

Bidrin for DED, Maple Disease Tips, Pricing Hints Conveyed to Arborists at 14th NAA Midwinter Caucus

By DANIEL DOWD, State University of New York, Farmingdale, L.I. ♦

An impressive program that sprang into life despite last minute difficulties with the proposed convention hotel lured some of the nation's leading arborists to Tampa, Fla., for the 14th annual National Arborist Association Midwinter Meeting earlier this year.

Covered in the meeting at Tampa's International Inn were a new Dutch elm disease control called Bidrin, some expert advice on various maple disease problems, three different pricing procedures arborists encounter, and a host of other subjects both new and old. Local convention chairmen had been thrown into a frenzy at the last minute when a previously chosen hotel became unavailable because of operational difficulties. However, the meeting went ahead as planned at the new site.

Of particular interest to the technologist-businessman was a crack panel on the costs and pricing of some tree operations. Lead-off discussion, offered by William A. Rae, distilled his experience with tree moving and planting. Rae is with Frost and Higgens Co., arborists from Arlington, Mass.

Rae said unless estimating tree moving and planting contracts is based on accurate information and knowledge of costs, profit can be wiped out. Collected stock very often costs more per unit than nursery stock because of hidden factors, the expert cautioned. For example, a breakdown of cost figures on a linden, 8"-9" caliper, showed that actual expense, including all costs, was over three times a nursery's catalog sum of \$270.

To such indirect expenses as insurance and overhead, arborists must add the liabilities of transportation, preparation of hole, topsoil, mulch, tree wrap, and planting labor to the final tally before a profit can be determined. Sometimes it is ad-

vantageous, when doing a job a long way from headquarters, to hire local labor; it may even be advisable to lease local equipment, the Frost and Higgens expert proposed.

In the second round of the pricing panel, NAA first vice president Edwin E. Irish delivered his views on pruning and fertilization cost analysis. He's with Charles F. Irish Company in Detroit, Mich. The Irish organization is considered unique because it does only private work, a large part of which is with regularly established accounts. "We give priority to our old customers," the Detroitier revealed.

Irish said in his company's relationship with old, private customers, most times there is no contract price and services are computed on a time and material basis. Less than a third of his jobs are estimated in advance.

Some of the details presented

were: Time is figured on a portal to portal basis. Air feeding with dry materials is at \$35 per hour which includes time of three men and the materials used. Liquid fertilization is charged at 20c per gallon applied. A 20-inch tree takes from 70 to 80 pounds of air fertilization. Unit rate of fertilization is 41 pounds per crew hour.

For a look at the pricing patterns in spraying, bracing, and cabling trees, conference planners slated William P. Lanphear of Forest City Tree Protection Co., Cleveland, Ohio. Lanphear said 60% of his business volume is in elm tree care. For this elm work he considers a sprayer of essential importance for measuring spray output. Time is recorded on color-coded sheets for each job. Records show gross value of work performed and of materials used, as well as direct labor costs. Lanphear also makes note of such costs as taxes on labor, trucks, etc.; insurance

Aerial Applicators Learn of Safety Needs

An appeal to help develop an effective accident prevention program which focuses more attention on "human factors engineering," was made recently to delegates of the 14th Annual Agricultural Aviation Conference at Texas A&M University.

Speaking on the subject "Accident Prevention," John P. Galipault, principal researcher for the Ohio State University Aviation Department said that state aerial applicator associations should co-operate closely with the federal government to formulate a "realistic set of pilot operating conditions and physiological limits."

Only Texas and California have regulations which require specific pilot competence, the speaker said; most states have

little or no regulation of aerial application activities and pilot requirements.

The Civil Aeronautics Board and Federal Aviation Agency estimate that about 80% of all accidents are caused by pilot error.

In other talks to the assembly Dr. Dayton L. Klingman, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, Beltsville, Md., offered "Research on Control of Weeds and Brush on Grazing Lands"; "Production and Distribution of Sterile Screw-worm Flies," by Charles L. Smith, USDA entomologist at Mission; and "Low Volume Aerial Spraying," by Kenneth Messenger, who is responsible for research at the USDA Plant Pest Control Division at Hyattsville, Md.

costs; depreciation; correspondence and record keeping; and other administrative expenses.

Bidrin in DED War

A new weapon which may help arborists wage successful war against dreaded Dutch elm disease is an organic phosphate compound, from Shell Chemical Company, called Bidrin. The new chemical was examined in detail by Dr. Hugh E. Thompson of Kansas State University in Manhattan.

Dr. Thompson said only expertly trained and experienced people are qualified to apply the new chemical, and that the correct dosage for trees is a critical one. Too little may fail to achieve control but too much may harm the tree, the KSU researcher maintained. Bidrin has a residual effect of four weeks, so timing is also crucial. Proper application time is when elms are in flower, Dr. Thompson said.

The material is packaged in specially designed capsules, color coded for different strengths, which can be attached to tree trunks for injection.

Dr. Thompson said the promising new material has received limited label approval and that Shell has printed recommendations for using the product. Use of Bidrin is limited to persons who have become qualified by examination, the Kansan said in conclusion.

Maple Ills Delineated

A variety of ailments which afflict maples in many areas, referred to variously as decline, blight, dieback, etc., were more specifically described by Dr. George H. Hepting, Principal Research Scientist, U. S. Forest Service, Asheville, N.C. Dr. Hepting said the problems are in fact: (1) New England roadside maple decline; (2) General maple decline in the Northeast; (3) Pathology of the sugar-bush maples; (4) Insect-induced maple blight of northern Wisconsin; and (5) Sapstreak disease of North Carolina and the Lake States.

Factors related to the New England ailment are road salt application, road widening, as-

phalt applications, and snow plow damage, Dr. Hepting said. In Wisconsin, an epidemic of maple webworm was intensified by a simultaneous infestation of leaf roller. Defoliation and its side effects contributed to a general decline.

The sapstreak disease was shown to be concurrent with extended drought conditions. An overlying problem associated with decline of maples and other northern hardwoods is that of general attrition due to a succession of years with below-normal precipitation and above-normal temperature. Accumulated moisture deficits brought about a chain of adverse happenings which cause decline.

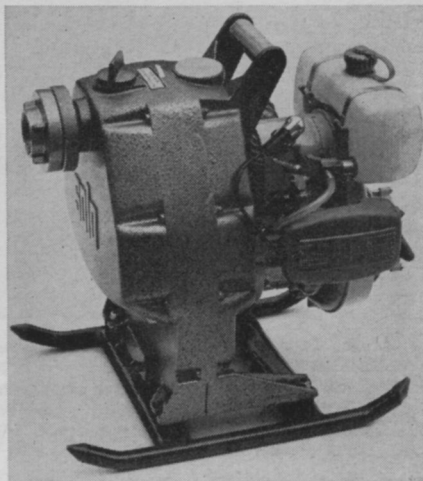
What the Utilities Want

A lecture of avowed interest to arborists, who traditionally reap much of their present income from utility work, was presented by P. C. O'Shee, Superintendent of Distribution, Alabama Power Company, Birmingham. O'Shee said fair prices, economical tree trimming, good public and customer relations, financial considerations about expensive equipment, and good line clearing supervisors are necessary to fulfill utility work. But he hastened to point out that it is indeed a "two-way street," and that the utility should have a supervisor who's trained in line work so he can work with the contractor; that the utility should realize the contractor must make a profit and pay for expensive equipment; and that personalities of foremen, owners, and utility personnel should be compatible.

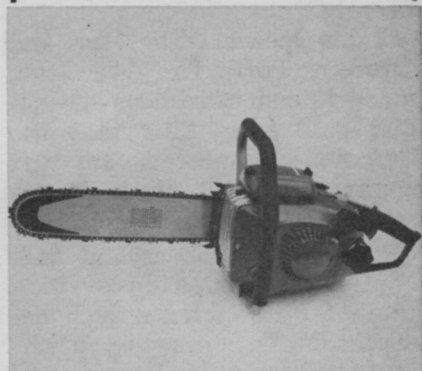
He reminded the arborists that when they're out doing work for the utility, they are in effect working for the utility itself, and must be careful to create good impressions for the power company.

NAA officials told *Weeds Trees and Turf* that dates for next year's meeting will be announced on these pages at a later date. The NAA also meets jointly August 15-20 in Washington, D.C., with the International Shade Tree Conference.

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