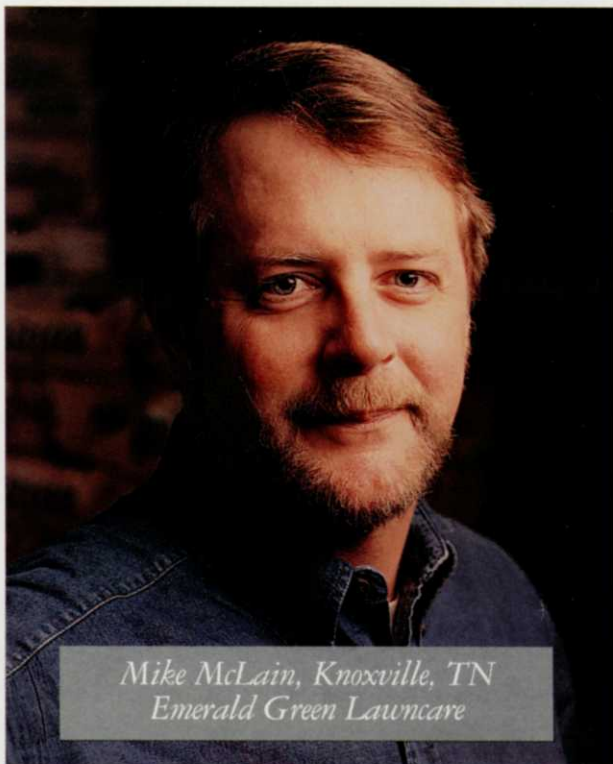


*Michael Woody, Bridgewater, NJ
Natural Green Lawncare*

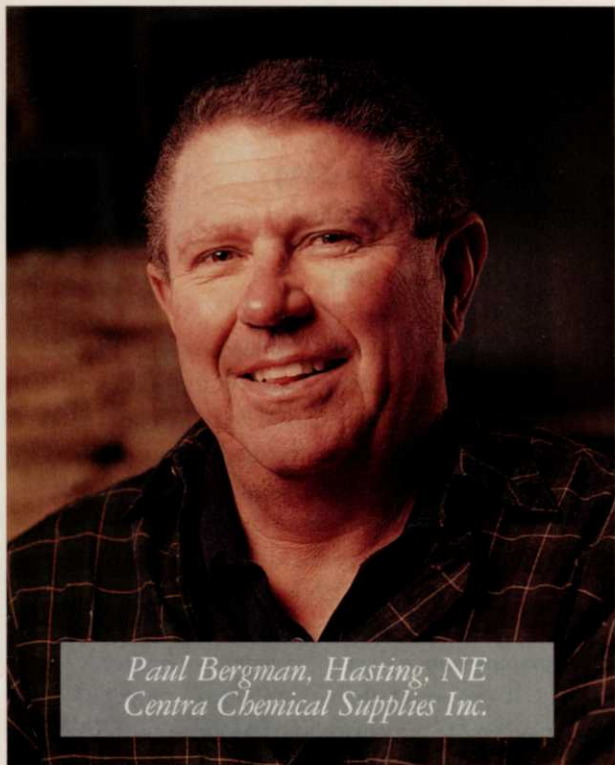


*Mike McLain, Knoxville, TN
Emerald Green Lawncare*

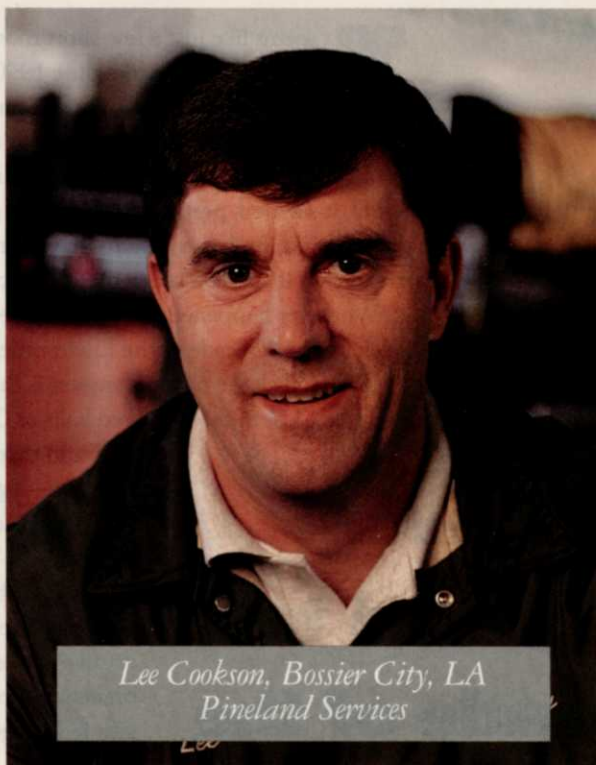
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It seems like just a few short months ago that we were heralding the 1990s as the "Decade of the Environment" on these pages. In reality, it was three or four years ago that every article, every column we wrote, it seemed, pertained to how the green industry could implement more "environmentally-friendly" golf and landscape maintenance.

Whatever happened, we asked ourselves last week, to the "Decade of the Environment," then?

Well, folks...the obvious answer is that it got lost. It got lost in the hallowed halls of Congress

first, and then—most recently—it got lost in the White House during the great "Battle for the Budget" being waged between the executive and legislative branches of our sluggish federal government.

We asked ourselves whether the "Decade of the Environment" will ever be re-discovered by our leaders. And, remembering a *USA Today* article, we thought probably

not—at least not into the foreseeable future.

That article to which I refer ran on the front page of the January 8th issue. It listed the top 15 concerns of the voting public.

Nowhere among those concerns—indeed, nowhere in the entire lengthy article—was the environment ever mentioned.

To refresh your memory, here are the public's top concerns as we begin 1996, and what percentage voiced them, according to the *USA Today*/Gallup poll:

- 1) quality of public education (67%)
- 2) crime (66%)
- 3) the economy (64%)
- 4) jobs (63%)
- 4) availability of health coverage (63%)
- 4) cost of health care (63%)

- 7) budget deficit (58%)
- 7) drug abuse (58%)
- 7) financial security for retirees (58%)
- 10) Medicare (55%)
- 10) moral values (55%)
- 12) poverty (51%)
- 12) federal taxes (51%)
- 14) welfare (49%)
- 15) college costs (43%)

Latest word out of Washington seems to indicate that, if the Republicans win the budget battle, the EPA will face cuts of \$1 billion, meaning up to 50 percent less enforcement of its rules and regulations. Even if Pres. Clinton and his liberal cronies get their way about the budget, the EPA will reportedly face some cuts.

Either way, the EPA is gearing its internal organization to become more of an information and training source than an enforcement agency.

It's no secret, then, that the government is planning to put environmental issues on the backburner because of a change in public priorities.

This is good news for the green industry, because it doesn't appear that you will be subject to any new reporting requirements in the near future. You also probably won't face as many possible inspections.

But this turn of events could also be bad news for the green industry, if you let it be.

Because from now on, the government won't be looking over your shoulder and holding your hands at every juncture. Which means that the safety of the environment now rests on your shoulders alone.

Even though our politicians have lost the concept of the "Decade of the Environment," the green industry still has the power to keep it alive.

So please continue to watch what you're doing to the environment. Watch how you're doing it. And, when you're given this new responsibility, please don't take undue advantage it.

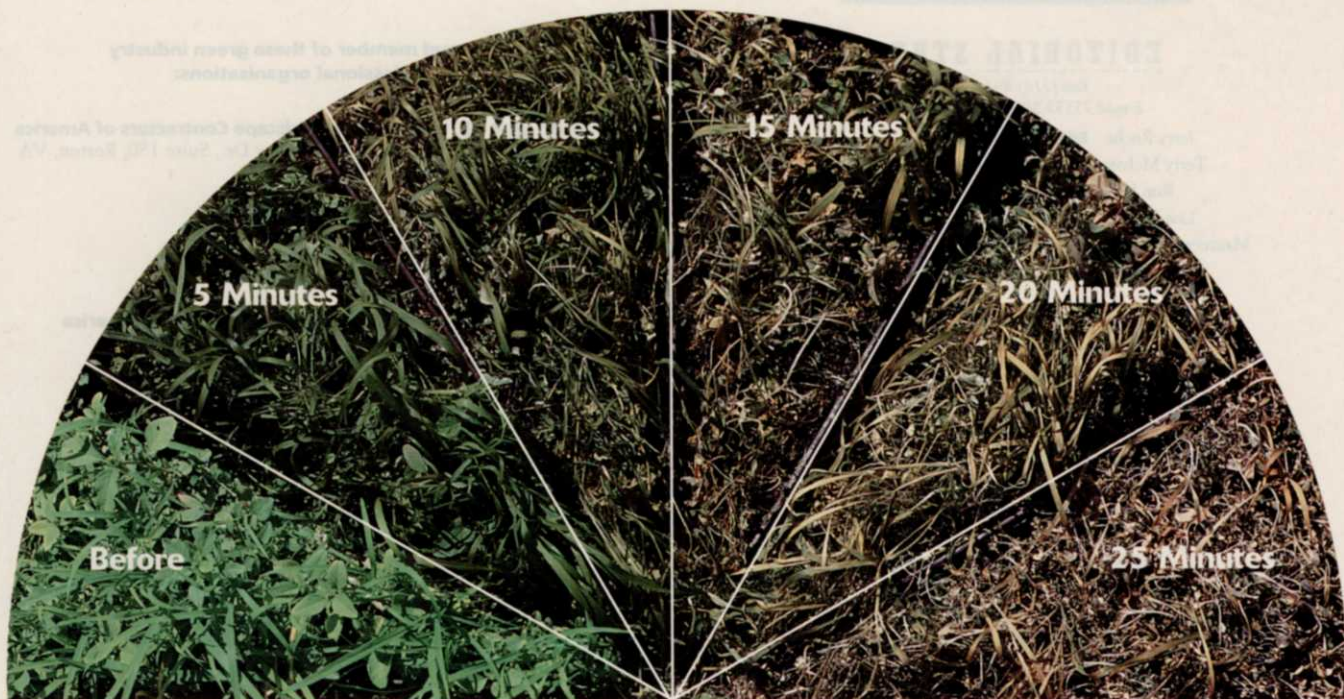
Or—just as sure as the sun will rise tomorrow morning—"the environment" will again leap to the top of public concerns and the government will slowly begin anew taking away our privileges, one by one. **LM**

What ever happened to 'Decade of the Environment?'



Jerry Roche

JERRY ROCHE
Editor-in-Chief



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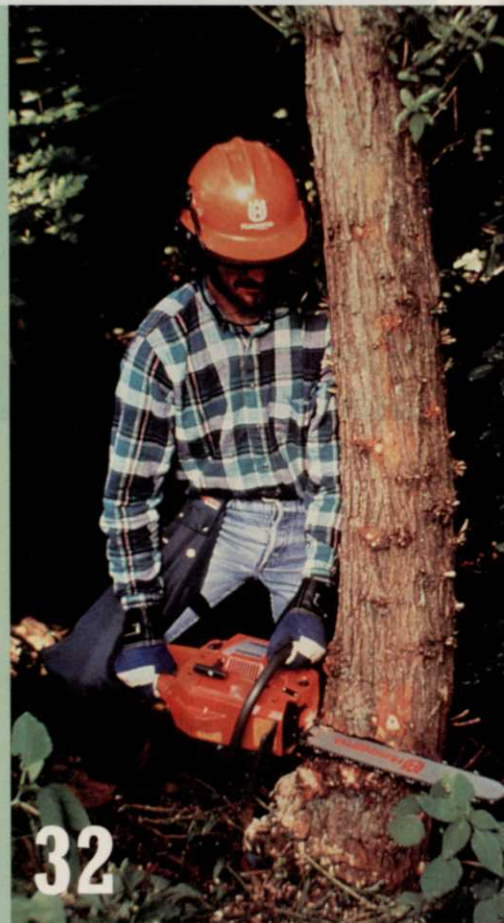
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Perennial weeds

We have had problems managing perennial weeds—such as poison ivy—by using Roundup herbicide. We apply Roundup in the spring, when other weeds and poison ivy begin to grow actively. We are not quite happy with the results. Is there something we are doing wrong, or is there a different way or time of the year to manage perennial weeds?

—SOUTH CAROLINA

People who have difficulty managing perennial weeds tend to question product performance. But problems may be related to: improper mixing rate, application coverage, equipment malfunctioning, equipment without a pressure regulator or flow meter to manage the flow rate, and proper timing. Among these, proper timing is the most critical factor.

Our experience suggests that late-summer or early fall application is better than a spring application to control poison ivy. Reports from the Georgia Extension Service indicate that Clemson University scientists found 20 percent control of poison ivy from May applications, 87 percent control from July applications, and 98 percent control from an August application. They also found similar results with other hard-to-control weeds, including yellow nutsedge.

It appears that timing may be your major problem. Mixing rates, application units and coverage also should be evaluated before your next application.

Fungus on mowers

Are there any solutions that can be applied to the undersides of lawn mowers to prevent fungus from building up? We scrape them clean every week, however still see a fungus buildup from wet grass.

—VIA E-MAIL

The fungal growth—moldy in appearance, with a decaying odor—is caused by saprophytes. These secondary fungi grown on dead and decaying organic matter like grass clippings. These saprophytes help the decomposition process. Generally, they are not considered to be harmful. However, some people may be allergic to the spores produced by these fungi. Therefore, while cleaning mower decks, it is a good idea for allergy-sensitive people to wear a dust mask to avoid inhaling fungal spores.

Maintain good sanitation, preferably cleaning the deck every day. Scrape off grass clippings and clean the mowers by using a water hose. In addition to this, you might also consider scrubbing with rubbing alcohol, diluted bleach (1 part bleach to 9 parts water) to kill the saprophyte fungal growth. Bleach mixtures are used to clean pots in greenhouses as well as disinfecting pruning tools. Bleach solution should remain on the mower deck surface for 10 minutes for better results. The solution should be thoroughly rinsed off to minimize corrosion. You can also try soaps or detergents like Comet or Ajax to reduce the saprophyte build-up.

Your best option is to mow when the turf is dry and clean the mower as often as possible with water (when feasible, use alcohol or Clorox) to prevent fungal growth build-up.

Slowing growth

Are there any products that we can use on hedge plants to slow their growth and reduce the need for pruning cycles? We are interested in managing the growth of plants like privet or honeysuckles.

—PENNSYLVANIA

Yes, there are a few products in the market which are labeled as plant growth regulators and should meet your needs. Such products are: Atrimmec, Embark 2-S, Trim-Cut ornamental growth regulator from PBI/Gordon Corp., and Maintain CF 125 from Uniroyal Co.

Most of the above-mentioned labels cover plants mostly from the southern or western plants of the United States. Therefore, refer to each label and be sure the specific plant or hedge is mentioned.

As a general rule, plant growth regulators are applied onto plants several days after they have been pruned. After treatment, these products slow growth from six to eight weeks.

As always, read and follow label specifications for best results. **LM**



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*Manager of Research and
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 Kent, Ohio*

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American workers find it difficult to get away from job

Those vacationers you see in Las Vegas and Palm Springs lounging by the pool with a cellular phone in hand aren't calling out for pizza, according to a survey by Steelcase, Inc. They're talking to their employer, or their employees or—in some cases—their clients. In other words, they're trying to have

some fun while still maintaining a close tie to their workplace.

Business before pleasure? With our modern system of communications, workaholics are finding it easier and easier to work and play at the same time.

According to the Steelcase survey, most vacationers con-

duct work-related activities at some point in their vacation.

The activities conducted range from reading work-

related material to handling staff problems via phone.

Here are results of the survey:

WORK-RELATED ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED DURING VACATION, 1995

Work-related reading	40%
Checking in with supervisor	33%
Paperwork	28%
Handling client relations	26%
Learning new job skills	18%
Handling staff problems	18%

Commercial turf care equipment shipments are down in 1995

Even though the green industry is apparently doing more mowing than ever before, shipments of commercial walk-behind mowers and other equipment have taken a bit of a dip in 1995.

Shipping estimates for model year 1995 (Sept. 1, 1994 through Aug. 31, 1995) for the walk-behinds decreased six percent from 104,800 in 1994 to 98,300 in 1995.

However, shipments of commercial riding units showed a very slight increase, from 44,700 in 1994 to 44,800 in 1995.

These estimates by the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute, Old Town Alexandria, Va., represent shipments destined to U.S. markets only.

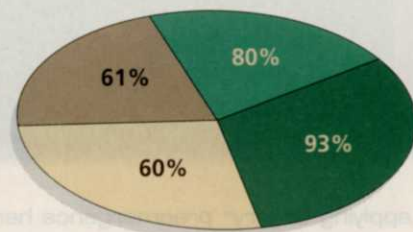
Overall, consumer products included, total shipments are estimated as somewhat more than 7.9 million, an increase of two percent over 1994.

In the near future, OPEI will provide a forecast of riding and intermediate walk-behind commercial unit shipments.

Violence in the workplace still a concern of employers

Forty-three percent of businesses surveyed by the International Facility Management Association reported a "violent incident" in the workplace in 1994, making such violence a continuing concern.

Most businesses offer an employee assistance program to prevent further such outbreaks while many simply control building access. Here are some preventive measures that employers are taking to quell the violence, according to the survey:



- Employee assistance programs
- Controlled building access
- Outplacement for displaced persons
- Crisis management programs

SOURCE: OUTDOOR POWER EQUIPMENT INSTITUTE, INC.

ANNUAL OUTDOOR POWER EQUIPMENT SHIPMENT ESTIMATES

	1995	1994	Change
Commercial walk-behind rotaries	98,300	104,800	-6%
All walk-behind rotary mowers	5,950,000	6,030,000	-1%
All riding mowers	1,644,000	1,452,000	+13%
Commercial riding units	44,800	44,700	0%
Riding garden tractors	226,000	189,000	+20%
Front-engine lawn tractors	1,250,000	1,086,000	+15%
Rear-engine riding mowers	168,000	177,000	-5%
Walk-behind rotary tillers	350,000	315,000	+11%