

# PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE —

## How Thorough Are You?

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Most of us are familiar with the term, preventive maintenance. Certainly all of us agree with the theory of preventive maintenance, or P.M. as it is often referred to. So why do problems still exist with many machines in use? Do manufacturers produce equipment not designed for the rugged demands of today's turf equipment?

As the representative of a major turf equipment manufacturer, I have the unique opportunity to view and examine a wide variety of equipment. Problems that may exist in one location, may not exist at all just down the road at someone else's facility.

What is the difference? Why is one customer satisfied, even happy, the other upset and disappointed? Consider some of these common denominators that manufacturers say work together to produce long life and trouble-free service.

**ATTITUDE** — Those customers who take a personal interest in the peak performance of a machine often are the most satisfied. They are the ones who respect and view machinery as sophisticated, well-designed work tools for accomplishing difficult tasks. Machines reflect this attitude by looking as good as they perform.

**RECORD KEEPING** — Record keeping has long been used as a gauge for determining how successful one's preventive maintenance program is. After all, without records, how can one verify and prove his point when making equipment evaluations? All successful professionals such as doctors and lawyers are required to keep records. Are we any less professionals?

**PLANNING** — "People do not plan to fail, they fail to plan" you may have heard said. People who plan ahead their daily, weekly or monthly maintenance procedures often spend less time repairing their machines.

**SERVICE SCHOOLS** — Manufacturers spend considerable time and money providing local service training sessions for customers. Statistically, less than 2% of the customers will ever show up for one of these schools. Also true is that 90% of the complaints received from the field are from the remaining 98% unattended.

**THOROUGHNESS** — Most people feel that changing the oil and greasing the zerks is the extent of preventive maintenance. Any owner's/service manual provided by all manufacturers will quickly point out much more.

Being thorough and following the manual will result in more preventive maintenance - but less frequent repairs.

**COMMITMENT** — What good are plans and intentions if the work never gets done? Commit yourself to see that this all important work is carried out dogmatically.

**DAILY CHECKLIST** — One key ingredient in the formula for successful preventive maintenance is a daily checklist. These are things performed on a daily basis *after* the day's work is completed. People who procrastinate and expect to perform their daily checklist in the morning, often find other things to stand in their way.

Everything discussed here may seem obvious, but the facts prove that most people do not carry out even the most obvious maintenance chores. Manufacturers and distributors of today's turf equipment want you to receive the most value for your dollar. A proper attitude and respect for machines is the first step. Keep records and make a definite plan for each day's scheduled maintenance. Learn to become a problem-spotter instead of a trouble-shooter in order to prevent breakdowns. Attend factory sponsored service schools and go expecting to learn. And once you've decided to develop a proper preventive maintenance program, carry through and do it.

A common sense approach to proper preventive maintenance will provide you the freedom of trouble-free equipment.

### DAILY CHECKLIST

- Check engine oil
- Check radiator water level
- Check fuel level
- Check transmission/hydraulic oil level
- Check tire pressure
- Clean air filter element
- Lubricate as scheduled
- Inspect hoses, hydraulic lines and fuel lines for wear or leakage
- Inspect for worn, loose, missing or damaged parts
- Inspect screens, shrouds and radiators for grass blockage
- Inspect for loose, dull or damaged rotary blades
- Inspect reel to bedknife adjustment on reel mowers
- Inspect height of cut on reel mowers ■