com](http://www.expressblower.com)  
**E-mail:**  
[info@expressblower.com](mailto:info@expressblower.com)



**Dan Rosenbaum**  
Director, FMC Specialty  
Products Business

### Mission Statement

Feeding the world, protecting health and providing the conveniences of life. That is the mission of FMC.

With our superior technology and strong partnerships with customers, FMC Corporation is finding solutions that help to change people's lives for the better. FMC is a global, diversified chemical company that has been providing innovative solutions, applications and quality products for more than a century in agricultural, industrial and consumer markets.



**FMC Corporation**  
**FMC Specialty Products**  
**Business**  
1735 Market St.  
Philadelphia, PA 19103

**Phone:** 800-321-1FMC  
**Fax:** 215-299-6100  
**Web site:**  
[www.fmcprosolutions.com](http://www.fmcprosolutions.com)  
**E-mail:** [michele\\_jmel@fmc.com](mailto:michele_jmel@fmc.com)

# FMC Corporation

## Product focus

FMC Specialty Products Business is dedicated to providing creative solutions that answer a direct need in the marketplace. The history of FMC is steeped in innovation and success in bringing new technologies to the market. It began with John Bean's insecticide spray pump invention in 1883 and continued when FMC set the standard for broad-spectrum pest control with Talstar® insecticide and continues today with the introduction of QuickSilver® herbicide and Dismiss™ turf herbicide.

FMC is proud of its 123-year history of providing effective technologies that answer a need for customers

in the United States to Australia, Europe and beyond.

With its heritage of fierce independence and dedication to customers, FMC first entered the pest control industry in 1987 and has since expanded its portfolio to address market needs in the nursery, turf, ornamental, golf, aquatics and other specialty chemical segments.

To keep pace with the demands of today's marketplace, FMC Specialty Products Business has created an initiative that seeks input on new product needs directly from customers and searches aggressively, both inside and outside of FMC for solutions to meet those needs.

## Technical support

To reach customer service or technical support representatives, please contact the Customer Satisfaction Center at 800-321-1FMC.

## Major product lines

► **Talstar® insecticide:** Count on Talstar for effective, long-residual control of a broad-spectrum of pests, including hard-to-control and nuisance pests and all species of ants.

► **QuickSilver® T&O herbicide:** Fast visual control of broadleaf weeds.

► **Dismiss™ turf herbicide:** Dismiss provides fast, effective control of yellow nutsedge and green kyllinga in a single application and purple nutsedge in two applications.





**Phil Wenzel**  
President & COO

### Mission Statement

Premier designer, manufacturer, marketer and distributor of high quality outdoor power equipment sold exclusively through independent dealers.

# Ferris Industries

### Product focus

Ferris is a veteran of innovation. We've introduced quality products and have been delivering solutions to our customers for over 95 years.

Our history is a long line of firsts. We brought you the industry's first hydrostatic drive walk-behind mower and the first electric deck lift. Our zero-turn mowers are the only commercial mowers with Independent Suspension.

We stay ahead of the pack. That's why Ferris, the commercial mower specialist, has earned the reputation as the innovation leader in the outdoor power equipment industry. Our ongoing development in mower design and suspension technology substantiates that position.

Products are a reflection of people who build them. Our cutting-edge technology starts with sharp minds — experienced professionals who understand what you do each day. At Ferris, we pour our talent and time into creating ways for you to work better, faster and smarter. The result: a



**IS 5000Z** — This ultimate mowing machine features Ferris' exclusive 4-wheel suspension and a 33-hp Caterpillar diesel engine.

first-class line of commercial mowers.

Ferris commercial mowers help you make the most of every minute in the field. Our mowers balance power and speed with productivity and precision. Our extensive equipment line promises you a perfect fit with a wide range of rugged walk-behinds, reliable three-wheel riders and innovative zero-turn mowers



**HydroCut 32** — Setting a new standard, this single-drive hydro-static walk-behind features a 32- or 36-inch cutting width with 13-hp Kawasaki V-Twin electric start engine.

ranging from 44- to 72-in. Our exclusive suspension systems, paired with powerful engine choices, achieve new levels of performance and productivity.

### Manufacturing facility

All this technology turns heads. To keep up with demands for products, Ferris has expanded its resources with a facility addition that features a state-of-the-art tow line and assembly area.



**Commercial Mower Specialist**

**Ferris Industries**  
5375 N. Main St.  
Munnsville, NY 13409

**Phone:** 800-933-6175  
**Fax:** 315-495-0109  
**Web site:**  
<http://ferrisindustries.com>  
**E-mail:** [marketing@ferrisindustries.com](mailto:marketing@ferrisindustries.com)



### Technical support, sales, training and customer service

Customers can count on the service and support they receive from authorized Ferris dealers. Those dealers are backed by the most experienced service technicians and parts support team in the industry.

### Major product lines

Zero-turns featuring Ferris' exclusive 4-wheel suspension systems, three-wheel riders and walk-behinds.

# GMC Sierra and Savana

Our engineers have worked hard at crafting professional-grade vehicles for more than 100 years. Vehicles that are smart, powerful and innovative. We began the process by asking you — the people who drive the trucks we design — for input. With your help, we've engineered industry-leading trucks, vans and SUVs. With results that speak for themselves.

Sierra trucks are available in an impressive variety of half-ton and heavy-duty models, with regular, extended and crew cabs. In 2006, the GMC Sierra offers more power than ever. The Sierra HD models are available with the 360 hp, 650 lb.-ft. torque Duramax 6600 Turbo Diesel V8. Coupled with the class exclusive Allison 1000 Series 6-Speed Automatic Transmission, Sierra provides an unbeatable powertrain combination. The Sierra 1500 Extended Cab is the first full-size pickup to offer gasoline/electric hybrid technology. And with 120-volt AC outlets to recharge your cordless tools, your business never has to stop working.

The GMC Savana Cargo Van is an undisputed leader with the new 250 hp, 460 lb.-ft. torque Duramax 6600 Diesel V8. Segment-exclusive features such as 60/40 driver-



side cargo doors, side access panels and all-wheel drive help you get the job done quickly and efficiently. The Savana Cutaway can easily adapt to whatever commercial

application you may need. With three wheelbases and GVWRs up to 12,300 lbs., it is designed for easy upfitting and body installation.

**GMC**

**GMC**  
**Phone:** 1-800-GMC-8782  
**Web site:** [www.GMC.com](http://www.GMC.com)





**Joel Goldsmith**  
President/CEO

### Mission Statement

To be the premier, independent plant breeding company in the world, with a strong and sustainable financial base, offering beautiful, high quality flower varieties through a distribution channel within which the company has increasing impact and influence.

**Goldsmith Seeds**  
2280 Hecker Pass Hwy.  
P.O. Box 1349  
Gilroy, CA 95021

**Phone:** 800-549-0158  
**Fax:** 408-848-5429  
**Web site:**  
[www.goldsmithseeds.com](http://www.goldsmithseeds.com)  
**E-mail:**  
[info@goldsmithseeds.com](mailto:info@goldsmithseeds.com)

# Goldsmith Seeds

## Major product lines

Goldsmith Seeds was founded in 1962 in Gilroy, CA, by Glenn and Jane Goldsmith. Still family-owned and operated more than 40 years later, Goldsmith Seeds is now a multinational company that has an outstanding record for consistently breeding and producing seed for top flower varieties, notably bedding plants such as Maverick™ Geraniums, Ramblin™ Trailing Petunias and Xtreme™ Impatiens. To date, we've earned 22 All America Selections Awards and 14 Fleuroselect medals for our introductions.

## Product focus

Goldsmith flower seed is distributed by a network of well-established wholesale brokers. These brokers sell our seed to professional growers who then grow and sell already-started plants to the landscape trade, garden centers and home stores throughout the world. Because Goldsmith is a wholesale company, seeds and plants are not available directly to you from us. To purchase seeds or plants, please contact your favorite supplier and ask for varieties bred by Goldsmith.

## Manufacturing facility

Goldsmith's plant breeding

work is conducted at our Gilroy, CA, research station and at another facility in the Netherlands. "We listen to



Ramblin™ Petunias



what the market demands and tailor our breeding programs accordingly," says Joel Goldsmith, president and CEO. Most of our seed is produced in greenhouses in Guatemala and the Netherlands, where Goldsmith has established facilities to optimize seed production.

## Technical support

We're committed to providing expert advice on our products and creative ideas to help you WOW your customers and make more money! Our Support & Service Group includes long-time industry Technical Advisors Tom Linwick, Burney Burton, Ken Harr and Don Snow. Call 800-549-0158 for helpful advice, service and ideas.

**Stan Guyer**  
President

# The Grasshopper Company

## Product focus

Grasshopper True ZeroTurn™ mowers are built for maximum comfort, durability, productivity and versatility while providing easy operation, agility and timesaving performance. Deep DuraMax™ decks deliver a quality cut in a variety of mowing conditions. The QuikConverter Implement System™ lets you change FrontMount™ deck sizes or add attachments in minutes without tools. The industry-exclusive PowerFold™/Electric Height Adjustment option for Grasshopper 48- to 61-inch FrontMount™ DuraMax™ decks effortlessly raises the front of the deck vertically with the flip of a switch for easy access to the underside for cleaning and maintenance. PowerFold™ also lets you change cutting heights from 1 to 5 inches with the same switch.

## Manufacturing facility

Grasshopper power units, mowing decks and attachments are produced by skilled workers with high-tech

equipment including computer-aided manufacturing fully integrated with a 3-D solid modeling computer design system, and CNC fabrication and machining. Facilities include more than 300,000 square feet of manufacturing, testing and warehouse space in Moundridge, KS.

## Technical support

Technical support is provided to Grasshopper customers through an extensive dealer network throughout the United States. The company provides service schools for its dealers.

## Major product lines

Grasshopper True ZeroTurn™ FrontMount™ mowers with horizontal crankshaft, OHV engine choices from 16 to 32 hp, liquid-cooled or air-cooled, gas or diesel.



Grasshopper True ZeroTurn™ MidMount™ mowers with horizontal crankshaft, OHV engine choices of 18 to 32 hp, gas or diesel. Deck cutting widths available from 41 to 72 inches. Year-round attachments include PowerVac™ collection systems, AERA-vator™, edger, turbine blower, V-plow, dozer blades, rotary brooms, snowthrowers, tine-rake dethatchers, and sprayers. Other options available include winter enclosure and heater.



**The Grasshopper Company**  
P.O. Box 637  
Moundridge, KS 67107

**Phone:** 620-345-8621  
**Fax:** 620-345-2301  
**Web site:**  
[www.grasshoppermower.com](http://www.grasshoppermower.com)



**Jim Ross**  
President and CEO

### Mission Statement

As a professional supplier to the green industry, we are committed to exceeding our customers' expectations by providing quality products, innovative services and professional knowledge — measured by the mutual profitability and success of our customers, employees and shareholders.

# Horizon

Ask any landscape professional what his most costly expense is and he'll answer "time." Time wasted waiting, driving around, and trying to find the right product in stock. Over the past few years, many irrigation and landscape distributors have tried to combat this by expanding their inventories to deliver what has been called a "one-stop shop." But many have fallen short, unable to readily stock the many product choices available, especially in power equipment and agronomic products. And finding staff trained in everything from irrigation to two-cycle oil is difficult.

One distributor has found the answer. Horizon stores offer a complete selection of all products the landscape professional needs, including irrigation and central control, erosion control, specialty reclamation products, fertilizers, chemicals, seed, sod, two-cycle engines, walk behind and ride-along mowers, landscape lighting, pond supplies and tools. They even offer built-in barbeques! How do they do it?

Horizon doesn't dabble in a product line. The company offers a full line of products and expertise for each of its major product offerings: Irrigation, Landscape Products, Professional Lawn Care Equipment and Specialty Equipment.



"Contractors are savvy enough to know the difference between a full-line supplier and those that pretend to be," said Horizon President Jim Ross. "We respect our customers' time and back it up with the inventory and expertise they require." Each new product line is fully examined, analyzed and evaluated to ensure it will add value to Horizon and to its customers.

Horizon serves customers from 59 locations in 10 states. Horizon offers a full agronomic offering to the turf professional backed by the expertise of several pest control advisors on staff.

Based on customer feedback and demand, the formula is working. Horizon is growing and just recently acquired Wickham Supply and Water Zone's 14 store locations in Texas and Georgia.

Horizon's first commitment

is to saving their customers time, especially when they stop in for supplies.

"Time is money to contractors," said Ross. "They have better things to do than take a number and wait at a counter for someone to go get what they want." All Horizon stores have in-aisle signage, displays and technical advice so the customer can quickly find the answers they want. And personalized assistance is just a moment away. "We have the best people in the industry serving our customers," Ross noted.

"Not every supplier can pull off the breadth and depth of this offering and do it with the expertise required," he said, adding: "We spend more on developing and educating our people so they can quickly understand the customer's need and deliver the best solution for them — quickly."



**Horizon**  
5214 S. 30th St.  
Phoenix, AZ 85040

**Phone:** 800-PVC-TURF  
**Fax:** 602-276-7800  
**Web site:**  
[www.HorizonOnline.com](http://www.HorizonOnline.com)  
**E-mail:** [webmaster@horizononline.com](mailto:webmaster@horizononline.com)



### WEB SITES TO VISIT:

[illegible]



**Richard E. Hunter**  
President and CEO

# Hunter Industries

With a legacy of pioneering efforts, Hunter has focused on bringing to market truly innovative products that have the power to advance the industry.

At the heart of the Hunter product line are the company's signature pop-up gear-driven rotors. Using the most advanced technology to deliver a consistent stream of water to a precise location, Hunter rotors helped launch an industry-wide "rotor revolution" by becoming the standard by which all sprinklers that followed would be

single controller to the number of zones a particular job requires. No need to replace a controller with a larger one when a system's needs grow – simply add another module. And no need for the installer to stock an inventory of various sizes of controller – just keep base units and extra station modules on hand.

With a complete line of irrigation components encompassing virtually every kind of landscape need, the Hunter product lineup is rounded out by a wide range of valves, spray heads, and a full family of sensor products.

All Hunter products are sold exclusively through an international network of professional irrigation distributors.

This highly successful system has made Hunter products available only to professional designers and installers who rely on the brand for the distinction it gives their projects and because Hunter is an industry leader.

But it is more than simply products at Hunter. It's a full commitment to helping those who purchase the brand make their business be the best it can be. A prime example is the Hunter Preferred Contractor



measured. Because all Hunter rotors pop up above the turf when in operation, then retract below grade when the cycle is completed, landscape irrigation has become more accurate, reliable and safer.

Thanks to the concept of modularity, Hunter is bringing a revolution to the irrigation controller line as well. Starting with a base unit to which modules that contain additional stations are added, it is possible to configure a



Program, the industry's only frequent buyer program that helps members get the equipment they need, advertise and promote their services, and provide training for their personnel.

There's also the Hunter DATA Line that puts design recommendations, programming solutions, and installation assistance just a phone call away. The Hunter Web site teeming with valuable resources. A wide array of computer software and helpful printed materials. Advanced education through the Hunter Institute of Irrigation, and more. In fact, no other company in the industry provides the kind of ongoing support that Hunter does.

From the performance of their products to the performance of their people, Hunter is dedicated to the needs of the irrigation professional.

**Hunter®**  
The Irrigation Innovators

**Hunter Industries**  
1940 Diamond St.  
San Marcos, CA 92078

**Phone:** 800-733-2823

**Fax:** 760-471-9626

**Web site:**  
[www.hunterindustries.com](http://www.hunterindustries.com)



**Paul Mullet**  
President

### Mission Statement

To provide innovative and durable outdoor power equipment, maximizing customer profitability and employee satisfaction, while creating value for shareholders.



**HUSTLER**

**Hustler Turf Equipment**  
200 South Ridge Road  
Hesston, KS 67062

**Phone:** 800-395-4757

**Fax:** 620-327-3123

**Web site:**

[www.hustlerturf.com](http://www.hustlerturf.com)

**E-mail:** [info@hustlerturf.com](mailto:info@hustlerturf.com)

# Hustler Turf Equipment

### Product focus

From the very first true zero-turning radius mower in 1964 to today, Hustler has concentrated on providing the most durable, productive mowers in the industry.

### Manufacturing facility

More than 100,000-sq.-ft. facility in Hesston, KS, which features the latest in powder-coat paint technology with a 9-stage wash system for the best finish in the industry.

### Major product lines

► **Hustler Z** – Featuring the toughest construction in the industry, the Hustler Z™ sports the strongest frame, front caster forks, deck, and blade spindles on the market. In fact we offer a lifetime warranty on the tractor frame and the leading edge of the mowing

deck. The 60-in. side-discharge deck features very-high blade-tip speed, high-lift blades, and six anti-scalp wheels to produce a beautiful finish.

Mowing heights can be changed from 1 in. to 5 in. with a foot-operated deck lift.

► **Super Z** – Built for speed, built to last. Top speed of the Hustler Super Z™ is 15 mph, making this the fastest z-rider on the market. The Super Z offers a choice of either 60-in. and 72-in. side-discharge decks. Add the 9-bushel BAC-VAC™ catcher or the new three bag catcher from Humboldt for a clean finish spring, summer or fall.

► **ATZ** – The Hustler ATZ was



born to climb. A modified Hustler Super Z, the ATZ is the perfect addition to a fleet where matchless performance on slopes must involve no compromise with flat-out Z-rider productivity.

► **FasTrak** – The FasTrak mows with a professional quality of cut at a brisk seven miles per hour. It moves nimbly around obstacles. Slopes are not a problem. And the FasTrak trims close to sidewalks, trees, birdbaths, and flower beds. The FasTrak features 44-in. or 52-in. side-discharge decks, which produce a beautiful cut. The new FasTrak warranty offers one year or 400 hour parts and labor and a lifetime warranty on the frame and leading edge of the deck.

► **Mini Z** – At 72-in. in length, it's the most compact mini on the market. The Hustler Mini Zs work from a wide stance with a low center of gravity. Handling on slopes is sure, confident and non-slip.







**Nate Jones**  
President, John Deere  
Worldwide Commercial  
& Consumer Equipment  
Division

#### **Mission Statement**

We aspire to distinctively serve customers — those linked to the land — through a business as great as our products. We will achieve this through exceptional operating performance, disciplined SVA growth, and aligned high-performance teamwork.



**JOHN DEERE**

**John Deere Worldwide  
Commercial & Consumer  
Equipment Division**  
2000 John Deere Run  
Cary, NC 27513

**Phone:** 800-537-8233

**Fax:** 919-804-2343

**Web site:** [www.JohnDeere.com](http://www.JohnDeere.com)

**E-mail:**

[jdlawns@JohnDeere.com](mailto:jdlawns@JohnDeere.com)

# John Deere Worldwide Commercial & Consumer Equipment Division

#### **Product focus**

The John Deere Worldwide Commercial & Consumer Equipment Division manufactures and distributes a full line of lawn care products for residential, commercial, and golf and turf applications. The John Deere organization is noted for nearly 170 years of innovation, the highest quality products, and its product and operator safety initiatives.



#### **Facilities**

The John Deere Worldwide Commercial & Consumer Equipment Division manufactures its line of commercial equipment in Raleigh, NC; Charlotte, NC; Horicon, WI; Augusta, GA; Alpharetta, GA; Greenville, TN; Rock Hill, SC; Welland, Canada; Gummersbach, Germany; and Enschede, The Netherlands.



#### **Technical support**

At [www.johndeere.com](http://www.johndeere.com), John Deere customers can find information on a variety of support functions,

including online product operator manuals, warranty information and product selector tools. In addition,

customers can call the John Deere Customer Communications Center at 800-537-8233.



**Sam Allen**  
President, Worldwide  
Construction &  
Forestry Division and  
John Deere  
Power Systems

# John Deere Construction & Forestry Company

## Product focus

The John Deere Construction & Forestry Company produces more than 120 machine models used in all facets of earthmoving, including road-building, underground utilities construction, site development and residential construction. John Deere construction and commercial worksite products are also used in landscaping, nurseries, material handling, road repair and maintenance. Through a joint venture agreement, John Deere also is responsible for marketing and sales of Hitachi construction and mining products in the Americas.



## JOHN DEERE

John Deere Construction  
& Forestry Company  
P.O. Box 8806  
Moline, IL 61266

**Phone:**  
**Division Headquarters:**  
309-765-8000  
**Customer Communications**  
**Center:** 800-503-3373  
**Fax:** 309-765-1859  
**Web site:** [www.JohnDeere.com](http://www.JohnDeere.com)  
**E-mail:** [jdeere@groupo.com](mailto:jdeere@groupo.com)

John Deere construction models include articulated dump trucks, backhoe loaders, compact track loaders, crawler dozers, crawler loaders, track and wheel excavators, 4WD loaders, landscape loaders, motor graders, skid steers and waste handlers. Hitachi models include excavators, front shovels and rigid-frame trucks.

John Deere employs a vast dealer network to provide reliable customer service, with more than 420 locations in North America. For

information on John Deere products and dealer locations, visit [www.johndeere.com](http://www.johndeere.com) or call the Customer Communications Center at 800-503-3373.

Deere's commitment to training is reflected in its Worldwide Training Center, a 55,000-sq.-ft. facility in Davenport, IA. It was the industry's first facility solely dedicated to training. Deere also maintains facilities in Illinois and Arizona for

demonstrations and training.

The company is guided today, as it has been since 1837, by John Deere's original values: quality, commitment, integrity, and innovation.

The John Deere Construction & Forestry Company was established in the mid-1950s. The company's people, products, programs and strategies are driven to provide productivity, uptime and low daily operating costs to all customers it serves.



# READERSHIP SURVEY

## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Beginning Oct. 15, visit [www.landscapegroup.com/sbsurvey](http://www.landscapegroup.com/sbsurvey)

and take a short survey that will tell us what you like about *Snow Business*, and what we can improve upon. Your feedback will help to make sure we're providing you with the best snow and ice management coverage in the industry. All respondents will be entered into a drawing for cool prizes.



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218-279-8858 or e-mail

[snowbusiness@questex.com](mailto:snowbusiness@questex.com).

# Snow Business



**Tom Rich**  
President

## L.T. Rich Products

### Product focus

L.T. Rich Products is a manufacturer of stand-on fertilizer/spray systems, aerators and turf renovators for the commercial lawn care industry. All units are zero-turn and feature a pump/wheel motor transmission. We use only state-of-the-art laser-cutting equipment and CNC fabrication machinery.

Sprayers feature all stainless

steel construction with large fertilizer and liquid spraying capacity. Sizes range from 100 to 300 lbs. for fertilizer and eight to 50 gallons of liquid.

Aerators feature 36-in. or 46-in. tine width and 95,000-sq.-ft.-per-hour productivity.

Several attachments are available for the aerators, including a spray system, fertilizer spreader, de-thatch rake, slit seeder, and even a

snow plow. Custom and purpose-built units are also available. All products are sold direct or through a dealer base depending on location.

### Manufacturing facility

22,000-sq.-ft. facility in Lebanon, IN.

### Major product lines

- ▶ Z-SPRAY
- ▶ Z-PLUG



### L.T. Rich Products

920 Hendricks Drive  
Lebanon, IN 46052

Phone: 877-482-2040

Fax: 765-482-2050

Web site: [www.z-spray.com](http://www.z-spray.com)

E-mail: [sales@z-spray.com](mailto:sales@z-spray.com)



### WEB SITES TO VISIT:

[illegible][illegible]

# ONE MEASURE OF SUCCESS: WINNING AWARDS FOR HARD WORK.

## LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT WON 12 AWARDS RECENTLY.

### ► ASSOCIATION OF BUSINESS PRESS EDITORS AWARDS

- Stephanie Ricca, 2006 Young Leader Scholarship award winner
- 2006 Business Planner, regional award, special section
- "Dialogue and democracy," Lynne Brakeman, national gold award, original Web commentary
- "Sell smart, not slick," Carrie Parkhill, regional gold award, front cover illustration

### ► TURF & ORNAMENTAL COMMUNICATORS ASSOCIATION AWARDS

- 2006 Business Planner, first place, special projects
- "It's not baseball. It's base ball," Ron Hall, first place, online original content
- "A tale of two domes," Lynne Brakeman, merit, online original content
- "10 things you must know about your competition," Carrie Parkhill, merit, design
- AthleticTurf.net, merit, e-newsletter design

### ► OHIO EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM AWARDS

- "On the Record," Ron Hall, first place, columns
- "St. Louis' winning season," Stephanie Ricca, second place, features-general
- "From the Shop," Harry Smith, second place, columns

SOLUTIONS FOR A GROWING INDUSTRY  
**Landscape**  
MANAGEMENT

A QUESTEX PUBLICATION





**Edward Abraham**  
President

### Mission Statement

As the maker of animal and insect repellents and plant growth accelerators, it is The Liquid Fence Company's commitment to produce earth and family friendly products that are always effective and economical.



**The Liquid Fence Company**

**The Liquid Fence Company**  
P.O. Box 300  
Brodheads ville, PA 18322

**Phone:** 800-923-3623

**Fax:** 570-722-8452

**Web site:**  
www.liquidfence.com  
**E-mail:** pro@liquidfence.com

**Key contact:**  
**Eric Gerhartz,**  
PRO Division Sales  
Manager  
**Phone:** 800-923-3623

# The Liquid Fence® Company

### Major product lines

The Liquid Fence Company makes earth- and family-friendly animal and insect repellents, and plant growth accelerators. The effective and economical product line includes:

- ▶ Liquid Fence Deer & Rabbit Repellent
- ▶ Liquid Fence Mole & Vole Repellent
- ▶ Liquid Fence Goose Repellent
- ▶ Speedy Grow Plant Growth Accelerator

### Product focus

▶ **Liquid Fence Mole & Vole Repellent** is designed to repel moles, voles and gophers from turf, landscaped areas, flowers, shrubs and plants. It is ideal for golf courses, municipal and private properties including parks, sports fields and schools, along with commercial and residential landscaping.

In testing performed to determine repellent efficacy, when exposed to the Common (Eastern) Mole (*Scalopus aquaticus*), independent research laboratory, Snell Scientifics, LLC concluded that Liquid Fence Mole & Vole Repellent provided excellent overall results, with an astonishing 99% reduction in mole activity, even four weeks after treatment.

All-natural, EPA-exempt Liquid Fence Mole & Vole Repellent will keep sprayers clog-free at temperatures as low as 33°F—much lower than other castor-based mole and vole repellents that will gel and clog at average well water temperature. This enables year-round application with year round effectiveness, guaranteed.

▶ **Liquid Fence Deer & Rabbit Repellent** is designed to repel deer and rabbits from landscaped garden areas, flowers, shrubs, trees and vines. It is ideal for all private and municipal properties from commercial

farms to public parks and golf courses.

All-natural Liquid Fence Deer & Rabbit Repellent will virtually stop deer and rabbits in their tracks. Because the guaranteed effective repellent works on scent, the animals don't have to browse or rub to be repelled. The all-season formula enables year-round application and effectiveness. It's eco-friendly, EPA-exempt and will not harm vegetation.

▶ **Liquid Fence Goose Repellent** is designed to repel geese, turkeys and ducks from landscaping or any turf areas where these birds are a problem. It is ideal for all private and public places, from parks to golf courses. Liquid Fence Goose Repellent will dramatically reduce habitation and the unsightly, unhealthy bird droppings they leave behind.

The application of Liquid Fence Goose Repellent makes the food supply in the treated area very undesirable. The elimination of the food source will completely change the feeding habits of these birds and cause them to look for a more desirable feeding location.

### Technical support, sales, training and/or customer service

Expert technical support, thorough product education and award-winning customer service contribute greatly to the success of The Liquid Fence Company.





**Norman Heidebrecht**  
President and COO

### **Mission Statement**

Provide the ultimate customer experience through quality, innovation and unparalleled customer service.

# Little Giant Pump Company

### **Product focus**

The company manufactures and sells submersible pumps, centrifugal pumps and related products. Little Giant pumps are used in a broad range of commercial, industrial and consumer products including heating, ventilating and cooling, parts washers, machine tools, evaporative coolers, sump pumps, statuary fountains, water gardening and waste management.

### **Manufacturing facilities**

Oklahoma City, OK — a 400,000-sq.-ft. facility, including a 200,000-sq.-ft. distribution/customer service center.

### **Technical support, sales, training and customer service**

Little Giant offers superior technical support and customer service. Our trained personnel offer accurate, helpful and courteous information to our customers.

### **Major product line**

Little Giant Pump Company is proud to announce the launch of WaterMark™, a complete new line of water garden products designed and created for the Professional Contractor/Installer.

Over the last year, Little Giant has collaborated with respected experts in the field to design and create water garden products that offer innovative technology to help simplify installation and reduce pond maintenance.

The new lineup features biological waterfall filtration units with BioVort™ technology, pond skimmers, vortex pumps with solids handling capabilities and energy-saving programmed LED lighting.



**Little Giant Pump Company**  
3810 N. Tulsa St.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73157

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**E-mail:** [customerservice@littlegiant.com](mailto:customerservice@littlegiant.com)



# Marsan Turf and Irrigation

At Marsan Turf & Irrigation Supply, Inc., we offer a complete line of wholesale turf and irrigation products, from sprinklers to low-voltage outdoor lighting. Our warehouse in Southern California is full of professional landscape sprinkler equipment and the parts and supplies you need. You can count on an expansive inventory of all the major manufacturers to meet your needs. Everything you need to get the job done right! All at the most competitive prices to help you save money and boost your profits. Visit our web site to view the great prices we offer on products you use every day.

MTI has served the Southern California market for more than 25 years, and we've been helping contractors save money nationwide for more than 10 years. We offer free shipping for all orders. With thousands of products in stock, you'll find what you'll need and save money.

These prices are only available to professional contractors, so our site is only advertised in professional trade publications. These special



prices also require box quantities on most products, except items such as backflows or controllers. This site is wholesale only for working contractor professionals.

Our Web store at [www.sprinklers4less.com](http://www.sprinklers4less.com) contains hundreds of our top-selling products, many at special sale prices for the season and all others at everyday low prices that you can't beat or find consistently. As more contractors use the online store, we'll add additional items to expand online availability. For items not found on the Web store, you can place as much of your order online as possible and then e-mail or call us for any

other items needed. You can always call 800-600-TURF, and one of our customer service specialists will take your order and answer any questions.

Our goal is to make your purchasing job easier with prompt, courteous and efficient service while saving you money. Unlike some "partner" programs, our approach lets you keep the money you save. You decide how you want to spend your savings. In today's challenging economic times, this can help small- and medium-sized contractors raise their profits and keep more for themselves.

This is the MTI economic recovery program for contractors—try it and save!

**Marsan Turf and Irrigation**  
519 Terrace Drive  
San Dimas, CA 91773-3305

**Phone:** 800-600-8873

**Fax:** 800-445-7770

**Web site:**

[www.sprinklers4less.com](http://www.sprinklers4less.com)

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**Rand Baldwin, CAE**  
Managing Director

# Mid-America Horticultural Trade Show

The Mid-America Horticultural Trade Show (Mid-Am) has bright new ideas for 2007. The trade show, which is scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 17, through Friday, Jan. 19, 2007, at Lakeside Center in Chicago's McCormick Place, features nearly 600 leading suppliers offering countless products, services and equipment for the horticulture industry.

New for 2007 is the **Innovation Showcase**, a new product display area that is designed to highlight the newest and most innovative plants, products and equipment.

Green industry professionals from the United States, Canada and beyond involved in growing, designing, installing, maintaining and selling plants and related material attend Mid-Am. They come to see what's hot for the coming season, learn new techniques, place orders and connect with industry peers.

Mid-Am has expanded its popular educational program by adding Irrigation Association classes and exams to the lineup. The educational program offers many opportunities for industry professionals to increase their knowledge and skills, including the pre-show **Management Workshop** on Tuesday, Jan. 16



and the **Midwinter Conference** on Wednesday through Friday. Both conferences offer in-depth educational sessions on business and industry issues geared specifically to the green industry professional. Additionally, the free keynote address on Wednesday, Jan. 17, features John Powers with his passionate discussion: "Do What You Love, Love What You Do."

The **Student Career Center** on Thursday, Jan. 18, provides a perfect opportunity for

employers and students to connect. Employers introduce their company to the new crop of hort grads and conduct preliminary interviews. Students can use the Career Center to meet the many potential employers and determine which might be a comfortable fit. The program is free for full-time students studying horticulture who register in advance. For information on how your business can host a table at the 2007 Mid-Am Student Career Center, contact Mid-Am at 847-526-2010 or visit [www.midam.org](http://www.midam.org).

Visitors can plan their Mid-Am experience using the interactive floor plan at [www.midam.org](http://www.midam.org). Search for exhibitors by name, by booth number, and by products and services.

For more information and to register for Mid-Am online, visit [www.midam.org](http://www.midam.org).



**Mid-America  
Horticultural Trade Show**  
1000 N. Rand Road  
Suite 214  
Wauconda, IL 60084

**Toll Free:** 1-800-223-8761  
**Phone:** 847-526-2010  
**Fax:** 847-526-3993  
**Web site:** [www.midam.org](http://www.midam.org)  
**E-mail:** [mail@midam.org](mailto:mail@midam.org)





**Loren Olson**  
President

### **Mission Statement**

Modeco System's goal is to streamline the collection of data from the field into the office in a seamless introduction of technology. Simply automating the collection of field time/data has unlimited savings potential. With our TimeScape and ZPS — Modeco's GPS system — we offer solutions for verification of data necessary for invoicing and payroll and job costing. Less time spent on paperwork, more time for increased profits.

**Modeco Systems, LLC**  
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Jackson, WI 53037

**Phone:** 262-677-8184

**Fax:** 262-677-8186

**Web site:**  
[www.modecosystems.com](http://www.modecosystems.com)

**E-mail:**  
[sales@modecosystems.com](mailto:sales@modecosystems.com)

# Modeco Systems, LLC

### **Product focus**

Modeco Systems, LLC's TimeScape™ is a mobile time tracking system designed to streamline the data collection process and dynamically generate reports for payroll, job invoicing, tasks and material. Utilizing a small hand-held scanner and barcodes to gather valuable landscape work information throughout the day's routine, TimeScape™ can integrate with other software

programs and can be completely customized to fit your specific requirements.

By quickly reviewing the newly collected data when gathered on a daily — not weekly — basis, time management and invoice issues can be appropriately adjusted. Our mobile time-tracking system replaces messy, hard-to-read daily log sheets and time cards, plus it saves hours of data-entry work for your office

staff. The collected data is brought back to the shop — and with a few clicks of the mouse, it is downloaded into a central database for immediate use with dozens of reports.

### **Technical support, sales, training and customer service**

Our experienced staff supplies technical service support, technical information, software and hardware support.

*It's about time!*

**TimeScape™**  
Time tracking for  
mobile employees

**Modeco Systems LLC**

- ▶ Employees collect data with small hand-held scanner
- ▶ Shows exact time of arrival and departure from customer sites
- ▶ Replaces time cards and job log sheets
- ▶ Downloads to a central database with a click of the mouse
- ▶ New ZPS — Modeco's GPS positioning system for vehicles — no monthly charge
- ▶ Less time crunching numbers — more time for profit



**Stewart Rom**  
VP of Sales & Marketing,  
B.S.L.A.

### Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide powerful, yet easy-to-use and affordable computer-aided design technology to the green industry.



**VectorWorks Landmark by Nemetschek NA**  
7150 Riverwood Drive  
Columbia, MD 21046

**Phone:** 888-646-4223  
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**Web site:**  
[www.nemetschek.net](http://www.nemetschek.net)  
**E-mail:** [sales@nemetschek.net](mailto:sales@nemetschek.net)

# VectorWorks Landmark by Nemetschek NA

### Product focus

VectorWorks Landmark provides all the tools and technology landscape designers need in one cost-effective, easy-to-learn software program.

Automatic plant tracking and automatically generated plant lists mean you don't have to waste time counting the plants in your drawings. Each time you make a change, your plant list is updated immediately. An extensive plant database give you access to more than 1,200 plants.

Powerful site-sculpting tools and advanced 3D tools make terrain modeling and analysis easy. A hardscape tool makes it easy to create patterned walkways and paved areas, so you don't have to draw these intricate patterns yourself. You can even create your own custom patterns.

You also get free object libraries within VectorWorks Landmark. So there's no need to buy separate landscape and site objects or symbol libraries. Everything you need, from plants to gravel, is just a mouse click away. And, our exclusive sketch technology that gives your 2D drawings and 3D models a hand-sketched look allows you to create stunning presentations that look hand-



drawn in just seconds.

Technical support is free. And upgrades are painless. It's the ideal solution for firms with limited IT budgets.

### Facility

Nemetschek North America is a wholly-owned subsidiary of European software giant Nemetschek AG, Munich. The company's research, development, marketing, sales and support are headquartered in Columbia, MD.

### Technical support

Free technical support is available to U.S. clients. Additional training options include training guides, project-based training CDs,

personal online tutoring, classroom training and in-house, one-on-one instruction.

### Major product lines

Nemetschek offers a variety of CAD programs tailored to different industries. In addition to VectorWorks Landmark, the company offers VectorWorks Architect for commercial and residential architects and home builders; VectorWorks Spotlight for lighting and scene and set designers; and VectorWorks Machine Design for industrial designers and metal fabricators. VectorWorks Designer and VectorWorks Fundamentals provide cost-effective professional design solutions for a variety of design disciplines.





**Ted Melnik**  
President

### Mission Statement

The ROOTS Plant Care Group of Novozymes Biologicals, Inc. is an industry leader in the research, development and manufacture of biotechnology plant care products for golf, turf and ornamental, nursery, greenhouse, tree care, and aquatic applications.

Our mission is to develop innovative and effective microbial-based technology that is safer for people and the environment. The core belief of Roots Plant Care Group and Novozymes, its parent corporation, is that natural technology has the power to solve many of environmental and business challenges.

**Novozymes Biologicals, Inc.**  
5400 Corporate Circle  
Salem, VA 24153

**Phone:** 800-342-6173  
**Fax:** 540-389-2688  
**Web site:** [www.rootsinc.com](http://www.rootsinc.com)  
**E-mail:**  
[jhow@novozymes.com](mailto:jhow@novozymes.com)

# Novozymes Biologicals, Inc.

### Product focus

For more than 60 years, Novozymes has been the biotech-based world leader in the development and production of enzymes and microorganisms. With U.S. revenues of more than \$1 billion, Novozymes employs more than 4,000 in 30 countries and sells more than 600 products in 130 countries.

In 2003, Salem, VA.-based Novozymes Biologicals, Inc. acquired Roots Inc., the green industry market leader in biological-based plant growth products and established Novozymes Biologicals Roots Plant Care Group. The combined strength of Novozymes and the ROOTS team has generated a portfolio of proven and trusted products for growth enhancement and disease control. Key products include those for disease control, thatch control and plant growth enhancement; organic-based fertilizers; water management; chelated micronutrients; and natural wetting agents.

All of Novozymes' products provide customers with unique, innovative benefits and serve as safe, effective and environmentally friendly alternatives to conventional products.

World-class product development, efficacy testing

and documentation all combine to ensure that Novozymes' ROOTS products are commercially competitive and meet or exceed customer expectations.

Novozymes Biologicals, Inc. also offers products that help solve household, industrial and agricultural challenges with environmentally safe technology. Applications include odor control, drain line and septic tank maintenance, grease removal, carpet cleaning, and wastewater treatment.

### Manufacturing facility

Novozymes Biologicals, Inc. has laboratory and manufacturing facilities in Salem, VA.

### Technical support, sales, training and customer service

Novozymes Biologicals/Roots Plant Care Group customer service:

#### North America:

800-342-6173

#### International:

540-389-9361

### Major product lines

Six key technologies provide the current basis for Novozymes/ROOTS' products:

- ▶ Microbial and Enzyme Technology
- ▶ Chelation Technology
- ▶ Mycorrhizal Technology



- ▶ Biostimulant Technology
- ▶ Granulation Technology
- ▶ Biofungicide Technology

### Our products include

- ▶ EcoGuard®
- ▶ TurfVigor®
- ▶ Roots® Turf Food
- ▶ endoROOTS®
- ▶ 1>2>3® Premix Plus
- ▶ 1>2>3® plus Condition™
- ▶ NoburN®
- ▶ Thatch-less™
- ▶ Lake Relief™
- ▶ ironROOTS®
- ▶ M-Roots®
- ▶ TotalTree®
- ▶ Transplant 1 Step™
- ▶ dryROOTS®
- ▶ Roots® Concentrate
- ▶ Fe8®
- ▶ AGRiplex®
- ▶ StandUp®
- ▶ LawnPlex®

**Greg Crawford**  
President

### Mission Statement

Our mission is to meet the interests of all stakeholders in a manner that shows we care about:

- ▶ The growth and success of the business;
- ▶ The well-being of our employees;
- ▶ The environment and the communities in which we operate;
- ▶ Our customers and suppliers and the reputation and performance of our products and service.



**Nufarm Americas, Inc.**  
150 Harvester Drive, Suite 200  
Burr Ridge, IL 60527

**Phone:** 800-345-3330

**Fax:** 708-754-0314

**Web site:**

[www.turf.us.nufarm.com](http://www.turf.us.nufarm.com)

**E-mail:** [ask@us.nufarm.com](mailto:ask@us.nufarm.com)

# Nufarm Turf & Specialty

### Product focus

Nufarm Turf & Specialty manufactures and formulates leading plant protection products for weed, disease and insect control. In fact, Nufarm Limited is one of the Top 10 crop and turf protection product manufacturers in the world.

### Manufacturing facility

The Nufarm manufacturing facility is in Chicago Heights, IL, and consists of four buildings on eight acres, which provides 60,000 square feet of warehouse space and 80,000 square feet of manufacturing, formulating and packaging capabilities. Although the facility primarily produces herbicides, it also formulates and packages fungicides. It can produce water-based products, emulsifiable concentrates, crystalline water soluble granules and impregnable granular products. Additionally, the facility can package any size container from one gallon to 20,000 gallon railcars.

### Technical support, sales, training and customer service

Product support is ensured through a veteran sales and technical staff known and active in the turf industry, and a distributor network serving all 50 states. The customer service call center is open from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. CST. To find a sales professional in your area, visit Nufarm on the Web at [www.turf.us.nufarm.com](http://www.turf.us.nufarm.com).

### Major product lines

#### TRIPLET Low Odor

▶ **Triplet Low Odor** is a powerful three-way herbicide that effectively controls broadleaf invaders in turfgrass without a harsh chemical smell. The proprietary, highly-refined formulation of 2,4-D, Mecoprop-p and Dicamba significantly reduces chemical odor while ensuring quick and complete weed kill with long-lasting results — leaving applicators and customers happy.

#### ESCALADE<sup>2</sup>

▶ **Escalade 2** is the advanced herbicide that delivers quick visual response, devastates weeds and reduces callbacks. Its combination of Fluroxypyr, Dicamba and 2,4-D controls more than 100 broadleaf weeds, including dandelion, plantain, oxalis, chickweed and many other hard-to-control species — with unsurpassed control of clover.

#### RAZORBURN

▶ **RazorBurn** is a post-emergent, systemic herbicide that is generally non-selective and gives broad-spectrum control of many annual weeds, perennial weeds, woody brush and trees. Controls weeds quickly (usually in 24 hours) and easily in ornamentals, bed maintenance, crack and crevice treatments, brush and vine clearing and perimeter treatments.



# Oregon Cutting Systems Group

## Product focus

Oregon Cutting Systems Group (OCSG) of Blount, Inc. is a world leader in providing high quality original equipment and replacement parts to the outdoor power equipment industry. Replacement products sold under the Oregon® brand name provide the industry with one of its most complete lines of parts including saw chain, guide bars, sprockets and maintenance accessories for chainsaws; lawnmower blades, engine parts, belts, tires and service tools for mowers and other outdoor power equipment; and trimmer line, heads, and blades for trimmers and brushcutters.

Oregon® replacement products are sold in more than 130 countries, and many leading manufacturers of outdoor power tools use parts made by OCSG as original equipment.

## Manufacturing facility

OCSG has six manufacturing plants around the world,



including four in North America.

## Technical support

A team of trained technical and customer service people in the United States field phone calls from customers and consumers. Through the Technical Services school program, OCSG trains more than 1,000 chain saw users each year in the safe use and maintenance of their cutting systems.

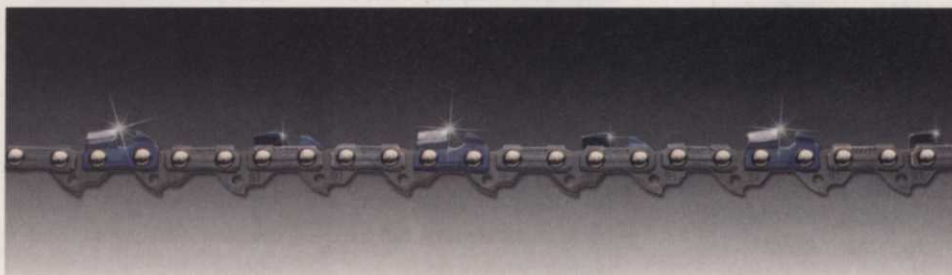
## Major product lines

- ▶ Chainsaw chain
- ▶ Chainsaw guide bars
- ▶ Chainsaw accessories
- ▶ Sprockets
- ▶ Lawnmower blades
- ▶ Engine parts, belts, tires and service tools for mowers and other outdoor power equipment
- ▶ Products for trimmers and brushcutters



**Oregon Cutting Systems  
Group**  
4909 SE International Way  
Portland, OR 97222

**Phone:** 503-653-8881  
**Web site:**  
[www.oregonchain.com](http://www.oregonchain.com)





**Zach Taylor**  
President, Oregon Fine  
Fescue Commission



**Kent Doerfler**  
President, Oregon Tall  
Fescue Commission

**Dave Nelson**  
Administrator, Oregon Fine  
Fescue Commission &  
Oregon Tall Fescue  
Commission

**Oregon Fine Fescue  
Commission & Oregon Tall  
Fescue Commission**  
1193 Royvonne Ave. South  
Suite 11  
Salem, OR 97302

**Phone:** 503-585-1157  
**Fax:** 503-585-1292  
**E-mail:**  
forages@oregonstate.edu/  
organizations/seed/

# Oregon Fine Fescue Commission & Oregon Tall Fescue Commission

## Company focus

The Oregon Fine Fescue Commission and Oregon Tall Fescue Commission represent Oregon's professional Chewings, creeping red and tall fescue seed growers in research and promotion of quality turfgrass seed where fine and tall fescues are adapted. Both commissions strive to provide information and answers about planting and maintaining fine and tall fescue turf on home lawns, sod farms, golf courses, athletic fields, industrial campuses and roadsides. They act as liaisons between growers and marketers to better understand the needs and projections of the turfgrass seed industry.

Oregon-grown fine and tall fescue seed is sold by virtually every distributor and dealer in areas where fine and tall fescues are adapted. Insist that your seed dealer provide you with only Oregon-grown fine and tall fescues.

Fine and tall fescues produce similar-appearing seedheads and share some other characteristics, but have distinct differences:

## Fine-leaved fescue



► **Fine-leaved fescues** are cold and shade tolerant, and are planted more and more in golf course extreme roughs for "the dunes look," as well as fairways and greens in some areas. For home lawns, parks, sod production, and industrial campuses, fine fescues are often mixed in equal parts with perennial ryegrass and Kentucky bluegrass for extended adaptability around trees. Ongoing research and development keeps improving fine fescues in areas of disease resistance and wider adaptability.

## Tall fescue



► **Tall fescues** are inherently deep rooted, as well as shade, drought and wear tolerant. Tall fescues will grow further south than fine fescues, and are, in some areas, replacing bermudagrass stands. Tall fescue is used more and more in golf course roughs and is often mixed with Kentucky bluegrass. Over the past several years, improvements have included: more dwarf growth habit for less mowing, finer leaved than older types, naturally darker green color for less nitrogen use, and inclusion of endophytes for natural insect resistance.





**Richard Martin**  
President & CEO

### Mission Statement

PBI/Gordon Corporation, a 100% employee-owned company, is a national leader in specialty pest management products and those related products and services that keep our environment beautiful and bountiful.

Our mission is to continually improve our products and services to meet the needs of the many specialty markets that make up the professional turf and ornamental, home, lawn and garden, agricultural and industrial vegetation management industries.



### PBI/Gordon Corporation

1217 W. 12th St.  
Kansas City, MO  
64101-04090

**Phone:** 800-821-7925

**Fax:** 816-474-0462

### Web site:

[www.pbigordon.com](http://www.pbigordon.com)

### E-mail:

[webmaster@pbigordon.com](mailto:webmaster@pbigordon.com)

# PBI/Gordon Corporation

## Nobody knows your turf like we do

### Product focus

At PBI/Gordon, innovative product development for the turf and ornamental industry is our primary focus. We were the first to formulate products specifically for this industry.

We continually search for and evaluate products or product combinations that fill the needs of the professional end-use market

we service. Our professional field sales team keeps us constantly alerted to these needs.

In the past, PBI/Gordon has been best known for quality herbicide products, first Trimec®, and more recently, SpeedZone®, Surge® and the new Q4®. But we're no longer "just an herbicide company." We were the first to offer plant growth regulators for fine turf. And since becoming an employee-owned company, we have taken a more aggressive position in the marketplace, have formed important strategic alliances in the industry and have introduced several new products — and there's more to come.



### Manufacturing facilities

We have two manufacturing facilities — in Kansas City, KS, and Crestline, KS.

### Technical support

Technical support service is available from dedicated support personnel on our toll-free line at 800-821-7925 (answered by real people!) or online at [www.pbigordon.com](http://www.pbigordon.com) or [www.weedalert.com](http://www.weedalert.com).

### Major product lines

Gordon's Professional Turf and Ornamental Products:

- ▶ SpeedZone® Herbicides
- ▶ Surge® Herbicides
- ▶ Trimec® Herbicides
- ▶ Q4® Herbicides
- ▶ Embark® Plant Growth Regulators
- ▶ Atrimmec® Plant Growth Regulators
- ▶ Azatrol® EC Insecticide
- ▶ Ferromec Liquid Iron
- ▶ Bensumec and PreSan Pre-Emergent Herbicides
- ▶ Launch and Focus Biostimulants



**Tanya Tolpegin**  
COO

### Mission Statement

The Professional Landcare Network cultivates and safeguards opportunities for our members — the dedicated professionals and companies who create and enhance the world's landscapes.

### PLANET Vision

To be the respected leader and voice of the green industry.



**Professional Landcare Network (PLANET)**  
950 Herndon Parkway  
Suite 450  
Herndon, VA 20170

**Phone:** 800-395-2522  
or 703-736-9666  
**Fax:** 703-736-9668  
**Web site:**  
[www.landcarenetwork.org](http://www.landcarenetwork.org)

# PLANET

### About PLANET

PLANET is an international association serving lawn care professionals, landscape management contractors, design/build/installation professionals, and interior plantscapers. PLANET provides its members with a good business foundation to help them evaluate, plan, and better manage their companies.

### Membership benefits

PLANET develops and maintains active programs for its approximately 4,400 member firms in the areas of business management, government affairs, public relations, technical assistance, safety and insurance, education, and interindustry relations with other facets of the green industry.

Member firms have direct access to marketing tools, industry-specific business publications, updates on legislative issues, world-class educational opportunities, Hispanic resources, and networking opportunities that can assist them in becoming more profitable.

### PLANET certifications

The PLANET certification program is an international program whose objectives are:

- ▶ To raise the standards of the profession
- ▶ To encourage self-

assessment by offering guidelines for achievement

- ▶ To identify persons with acceptable knowledge of principles and practices of the profession
- ▶ To award recognition to those who have demonstrated a high level of competence in the profession
- ▶ To improve performance within the profession by encouraging participation in a continuing program of professional development

### Upcoming PLANET Events

#### Green Industry Conference and Expo

Nov. 1-4, 2006, Columbus, OH

PLANET's Green Industry Conference features first-rate education and networking opportunities targeted specifically for green industry professionals. Plus, attendees can view the vast array of new products, technology, and services on display at the Green Industry Expo.

#### Executive Forum

Feb. 15-18, 2007, Bonita Springs, FL

Designed for green industry company owners and managers, PLANET's 2007 Executive Forum offers the unique opportunity to learn the principles of lean management through hands-on exercises and presents unsurpassed opportunities for collaborative exchange with peers.

#### Student Career Days

March 29-April 1, 2007, Michigan State University, Lansing, MI

Celebrate more than 30 years of successful Student Career Days. In addition to the competitive events, PLANET's Student Career Days offers future green industry employees the opportunity to network with potential employers and provides a forum for businesses to recruit tomorrow's talent.

#### Legislative Days and Renewal and Remembrance

July 15-17, 2007, Washington, D.C.

Legislative Day on the Hill provides green industry professionals with an opportunity to unite and take a stand on Capitol Hill by discussing vital industry issues with legislators. The day before the Hill visits, attendees are invited to volunteer their skills and/or equipment for the "Renewal & Remembrance" project, a national community service effort to beautify Arlington National Cemetery and Historic Congressional Cemetery.

#### Specialty Symposium

Aug. 24-26, 2007, Indianapolis, IN

The Specialty Symposium is an educational opportunity for owners and managers to take an in-depth look at specific aspects of running a green industry business. Industry professionals will lead the presentations and discussions, sharing their experiences and approaches to facing the changing business climate.

### Publications

Each publication that is available in the PLANET Bookstore was carefully selected and reviewed by PLANET to ensure the kind of specialized information that lawn care, landscape management, interior plantscaping, and design/build/installation companies need to build company profits.

For more information, visit [www.landcarenetwork.org](http://www.landcarenetwork.org) or call 800-395-2522.



**Michael Weagley**  
President

**Mission Statement**

To bring value to our products, customers and our people through a world class, high quality organization and the development of new products and markets.

# Pro-Tech Manufacturing and Distribution

**Product focus**

Pro-Tech Manufacturing and Distribution is proud to introduce its latest tool for snow and ice removal, the IST (Ice Scraping Technology) Sno Pusher — the first steel trip edge designed for Sno Pushers to incorporate the longevity and limited moving parts of rubber-edge pushers. This urethane-based technology ushers in a new generation of steel trip edges that do not require springs or hinges, which are very susceptible to malfunction.

The design of the IST Sno Pusher incorporates extended wear shoes for a balanced, even push along with a modified angle in the moldboard. These two features, combined with the urethane tripping mechanism, provide a loaded torque on the steel edge that ensures the most effective ice scraping ability and the safest, most consistent tripping mechanism in the industry.

**Manufacturing facility**

Pro-Tech's products are made at its facility in Rochester, NY. We use the latest equipment technology in the steel manufacturing and welding

industry, combined with the expertise and experience of our employees. Pro-Tech unites its manufacturing abilities with a formal R & D branch, including a test course on site.

**Technical support, sales, training and customer support**

Pro-Tech integrates its customer support through a dedicated internal sales and customer service staff with an expansive dealer network. Pro-Tech is very concerned with the progression and training of the snow and ice industry. Pro-Tech worked with the Snow & Ice Management Association to produce the most comprehensive training video and guide to date for Sno Pushers.

Pro-Tech has developed considerable on-line resources. Its web site, [www.snopusher.com](http://www.snopusher.com),

contains helpful and relevant information for the experienced snow contractor down to the novice contractor. It includes snow removal studies, full product descriptions, dealer information and current sale information. As always, our staff is available at 888-PUSHSNO to assist you.

**Major product lines**

- ▶ **Rubber Edge Pushers** — Loader (SPL), Backhoe (SPB), Skid Steer (SPS), Compact (SPC), Fold Out (FPL/FPB), Pull Back (PBS/PBB), Super Duty (SDL), Angle (APL/APB), Forklift (FTF)
- ▶ **Switchblade Pushers** — Loader (SBL), Backhoe (SBB), Skid Steer (SBS)
- ▶ **IST Pushers** — Loader (ISL), Backhoe (ISB), Skid Steer (ISS)
- ▶ **Heavy Duty V-Plow** (VP055)
- ▶ **Material Handler Box** (MH08T)



**Pro-Tech Manufacturing and Distribution**  
711 West Ave.  
Rochester, NY 14611

**Phone:** 888-PUSHSNO  
**Fax:** 585-436-8172  
**Web site:**  
[www.snopusher.com](http://www.snopusher.com)  
**E-mail:** [sales@snopusher.com](mailto:sales@snopusher.com)

**Walter K. Byrd**  
President

**Mission Statement**

Listen to our customers. To design and manufacture professional quality spray equipment that can be easily maintained and operated and will be a profitable part of our customers' businesses.

# R&K Pump & Equipment, Inc.

**Product focus**

R&K Pump & Equipment manufactures professional quality sprayers for the lawn care, pest control, aquatics, nursery & tree care industries. We offer 32 sprayer models with multiple pump and engine combinations, hose reel options and poly or fiberglass tanks. Our exclusive all-welded marine-grade aluminum frames allow us to produce a high strength, lightweight piece of equipment that will never rust or need painting.

**Manufacturing facility**

Located in Pompano Beach, FL, R&K is proud to be an American manufacturer. Thanks to our south Florida location, our customers benefit from equipment that is designed to provide continuous 12-month service with little or no maintenance.

**Technical support**

R&K's design-build division offers customer assistance with equipment selections as well as computerized custom design services. Contact 954-295-3144 from 7 a.m.-6 p.m. EST Monday-Friday.

**Major product lines**

- ▶ **Lawn/Turf Care Trucks:** Models are available from 200 to 1,600 gallons. We offer body & chassis combinations, or build to suit on your existing equipment.
- ▶ **Pro-Series Skid-Mounted Units:** Available with 50 to 600 gallon poly or fiberglass tanks and up to a dozen pump & engine combinations, these units offer exceptional service at an economic price.
- ▶ **Portable Commercial Sprayers:** Our 50-, 100- and 200-gallon 4-Wheel Carts and 2-Wheel Trailers are available with boom spray options and hose reel accessories to match any spraying application.



**R&K**  
Pump & Equipment

**R&K Pump & Equipment, Inc.**  
500 NE 28th St.  
Pompano Beach, FL 33064

**Phone:** 954-295-3144  
**Fax:** 954-786-1400  
**E-mail:** randkpumpinc@comcast.net





**Anthony LaFetra**  
President

### Corporate Philosophy

At Rain Bird, we believe it is our responsibility to develop products and technologies that use water efficiently. Our commitment extends to instruction, training and services for our industry and our communities. We call this commitment The Intelligent Use of Water™ and it encompasses four cornerstones: Leadership, Education, Partnerships and Products. Rain Bird supports these cornerstones with its involvement in activities that include hosting Intelligent Use of Water Summits, providing training opportunities through Rain Bird's Training Academy, partnering with the EPA in its WaterSense program and manufacturing the most smart water products on the market.

The need to conserve water has never been greater. We want to do even more and, with your help, we can.



**Rain Bird**  
970 W. Sierra Madre Ave.  
Azusa, CA 91702

**Phone:** 1-800-RAINBIRD  
(1-800-724-6247)

**Web site:** [www.rainbird.com](http://www.rainbird.com)

# Rain Bird

### Product focus

Rain Bird is the leading manufacturer of irrigation products and services. Since its beginning in 1933, Rain Bird has offered the industry's broadest range of irrigation products for farms, golf courses, sports arenas, public parks, commercial developments and homes in more than 130 countries. Today, Rain Bird offers more than 4,000 products.

Rain Bird has been awarded more than 130 patents, starting with the first patent in 1935 for the impact sprinkler. Examples of Rain Bird's recent innovative technology include:

#### ► Rain Curtain™

Technology for even water distribution over the entire range of a rotor.

#### ► MPR (Matched

Precipitation Rate) nozzles for even water distribution and design flexibility.

#### ► SAM (Seal-A-Matic™)

built-in check valve to save on parts and reduce water waste from spray heads.

#### ► PRS stem pressure

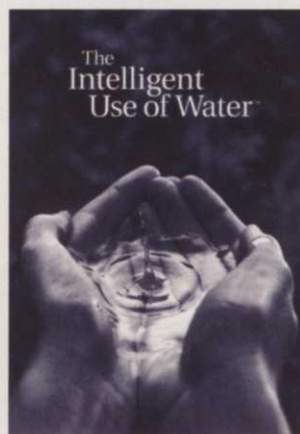
regulator option for maintaining optimal pressure in each spray head.

Rain Bird maintains one of the largest indoor irrigation testing centers in the world to ensure the development of quality products.

### Service offerings

Rain Bird is committed to training and improving the irrigation knowledge. It offers many diverse programs taught by Irrigation Industry Certified Trainers covering system design, field installation techniques, troubleshooting irrigation systems, business skills and more. Courses are available in English and Spanish.

Rain Bird also operates a



fully staffed call center for technical support to answer questions and troubleshoot problems for professionals and consumers. Technical support is available at 1-800-RAINBIRD Monday through Friday, 5 a.m. to 6 p.m. (PST).

Rain Bird Rewards and Agency Rewards are rewards programs offering additional value to professional customers and public agency customers, respectively.



**John Burks**  
President

# RedMax/Komatsu Zenoah America, Inc.

From manufacturing facilities in Japan and Georgia, Komatsu Zenoah manufactures a complete line of RedMax commercial, handheld power equipment. Products are sold exclusively through distributors and servicing dealers, who are supported by a staff of engineers and technicians at Komatsu Zenoah America headquarters in Georgia.

RedMax products include string trimmers, hedge trimmers, edgers, handheld and backpack blowers, chainsaws and pole saws. The company also manufactures a reciprocating trimmer, which is the trimmer of choice for golf courses. Other specialty products include drills, augers, sweepers, a cut-off saw and a mini-tiller.

Many RedMax products are powered by the company's Strato-Charged™

engine. This unique technology allows the pure two-cycle engines to meet emissions compliance standards by introducing fresh air into the engine between the exhaust gases and the fresh charge of air/fuel mix.

RedMax's pure two-cycle engines have fewer moving parts, requires no valve maintenance and uses less fuel than traditional two-cycle engine.



**RedMax/Komatsu Zenoah America, Inc.**  
4344 Shackelford Road  
Norcross, GA 30093

**Phone:** 800-291-8251  
**Fax:** 770-381-5150  
**Web site:** [www.redmax.com](http://www.redmax.com)  
**E-mail:** [sales@redmax.com](mailto:sales@redmax.com)

**Key Contacts:**

**Tommy Tanaka**  
Marketing Manager

**Jim Gabrielson**  
Sales Manager





### Mission Statement

Based in Marysville, OH, The Scotts Company LLC is the world's leading producer and marketer of professional horticulture and landscape products. The company's industry-leading brands include Osmocote® controlled-release fertilizers, Peters Professional® and Peters Excel® water soluble fertilizers, and more than a dozen herbicide, miticide and fungicide products. For many years, The Scotts Testing Lab® has helped thousands of professionals learn how to maximize their nutritional needs. Learn more by calling customer service at 1-800-492-8255 or visit the Web site at [www.scottsprohort.com](http://www.scottsprohort.com).

# Scotts Company LLC

## Product focus

The Scotts Landscaper® PRO™ series provides landscapers with a highly reliable and cost-in-use source of turf and ornamental nutrition, all backed by Scotts' heritage of plant nutrition experience.

All Scotts Landscaper PRO products are specially formulated with Scotts' patented Poly-S®, a poly-coated sulfur-coated nitrogen extended-release fertilizer, which feeds for three to four months.

In addition to the new series of fertilizer products, Scotts has a comprehensive line of fertilizers, fungicides and pre-emergent herbicides, all available for the landscape market.

## Manufacturing facilities

The Scotts research and development organization has some of the world's leading experts in horticultural science, fertilizer product and package development, pesticide formulation and package development, fertilizer and pesticide efficacy testing, soil science and regulatory assessment.

Scotts has three research stations nationwide, including



the largest facility at the corporate headquarters in Ohio, with a state-of-the-art greenhouse and more than 100 acres of field research capability.

## Technical support

As is the case for all Scotts products, the Landscaper PRO line is supported with an extensive network of technical advisors and territory managers who are also available for questions and troubleshooting.

Landscapers will be confident using all of Scotts products, knowing Scotts Landscaper PRO series is backed by a science of superior plant nutrition research and development.

## Product lines

- ▶ 16-25-10 Starter® brand fertilizer
- ▶ 32-3-10 Turf fertilizer
- ▶ 14-14-14 Outdoor Ornamentals fertilizer
- ▶ STEP® MAX™ micronutrients formula
- ▶ Two landscaper-designed Pro spreaders
- ▶ Osmocote® Plus fertilizer
- ▶ Osmocote® Classic fertilizer
- ▶ Agriform® Planting tablets
- ▶ Osmocote® Plus tablets
- ▶ AllBan™ Flo, Banrot® and Zyban® fungicides
- ▶ Corral® pre-emergent herbicide



### Scotts Company LLC

14111 Scottslawn Road  
Marysville, OH 43041

Phone: 1-800-492-8255

Fax: 1-888-329-4678

### Web site:

[www.scottsprohort.com](http://www.scottsprohort.com)

### E-mail:

[tami.bayes@scotts.com](mailto:tami.bayes@scotts.com)



**William Culpepper**  
President

### Mission Statement

To provide plant protection and plant management products and services that fit specialized market segments that are often outside of the core business strategy of large manufacturers. We acquire, develop, manufacture and market value-added products and services that satisfy the unique needs of our customers. A top priority of all SePRO employees will be product and environmental stewardship.

**SePRO Corporation**  
11550 N. Meridian St.  
Suite 600  
Carmel, IN 46032

**Phone:** 800-419-7779  
**Fax:** 317-580-8290  
**Web site:** [www.sepro.com](http://www.sepro.com)  
**E-mail:** [stevem@sepro.com](mailto:stevem@sepro.com)

# SePRO Corporation

## Product focus

### Cutless® Granular Landscape

**Growth Regulator** is a new systemic landscape growth regulator for shoot growth suppression in landscape ornamentals, resulting in more compact growth form and reduced trimming, in an easy-to-apply granular formulation. Expected plant responses:

- ▶ Reduced trimming/pruning frequency
- ▶ Increased plant density or compact growth habit
- ▶ Shoot growth suppression
- ▶ Decreased internode length
- ▶ Darker green foliage
- ▶ No negative flowering response
- ▶ Plant stress conditioning effects associated with PGRs

### Cutless® Turf Growth

**Regulator** is a unique turf growth regulator that enhances the quality of fine turfgrass. Cutless improves turfgrass playability, reduces mowing time, reduces clippings, improves water utilization, makes turf more wear resistant



and improves turfgrass color and appearance. On cool-season turfgrass, Cutless can shift the competitive balance from *Poa annua*-infested turf to desirable perennial grasses.

## R&D focus

The SePRO Research and Technology Campus (SRTC) greatly expanded SePRO laboratory and field research capabilities while providing high quality technical support for SePRO's future growth. Located in Whitakers, NC, the SRTC houses an extensive six-building aquatic research and technology complex on a 410-

acre site complete with laboratories and 11 acres of specialized aquatic research ponds and mesocosms. The center incorporates an aquarium, mesocosm and field research studies, laboratory assay support, and growth room screening for evaluating existing and new products. In the future, the facility could also accommodate turf and landscape ornamental research capabilities and distribution center for SePRO's growing product line.

## Major product lines

- ▶ Cutless® Granular Landscape Growth Regulator
- ▶ Cutless® Turf Growth Regulator
- ▶ Professional ornamental fungicides, plant growth regulators and insecticides
- ▶ Professional aquatic herbicides and algaecides
- ▶ Humane Canada goose control







**Tom Bunch**  
President

### Mission Statement

The mission of Shindaiwa Inc. is to deliver complete customer satisfaction by being First to Start, Last to Quit — in all business dealings. Our business is managed to achieve a balance between sales and market-share growth of core products and markets, increased profits, and effective asset turnover. To accomplish this we deliver our customers' products and services with superior levels of quality, as well as value exceeding their expectations. We want our customers to enjoy above-average profitability for our industry, and we strive to deliver more than we promise and not promise more than we deliver.

**Shindaiwa, Inc.**  
11975 SW Herman Road  
Tualatin, OR 97062

**Phone:** 800-521-7733

**Fax:** 503-692-6696

**Web site:**  
[www.shindaiwa.com](http://www.shindaiwa.com)

**E-mail:** [info@shindaiwa.com](mailto:info@shindaiwa.com)

# Shindaiwa, Inc.

## Major product lines

Shindaiwa manufactures a full line of commercial-grade outdoor power equipment including trimmers, brushcutters, hedge trimmers, blowers, the PowerBroom®, chain saws and lawn edgers. In October 2001, the company established itself as a leader in technical innovation when it introduced its patented C4 Technology® and the industry's first low-emission two-stroke/four-stroke hybrid units.

## Product focus

Shindaiwa offers our customers choices — commercial-grade products featuring both high quality two-stroke and micro four-stroke C4 Technology engines. Shindaiwa will continue to invest and improve our range of two-stroke products as long as mechanically-advanced technologies for two-stroke are still prudently cost-effective when complying with emission standards.

By offering a full range of models featuring our low emission micro four-stroke C4 Technology Engines, complemented with our legendary two-stroke models, Shindaiwa customers will have all the products to keep them in business and coming back for more. Within the OPE industry, we believe Shindaiwa has taken a leading role in designing new



engine technologies that will take us well in to the future. It's all about choices. Whether it's two-stroke or micro four-stroke engine technologies, Shindaiwa has you covered.

## Manufacturing facility

At the heart of all Shindaiwa products is its engineering excellence. With more than 100 degreed engineers, Shindaiwa is a fully integrated manufacturer. Every new product from its Hiroshima, Japan, manufacturing facility is subjected to an established set of criteria (ISO9001) to maintain a high level of performance and quality control. And, in October 2005, Shindaiwa opened an ultra-modern assembly and



warehouse operation in Tualatin, OR.

## Technical support

Shindaiwa products are sold through independent distributors and dealers who know and understand the outdoor power equipment industry. Shindaiwa values its relationship with its distributors and dealers by investing heavily in the development of numerous sales programs, creative marketing tools, and technical training material to help improve their sales and profitability.

**Mission Statement**

Be the market leader in providing electro-mechanical technology for precision material metering, precision placement and application data management in mobile applications.

# Spraying Systems Co., Mobile Systems Division

**Major product lines**

Spraying Systems Co., Mobile Systems Division is the world leader in the manufacturing of agricultural, turfgrass and right-of-way sprayer components.

The Mobile Systems Division's TeeJet products are manufactured in Wheaton, IL, and include spray nozzles, boom components, line strainers, electric shut-off valves and hand spray guns.

Midwest Technologies, located in Springfield, IL, manufactures MID-TECH electronic

application controls and GPS-based guidance and automated steering systems.

LH Technologies, located in Aabybro, Denmark, develops and produces LH AGRO control systems for many agricultural implements.

**Manufacturing facility**

With many manufacturing facilities throughout the globe, Spraying Systems Co. can quickly deliver to customers anywhere in the world.



**Spraying Systems Co.**

**Spraying Systems Co.,  
Mobile Systems Division**

P.O. Box 7900  
Wheaton, IL 60189

**Phone:** 630-665-5000

**Fax:** 630-665-5292

**Web site:** [www.teejet.com](http://www.teejet.com)





### Mission Statement

The vision of Syngenta is to provide the best products in the industry, and to build superior packages of chemistries and technology to help our customers meet their goals.

# Syngenta Professional Products

## Product focus

Syngenta offers industry-leading products for weed and disease prevention and control, and growth regulators to help manage turf. Syngenta also offers a variety of resources and services to help lawn care operators manage their businesses more efficiently, effectively and profitably.

## Manufacturing facilities

Syngenta operates five manufacturing facilities and two formulation facilities in the United States. Syngenta also contracts 43 formulation and packaging facilities. These state-of-the-art facilities manufacture many of our herbicides, fungicides and insecticides. Contract formulation and packaging allows rapid response to changing needs.

## Major product lines

Syngenta offers some of the industry's most effective herbicides, fungicides, insecticides and plant growth regulators, including:

► **Barricade® herbicide** is a selective pre-emergence herbicide that offers low-rate, season-long control of more than 30 grassy and broadleaf weeds, including crabgrass, goosegrass and *Poa annua*. Barricade offers the widest possible window for keeping



turf weed-free, allowing for applications from fall through early winter and spring.

► **Headway™ fungicide** provides lawn care operators with the most innovative, cost-effective, and practical way to control all major turf diseases on their customers' turf.

Headway uses two active ingredients to deliver broad-spectrum disease control against brown patch and other major turf diseases. Using dual modes of action helps ward off disease resistance and allows Headway to control a wider range of diseases than any other registered product.

► **Primo MAXX® plant growth regulator** targets the part of the plant that inhibits vertical growth while enabling rich color, lateral stems and root mass development. The end result is a healthier, more durable blade with a higher tolerance to weather extremes.

## Technical support, sales, training and customer service

Syngenta gives lawn-care operators:

- Its staff of territory managers, who consult with customers to solve problems and work in partnership with a nationwide network of full-service distribution partners;
- Its staff of field technical managers, who are available to assist with issues that our customers might face;
- The Syngenta Customer Center, which gives customers access to a wealth of knowledge about Syngenta products and services, as well as assistance with marketing programs;
- GreenCast® ([www.greencastonline.com](http://www.greencastonline.com)), a Web-based technology that provides lawn-care operators with customized weather reports, disease outlooks and pest alerts specific to their market and area;
- The GreenPartners® program ([www.greenpartners.com](http://www.greenpartners.com)), which allows loyal customers to accrue points with each purchase of Syngenta products, to be redeemed for business tools such as computers, equipment and educational seminars and conferences.

**syngenta**

### Syngenta Professional Products

410 Swing Road  
Greensboro, NC 27419

Phone: 866-SYNGENTA  
(796-4368)

Fax: 336-632-7065

Web site: [www.syngenta-professionalproducts.com](http://www.syngenta-professionalproducts.com)

E-mail:  
[steve.stansell@syngenta.com](mailto:steve.stansell@syngenta.com)



**Lon Records**  
President

### **Mission Statement**

To be the best wholesale distributor of specialty agricultural chemicals and supplies to the specialty markets, while striving to serve the needs of our customers, employees, suppliers, community and owners.



**TARGET<sub>TM</sub>**  
SPECIALTY PRODUCTS  
*Delivering Value*

**Target Specialty Products**  
Home Office  
15415 Marquardt Ave.  
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670

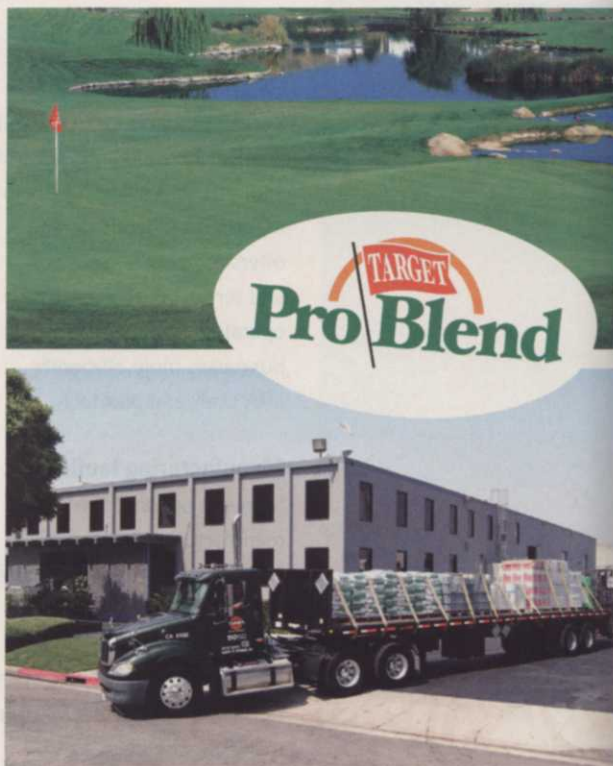
**Phone:** 800-352-3870  
**Web site:**  
[www.target-specialty.com](http://www.target-specialty.com)

# Target Specialty Products

Target Specialty Products is the West's leading wholesale distributor of specialty agricultural chemicals, fertilizers, application equipment, services and education. Since 1969, Target has provided products and services to both the public and private sectors in the following markets: golf, landscape, nursery, professional pest management and vegetation management. Committed to quality through service, Target is ISO 9002 certified and provides specialized training and education programs, risk management, worker safety classes and regulatory compliance.

In achieving ISO 9002 certification, all processes and procedures throughout the company from customer service to shipping and receiving are documented. ISO 9002 certification ensures consistent, reliable service.

Target Specialty Products



carries a complete product line of disease and pest management products and equipment including:

- ▶ Adjuvants, Wetting Agents
- ▶ Fertilizers, Herbicides, Insecticides, Fungicides, Soil Surfactants
- ▶ Soil Conditioners & Amendments
- ▶ Lake and Pond Herbicides, Algaecides and Colorants
- ▶ Spreader and Nutrient Management Products
- ▶ Spray Application Equipment, Parts and Accessories

▶ Personal Safety and Protective Equipment

### **Target ProBlend Seed**

Target Specialty Products recently introduced a new line of ProBlend grass seed mixtures. Especially designed for the golf market, the 3-way GLS Perennial Ryegrass Blend contains three varieties of gray leaf spot resistant perennial ryegrass, offering the best gray leaf spot resistance in the industry.

Target plans to expand the ProBlend grass seed line. For more information, contact the Target branch near you.





**Tim Van Cleve**  
COO

### Mission Statement

To continue to set and exceed the industry standard for GPS-based automatic vehicle tracking, 2-way wireless communications, onboard navigation and fleet management software systems. To continue to set and exceed the industry standards for installation, training, field service and on going customer support services.

**Teletrac, Inc.**  
7391 Lincoln Way  
Garden Grove, CA 92841-1428

**Phone:** 1-800-835-3872  
**Fax:** 714-379-6378  
**Web site:** [www.teletrac.net](http://www.teletrac.net)  
**E-mail:** [sales@teletrac.net](mailto:sales@teletrac.net)

# Teletrac, Inc.

### Product focus

Teletrac products are designed to provide companies that operate commercial vehicles with all the tools they need to monitor, control, manage and improve their operations.

FleetDirector® allows landscape contractors to control labor costs with accurate timesheet information, reduce fuel consumption and wasted miles with more efficient dispatch, eliminate the personal use of company vehicles and monitor actual job costs with fully-documented time-on-jobsite reports.

Landscape contractors operating five or more vehicles routinely report fuel savings of 10% to 30% and overtime reduction by five percent to 20% when using our system.

### Technical support

Unlike many providers, Teletrac is represented by only full-time employees in our sales, customer training, installation, field service and customer service departments. Responsiveness to customers' needs has been a hallmark of Teletrac since 1988.

### Major product lines

Teletrac, Inc. was an originator of wireless vehicle tracking and fleet management software. The Teletrac FleetDirector product is an integrated system



The in-cab Message Display Terminal provides wireless 2-way, real-time messaging between drivers and dispatchers.



Teletrac FleetDirector allows dispatchers to see the exact location and status of every vehicle using real-time information delivered via the Internet.

comprised of the following major components:

- ▶ Enhanced, onboard GPS-based vehicle location module.
- ▶ Prism TM2 Onboard data recorder and wireless transmitter.
- ▶ NET 960e Mobile Display

Terminal (MDT) for in-cab, 2-way wireless communications.

- ▶ eClient software for the preparation of highly detailed, standard and custom management reports used to maximize dispatch efficiency and overall productivity.

**Mike Hoffman**  
Chairman and CEO

**John McPhee**  
Director of Marketing  
Sports Fields, Grounds  
and Services

### Mission Statement

To be the leading worldwide provider of outdoor landscaping products, support services and integrated systems.

# The Toro Company

### Product focus

Grounds managers achieve superior productivity with Toro products like Groundsmaster® mowers, Z-Master® landscape mowers, Workman® utility vehicles, Infield Pro® groomers, Dingo® compact utility loaders and Sentinel® irrigation control. In addition, key professional services, including Toro Financing and the Toro Protection Plus extended service protection, supports budget optimization and balance sheet stabilization.

### Manufacturing facility

Toro commercial and landscape mowers, utility vehicles and groomers are produced in Tomah, WI. Toro® irrigation products are manufactured in El Paso, TX, and Juarez, Mexico.

### Technical support

Toro supports its product lines with a variety of industry-leading professional



services, including technical support and training for equipment and irrigation maintenance through its distributor network. In addition, Toro offers technical training classes for grounds equipment at its training facility in Bloomington, MN.

### Major product lines

The Groundsmaster® 7200/7210 series is a zero-turn rotary mower rugged enough

to be called a Groundsmaster. Powerful Kubota® 28-hp and 35-hp 3-cylinder liquid-cooled diesel engines get the job done. The Groundsmaster features durable heavy-duty 7-gauge welded deck construction and the industry's toughest spindle assembly. Convert the Groundsmaster 7200/7210 from mow to snow removal with the patent-pending POLAR TRAC® system. Additional versatility includes attachments for removing grooming infields and blowing leaves. The Infield Pro 3040 and the premium Infield Pro 5040 Groomers feature innovations that elevate the overall versatility and reliability of these sports field management machines. The new Quick Attach System (QAS) allows operators, in less than a minute, to switch from among 17 attachments — without the use of tools.



**The Toro Company**  
8111 Lyndale Ave. South  
Bloomington, MN 55420

**Phone:** 800-803-8676

**Fax:** 952-887-8693

**Web sites:** [www.toro.com](http://www.toro.com)  
[www.torosports.com](http://www.torosports.com)

**E-mail:**  
[turfequipment@toro.com](mailto:turfequipment@toro.com)







**George Kinkead**  
President

### Mission Statement

With more than 50 years of experience manufacturing renovation equipment, Turfco Direct understands your need for durable, effective equipment, as well as quick answers to renovation questions. That's why we created Turfco Direct – the one-stop shop for all your turf renovation needs.



**Turfco Direct**  
1655 101st Ave. NE  
Minneapolis, MN 55449

**Phone:** 800-679-8201

**Fax:** 763-485-0556

**Web site:**  
[www.turfcodirect.com](http://www.turfcodirect.com)

**E-mail:**  
[sales@turfcodirect.com](mailto:sales@turfcodirect.com)

# Turfco Direct

## Why Turfco Direct?

► **Quality Products:** Turfco Direct offers some of the most advanced renovation equipment available.

► **Order Direct:** We help you choose the right equipment and options for your applications, and coordinate delivery to your door.

- 14-day trial
- 2-year commercial warranty
- First-class service and support, available by phone or Web
- Quick, easy financing

## Product focus

Turfco developed the TurnAer 4 and TurnAer 26 aerators to bring an entirely new level of productivity to lawn aeration. The company's patented DiffDrive system with dual-brake action allows you to turn with the tines in the ground without tearing turf.

The TurnAer 4 is ideal for residential contractors, and features a 17-in. aeration width. Its compact size allows it to fit through a 28-in. gate. The larger TurnAer 26 features an aeration width of almost 25-in., allowing it to make quick work of large residential or commercial properties.

Both TurnAer models feature durable, reliable 4-hp Honda powerplants.

Turfco's innovative Chariot

ride-on further enhances the productivity of either TurnAer model through dramatically reduced operator fatigue. Designed to attach/detach quickly, the Chariot is the ultimate aeration time saver.

## Manufacturing facility

All Turfco products are manufactured by Turfco at its facility in Minneapolis.

## Technical support

Getting technical support from someone that understands your needs has never been easier. Turfco's experienced renovation experts are available by phone, fax or online. Turfco's new online service center provides quick solutions to a wide variety of troubleshooting and technical issues. Simply log onto [www.turfcodirect.com](http://www.turfcodirect.com), go to the troubleshooting section and click the appropriate button for detailed assistance, including problems, possible causes and possible solutions.

## Major product lines

► **Aerators** – Turfco offers the most complete line of aerators available, from the traditional walk-behind Aerator 4 and Aerator Pro-26, to the tow-



behind TM-42 and TM-62, to the featured TurnAer 4 and TurnAer 26 steerable walk-behind models.

► **Overseeders** – From the walk-behind LS-20 to the new TriWave 60 tow-type overseeder, Turfco has an overseeder to meet your needs.

► **Sod Cutters** – Turfco's KisCutter is renowned for its easy operation and maneuverability.

► **Dethatchers** – The rugged Dethatcher 20 offers solid performance and commercial-duty durability.

► **Bed Edgers** – The Turfco Edge-R-Rite II offers the ultimate in edging versatility with numerous blade options.

► **Top Dressers** – Turfco is the topdressing equipment leader, with innovative models to meet any need. Models include the WideSpin 1530, CR-10 and Mete-R-Matic models.



**Ken Hutcheson**  
President

### Mission Statement

To provide our clients with the highest quality landscape management program at competitive prices through a national organization of dedicated owner operators and their employees supported by the expertise of today's most accomplished industry leaders. In pursuit of excellence we are committed to honest and forthright dealings with our clients, our employees and our vendors.



**U.S. LAWN'S Inc.**  
4407 Vineland Road  
Suite D 15  
Orlando, FL 32811

**Phone:** 800-USLAWNS  
**Fax:** 407-246-1623  
**Web site:** [www.uslawns.com](http://www.uslawns.com)  
**E-mail:** [info@uslawns.com](mailto:info@uslawns.com)

# U.S. Lawns, Inc.

### Company focus

Recently included among *Entrepreneur* magazine's listing of "Best Franchise Opportunities," U.S. Lawns is America's fastest growing and most dynamic landscape franchise company. Since its founding in 1986, the U.S. Lawns team of business, sales and landscape professionals has consistently guided the franchise family as they pursue their dreams of operating a business in the landscape industry.

With more than 150 franchise locations open in 29 states, U.S. Lawns' philosophy of no job too big or too small, along with our four ideals — Trust, Quality, Services and Value — has proven to be a winning strategy. If you are looking to take your company to another level, explore the benefits of owning a U.S. Lawns franchise:

► There is no other franchise opportunity backed



by a stronger, more powerful company. ValleyCrest Companies, one of the nation's oldest, largest and most-well established landscape management companies, has sales in excess of \$600 million annually.

► Business operating systems, complete marketing support and purchasing power put you, the owner-operator, in the best possible position ... entrepreneurial freedom with the power of a well-established organization behind you.

► The distinctive U.S.

Lawns logo is receiving ever-increasing exposure as U.S. Lawns follows its growth plans to expand into many key markets in the United States.

► The training and support you will receive from U.S. Lawns provides access to a staff of experts in all areas of the landscape maintenance business, including technical training and support, sales training and support, administrative training and support and more. This means you won't have to hire an in-house team or consultants to advise you. You'll have the resources, without the payroll.

The U.S. Lawns corporate team combines the hands-on philosophy of a small business with large corporate-style organization and technical resources to provide complete personalized support. For more information on becoming a U.S. Lawns franchisee, contact Scott Finn, Director of Franchise Development, at 407-246-1630 or e-mail [sfinn@uslawns.com](mailto:sfinn@uslawns.com).





# Reader Service

FREE INFORMATION

CIRCLE NUMBER(S) THAT CORRESPOND TO ADVERTISEMENTS OF INTEREST IN THIS ISSUE

101	113	125	137	149	161	173	185	197	209	221	233	245	257	269	281	293	305
102	114	126	138	150	162	174	186	198	210	222	234	246	258	270	282	294	306
103	115	127	139	151	163	175	187	199	211	223	235	247	259	271	283	295	307
104	116	128	140	152	164	176	188	200	212	224	236	248	260	272	284	296	308
105	117	129	141	153	165	177	189	201	213	225	237	249	261	273	285	297	309
106	118	130	142	154	166	178	190	202	214	226	238	250	262	274	286	298	310
107	119	131	143	155	167	179	191	203	215	227	239	251	263	275	287	299	311
108	120	132	144	156	168	180	192	204	216	228	240	252	264	276	288	300	312
109	121	133	145	157	169	181	193	205	217	229	241	253	265	277	289	301	313
110	122	134	146	158	170	182	194	206	218	230	242	254	266	278	290	302	314
111	123	135	147	159	171	183	195	207	219	231	243	255	267	279	291	303	315
112	124	136	148	160	172	184	196	208	220	232	244	256	268	280	292	304	316

I would like to receive (continue receiving)

LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT free each month: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Signature (required) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

SUBSCRIBER NUMBER FROM LABEL \_\_\_\_\_

NAME (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

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FIRM \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS\* \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

\*Is this your home address? ☐ Yes ☐ No

PHONE (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

FAX (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. My primary business at this location is: (Fill in ONE only)

CONTRACTORS/SERVICE COMPANIES

01 ☐ Landscape Contractors (Installation & Maintenance)02 ☐ Lawn Care Service Companies & Custom Chemical Applicators (ground & air)03 ☐ Irrigation Contractors & Consultants04 ☐ Other Contractors/Service Companies (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

LANDSCAPING/GROUNDS CARE FACILITIES

05 ☐ Sports Complexes 06 ☐ Parks 07 ☐ Schools, Colleges & Universities08 ☐ Other Grounds Care Facilities (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

SUPPLIERS AND CONSULTANTS

09 ☐ Extension Agents/Consultants for Horticulture 10 ☐ Sod Growers, Turf Seed Growers & Nurseries11 ☐ Dealers, Distributors, Formulators & Brokers 12 ☐ Manufacturers13 ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

101	113	125	137	149	161	173	185	197	209	221	233	245	257	269	281	293	305
102	114	126	138	150	162	174	186	198	210	222	234	246	258	270	282	294	306
103	115	127	139	151	163	175	187	199	211	223	235	247	259	271	283	295	307
104	116	128	140	152	164	176	188	200	212	224	236	248	260	272	284	296	308
105	117	129	141	153	165	177	189	201	213	225	237	249	261	273	285	297	309
106	118	130	142	154	166	178	190	202	214	226	238	250	262	274	286	298	310
107	119	131	143	155	167	179	191	203	215	227	239	251	263	275	287	299	311
108	120	132	144	156	168	180	192	204	216	228	240	252	264	276	288	300	312
109	121	133	145	157	169	181	193	205	217	229	241	253	265	277	289	301	313
110	122	134	146	158	170	182	194	206	218	230	242	254	266	278	290	302	314
111	123	135	147	159	171	183	195	207	219	231	243	255	267	279	291	303	315
112	124	136	148	160	172	184	196	208	220	232	244	256	268	280	292	304	316

I would like to receive (continue receiving)

LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT free each month: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Signature (required) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

SUBSCRIBER NUMBER FROM LABEL \_\_\_\_\_

NAME (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE \_\_\_\_\_

FIRM \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS\* \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

\*Is this your home address? ☐ Yes ☐ No

PHONE (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

FAX (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. My primary business at this location is: (Fill in ONE only)

CONTRACTORS/SERVICE COMPANIES

01 ☐ Landscape Contractors (Installation & Maintenance)02 ☐ Lawn Care Service Companies & Custom Chemical Applicators (ground & air)03 ☐ Irrigation Contractors & Consultants04 ☐ Other Contractors/Service Companies (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

LANDSCAPING/GROUNDS CARE FACILITIES

05 ☐ Sports Complexes 06 ☐ Parks 07 ☐ Schools, Colleges & Universities08 ☐ Other Grounds Care Facilities (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

SUPPLIERS AND CONSULTANTS

09 ☐ Extension Agents/Consultants for Horticulture 10 ☐ Sod Growers, Turf Seed Growers & Nurseries11 ☐ Dealers, Distributors, Formulators & Brokers 12 ☐ Manufacturers13 ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

## Landscape MANAGEMENT

SOLUTIONS FOR A GROWING INDUSTRY

OCTOBER 2006

Card expires December 15, 2006

For FASTEST SERVICE, fax form to 416-620-9790.

## 2. Which of the following best describes your title? (Fill in ONE only)

- 10 ☐ **Executive/Administrator** - President, Owner, Partner, Director, General Manager, Chairman of the Board, Purchasing Agent, Director of Physical Plant
- 20 ☐ **Manager/Superintendent** - Arborist, Architect, Landscape/Grounds Manager, Superintendent, Foreman, Supervisor
- 30 ☐ **Government Official** - Government Commissioner, Agent, Other Government Official
- 40 ☐ **Specialist** - Forester, Consultant, Agronomist, Pilot, Instructor, Researcher, Horticulturist, Certified Specialist
- 50 ☐ **Other Titled and Non-Titled Personnel** (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

## 3. Which of the following services does your company provide? (Fill in ALL that apply)

MAINTENANCE SERVICES

- 01 ☐ Mowing 04 ☐ Turf Disease Control 07 ☐ Irrigation Services 08 ☐ Tree Care
- 05 ☐ Turf Fertilization 06 ☐ Turf Aeration 47 ☐ Bedding/Perennial Installation 10 ☐ Pond/Lake Care
- 02 ☐ Turf Insect Control 45 ☐ Hydro-seeding 48 ☐ Ornamental Care 11 ☐ Snow Removal
- 03 ☐ Turf Weed Control 46 ☐ Erosion Control

DESIGN/BUILD

- 12 ☐ Landscape Design 14 ☐ Irrigation Installation 48 ☐ Landscape Lighting 98 ☐ Other (please specify)
- 13 ☐ Landscape Installation 15 ☐ Paving/Deck/Patio Installation

## 4. Which of the following landscape products do you purchase or specify? (Fill in ALL that apply)

- 27 ☐ Mowers 22 ☐ Herbicides 28 ☐ Ornamental/Nursery Products 33 ☐ Tractors
- 18 ☐ Engines 21 ☐ Fungicides 24 ☐ Irrigation Systems 44 ☐ Pick-up Trucks
- 16 ☐ Blowers 40 ☐ Biological/Organics 38 ☐ Ponds/Water Features 43 ☐ Cab Forward Trucks
- 17 ☐ Chain Saws 36 ☐ Turf Seed/Seed 29 ☐ Pavers/Masonry/Bricks/Rocks 37 ☐ Utility Vehicles
- 26 ☐ Line Trimmers 32 ☐ Spreaders (Hardscape Materials) 41 ☐ Business Management Software
- 20 ☐ Fertilizers 39 ☐ Bedding/Perennials 31 ☐ Skid Steers 97 ☐ Other (please specify)
- 23 ☐ Insecticides 42 ☐ Compact Track Loaders

## 5. My firm's annual revenue is: (Fill in ONE only)

- 001 ☐ More than \$4,000,000 003 ☐ \$1,500,000 - \$1,999,999 005 ☐ \$500,000 - \$999,999
- 002 ☐ \$2,000,000 - \$4,000,000 004 ☐ \$1,000,000 - \$1,499,999 006 ☐ Less than \$500,000

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OCTOBER 2006

Card expires December 15, 2006

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## 2. Which of the following best describes your title? (Fill in ONE only)

- 10 ☐ **Executive/Administrator** - President, Owner, Partner, Director, General Manager, Chairman of the Board, Purchasing Agent, Director of Physical Plant
- 20 ☐ **Manager/Superintendent** - Arborist, Architect, Landscape/Grounds Manager, Superintendent, Foreman, Supervisor
- 30 ☐ **Government Official** - Government Commissioner, Agent, Other Government Official
- 40 ☐ **Specialist** - Forester, Consultant, Agronomist, Pilot, Instructor, Researcher, Horticulturist, Certified Specialist
- 50 ☐ **Other Titled and Non-Titled Personnel** (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

## 3. Which of the following services does your company provide? (Fill in ALL that apply)

MAINTENANCE SERVICES

- 01 ☐ Mowing 04 ☐ Turf Disease Control 07 ☐ Irrigation Services 09 ☐ Tree Care
- 05 ☐ Turf Fertilization 06 ☐ Turf Aeration 47 ☐ Bedding/Perennial Installation 10 ☐ Pond/Lake Care
- 02 ☐ Turf Insect Control 45 ☐ Hydro-seeding 48 ☐ Ornamental Care 11 ☐ Snow Removal
- 03 ☐ Turf Weed Control 46 ☐ Erosion Control

DESIGN/BUILD

- 12 ☐ Landscape Design 14 ☐ Irrigation Installation 48 ☐ Landscape Lighting 98 ☐ Other (please specify)
- 13 ☐ Landscape Installation 15 ☐ Paving/Deck/Patio Installation

## 4. Which of the following landscape products do you purchase or specify? (Fill in ALL that apply)

- 27 ☐ Mowers 22 ☐ Herbicides 28 ☐ Ornamental/Nursery Products 33 ☐ Tractors
- 18 ☐ Engines 21 ☐ Fungicides 24 ☐ Irrigation Systems 44 ☐ Pick-up Trucks
- 16 ☐ Blowers 40 ☐ Biological/Organics 38 ☐ Ponds/Water Features 43 ☐ Cab Forward Trucks
- 17 ☐ Chain Saws 36 ☐ Turf Seed/Seed 29 ☐ Pavers/Masonry/Bricks/Rocks 37 ☐ Utility Vehicles
- 26 ☐ Line Trimmers 32 ☐ Spreaders (Hardscape Materials) 41 ☐ Business Management Software
- 20 ☐ Fertilizers 39 ☐ Bedding/Perennials 31 ☐ Skid Steers 97 ☐ Other (please specify)
- 23 ☐ Insecticides 42 ☐ Compact Track Loaders

## 5. My firm's annual revenue is: (Fill in ONE only)

- 001 ☐ More than \$4,000,000 003 ☐ \$1,500,000 - \$1,999,999 005 ☐ \$500,000 - \$999,999
- 002 ☐ \$2,000,000 - \$4,000,000 004 ☐ \$1,000,000 - \$1,499,999 006 ☐ Less than \$500,000

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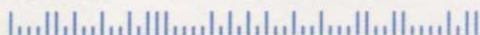
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Dallas Steiner  
President & CEO



### Mission Statement

Venture Products, Inc., is committed to providing a unique, superior quality product while maintaining the highest standard of business ethics. We will be a positive influence to the global community, growing at a balanced rate while remaining an independent company.



Venture Products Inc  
328 E. Water St.  
Orville, OH 44667

Phone: 866-836-8722  
Fax: 330-683-0000  
Web site: [www.ventrac.com](http://www.ventrac.com)  
E-mail: [info@ventrac.com](mailto:info@ventrac.com)

# Venture Products Inc.

## Product focus

Venture Products, Inc., is known for Versatility by Design. We manufacture all-wheel-drive center-articulating compact tractors. Ventrac engineers designed a tractor without equal. No other compact tractor gives you more power, productivity and versatility than Ventrac does.

► **Design:** The articulated, heavy-duty frame and hydrostatic drive-system delivers maximum maneuverability, durability and flexibility. All-wheel-drive, combined with a low center of gravity and weight transfer system, enables Ventrac to conquer even the roughest of terrain.

► **Comfort:** S.D.L.A. convenient hand controls are located next to the operator for precise control of Speed, Direction, Lift and Auxiliary function.

## Manufacturing facility

Venture Products Inc. has two manufacturing facilities in Orville, OH. As part of continuous improvement in technology, Venture Products, Inc., added a new 7-Stage Wash and Powder Coat Painting System in 2005. Wash stages include alkaline cleaner, acid de-scaler, phosphate and sealer. This greatly improves cleaning and descaling which extends paint life. Venture

Products Inc. is committed to reaching our full potential in the development of products.

## Technical support

Customers can purchase a Ventrac only through our dealers, whom we work with on a daily basis. VPI provides Factory Service School Training three times a year. A strong sales team is always on the road assisting with demo rides and proper usage of the equipment. VPI also provides excellent technical support, and a strong parts department. VPI's marketing department has promotional items to help assist dealers with their advertising needs. We work hard to provide world-class customer service.

## Major product lines

► The **Ventrac 4200VXD** series takes compact tractors to a new level. With more power pound for pound, you can choose either gas or

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► The **Ventrac 4100** is built on the same rugged frame as the 4200VXD while using a dependable 25-hp twin cylinder Kawasaki or 31-hp Vanguard air-cooled engine.

► The **Ventrac 3000** is a compact tractor that puts you out front where the action is for maximum visibility. The 3000 is smaller with greater maneuverability.

► **Attachments:** We make more than 30 attachments for the 4000 series and 18 for the Ventrac 3000 to get the job done. Some attachments include mowers, blowers, brooms, slip scoops, stump grinders and snow blowers.

## ► Minute Mount System:

Drive up and attach to the implement of your choice in about a minute or less. The Minute Mount System is quick, efficient and requires no tools.

## ► The Ventrac V-PLUS

**Warranty:** All Ventrac tractors & Attachments come standard with a 3-year Residential or 2-year commercial limited warranty.



**Robert Vermeer**  
Chairman and CEO

**Mary Andringa**  
President and CEO

### **Mission Statement**

Dedication to quality. Vermeer designs, manufactures and supports its products to provide a level of quality and value that not only meets or exceeds reasonable customer expectations, but stands out as an industry leader in this effort.

# **Vermeer Manufacturing Co.**

### **Product focus**

Vermeer believes in "Taking care of customers worldwide with better solutions." And for more than five decades, Vermeer has been successfully manufacturing equipment and providing solutions that enable customers on job sites around the world to work more efficiently. Vermeer offers products for the underground, environmental, excavation and agricultural industries.

### **Manufacturing facilities**

Vermeer products are designed and manufactured at the company's factories in Pella, IA.

### **Technical support, sales, training and customer service**

Vermeer offers worldwide sales, support, service and parts through an independent, authorized dealer network. The Vermeer dealers are on the front line, gathering input from customers before and after the sale, standing by customers for the long haul. The Vermeer way is to understand that when customers are successful, the company is successful. Service, training, certified parts and exceptional warranty programs are just a few of the resources Vermeer offers once a customer takes delivery of a machine. For more information, please call 888-



VERMEER (837-6337) or visit [www.vermeer.com](http://www.vermeer.com).

### **Major product lines**

Vermeer is a proven leader in innovative, high-performance lines of construction equipment for earthmoving and utility installation, including compact skid steer loaders and compact excavators.

The Vermeer S600TX and S600 compact skid steers are versatile machines designed for landscaping, utility or do-it-yourself home projects. The Vermeer S600TX and S600 ride-on compact skid steers offers multifunctional controls, enabling the operator to operate the machine with both hands holding onto the handlebars.

Vermeer compact excavators are designed for



high output in confined worksites and are ideal for equipment rental stores, landscapers and utility contractors. The Vermeer line of compact excavators can be equipped with various attachments to provide versatility on the job. Vermeer offers seven models of compact excavators including the CX216, CX218, CX219Z, CX224, CX229, CX234 and CX254.

# **Vermeer®**

**Vermeer Manufacturing Company**  
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Pella, IA 50219

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**Fax:** 641-621-7734

**Web:** [www.vermeer.com](http://www.vermeer.com)

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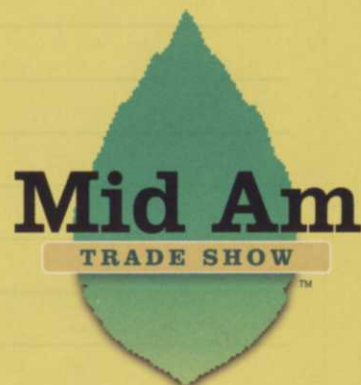
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<input type="checkbox"/> ASIC		136	
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<input type="checkbox"/> Bobcat Co		(reg)94a-94j	168
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<input type="checkbox"/> Snowpusherparts.com	179	160	
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<input type="checkbox"/> Syngenta	134	56*57	217
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<input type="checkbox"/> Toro Co			220
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<input type="checkbox"/> Zorock	160	118	

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### Account Executive, Classifieds

600 Superior Avenue East, Suite 1100

Cleveland, OH 44144

Phone: 216/706-3740, Fax: 216/706-3711

E-mail: bolesinski@questex.com



## ADVERTISING INFORMATION:

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# Events

RESOURCES

WHAT, WHEN & WHERE

## October

**22-26 Kentucky Turfgrass Council Conference and Trade Show** / Bowling Green, KY, 859/625-9448, [www.uky.edu/Ag/ukturf](http://www.uky.edu/Ag/ukturf)

**31-Dec. 12 UMass Extension Green School** / Milford, MA, 413/545-0895, [www.umassgreeninfo.org](http://www.umassgreeninfo.org)

## November

**1-4 Green Industry Expo** / Columbus, OH, Sponsored by PLANET, PGMS, 800/458-3466, [www.gieonline.com](http://www.gieonline.com)

**5-7 International Irrigation Show** / San Antonio, TX, Sponsored by Irrigation Association, 703/536-7080, [www.irrigation.org](http://www.irrigation.org)

**8-9 IOG Scotsturf** / Edinburgh, Scotland, Sponsored by Institute of Groundsmanship, 1908/312511, [www.iog.org](http://www.iog.org)

**8-10 Oklahoma Turfgrass Conference & Trade Show** / Stillwater, OK, Sponsored by Oklahoma Turfgrass Research Foundation, 918/437-0835, [www.otrf.com](http://www.otrf.com)

**9-11 TCI Expo 2006** / Baltimore, MD, Sponsored by Tree Care Industry Assn., 800/733-2622, [www.treecareindustry.org](http://www.treecareindustry.org)

**12-16 ASA-CSSA-SSSA Annual Meeting** / Indianapolis, IN, Sponsored by American Society of Agronomy, Soil Science Society of America, Crop Science Society of America, 608/273-8080, [www.asa-cssa-sssa.org](http://www.asa-cssa-sssa.org)

**14-16 Empire State Green Industry Show** / Rochester, NY, Sponsored by NY State Turfgrass

Assn., 800/873-8873, [www.nysta.org](http://www.nysta.org)

**14 CLIP Conference 2006** / Gaithersburg, MD, Sponsored by CLIP Sensible Software, 301/977-3311, [www.clip.com](http://www.clip.com)

## December

**3-6 ASCA Annual Conference** / Napa, CA, Sponsored by American Society of Consulting Arborists, 301/947-0483, [www.asca-consultants.org](http://www.asca-consultants.org)

**4-7 Turfgrass Short Course** / Blacksburg, VA, Sponsored by Virginia Turfgrass Council, 757/464-1004, [www.vaturf.org](http://www.vaturf.org)

**5-8 Ohio Turfgrass Conference and Show** / Columbus, OH, 888/683-3445, [www.ohioturfgrass.org](http://www.ohioturfgrass.org)

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**5-7 Rocky Mountain Regional Turfgrass Association Annual Conference and Trade Show / Denver, Sponsored by Rocky Mountain Regional Turfgrass Association, 303/770-2220, [www.rmrta.org](http://www.rmrta.org)**

**5-7 New Jersey Turfgrass Conference & Show / Atlantic City, NJ, Sponsored by New Jersey Turfgrass Association, 215/757-NJTA, [www.njturfgrass.org](http://www.njturfgrass.org)**

**5-6 Georgia Turfgrass Institute and Trade Show / Duluth, GA, Sponsored by Georgia Turfgrass Association, 706/335-6817, [www.turfgrass.org](http://www.turfgrass.org)**

**11-13 Texas Turfgrass Conference & Expo / Austin, TX, Sponsored by Texas Turfgrass Assn., 800/830-8873, [www.texasturf.com](http://www.texasturf.com)**

**11-15 MSU School of Turfgrass Management / Lansing, MI, Sponsored by Michigan State University Extension, 517/355-0271, [www.michiganturfgrass.org](http://www.michiganturfgrass.org)**

## January 2007

**4-5 Mid-States Horticultural Expo / Louisville, KY, Sponsored by Kentucky, Tennessee and Southern Nursery & Landscape Associations, 770/953-3311, [www.sna.org/midstates](http://www.sna.org/midstates)**

**7-9 WESTERN 2007 / Overland Park, KS, Sponsored by Western Nursery and Landscape Assn., 816/233-1481, [www.wnla.org](http://www.wnla.org)**

**9-11 Eastern PA Turf Conference and Trade Show / King of Prussia, PA, Sponsored by Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council, 814/238-2402, [www.paturf.org](http://www.paturf.org)**

### STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION (Required by 39 USC 3685)

1. **Publication Title:** LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT
2. **Publication Number:** 0894-1254
3. **Filing Date:** September 22, 2006
4. **Issue Frequency:** Monthly
5. **Number of Issues Published Annually:** 12
6. **Annual Subscription Price:** \$49.00
7. **Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication:** 306 West Michigan Street, Suite 200, Duluth, St. Louis County, Minnesota 55802-1610  
**Contact Person:** Jessica Borgren  
**Telephone:** (218)279-8858
8. **Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher:** 275 Grove Street, Suite 2-130, Newton, MA 02466
9. **Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher:** Kevin Stahlman, 600 Superior Avenue East, Suite 1100, Cleveland, Ohio 44114  
**Editor-in-Chief:** Ron Hall, 600 Superior Avenue East, Suite 1100, Cleveland, Ohio 44114  
**Managing Editor:** Stephanie Ricca, 600 Superior Avenue East, Suite 1100, Cleveland, Ohio 44114
10. **This publication is owned by:** Questex Media Group, Inc., 275 Grove Street, Suite 2-130, Newton, MA 02466. The sole shareholder of Questex Media Group, Inc. is: QMG Holdings, Inc., 275 Grove Street, Suite 2-130, Newton, MA 02466
11. **Questex Media Group, Inc. is the Mortgagee under a Credit Agreement dated May 23, 2005, with various lenders as named therein from time to time. The agent for the lenders is: Bank of Montreal, Chicago Branch, as Administrative Agent, 115 South LaSalle Street, Chicago, IL 60603. Holders of 1.0% or more of Questex Media Group, Inc. Mortgages or Other Securities as of July, 2006 are as follows:** Audax Private Equity Fund II, L.P. 101 Huntington Avenue Boston, MA 02199 Audax Private Equity Fund II, L.P. 101 Huntington Avenue Boston, MA 02199 Audax Co-Invest, L.P. 101 Huntington Avenue Boston, MA 02199 Audax Trust Co-Invest, L.P. 101 Huntington Avenue Boston, MA 02199 Audax Special Purpose Co-Invest, L.P. 101 Huntington Avenue Boston, MA 02199 AFF Co-Invest, L.P. 101 Huntington Avenue Boston, MA 02199 Bank of Montreal 3 Times Square, 29th Floor New York, NY 10036 Ares Enhanced Loan Investment Strategy, Ltd Ares Management LLC 1999 Avenue of the Stars #1900 Los Angeles, CA 90067 Ares Enhanced Loan Investment Strategy II, Ltd Ares Management LLC 1999 Avenue of the Stars #1900 Los Angeles, CA 90067 Ares Total Value Fund, L.P. Ares Management LLC 1999 Avenue of the Stars #1900 Los Angeles, CA 90067 Ares V CLO Ltd Ares Management LLC 1999 Avenue of the Stars #1900 Los Angeles, CA 90067 Ares V CLO Ltd Ares Management LLC 1999 Avenue of the Stars #1900 Los Angeles, CA 90067 Ares VIII CLO Ltd Ares Management LLC 1999 Avenue of the Stars #1900 Los Angeles, CA 90067 Ares IX CLO Ltd Ares Management LLC 1999 Avenue of the Stars #1900 Los Angeles, CA 90067 Friedberg Midstate Private Capital Fund I C/O Friedberg Midstate LLC 6 East 43rd Street New York, NY 10017 PM Leveraged Capital Fund I 6 East 43rd St New York, NY 10017 Green Lane CLO Ltd C/O Guggenheim Investment Mgmt LLC 135 East 57th Street, 9th Floor New York, NY 10022 GSC Partners CDO Fund III Limited C/O GSC (NJ) LP as collateral Manager 300 Campus Drive, Suite 110 Florham Park, NJ 07932 GSC Partners CDO Fund V Limited C/O GSC (NJ) LP as collateral Manager 300 Campus Drive, Suite 110 Florham Park, NJ 07932 GSC Partners Gemini Fund Ltd C/O GSC (NJ) LP as collateral Manager 300 Campus Drive, Suite 110 Florham Park, NJ 07932 LFC2 Loan Funding LLC C/O LaSalle Bank NA 135 South LaSalle Street, Suite 1625 Chicago, IL 60603 Midland National Life Insurance Co C/O Guggenheim Investment Mgmt LLC 135 East 57th Street, 9th Floor New York, NY 10022 North American Co for Life and Health Ins C/O Guggenheim Investment Mgmt LLC 135 East 57th Street, 9th Floor New York, NY 10022 Wells Fargo Fossil III Inc 2450 Colorado Avenue, Suite 3000W Santa Monica, CA 90404

12. **Does Not Apply**
13. **Publication Title:** Landscape Management
14. **Issue Date for Circulation Data Below:** August 2006
15. **Extent and Nature of Circulation**

	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
<b>A. Total Number of Copies Paid and/or Requested Circulation</b>		
1. Paid/Requested Outside-County Mail Subscriptions Stated on Form 3541	55,602	55,641
2. Paid In-County Subscriptions Stated on Form 3541	0	0
3. Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Non-USPS Paid Distribution (Includes non-USPS requester distribution)	92	82
4. Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	0	0
<b>C. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation</b>	55,694	55,723
<b>D. Free Distribution by Mail</b>		
1. Outside-County as Stated on Form 3541	6,681	6,494
2. In-County as Stated on Form 3541	0	0
3. Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	0	0
<b>E. Free Distribution Outside the Mail</b>	683	369
<b>F. Total Free Distribution</b>	7,364	8,663
<b>G. Total Distribution</b>	63,058	62,586
<b>H. Copies Not Distributed</b>	95	102
<b>I. Total</b>	63,153	62,688
<b>J. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation</b>	88.3%	89.0%
<b>16. Publication required.</b> Will be printed in the October 2006 issue of this publication		
<b>17. Name and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner:</b> Kristin J. Meyer, Circulation Director Date: 9/22/06 I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.		

**9-11 Landscape Ontario Congress 2007 / Toronto, Sponsored by Landscape Ontario, 800/661-5319, [www.locongress.com](http://www.locongress.com)**

**10-12 Mid-Atlantic Nursery Trade Show (MANTS) / Baltimore, MD, Sponsored by State Nursery and Landscape Associations of Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia, 800/431-0066, [www.mants.com](http://www.mants.com)**

**17-19 Mid-America Horticultural Trade Show / Chicago, 847/526-2010, [www.midam.org](http://www.midam.org)**

**17-21 STMA Annual Conference / San Antonio, TX, Sponsored by Sports Turf Managers Association, 800/323-3875, [www.sportsturfmanager.org](http://www.sportsturfmanager.org)**

**22-26 Denver ProGreen Expo / Denver, Sponsored by Associated Landscape Contractors of Colorado, Colorado Chapter American Society of Landscape Architects, Colorado Nursery & Greenhouse Assn., Garden Centers of Colorado, Rocky Mountain Chapter International Society of Arboriculture, Colorado State University Cooperative, [www.progreenexpo.com](http://www.progreenexpo.com)**

**LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT** (ISSN 0894-1254) is published monthly (12 issues per year) by Questex Media Group, Inc., 306 W Michigan St, Suite 200, Duluth, MN 55802. **Subscription rates:** one year, \$49, two years \$69 in the United States & Possessions; \$79 for one year, \$115 for two years in Canada and Mexico; all other countries \$150 for one year, \$225 for two years. For annual delivery, include an additional \$75 per order annually. Single copies (pre-paid only): \$8 in the United States; \$10 in Canada and Mexico; \$15 all other countries. Back issues, if available: \$16 in the U.S.; \$20 in Canada and Mexico; \$30 all other countries. Add \$6.50 per order for shipping and handling. **Periodicals postage paid** at Duluth, MN 55806 and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Please send address changes to Landscape Management, P.O. Box 5057, Brentwood, TN 37024-5057. Canadian G.S.T. number: 840 033 278 RT0001. Publications Mail Agreement Number 40017597. Printed in the U.S.A.



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# Winners

RESOURCES

SMALL/MID-SIZED COMPANIES TO WATCH

## Jack Verducci

Miniature worlds with working locomotives and living plants delight customers

BY RON HALL / Editor in Chief

Jack Verducci began building his railroad 18 years ago but, unlike fellow Californian Leland Stanford of Central Pacific fame, you won't find a university bearing his name.

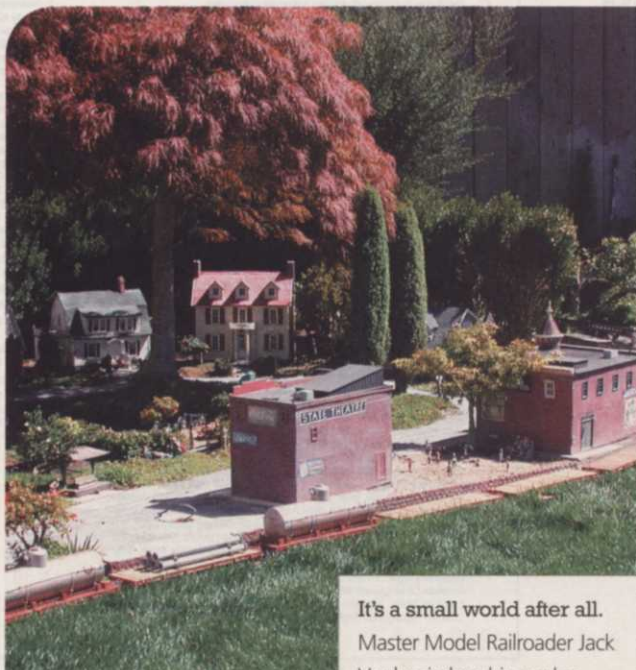
You see, Verducci's railroad, the Crystal Springs Railroad, doesn't cross the Sierra Nevadas; it's built into a hillside on his property in San Mateo.

The 3,000-sq.-ft. landscape is a coastal, narrow gauge layout with 1939-era locomotives in a lumber and mining theme. The length of the main line is 650 feet.

### Hobby turned business

Verducci, a Master Model Railroader (he's the first garden railroader to earn the honor) has since built about 75 landscape or "garden railroads" to the delight of clients.

"I am a landscape contractor but I only do garden railroads," says Verducci. "I design and install them but I also do consulting with people who



**It's a small world after all.** Master Model Railroader Jack Verducci plans his garden landscapes to scale. Note the "trees" alongside the track.

want to build their own."

Verducci says he got into building garden railroads after selling his manufacturing business, and word got out about what he had designed and installed in his own yard.

From there he read all that he could on the subject, citing *Garden Railways* magazine as a great help, and his own love of garden railroading. Demand for his services soon took off.

"Back in the 80s, with a

few exceptions, garden railroads were rather primitive. Many were simply trains running through a yard with full-size plants. A few used miniature plants and other small-scale items to create their special miniature worlds," Verducci says.

"The more I learned about it the more I became interested in creating miniature worlds with living plants, rocks and model trains," Verducci says a "very simple" garden layout can cost as little as

\$5,000, but the average installation is closer to \$25,000.

### Designs on site

"It is difficult to create a plan on paper since there are so many variables. I have found a way to create a one-to-one scale three-dimensional track plan on sight. This is the most efficient way for me to design a railroad. This method allows the client to see exactly where the road bed will be," he says.

While building a garden railroad is usually a one-man operation, he sometimes works alongside other landscape contractors on a property.

"I work with their crews and I get down on the ground and build the railroad with them," he says.

Garden railroading is growing in popularity, especially among serious hobbyists. "I provide on-site consulting and the next level is creating a three-dimensional full-size plan on site for a client," Verducci says.

Once that plan is in place the client can go a number of directions, from installing the layout themselves to working with him or hiring other contractors to install it. Verducci says he is flexible. **LH**

►► **Online:** <http://kalmbachcatalog.stores.yahoo.net/1246.html>  
Jack Verducci's book, "How to Design and Build Your Garden Railroad," is available here from Kalbach Publishing.



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