

Leading Turf Equipment Company Is Opening Up Communications Within The Industry

(TAMPA, Florida, November 12, 1984—) DeBRA Turf and Industrial Equipment Company, the industry's leading equipment distributor, has become involved in a series of programs aimed at opening up communications between manufacturers, distributors, customers and students in the turf industry.

"No longer can an equipment dealer just sell equipment to customers and expect those customers to be satisfied," said M.J. McLaughlin, general manager of the Tampa office of DeBRA. "Today, dealers have to understand customer's requirements in order to serve them properly."

And this understanding works two ways according to McLaughlin. "We not only have to learn about our customer's needs and problems, they need to learn from us as well.

"In the past, equipment was far more simple than today. Now machinery has become very specialized and complicated," reported McLaughlin. "It is necessary to educate our customers on this new machinery as well as educate ourselves on what problems this new equipment can present."

In order to increase communications between themselves and their customers, DeBRA is presently involved in several turf seminar programs.

A recent in-house service seminar in Tampa attracted more than 70 people according to McLaughlin.

"This is one way we can make purchasers more aware of what machinery is available and the proper use and servicing of that equipment. By making them more familiar with the equipment, we can ensure they choose the right machinery for their needs and help them avoid problems which might lead to unnecessary repairs."

Those in attendance heard talks on repair techniques, the proper use of turf machinery and equipment maintenance by personnel from DeBRA and Jacobsen, the world leading manufacturer in turf machinery. Tom Jochimsen, one of Jacobsen's leading service experts, was the featured speaker.

Hands on experience was also offered with access to newly introduced machinery so that participants could take a look at state-of-the-art turf maintenance equipment.

Plans are being made to hold a similar seminar in the Hollywood office which should attract nearly 200 participants.

DeBRA has also started a program in which they invite a customer to speak to the firm's employees on particular problems faced in the field.

"We have invited golf course superintendents and other professionals to speak to our employees about what difficulties they run into when maintaining their properties," said McLaughlin. "By allowing our people to hear what problems customers have directly from the customers themselves, our employees will have a better understanding of how they can assist buyers," he continued.

One final program in which DeBRA is involved is the Annual Field Day and Dinner for seniors at Lake City Community College. We've been involved with the field day for nearly 10 years and look forward to many more.

The annual event, geared to those students in the turf program at the Community College, features equipment and representatives from co-sponsor Jacobsen Manufacturing Company. This allows students to see and learn about the latest turf machinery. A dinner in honor of the students is held the night before the field day.

"The students seem really pleased with the chance to see the equipment and talk to professionals from the industry," said McLaughlin. "It's a definite advantage for the seniors who are about to start their careers in this profession. We are proud to help them in this way.

"It's a definite advantage to the industry as a whole to create channels of communication within the profession," concluded McLaughlin. "We are pleased with our success and will continue our programs as long as they can be of use." ■

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