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LANDSCAPE

CONTRACTOR NEWS

ASLA gets home in downtown Washington

On Monday, April 29, the Executive Committee of the American Society of Landscape Architects voted to enter into a lease with option to purchase a building at 1733 Connecticut Ave.

ASLA President Robert Woerner said the committee decided the property met requirements to protect ASLA's long-term rental costs and to invest in its future, and took the necessary action.

Woerner said: "A year from now, ASLA will be in its new quarters. Should all things go according to our plans, we will be located in our historic building on Connecticut Ave.—one which will be eventually acquired as our own."

Executive Director Ed Able said the soaring cost of real estate in the metropolitan Washington area motivated the action. "The one method of putting a cap on this spiral is to ultimately purchase our own property and stabilize our cost of office space. Needless to say, the result would mean more dollars for programs and less dollars for rent," Able said.

Maryland professor warns of scale insects

Scale insects on camellia and some other ornamental shrubs could be especially severe this year because of a relatively mild winter, says Dr. Conrad B. Link, extension floriculture specialist and professor of horticulture at the University of Maryland in College Park.

Inspecting plants for insect and disease problems should head the list of things to do, Link says. Other priorities include shaping and pruning of azalea and other spring-flowering shrubs which have finished blooming. Also cut back poinsettia plants to save them for blooming again by next Christmas.

ALCA schedules interior short courses

The Interior Landscape Div. of the Associated Landscape Contractors of America has designed a series of short courses for all personnel who are involved in any phase of interior maintenance.

The short courses will include a review of basic horticultural knowledge, followed by a lengthy discussion of plant problems and solutions. Robert T. DeNeve, a horticultural expert with Tropical Ornamentals of Delray Beach, FL, and Dr. William Noble, instructor at California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo, will conduct the programs.

Locations, dates, and contacts are: West Palm Beach, July 30, contact Laine Craft, Living Interiors, 305/842-1823; Atlanta, Aug. 1, contact David Korstad, Sedgefield Atlanta, 404/872-0701; Seattle, Aug. 21, contact Jack Ballard, The Greenery, Inc., 206/622-3373; and San Diego, Aug. 23, contact Nancy Hughes, Habitat International Design, 714/753-5007.

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

First program set for roadside management

The Transportation Research Board's committees on landscape and environmental design and roadside maintenance are hosting a joint session on vegetation management in San Antonio, TX, Aug. 4-8.

The week-long program will include presentations on chemicals and machinery now being manufactured, operations research now being conducted that may affect the future work programs, side effects of a roadside management program, current practice, and a comprehensive field demonstration trip.

Byron Blaschke, chief engineer, maintenance and operations, will

direct the meeting. For more details or arrangements, contact Robert Guinn, engineer of maintenance, Texas Dept. of Highways and Public Transportation, Highway Building, Austin, TX 78701.

EQUIPMENT

Snow thrower shipments increase 40 percent in 1980

U.S. manufacturers shipped 1,571,000 walk-behind snow throwers during the shipment year which ended Feb. 29, 1980, according to the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute.

Although this represents an increase of 40% over the 1,118,000 units shipped in the 1979 model year, the past winter's extremely light snowfall in major markets has resulted in higher-than-normal inventory at the dealer level. Factory value of the units shipped was \$396 million, up 58% from last year's \$250 million.

Convention will stress togetherness theme

"Together Through The 80's" will be the theme this year at the 105th Annual Convention and Trade Show sponsored by the American Association of Nurserymen.

Educational sessions each day will deal with contemporary topics of the industry, which is meeting at the historic Radisson Muehlbach Hotel, Kansas City, MO, July 12-16. The trade show promises to display the latest products and services available to nursery business people.

Nine other national associations will be meeting at the same time, as well as various committee meetings, regional caucuses, legislative and research conferences, and state meetings.

For more information, contact Robert S. Fortna, 230 Southern Building, Washington, DC 20005, 202/737-4060.

NURSERYMEN

Reilly named exec sec for Mailorder Assn.

Ann Reilly has accepted the position of executive secretary/public rela-

GOVERNMENT

UPDATE

tions coordinator for the Mailorder Association of Nurserymen.

Reilly is also executive secretary of the New York State Flower Industries, the New York State Turf Grass Association, the Long Island Flower Growers Association, and the Long Island Horticultural Society. She has authored several gardening books and has contributed numerous articles and photographs to many gardening and shelter magazines.

PESTICIDES

Dutch Elm control gets EPA approval

Elm owners who have injected their trees with Arbotect 20-S systemic fungicide to prevent Dutch Elm disease for the past two years can continue treatments this year.

Two years ago when Arbotect was first registered, the EPA placed a restriction on the label specifying that the fungicide should not be used for more than two consecutive years. The reason was to allow more time for research into the long-range effects of continuous annual treatments. Since subsequent testing has shown no significant problems, the restriction has been dropped.

Using a fungicide in this capacity is one of the four important steps in controlling the disease, says Dr. Ronald Landis, director of agricultural research and development for MSD AGVET, Div. of Merck & Co., Inc. Other steps include good sanitation, insect control, and elimination of root grafts.

EQUIPMENT

Program proposed for equipment anti-theft

The Construction Industry Manufacturers Association (CIMA) has been studying a special anti-theft training program for law enforcement, said Earl O. Christianson, director of security for J I Case.

Speaking to the Heavy Equipment Committee of the International Association of Automotive Theft Investigators (IAATI), Christianson said the proposed educational program is also studying resource materials to assist in identification and recovery of stolen equipment.

A Case study made of law enforcement agency response to the equip-

Continues on page 78

Feds propose ban on equipment with PCB

Pesticide and fertilizer companies would be required to remove equipment containing liquid polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) or flush the PCB from the equipment under regulations proposed by the USDA, FDA, and EPA.

Producers and processors would also be required to remove any liquid PCB stored separately at their facilities under proposals by the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services and the EPA.

Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Carol Tucker Foreman said the proposals represent a coordinated effort by the federal agencies to protect consumers from environmental contamination of the food supply and protect producers and processors from catastrophic losses which may result from such contamination.

Regs for wage and hour laws may change

Changes in regulations have been proposed to facilitate the hearing and appeal process for issues concerning the Davis-Bacon and related acts, the Service Contract Act, and Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act.

Under the Service Contract Act, the hearing and appeal process regarding enforcement, debarment, and wage determination matters would be revised. A Board of Service Contract Appeals would be created to hear appeals from decisions of administrative law judges.

The existing Wage Appeals Board would continue to hear appeals involving the Davis-Bacon and related acts. The proposal would also establish certain new procedures, such as formal hearings before administrative law judges concerning enforcement and debarment of contractors from federal contracts for violating the acts.

New procedures would be established for expediting cases involving the Contract Hours and Safety Standards Act.

National Arbor Day bill passes Senate

The bill to annually designate the last Friday in April as Arbor Day has passed the Senate but needs 218 members from the House to cosponsor it.

The House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service has a policy that this type of bill will neither be heard nor reported unless 218 members cosponsor it. Neither will the committee hold hearings on the Senate-passed bill. House Bill (HJR-159), introduced by Rep. Minish (D-NJ), has 22 cosponsors to date (May 31).

EPA bars six new plastic compounds

The Environmental Protection Agency has issued the first order of its kind to prohibit the manufacture of six new chemicals on grounds that they may pose serious risks to human health and the environment.

The chemicals, called "phthalate esters," are "plasticizers" used to give flexibility to polyvinyl chloride plastic products such as garden hoses, floor tiles, and refrigerator gaskets.

EPA imposed the manufacturing ban under the Toxic Substances Control Act because of evidence indicating that the new substances could pose a cancer risk to production workers and could kill and deform fish and other organisms.

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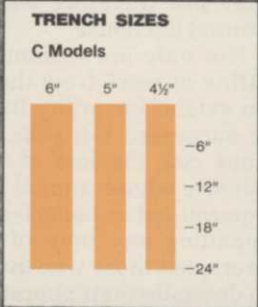
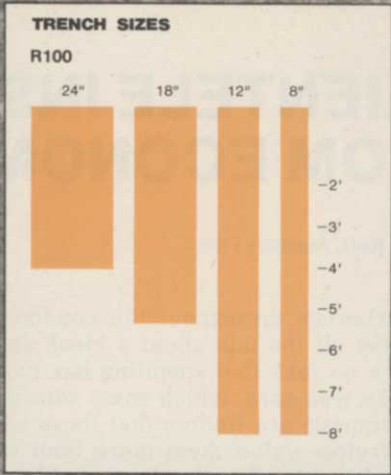
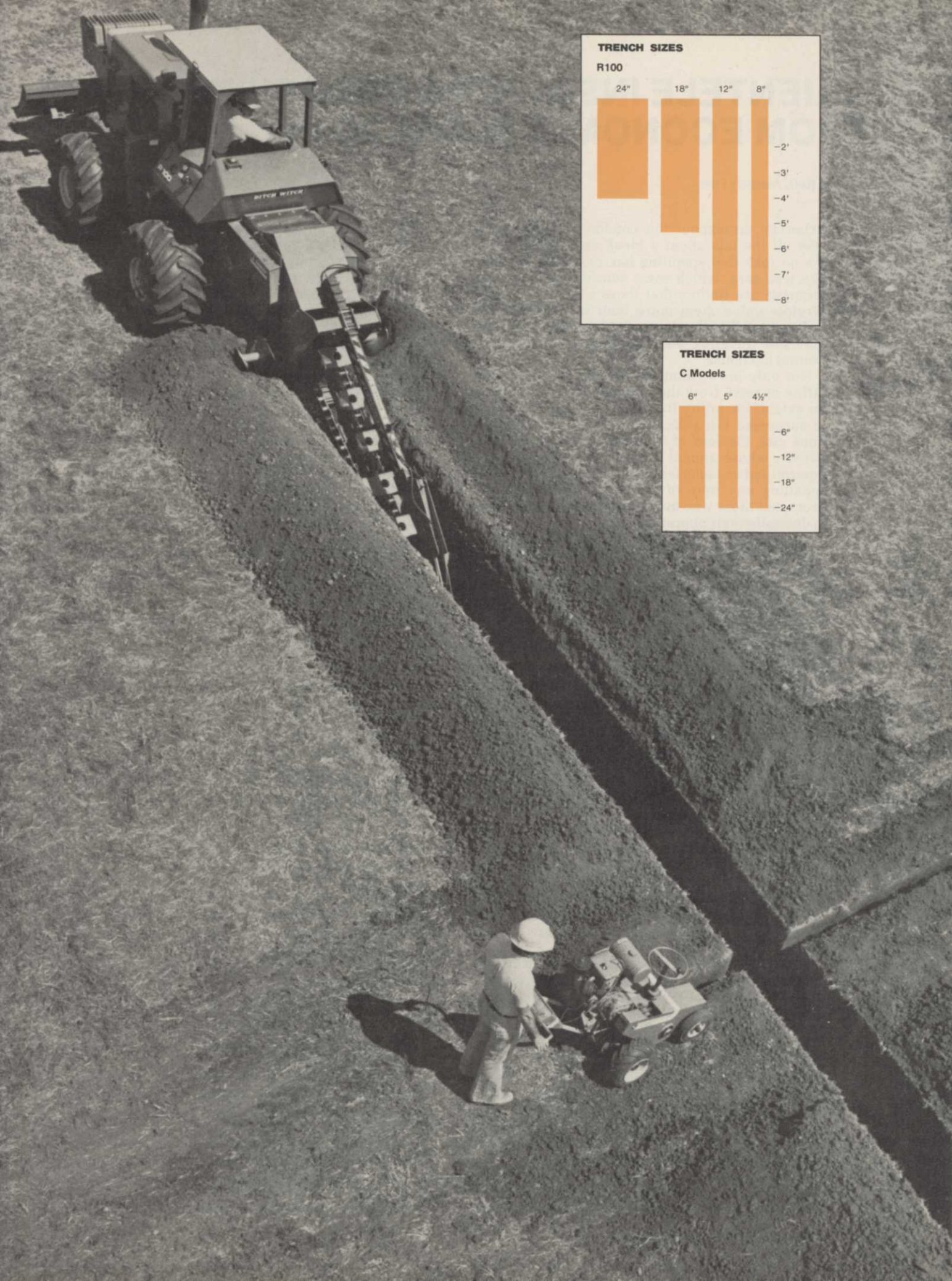
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CLIENTELE INSULATES ARBORISTS FROM ECONOMIC SLOW-DOWN

By John Kerr, Assistant Editor

Arborists throughout the country are wondering why all the talk about a bleak economic climate. It's no joke that spending has been cut for items like tree care, which some consider luxuries. But arborists are finding that those who request such services value them more than ever. People are scrutinizing their landscape with acute vision since they are traveling less and spending more time around the house.

Not only are residential customers steady. The influx of work from the commercial sector, and to an extent, for utility line clearance, has kept pace or surpassed last year. Arborists who clear utility lines risk the loss of business from power companies, whose annual budgets are not as strictly determined as factories or institutions and may cut spending any time of the year. This factor has prompted those who mainly worked on utility lines to diversify their operation.

Other reasons exist for the general optimism among arborists. Environmental awareness and promotion of events such as Arbor Day have boosted the public's appreciation of trees. Bob Felix, executive director of the National Arborist Association, says that American people are jealous of their leisure time and won't begin to do the work themselves. "People wish to take care of their property and will spend money to do that," he says.

Many arborists agree that the socio-economic level of their customers makes them nearly the last to be affected by a recession. "Some feel that by the time the ripple affect of a recession reaches the level of tree care clients that you customarily deal with, the economy will be climbing out of the recession and it will not be felt at all," says Felix. For the present, when arborists hear talk of a "so-called recession," they don't listen.

Neil Engledow, who runs Midwestern Tree Experts Inc., was concerned about the slow request for work a few months ago. Now it appears that people staying home more, damage from winter, and high sales of shade trees could make this one of his best years. Tornados have caused extra work and the epidemic of pests forced Engledow to add a new rig for spraying.

Five different types of scale and 16 varieties of caterpillars have infested trees in Engledow's Indianapolis area. Last winter's mild temperatures didn't kill the scales; the winters of two and three years ago were so harsh that they killed the fibrous feeding roots, a condition which is just manifesting itself this summer in the form of weak foliage on some trees. Engledow is worrying that chemicals he uses that no longer have a strong residual effect will not solve the problem. His customers don't like spraying done over and over so he is looking at superior oil sprays, which have to be diluted and used at the right humidity and temperature.

Because many factory workers with qualified skills for tree care are laid off, Engledow can be very selective in who he hires. He thinks his em-

ployees are also starting to appreciate their jobs more. An incentive program learned from a fellow arborist helps production.

Engledow has improved business by going to more contract work instead of an hourly rate. When his crew is on a job, they inspect the property to anticipate future needs. To reduce fuel costs he has cut back to a 15-mile perimeter around headquarters. That's also because business is so good. "I'm in a very fortunate position," he says. "I can hardly get out of my own realm."

Eric Haupt, owner of The Haupt Tree Co. in Sheffield, MA, hasn't seen any direct evidence of recession. He attributes some cancellations and a volume up-net down situation to inflation rather than recession. What's hurt is the high cost of pesticides and overhead on office space and garages, which make it difficult to compete with those who leave their equipment outside and charge less per hour.

"Overregulation is a bigger problem than recession," says Haupt. Overlapping regulations from the EPA for pesticides, OSHA for safety, and the Dept. of Transportation for hazardous materials cost much to comply with. They force gypsy tree companies to raise their standards, which gives the profession a better image, but the good operations still suffer. For example, Haupt says the decal on his spray rigs which identifies a registered applicator expired this March. The EPA, behind on its paperwork, has OK'd Haupt for continued spraying. The agency must OK every operation then, even those spraying indiscriminately.

Concerned with keeping his good reputation with clients, Haupt makes a point to contact them. "The public and clients are fickle," he says, "We sell them on skilled service, but if they find out later about another company with a lower price, we run the risk of losing them."

One lesson Haupt has learned is not to put all his eggs in one basket. He has seen the power company running Three Mile Island lose everything. He is determined to prevent this and will not make his utility line operation more than 50 percent of his business. Extra emphasis has also been put on maintenance for safety, appearance, and better fuel consumption.

Haupt believes from a nursery standpoint, the recession will probably help. He now has more employees than ever. With better coordination of his expanding family-run business, there will be plenty more work to do.

On the other side of the country in Clackamas, OR, volume of work is holding well for William Owen, owner of General Tree Service (formerly General Spray). Owen has experienced no particular impact from the "so-called recession" in general, but has had two sizable commercial accounts make substantial cutbacks in service. Business has increased from last year.

Owen recognizes the economic situation but

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shucks the negative talk which feeds the fire. "I questioned a number of big associations and found there was almost no significant impact because of the so-called recession," he says. "The biggest defense against it is to do things on a positive note, take a move to create new business unless the crippling cost of cash flow makes it impossible."

Because of the high fuel expense, Owen methodically routes his crews to reduce driving and reminds them to idle trucks less. When working in a neighborhood, someone will canvas the area to describe services and spread the name of General Tree Service.

The company advertises no more than it always has, but sends a special printing of its brochure to certain accounts—offices, commercial installations, or factories which need landscape. "This market considers tree care a necessity," says Owens.

Reaching the level of clients who can afford the arborist's service through advertising and other efforts will become increasingly important in the future, Owen thinks. Other pursuits he considers vital to survival are to be a top-line professional in a diversified manner, and to realize this professionalism particularly in the area of integrated pest management.

Down in San Antonio, TX, the Horti-Care Corp., owned by Alan Brook, has raised its volume 10 percent with consideration for inflation. Small accounts on fixed retirement incomes have dropped off, but otherwise business has been strong. "I've always had people say 'it's too much, I can't afford it,'" says Brook. "I take the approach that if they're going to take care of their trees, they can't wait until next year."

Brook is trying to get better people and equip-

Continues on page 75

TREE CARE SAFETY PROGRAMS—FACT OR FICTION



By Robert Felix,
Executive Vice President,
National Arborist Association

In 1979, accident frequency in the tree care industry increased by 30% over 1978.

Workers compensation rates continue to increase at an alarming rate.

These are statistical facts that cannot be disputed. Everybody talks about safety. Many claim to have safety programs, but how many of these programs are effective?

Paying lip service to safety, passing out safety bulletins without explanations, and assuming that tree workers understand is a presumption that the tree care industry cannot afford.

The only way to reduce the frequency of lost time accidents and reduce your cost of workers compensation insurance is to make a sincere effort to properly train your employees. This requires time and costs money but it pays dividends. Anything less is a figment of your imagination. Anything less is a fictitious safety program!

Some say that "It's safe if you know how to do it!" That is a half truth. It is only safe if you know how to do it, safely.

The tree care industry is a high risk industry. The heights that we work at, the electrical hazards involved, the equipment that we work with, and the pesticides that we use each pose a threat to the safety of the untrained. It is easy to measure an increased cost for insurance, but not so easy to measure the pain and suffering resulting from an

injury, much less production and inefficiency.

Much of this can be avoided with an ongoing safety program. Such programs exist in the form of slide/cassette programs from the National Arborist Association, as well as a Tail Gate Safety program. Both are based on the Z-133.1 Standard of the American National Standards Institute, "Safety Requirements for Pruning, Trimming, Repairing, Maintaining and Removing Trees, and for Cutting Brush."

The economics of a safety program without even giving any consideration to the pain or suffering of an injured worker are very simple. For example: If a three-man crew, which ordinarily produces \$60 per hour, devoted one hour per week to safety, lost production for the year would be about \$3,000. At an average of \$6 per hour per worker, plus payroll taxes and benefits, the payroll cost per year would be \$1,125 resulting in a loss of revenue of only \$1,875 per year.

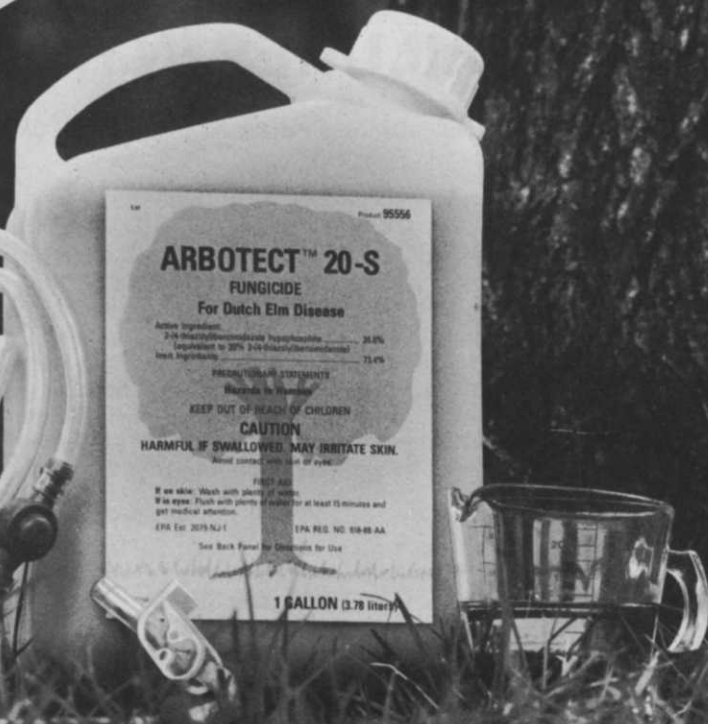
Three men earning an average of \$6 per hour would earn \$37,440 per year. If your manual rate for workers compensation was 20%, your cost would be \$7,488 per year. A 25% experience credit would equal \$1,872, as much as was sacrificed in revenue for the one hour per week safety training program, plus fewer lost-time accidents and more production.

The National Arborist Association safety training programs are tailor made for the tree care industry. The slide/cassette program provides an audio/visual exposure to safe practices presented in an informal atmosphere. The Tail Gate Safety Program is highly structured yet designed to be presented in the field. It includes attendance records and provides all of the necessary ingredients required by OSHA.

Tree care safety is an essential ingredient in good arboricultural practice. We must do a better job of putting it into practice.

For more information on the slide/cassette and Tail Gate Safety programs, contact the National Arborist Association, Inc., 3537 Stratford Road, Wantagh, NY 11793, 516/221-3082.

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PROPER MATERIAL, CLOSE OBSERVATION PREVENT FAILURES IN HERBICIDE USE

By Thomas A. Fretz, Professor and Head, Department of Horticulture, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS

Most nurserymen and landscape contractors who regularly use herbicides in their businesses have experienced occasions where the herbicide did not perform to their expectations. Many of these herbicide failures are not failures of the herbicide itself; more likely the conditions under which the material has been applied is usually responsible for this "so-called failure." When one takes time to consider all of the external forces that can ultimately affect herbicidal action, it's a miracle they work at all!

Three major degradation processes, photo, chemical and biological decomposition, can occur which can alter the structure of the herbicide molecule and eventually its selectivity and activity. Biological decomposition includes the breakdown of the herbicide by living organisms in the soil; chemical decomposition is an altering of the chemical structure of the herbicide in the absence of any living organism; and photo decomposition is the degradation of the molecule by any chemical processes requiring radiant energy from the sun.

In addition, there are several major transfer processes that affect herbicide activity once the herbicide has been introduced into the environment. The herbicide can be absorbed by plants and animals, retained in vegetation and transferred to the harvested products, absorbed on soil colloids and thus rendered unavailable, volatilized into the atmosphere, or lost through surface runoff and leaching, eventually to end up in the water table.

Not only can these above factors alter herbicidal activity, but the chances for human error are present right from the initial selection of the herbicide, through its application and following into crop management.

The discussion that follows is not meant to be an excuse for previous herbicide failures you might have experienced, but rather to help you draw attention to those variables which may help you avoid a costly failure with your herbicide program in the future.

Weeds

Above all, proper herbicide selection is paramount in achieving a successful weed control program, whether it is for container grown nursery crops or the plants in an established landscape situation. Never forget that herbicides are very selective and while some are noted for their annual grass control, others control only broadleaf weed species. Still, other herbicides have a relatively broad spectrum in terms of the weed species they will control. Knowing what weed species are present in any particular situation will ultimately help in choosing the proper herbicide for the job. The herbicides listed in Table 1 illustrate the fact that herbicides vary with regard to their ability to

control particular weed species. For example, selecting DCPA (Dacthal) to control broadleaf weeds will almost certainly produce unsatisfactory results.

In addition to considering the major weed species present in any given nursery or landscape situation, the applicator must constantly be reminded of the fact that the weed spectrum will change with repeated application of a single herbicide. Surely every nurseryman and landscape contractor can cite examples of the elimination of one troublesome weed pest only to observe the encroachment of another weed species. For this reason, the development of a program of alternative herbicides which can be used in particular situations should be carefully considered.

Crops

We all realize that an herbicide may effectively control weeds around one plant species while severely damaging another. For example, dichlobenil (Casoron) may be used on junipers to effectively control many perennial weed species. However, this herbicide will cause severe injury if used around Japanese holly. The application of herbicides to various crops is, by far, one of the most exacting tasks that a grower must perform. The aim is always to injure or kill the weeds while at the same time not causing any crop damage.

Once a grower has decided on the herbicide that is specifically labelled for use on his crops or in a particular landscape situation and has an exact knowledge of the weeds which are present, he is ready to apply an herbicide, that is tailor-made for the job.

Time of application

All herbicides have an optimum time for application. **Preplant** herbicides such as trifluralin (Treflan) are applied prior to the planting of the crop, while **preemergent** herbicides, such as diphenamid, oryzalen and oxadiazon (Enide, Surlan and Ronstar, resp.) are applied prior to the emergence of weeds. With nursery crops and in landscape situations we generally think of preemergent herbicides as being used on established crops prior to weed emergence. **Postemergent** herbicides, like paraquat and glyphosate (Roundup), are applied after weeds have emerged from the soil.

Most nurserymen and landscape contractors have seen numerous examples of correct and incorrect timing of herbicide applications. As an example, most nurserymen realize that in order to achieve successful weed control with dichlobenil (Casoron) it must be applied at temperatures

Continues on page 73