



There's a New Name in Landscape Contracting

the Grounds Guys
LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

A GREENER FUTURE IS WAITING FOR YOU

Say hello to The Grounds Guys, the newest franchise in the landscape contracting industry. But we're not really new. We're part of a family of nationally-respected service franchise brands - Leading the Service Industry™.

With The Grounds Guys, you get -

- World-class training and support.
- Discounts on supplies, vehicles, insurance and more.
- National marketing and internet marketing.
- Systems to build your business.
- Sophisticated software systems.
- Control of your business and an improved quality of life.

(800) 638-9851
GroundsGuysFranchise.com

A Company of The Dwyer Group®

LAWNCAREPRO

LM'S OPERATOR OF THE MONTH » BY RON HALL



Alan White will soon begin his third decade in business. As the founder and owner of Ontario, Canada-based Turf Systems he's learned a few important lessons. "Be a part of and participate in your industry," White says. "It will keep you prepared. You have to know what's going on around you. You're never too small to be involved and take an active role in shaping the industry."

What has been your company's experience with the lawn care pesticide ban the Ontario Provincial government implemented more than two years ago?

Customers want green, weed-free lawns. This has been a very difficult season for our customers — and for us. This summer, we had tropical conditions for weeks at a time. It caused lots of problems. We've never seen so much crabgrass. The same goes for Japanese beetles. Chinch bugs have been out of control, too, and we don't have anything that we can use on them.

What sense do you get of customers' reaction to the pesticide ban?

Customers support the proposition of reducing risk. But, in terms of pesticides, most customers base their perception of risk on what they perceive and not on what they know. While our company has always used very little (pest control) product, I've always been a proponent that they should be available for use by the industry.

What has been their reaction to the conditions of their lawns this season?

Customers are used to seeing green lawns. They don't ask how we do it. They don't ask for a weed control or an insect control. They trust us to do

what needs to be done. We work hard to build that trust. They're not accustomed to seeing so much chinch bug damage or so many weeds. You can see the frustration in their eyes... especially when you inform them that if they were in another province, we would have a product.

Do you see any possibility that the provincial ban will be reversed? Not anytime soon. The liberal government has another year in office, so it wouldn't happen before then.

Alan, you've advocated the use of IPM your entire career. As vice chairman of the IPM Council, where does the IPM accreditation program stand now?

We designed the IPM accreditation program to eventually be applied across multiple sectors and multiple disciplines — lawn care, golf, structural pest control, arboriculture, parks and public works. Lawn care was the first sector with a program and an auditing component. Then golf. There is no IPM accreditation for public works, but it can have IPM-certified agents. There's no IPM accreditation program for lawn care in Ontario, but the structure is in place and can be implemented.

AT A GLANCE

COMPANY: Turf Systems Inc.

FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT: Alan White

HEADQUARTERS: Burlington, Ontario, Canada

FOUNDED: 1991

SERVICES: Lawn care

INDUSTRY INVOLVEMENT: Member of PLANET, helped develop IPM accreditation program, board member of IPM Council of Canada, helped bring Project Evergreen to Canada

WEBSITE: TurfSystems.ca