

ON-SITE CHEMICAL PROGRAM SELECTION  
USING MODERN PUMPING SYSTEMS

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The lawn care industry has become one of change as well as growth, in the last ten years. Early lawn care companies sometimes offered only broadleafed weed control and fertilization; preemergent crabgrass control was extra or not offered. Slow release nitrogen was not even thought of.

Times have changed. Through efforts by lawn companies themselves, customers have learned to demand a full program of preemergent and post emergent weed control, soil insecticide as well as a balanced fertilization program. More recently, slow release fertilizer and disease control programs have become important. No longer can companies ignore the fact that all lawns are not the same. There is an increased market demand for custom programs throughout the nation. Out of these changes in the programs offered to the homeowner has evolved a demand in the industry for different equipment. The old piston pump with mechanical agitation was fine when all products were water soluble. However, with the advent of IBDU and Powder Blue nitrogen, lime programs and some wettable powders, increased pumping and agitation capacities are needed.

A few equipment manufacturers have kept abreast of these market needs. Centrifugal and gear pumps are being offered to allow for high pressure agitation as well as the movement of granule materials. Inductors are being integrated into the system to allow the applicator to add product at the site of application. This means that a basic product solution can be mixed back at the plant but special products such as fungicides, insecticide or extra weed control could be added on a "Lawn by Lawn" basis.

More changes and improved engineering is surely on the drawing boards. However, if you are building or buying equipment, keep in mind what your program demands will be in the future and look for compartmentalized tanks, inductors and high capacity agitation.