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landscape maintenance and irrigation and water management. Specialties include tree preservation, Colorscaping™, landscape lighting and hardscape construction.

**Trucks:** Fleet arsenal includes 24 cars, 98 trucks (S-10s to Tandem), 32 tractors (Kubota, John Deere, Ford, New Holland), 35 equipment trailers (four enclosed) and 503 small engine units. "We have a truck that's 25 years old and has over 250,000 miles on it, and another truck with over 300,000 miles. A good preventive maintenance program with regular oil changes and wheel alignments to prevent premature tire wear is key to their longevity. Also, our trucks are like rolling billboards, so we always make sure they're kept clean and shiny."

**Favorite features:** Automatic transmission, tool boxes and sideboards are must-have features.

**Finance method:** Vehicles are purchased and then leased back to the company.

**Dream truck:** Four-door, heavy-duty, low-profile truck with lots of crew space.

### MEDIUM CONTRACTOR

**Name:** Rich Rivera  
**Title:** Grounds Superintendent  
**Company:** Joliet Jr. College  
**Location:** Joliet, IL

**2000 revenues:** n/a

**Business mix:** Through a work order system, the Grounds Department provides many services from mowing and trimming to snow and ice removal to blacktopping and striping.

**Employees:** Five full-time, five-part time and nine student assistant groundskeepers.



**Company profile:** America's oldest public community college established in 1901, Joliet's main campus is nestled on a 400-acre scenic tract of land which embraces two 80-acre farm fields, a lake, an 11-acre arboretum, three miles of nature trails, rows of 200-year-old oak trees, a natural prairie area, seven acres of athletic fields and 10 tennis courts. Of those 400 acres, about 108 is devoted to turf, plant beds and landscape maintenance areas. His crew also maintains two other Joliet Jr. College branches in Romeoville and downtown Joliet.

**Trucks:** "We use a 1989 3/4-ton Chevy pickup with 1,000-lb. liftgate/towing package and snow removal and four-wheel drive capabilities; two 1993 one-ton Ford F350 pickups, one of which is equipped with liftgate/towing package and the other with a V-box spreader for the winter; 1996 one-ton Chevy pickup and 1999 GMC 3500 Series, both outfitted with liftgate/tow packages and snow plow. My oldest truck is a 1984 2-1/2-ton GMC series 5000 dump truck. We also run

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# Husqvarna

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two Cushman's. All my pickup trucks are diesels and my dump truck is gasoline-fueled."

**Favorite features:** "My liftgates are real back-savers. The dump bed on our new Cushman saves us time on the job. Automatic transmission is a must."

**Finance method:** Purchased based on budgetary constraints and a bid system.

**Dream truck:** "If cost was not an object, I'd love to have pickups with dump beds and a dump truck with automatic transmission and split rear axle with a nursery style bed."

### SMALL CONTRACTOR

**Name:** Ryan Hughes

**Title:** President

**Company:** Hughes Nursery, Inc.

**Location:** Odessa, FL

**Business mix:** Mostly commercial

**Employees:** 35

**Company profile:** Hughes Nursery, Inc. was established in 1972 as a family-owned landscape company. It was primarily involved in landscape, irrigation and sod installation, and now has expanded into other facets of the industry with divisions in lawn maintenance, grading and excavating, hardscaping, exterior lighting and waterscaping.

**Trucks:** Two Mack mini-wheelers, four Ford F-450's, one F-650, two F-250's, one F-350, four F-150's and two Ford Explorers.

**Favorite features:** "The most valuable truck we use today is the Ford F-650. It was custom built to accommodate our needs for large landscaping contracts. It also can carry a load that would normally require two trucks, and has a crew cab with seating capacity for seven, perfect for one crew. It's capable of hauling two pallets of mulch, 300 to 400 one-gallon plants, 8- to 10-ft. trees or palms and still has power to pull a 820 TCM loader. It gives us the ability to increase our bottom line because we can trans-

port more product, haul our equipment and transport our entire crew."

**Finance method:** "We always buy new vehicles. Cost considerations are based upon the task the truck will perform and the amount of anticipated use."

**Dream truck:** "One that didn't require any fuel to operate — a truck that could run on electric or solar energy would be fantastic. The increase in the cost of fuel over the last year has had a severe impact on our bottom line."



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# Top TRUCKS

BY VICKY POULSEN

**W**ho's got the best truck? We'll let you be the judge. As truck manufacturers continue to clamor to get their latest and greatest models to market, we invite you, our readers, to enter their inner sanctum by taking a peak at the hottest trends in the truck market today. Welcome to their world!

## Chevrolet-GMC

**Product:** W4500 and W5500 medium-duty crew cabs and WT5500 single-axle extended cab

### Best features:

- ▶ Duramax 7800 6-cyl. diesel engine with 200 hp at 2400 rpm and 441 lbs. per ft. of torque at 1500 rpm
- ▶ Vacuum/hydraulic with 4-channel ABS
- ▶ Greater maneuverability

**Product:** C-Series medium duty trucks — Classes 5-8

### Best features:

- ▶ New 2000/2400 Allison automatic transmissions
- ▶ Vortec 8100 MD V-8 gas engine (Cat 3126E diesel, 190 to 300 hp listed as an option)
- ▶ Four-wheel anti-lock hydraulic brakes

## Check out the hottest features on the hottest new trucks

- ▶ Front three-passenger bench with head restraints
  - ▶ Government Vehicle Weight Ratings (GVWR) range from 18,000 to 61,000 lbs.
- Product:** T-Series, tilt-cab medium duty trucks/Class 5 through lower end of Class 8
- Best features:**
- ▶ Available in single axle, tandem axles and LoPro models
  - ▶ Accommodates bodies up to 28 ft. and payloads up to 40,000 lbs.
  - ▶ Shorter lengths and tighter turn radius especially popular in congested areas

**Product:** GMC's Sierra 1500 HD (available in either 2WD or 4WD crew cab short box models)

### Best features:

- ▶ Vortec 6000 SFI V-8 engine
- ▶ Sunshade extender
- ▶ OnStar available on SLE
- ▶ 7-way to 4-way trailer adapter included with Z82 training package
- ▶ Fog lamps now included with SLT

**Product:** Chevrolet's Silverado 1500

**Best features:**

- ▶ Powered by Vortec 4300 SFI for a V-6 engine or a Vortec 4800 or 5300 SFI for V-8 engines
- ▶ Available in either automatic or manual transmission
- ▶ Air conditioning is standard on all trim levels
- ▶ Remote keyless entry available on base models

**Dodge**

**Product:** 2001 Dodge Ram (available in both two-wheel drive and four-wheel drive in regular cab, club cab and quad cab and various box sizes and payload capacities.)

**Best features:**

- ▶ The Ram quad cab features two rear-hinged doors in the back of the cab that serve as convenient access for people or a large storage area for gear
- ▶ Available in a wide range of Magnum V-6, V-8 and V-10 gasoline engines, along with the Cummins turbo diesel engine
- ▶ Four-speed automatic or five-speed manual transmission is available
- ▶ Dodge Magnum gas engines feature sequential multi-port fuel injection (SMPI) for immediate throttle response and a flat torque range that delivers load carrying power
- ▶ High-flow exhaust manifolds combine with tuned port and combustion chamber configurations for maximum horsepower

**Product:** 2001 Dodge Dakota quad cab

**Best features:**

- ▶ Four full-size doors with six-passenger seating and great towing and hauling capability
- ▶ Offers a range of engines with four Magnum engine choices. Two optional Magnum V-8s — the only two in the compact pickup segment — include the 230-hp 4.7-liter engine and the 250-hp 5.9-liter V-8. Can be coupled to a fully automatic, electronically controlled automatic transmission with a dual ratio second gear
- ▶ A 6700-lb. maximum towing capacity and 2,100-lb. maximum payload

**Product:** 2001 Dakota R/T compact pickup

**Best features:**

- ▶ Equipped with a 5.9-liter Magnum V-8 engine and a large-bore, free-flow exhaust that delivers increased engine performance
- ▶ The 250-hp engine is mated to a four-speed transmission and supported by

255/55x17-in. tires. The Dakota R/T is lowered one inch and features suspension tuning and front and rear stabilizer bars

**Ford**

**Product:** 2001 F-150 Supercrew

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**Best features:**

- ▶ SUV-sized cabin with four full size doors for up to six adults, with the added versatility of a pickup box
- ▶ An under-8,500-lb. (3,856 kg) gross vehicle weight (GVW) pickup truck with four full size doors and full rear passenger compartment
- ▶ Its foundation is the chassis of the 139-in. wheelbase SuperCab
- ▶ The pickup box measures 1.7 metres (5.5 ft.) long and is the same width at the wheel-houses as the rest of the F-150 lineup
- ▶ Offers a choice of two Triton V-8 engines, both of which meet federal Low Emission Vehicle (LEV) standards, combined with a proven F-Series 4-speed automatic transmission
- ▶ The 4.6-litre SOHC Triton V-8 delivers 220 hp at 4,500 rpm and 290 lb. ft. of torque at 3,250 rpm. The 5.4-litre SOHC Triton V-8 churns out 260 hp at 4,500 rpm with torque of 350 lb. ft. at 2,500 rpm
- ▶ Standard four-wheel anti-lock braking system (ABS)

**Product:** 2001 F-Series Super Duty trucks (250/350/450/550)

**Best features:**

- ▶ Super Duty F-350 DRW equipped with the 7.3L Power Stroke turbo diesel engine with 11,500 GVWR. The 7.3L Power Stroke turbo diesel engine has even more horsepower and torque this year
- ▶ All Super Duty F-Series pickups will be trailer-ready with a standard trailer towing package, and a 4-wheel Antilock Braking System (ABS) is standard on all trim levels
- ▶ Three different engines are available — the standard 5.4L SOHC Triton V-8 is rated at 260 hp and 350 lb.-ft. of torque; the 7.3L Power Stroke turbo diesel V-8 produces 250 hp (15 more than last year) and 505 lb.-ft. of torque with the automatic transmission,

and 275 hp and 520 lb.-ft. of torque when joined to a manual transmission; the 6.8L SOHC Triton V-10 puts out 310 hp and 425 lb.-ft. of torque

- ▶ A 5-speed manual overdrive transmission is standard with the gasoline-powered Super Duty F-Series and features wide ratio gearing to quickly reach maximum torque. A 6-speed manual overdrive transmission is standard on Super Duty F-Series trucks equipped with Ford's Power Stroke turbo diesel engine
- ▶ The optional 4-speed automatic transmission has an automatic tow-haul feature that adjusts shift patterns for hilly terrain, heavy tow loads and high altitude driving
- ▶ All Super Duty F-Series pickups are trailer-ready with the trailer tow package as standard equipment
- ▶ Super Duty F-350, F-450 and F-550 chassis cabs have the power trains to suit the diverse needs of commercial and governmental fleets

**Hino**

**Product:** FB medium-duty Class 5 truck

**Best features:**

- ▶ An 11,000-lb. body and payload capacity
- ▶ It can be specked as a flatbed, with stake beds or with a small dump body
- ▶ Powered by a turbo intercooled, four-valve overhead cam engine and driven through a five-speed direct drive transmission, or optional four-speed automatic
- ▶ Its cab-over design makes driving in tight residential areas easy
- ▶ Cab features an enlarged interior with room for three people
- ▶ A six-way adjustable air-ride driver's seat with improved support on a chassis that is supported by long, taper-leaf springs



**FB medium-duty Class 5 truck**

**Product:** Utility Service Van (USV)

**Best features:**

- ▶ Designed for the business that needs a stand-up work area and maximum storage space for tools and equipment
- ▶ Spacious interior and exterior compartments supply abundant storage for equipment and supplies and are quickly accessible with the walk-through cab design
- ▶ A large, open cargo space provides extra hauling room and doubles as a covered work center.
- ▶ Up to 65% more storage space than a conventional van and up to two tons of payload capacity.

**Product:** Grand Challenger

**Best features:**

- ▶ Body is constructed with galvanized steel and designed to match the style of your truck cab
- ▶ Contoured sides, concealed hinges, a flush tailgate, and fuel fill doors
- ▶ Keyed alike locks, double panel steel doors, and weather-tight seals
- ▶ Adjustable shelves and material trays

**Mitsubishi Fuso**

**Product:** 2002 FE-SP with crew cab

**Best features:**

- ▶ Hauls seven people to a job site with its new 175-hp engine
- ▶ Can handle any application with 14,500-lbs. GVWR

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