On the rebound

The economy of Houston, Texas has long been upset by the decline in that state's oil industry. But for Environmental Landscape Services, things are on the upswing.

"For the first time in a while, I feel good about business in our part of the world," says company president Charlie Racusin. "We're headed in a good direction. I feel comfortable and enthused, and have nothing but good to tell you. The opportunity for growth in past years was not as good as this year in Houston."

According to Racusin, profit margins are much more competitive than they were five or six years ago. "The people I'm selling to are also positive and not nitpicking as much."

Gregory Spencer of The Spencer Co., also located in Houston, believes the market size and desired quality of landscape management services continues to grow into the 1990s.

"In order for our industry to meet the challenge of the future," says Spencer, "it is imperative that we continue to train our personnel towards higher productivity and use the latest technology available to our industry."

"The recruitment, development and retention of experienced and educated employees at all levels of the company is a high priority for our industry."

Spencer, much like other landscape professionals, is aware of the continuing challenge the industry faces to find and retain a competent workforce.

The industry is aware of the problem, and fortunately, is doing something about it. The secret is to control events before they control you. Continues Spencer, "We compete not only within our industry for qualified personnel, but also with unrelated industries in the service sector. The quality of management, employee recognition, better benefits, company climate and opportunities for career growth are some of the factors which will have a bearing on the retention of good employees an increasingly scarce resource."

The labor question

Allan Curr says Wm. Vandergeest Landscape Care, Santa Ana, Calif., is in the enviable position of having to turn down more work.

"We've reached a size where I feel quite comfortable. The most difficult thing is being polite enough to turn down a client without them thinking you're being snooty," notes Curr. "We're sort of staying where we are in size for until I train more personnel."

Curr says, however, that labor retention problems remain.

TALLYING UP THE TOTALS

The following companies responding to our "Million Dollar Mowers" survey reported more than $1 million in mowing/management revenue in 1989.

1. Environmental Care, Inc., Calabases, CA — $1.8 million.
2. The Brickman Group, Jenkintown, PA — $2.2 million.
4. Stiles Landscape Service Co., Pompano Beach, FL — $1.4 million.
5. AAA Lawn Industries, Tucker, GA — $1.9 million.
7. The Spencer Co., Houston, TX — $1.4 million.
9. BGT Landscape Co., Inc., Mundelein, IL — $2.2 million.
10. Ruppert Landscape Co., Aston, MD — $2.2 million.
11. Southwest Landscape Industries, Tigard, OR — $2.2 million.
12. Landcare Industries, Tampa, FL — $3 million.
15. Grounds Management and Landscaping, Mitchellville, MD — $3.5 million.
16. Wm. Vandergeest Landscape Care, Santa Ana, Calif. — $3.9 million.
18. The Bruce Co., Racine, WI — $4.1 million.
20. American Landscape Maintenance, Canoga Park, CA — $4.2 million.
22. The Brickman Group, Jenkintown, PA — $4.5 million.
23. Environmental Landscape Services, Inc., Houston, TX — $4.6 million.
24. The Bruce Co., Racine, WI — $4.7 million.
25. Moon Landscaping, Yardley, PA — $4.8 million.
28. SKB Lawn Industries, Clarkston, GA — $5 million.
29. The Brickman Group, Jenkintown, PA — $5.2 million.
30. The Bruce Co., Racine, WI — $5.2 million.
31b. Tecza Brothers, Inc., Elgin, IL — $5.4 million.
32. Earth Tone Development, Houston, TX — $5.4 million.
33. SKB Lawn Industries, Clarkston, GA — $5.6 million.
34. The Bruce Co., Racine, WI — $5.7 million.
35. Moon Landscaping, Yardley, PA — $5.8 million.
36. The Brickman Group, Jenkintown, PA — $5.9 million.
37. SKB Lawn Industries, Clarkston, GA — $6 million.
38. The Brickman Group, Jenkintown, PA — $6.1 million.
39. SKB Lawn Industries, Clarkston, GA — $6.2 million.
40. The Brickman Group, Jenkintown, PA — $6.3 million.

OVER $1 MILLION, FIGURES NOT RELEASED:

Environmental Landscape Services, Inc., Houston, TX
KEI Enterprises, Cudahy, WI
Allen Keesen Landscape, Inc., Denver, CO
Minor's Lawn Care, Ft. Worth, TX
Northwest Landscape Industries, Tigard, OR
Proscape Co., Dallas, TX

APRIL 1990/LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT 31
To retain a good labor force in the 1990s companies will have to pay much higher wages to keep people on board.

"The primary (cause) is the pay scale in this industry," explains Curr. "I'm not saying you get better people if you throw money out there, but it would help. Maintenance is not a high paying industry in California.

"In order for an employee to live halfway decently in Southern California," says Curr, "and have more of an incentive for longer term commitment, first of all he needs more education and beginning base pay has to be around $8 an hour."

What do "Million Dollar Mowers" have in common? For some, success has been won through traditions of service excellence. Marketing skills, a dedicated work force and diversity of service to a large client base insures the success of others.

"Successful companies will have to have a complete understanding of the total costs of the business and reasonable profits required to meet the needs of the marketplace" — Gregory Spencer

small companies must adopt or continue to practice is preparedness and adaptability.

What's the secret?
The weather surely can't be expected to cooperate. Politically-motivated legislators will continue to put up roadblocks, and the economy can change in a matter of days. The dual challenge is to manage, contribute to or be ready for the outcomes of the behind-the-scenes politicking while trying to run a profitable business.

Sensitivity to the issues and smart business practices will make the '90s a harmonious, safe and profitable decade.

LM
Now, after years of exacting test reports, pre-commercial "225" comes to you as Classic, the elite, Category 1 Kentucky bluegrass.

Expect these outstanding characteristics in Classic Kentucky bluegrass.

YEAR 'ROUND QUALITY
Classic demonstrates high quality texture from early spring to winter throughout the traditional bluegrass belt.

EARLY STAND STRENGTH
Classic produces strong plants that withstand early growth abuse, demonstrates developmental strength in both irrigated and dryland conditions.

HIGH DENSITY
Test reports indicate Classic's ability to produce a highly dense stand and excellent percent of living ground cover all year long.

PEST RESISTANT
Classic demonstrates good resistance to leaf spot, crown rot and rust. Classic demonstrates resistance to stripe smut, snow mold, stem rust and Fusarium blight. Classic is tough.

BRIGHT, DEEP GREEN COLOR
Texture and color of Classic provide a handsome pleasing growth. Color is bright, deep green. Classic proves highly compatible in turf-seed blends. Classic is a sward of beauty.

UNIFORM & STABLE
Classic offers the genetic capability to remain true to the variety. Aberrant growth is extremely low. When you plant Classic, you get Classic.

EARLY GREEN-UP
Classic comes on strong in the spring with early green-up, retains its color well into the winter season.

Call or write your seed supplier. Ask for Classic facts.

PETERSON SEED COMPANY, INC.
P.O. BOX 346 SAVAGE, MN 55378
Circle No. 150 on Reader Inquiry Card
With virtually endless varieties of colorful woody ornamentals now available in nurseries, many landscapers are purposely creating Dyclomec-safe beauty spots such as the one above. Photos on the right show how Dyclomec can turn a fence line into a landscaping highlight.

How to improve your efficiency in managing landscape beauty spots

Nothing says as much about a landscaper’s expertise as the appearance of ornamental beds, fence lines, tree wells, etc. Learn how Dyclomec® Landscaping Herbicide can help keep these beauty spots weed-and-grass-free for considerably less money than you are now spending.

In recent years, the usage of Dyclomec has increased at an unprecedented rate as more and more landscapers have learned from direct experience what a labor-saving, cost-saving chemical tool it is.

And now, it is your turn to discover how you can use Dyclomec to keep problem areas such as fence lines, tree wells, ornamental beds, etc. free from weeds and grasses. Of course, you know how important this is, because the most neatly manicured turf and beautifully trimmed ornamentals are wasted if your landscaping highlights are spoiled by an ugly growth of weeds and grass.

Perhaps you’ve tried a contact herbicide only to find that the vegetation grows right back. Perhaps you’ve tried a flower-safe pre-emerge, only to find that it runs out of gas long before the season is over, and that its narrow spectrum misses the very weeds and grasses you need to control.

Broad-spectrum strength. In desperation you may have gone back to your string trimmer and a hoe.

But cheer up — because this is the year you discover Dyclomec.

Indeed Dyclomec’s active ingredient is unique in all the world. No other chemical is so versatile and so helpful to the landscaper.

It’s both post-emerge and pre-emerge; it controls both grasses and broadleaves, even such toughies as quackgrass and spurge; it controls both annuals and perennials; it has the broadest spectrum of any pre-emergent in the world; one treatment lasts all season and then totally biodegrades.

What is Dyclomec — how does it work?

The active ingredient in Dyclomec is dichlorobenzonitrile. We mill it into razor-thin crystals and incorporate it into a special granule that our researchers developed in 1985.

You simply spread the granules on any precise area you want to keep clean. You can put the granules down over existing weeds and grasses or you can put them down over
Schematic drawings show why Dyclomec works where conventional (flower-safe) pre-emergents fail.

Flower-safe pre-emergent herbicides in some instances have to be present in adequate strength before germination occurs. Such herbicides simply will not knock out weeds after they germinate.

Furthermore, these flower-safe pre-emergents are broken down by light and microbial action and thus begin to lose strength from the very first day they are applied.

Seeds, of course, can germinate almost anytime during the year, depending on the weather and the weed or grass species. Thus it is that many seeds can germinate past the efficiency period of the pre-emerge — or could have germinated before the pre-emerge is applied. It's a narrow window at best, and characteristically the spectrum of a pre-emerge that stops germination is relatively limited.

Of course, these flower-safe pre-emergents have no effect at all on existing weeds (that's why it's safe to spray them over flowers). Accordingly, to clean up a landscape beauty spot, it is necessary to kill existing vegetation with a contact herbicide. Or clean it out by hand.

Now ... take a minute to study the schematic drawings on this page that delineate the remarkable activity of Dyclomec ... then, as a professional, ask yourself if you shouldn't at least give Dyclomec a trial.

Dyclomec granules are spread in areas you wish to keep clean from weeds and grasses. It is all right to spread them over existing vegetation if you want to kill it. Water moves the active ingredient into the top 2 or 3 inches of the soil, where it forms a vapor barrier that kills meristematic tissue.

Dyclomec kills all existing weeds and grasses because their tender roots are in the vapor barrier. Even such toughies as quackgrass, crabgrass, Bermudagrass, spurge, oxalis and ground ivy will die when their roots are exposed to the Dyclomec vapor barrier, resulting in beautifully weed-free grounds all season long.

Perennial weeds die when new growth invades vapor barrier.

Perennials coming out of dormancy die when their new sprouts hit the barrier. Likewise, creeping grasses like Bermuda are pruned back when they try to invade the vapor barrier. So long as the Dyclomec vapor barrier is present, you can be sure that the area is going to be free of weeds and grasses.

Woody ornamentals safely rooted below vapor barrier are not affected.

Blacktop cart paths that are underlaid with Dyclomec will not have weeds poking through their surface nor shallow roots invading from below and threatening to buckle the blacktop. Of course, this is also true of areas that are covered with gravel or pebbles, or even cobblestones or bricks.

And here's the really good news! It lasts all season long, and then totally biodegrades.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please call our Sales Service Department. Call toll-free, 1-800-821-7925.

Dyclomec® and Barrier® are registered trademarks of PBI/Gordon Corporation.
The key element to keep in mind when preparing to control insects in Southern turf has been and will continue to be “strategy.”

Strategy implies the use of knowledge, planning and skillful management in getting the better of one’s adversaries. That’s exactly what’s taking place among Southern turf managers who are streamlining insect control efforts and treatment costs.

An increased demand for quality turf, coupled with the wide variety of Southern turf insect pests, has created the potential for outrageously expensive control efforts. These increased costs, coupled with today’s heightened awareness of environmental protection, have meant developing and adopting new approaches to both old and new insect problems.

An affordable, effective control strategy will use available pesticide information to select and benefit from today’s biological, cultural and chemical tools.

Problem insects

Although mole crickets and fire ants remain the most expensive turf insects to control, grub problems continue to become more widespread throughout the Southeast. Spittlebugs, once a coastal problem, now damage turf in most areas of the Gulf States and Georgia.

In 1989, tropical sod webworms, usually found only in central and south Florida, were reported by lawn care professionals in areas along the Gulf Coast.

Annual pests in Florida, southern Georgia and the southern half of the mid-Gulf states, mole crickets have made their way into the Carolinas and

T

INSECT CONTROL

Strategy through streamlining is keeping turf managers ahead of the pests in southern climates.

by Patricia P. Cobb, Ph.D., Auburn University

INSECT CONTROL CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Warm-Season*</th>
<th>Late Winter (Mar)</th>
<th>Spring (Apr-May)</th>
<th>Summer (June-Aug)</th>
<th>Fall (Sept-Oct)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Southern) Chinch Bugs</td>
<td>Replace susceptible turf with resistant or non-host varieties. If overwintered adults become active treat in March with diazinon (4 lb Al/Acre), Dursban® (1 lb Al/Acre), Triumph® (1 lb Al/Acre), or Oftano® (2 lb Al/Acre).</td>
<td>Control thatch as recommended. Mid-April to May treatments prevent or population buildup. Treatments include those listed for late winter.</td>
<td>Damage limited to sunny rather than shady areas spot or area treat damaged grass. Treatment for existing population include those listed for late winter.</td>
<td>Late summer applications usually make fall treatments unnecessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billbugs</td>
<td>Treatment can be done now if adults are active. Diazinon® (4 lb Al/Acre), Dursban® (1 lb Al/Acre), Oftano® (2 lb Al/Acre), or Triumph® (1 lb Al/Acre), may be used.</td>
<td>Treat adults when they become active as recommended for late winter.</td>
<td>Treat billbug grubs with grub rates of Turcam®, Mocap® SG, Triumph® (if not used earlier), or diazinon®.</td>
<td>Billbug grub infestations discovered now may be more difficult to control.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grubs</td>
<td>Control with insecticides usually does not extend to new generation in late July and August. Late March-early April treatments are only effective before pupation occurs. Treatment may include Turcam® (2-4 lb Al/Acre), diazinon® (4 lb Al/Acre), Triumph® (2 lb Al/Acre), or Mocap® (5 lb Al/Acre). Late summer treatments may still be required if reinfestation occurs.</td>
<td>New generation grubs present by late July-mid August can be controlled with Turcam® (2 lb Al/Acre), diazinon® (4 lb Al/Acre), Triumph® (2 lb Al/Acre), or Mocap® (5 lb Al/Acre).</td>
<td>Treatments are effective most years through Sept. Proxol® (5 lb Al/Acre), or Triumph® (2 lb Al/Acre) are effective for late-season control.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sod Webworm</td>
<td>Treatment is not appropriate at this time.</td>
<td>Warm season grasses out-grow moderate damage. Diazinon® (4 lb Al/Acre), Dursban® (1 lb Al/Acre), Proxol® (6 lb Al/Acre), Orthene® (1 lb Al/Acre), or Dipel® may be used when larvae are present.</td>
<td>Treat when larvae are present or two weeks after peak moth flight. Treatments include those listed for spring.</td>
<td>Treatment in early Sept. may reduce overwintering population.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutworms</td>
<td>Treatment is not appropriate at this time.</td>
<td>Apply insecticides late afternoon and do not irrigate immediately unless specified on label. Treatments include Dursban® (1 lb Al/Acre), Proxol® (6-8 lb Al/Acre), or Orthene® (2-4 lb Al/Acre).</td>
<td>In the South cutworms are usually a spring problem. If summer infestations occur treat as directed for spring.</td>
<td>Treatment usually not necessary at this time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A STRONG CASE AGAINST BOBCAT.

When you think skid steer loaders, you probably think Bobcat. But let's push them aside for a moment. And discuss Case Uni-Loader® skid steers. Which just happen to outdo the competition in areas like power, performance and productivity.

Compare, for instance, the new Case 1840 to its counterpart, the Bobcat 743. The 1840 turns out 50 net horsepower to the Bobcat's 36. 1350 pounds of lift capacity to their 1300. And the Case engine displaces 239 cubic inches to their 106. Simply stated, the Case 1840 is the most powerful unit in its class.

Now, put the Case 1845C up against the comparable Bobcat 843. Our 56 net horsepower to their 54. And our 239 cubic inches of engine displacement to their 169. Which also makes the 1845C the most powerful unit in its class.

All this, when added to simple, construction-type hand controls, heavy-duty mainframes and a long list of versatile attachments, makes a compelling case for Case Uni-Loader skid steers.

So contact your nearest Case Dealer to see the powerful Uni-Loader family in action. After all, you just might discover that Bobcat is no longer in the picture.

POWER TO GET THE JOB DONE.
eastern Texas. Control costs have increased as the tawny mole cricket, one of the pest species, moved north and west.

The cost of controlling mole crickets in Florida usually exceeds $40 million annually. Florida turf managers, in cooperation with University of Florida scientists, have accelerated biological control efforts in a big way.

**Nematodes to the rescue**

Parasitic nematodes specific to mole crickets have been released at sites selected throughout the state. Evidence of mole cricket population suppression by these parasites has kindled hope for an effective biological tool for long range control of the Southeast’s most damaging turf pests.

A two-year project just concluded in Alabama verified the importance of “knowing the pest” in development of control strategies for mole crickets. Our project involved monitoring pest populations by soap flushing, mapping areas of overwintered mole cricket activity in early April, and treating only mapped areas later for the newly-hatching generation. Mapping in April accounted both years for 90 percent or more of the total area damaged by mole crickets through the whole season.

**Timed applications**

Tying treatment dates to first observable hatch—before damage became visible—resulted in effective control with lower than label rates of some insecticides. Thus, the combination of mapping and monitoring seed labor and insecticide costs resulted in more effective control.

Dr. Leon Stacey, turf consultant in Georgia, has also reported success with mole cricket mapping.

Heavy spring rains in 1989 brought an end to the drought in many areas, but provided a perfect environment for two-lined spittlebug development. Once a coastal problem, spittlebugs are now a major lawn problem in cities such as Atlanta and Birmingham—particularly in “wet” seasons.

Management practices, especially dethatching, play a major role in effective control of this pest, yet insecticides are still the backbone of our control efforts.

**Newer and safer**

New and safer formulations of existing products can be expected. Dustless granular insecticides, such as a new granular Mocap from Rhone-Poulenc, will be the result of new formulation technology.

New formulations of Triumph from Ciba-Geigy and fonofos from ICI are expected this year. Registration of new pyrethrins for turf insect control is also expected.

High pressure liquid injection of insecticides (1500 to 2000 psi) continues to be of interest to turf managers and researchers. This system, developed by Cross Equipment Co. of Albany, Georgia, injects material without slicing as nozzles move over the turf surface.

Advantages of this system include effective control of mole crickets and grubs with lower-than-label rates of certain insecticides and reduced surface residues. (In some states special labeling is required for insecticide application by high pressure injection equipment).

Southern turf in many areas now includes a variety of traditionally cool-season fescues and ryes. Those varieties that are endophyte-containing (plant within a plant) have long been known to be less damaged by surface-feeding insects.

Dr. Dan Potter of the University of Kentucky, reports results of tests in which certain endophyte-bearing grasses were less damaged by grubs.

During the past decade, southern turf insect problems have become more severe. To what extent the loss of organochlorine insecticides, increased turf quality, expanded pest ranges or the probable combination of factors is responsible, we can not say with certainty. What we can say for sure is that turf professionals have responded positively.

**Continued restrictions**

Restrictions on pesticides and pesticide use, and increased product
For Getting Rid of Grubs in Record Time, There's Nothing Faster Than Dylox.

DYLOX* insecticide stops grubs in their tracks. Fast. Usually in less than 48 hours.

And for the record, nothing on the market works better or faster.

DYLOX* insecticide stops grubs in their tracks. Fast. Usually in less than 48 hours. And for the record, nothing on the market works better or faster.
costs have resulted in our examining our options more closely. Basic pest information has taken on new meaning as we learn more about how to manipulate cultural practices to disrupt pest life cycles.

New technology in product formulations, production of biological control agents, and application methods promises greater applicator and environmental safety.

In summary, Southern turf managers have and are meeting the challenge of cost-effective insect pest control by increasing their knowledge and expertise, supporting research and extension efforts, and through skillful planning.

In other words, it's the same important basic message: (1) Know all you can about the pest; (2) Know your control options; (3) Develop your strategy and time efforts effectively, considering long range as well as immediate effects.

The general information offered here is intended to assist the Southern turf manager with developing control strategies for common insect pests.

**SPRING**
**(April-May)**

Early April treatments of chinch bug and billbug adults may eliminate egg layers and reduce damage later in the season. Chinch bug treatments in May reduce the first nymphal (immature) population that is responsible for June damage.

Turf areas that don’t “green up” need to be checked for grubs. If grubs are not in the pupa stage, treatment can be done, but may have to be repeated later in the summer if re-infestation occurs.

Mole cricket hatching begins in May in most areas. Infested turf should be monitored weekly with soap flushes (2 lbs. liquid dishwashing soap in 1 gal. water) in order to determine when first hatch occurs. Be sure to monitor late or early in the day, then flush area with plain water to avoid excessive turf “scalding” by the detergent.

Treatments to reduce spring tunneling are considered optional in most areas.

Sod webworm caterpillars that overwintered in turf usually pupate and moths emerge in April. Larvae usually hatch about two weeks after moth flights peak. Treatments to infested turf two to three weeks after moth flights peak can eliminate damage.

Cutworm moths often lay their eggs in aerification holes on golf greens in the spring. Larvae hatch and feed at night. Apply insecticides late in the day, and irrigate after treatment only if specified by the label.

Fire ants establish new colonies after rain on warm spring days. During this time fire ants are active on and near the soil surface. New mounds may not be visible above the turf for several days. Infested turf of an acre or more can be broadcast-treated with a fire ant bait.

Allow a week for foraging workers to pick up bait particles, then treat all visible mounds with a contact insecticide to eliminate workers. Treat mounds as re-infestation occurs.

This plan is usually less labor-intensive than simply mound-treating all season, and often results in less pesticide usage.

Ground pearl nymphs hatch during the spring, although treatment has not been shown to be effective. Healthy turf, including disease and nematode control, are important in preventing further damage.

Spittlebugs, once only a coastal problem, now damage turf in most areas of the Gulf states and Georgia. Nymph damage will first appear in June or July, according to Auburn’s Dr. Pat Cobb.