

Integrated Turf Care takes sustainability seriously. The Coral Springs, FL-based company is a platinum member of the Audubon Lifestyles and a chartered member of the International Sustainability Council. It's clear **Kenny Perkins**, CEO, is excited about what his company has to offer. "Work is fun for me again," he says. "I never minded coming to work, but now I look forward to doing this every day. I'm loving being on the forefront of where this industry is going."

Kenny, tell us why you're so enthusiastic about organic turf fertilization. We now have organic products that perform as good as synthetics. That hasn't always been the case. I tried organic processes several years ago, and I wasted maybe \$90,000 because the products didn't perform well. We're now using a natural organic product — a 15-0-0 granular and a 10-0-0 liquid — that's produced by a high-pressure composting process using food waste. Some of the products have lysine, which is a single-source nitrogen product derived from corn. We get it and other turf and ornamental products from Purely Organic, a company located in Maine.

Obviously, you're pleased with the results. We've had great success. We're applying a granular in the spring and fall, and a liquid product in fertigation systems on several different proper-

ties during the summer. We probably have 80 or 90 acres under fertigation.

Fertigation, that's applying fertilizer in irrigation water. When did you get involved with that? We started this past summer. I got the idea while I was meeting with a distributor and got involved with a discussion concerning a turf problem at a golf course. I had experience injecting rust inhibitors in irrigation systems, so it dawned on me that I could inject fertilizers, too. I investigated the idea and called Michael Chaplinsky and learned about his company, Turf Feeding Systems.

Please share your experience with fertigation so far. One of the properties we've improved is the St. Mary's Medical Center in West Palm Beach. It's about 10 acres. The hospital is committed to having a sustainable landscape, and that's what we offer. I've been working

to bring its older irrigation system up to standard. We started fertigating with organic fertilizers in mid-summer and within four or five weeks, the improvement was dramatic. They've been very pleased.

What other benefits do you feel your organic program offers customers? Once we get the properties under control, we believe we can reduce the amount of fertilizer we use and still get great results. The increased biological activity within the soil will allow us to reduce the amount of nitrogen we apply, reduce pesticide use and save water, too. That's what sustainability is about, right?

We understand that your firm joined Audubon Lifestyles as a Platinum member. What does that mean? We're proud to be a part of Audubon Lifestyles. Audubon Lifestyles is a non-profit organization based on the principles of



AT A GLANCE

COMPANY: Integrated Turf Care

ONLINE: IntegratedTurfCare.com

CEO: Kenny Perkins

HEADQUARTERS: Coral Springs, FL

SERVICE AREA: Miami/Dade/Broward/Palm Beach Counties

FOUNDED: 1986, merged with another company in 2006 to become ITC

EMPLOYEES: 40 employees (peak season)

SERVICES: lawn maintenance, fertilization, pest control, landscaping, irrigation, soil analysis

PERSONAL HIGHLIGHTS/HOBBIES: Motorcycling ("I'm a speed freak.")

FAMILY: Wife, Robin

sustainability. Our company's focus is offering sustainable landscape solutions.

Obviously, you feel the direction you've chosen differentiates your company in your market. Absolutely. What we're offering is industry-altering services and products, game changers. I've been in this industry since 1986, and I sense a true metamorphosis taking place these last two or three years with the industry's understanding of the importance of enhancing soil biology to reduce chemical and water use.

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