The conventional wisdom on grub control is shifting from a curative to a preventive approach. Fortunately, MACH 2 Turf Insecticide offers effective preventive grub control with a powerful curative component as well.

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Grand Rapids, MI; 800/879-6652; www.mnla.org

17-19 WALP Retreat / Coeur d'Alene, ID; 800/833-2186

17-19 Nursery/Landscape Expo / Dallas, TX; 512/280-5182; www.txnla.org

17-19 ALCA Design/Build Workshop / Atlanta, GA; 800/395-2522

18 Certified Landscape Technician Exam / Joliet, IL; Sponsored by the Illinois Landscape Contractors Association; 630/472-2851

19-25 International Garden Centre Tour / New York/Baltimore; 202/789-5980, x3010

21 Cornell University Field Day / Ithaca, NY; 800/873-8873

22 Trees and Utilities Seminar / Alexandria, LA; 888/448-7337

24-26 Farwest Show and Ornamentals Northwest Seminars / Portland, OR; 800/342-6401; www.nurseryguide.com

25 Landscape Expo / Alberta, Canada; 780/489-1991

September

5-8 42nd Western Region Annual Meeting of the International Plant Propagators' Society / Seattle, WA; 360/687-5842

9-11 ANLA Legislative Conference / Washington, DC; www.anla.org

11-12 MFPA Annual Summer Educational Meeting / Walled Lake, MI; 517/482-5530

12 Hampton Roads Agricultural Research and Extension Center Annual Field Day / Virginia Beach, VA; 757/363-3906

13 Southwest Palm Seminar Yorba Linda, CA; Sponsored by California State University; 909/880-5977

13-14 Southwest Horticultural Trade Show & Conference / Phoenix, AZ; 480/966-1610; www.azna.org
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Circle No. 107 on Reader Inquiry Card
His business runs him

Which is worse: too little work or too much? I suspect most of you think not having enough is worse, and you're right — it's horrible to scramble for business. In fact, it's a direct cause of many sorry practices:

- low-balling to "buy" business (and usually, unprofitable work).
- taking jobs outside your core business (construction, if you do maintenance, for example). This wreaks havoc on your costs, systems and customer or supplier relationships.
- accepting jobs that are too big but promise lots of money. These usually escalate into a nightmare of surprising costs, stresses and schedule crunches.
- adding new services unrelated to landscape. These may compound your operating problems.
- entering a new niche without understanding it, like adding a new branch or jumping from residential to commercial. You may be in for nasty cost, competition and operating surprises.

There's probably a direct correlation between the rate that cash flow ebbs away and the number of mistakes contractors make to correct it. In many cases, those quick solutions become long-lasting headaches.

But his problem is that his business is running him, he's working seven days most weeks, and he's burning out as fast as a Fourth of July firecracker.

Have you over-extended yourself? You may be doing it to "keep the business running," and, of course, it's great when the money keeps rolling in.

But ask yourself if you can do this more simply, more profitably and more enjoyably. You can, if you focus. Working yourself to a frazzle is not the best lifestyle, especially if you want to be creative and profitable. If the goal of a business is to be an organization doing good work and sustaining itself for the long haul, is this how it's done?

K.I.S.S.

If you're over-extended, force yourself to take a few days to regroup. Discover what you do best and how you can be profitable at that one thing. Most landscape organizations do not need 15 different services to maintain themselves — one or two (done well) suffices very well.

Find your core strength, then find how to get professional help to make it profitable. Local government and industry organizations offer lots of free advice, or you can pay accountants, attorneys and consultants for more specific help.

Do yourself a favor and simplify your operations. Get help making those few good things work. You'll be surprised at how satisfying that can be.

Contact Sue at 440/891-2729 or e-mail at sgibson@advanstar.com

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