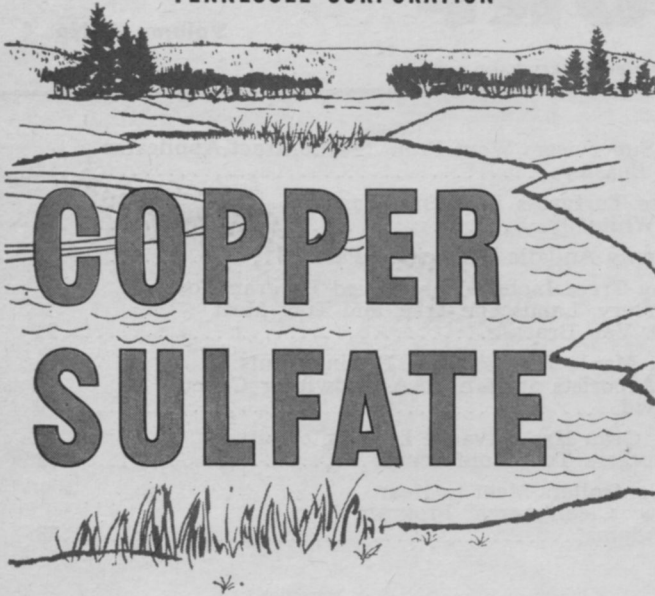


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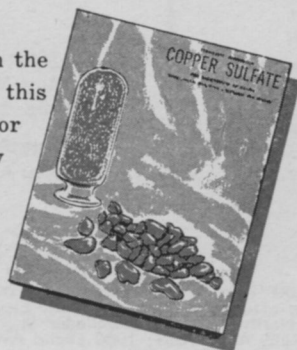


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High Standards; Low Pressure!

Late last year a southern college sent us a news release which listed case histories of citizens who had been swindled by "phony tree experts." While these occasional swindlers indeed exist in any business, they are decidedly in the minority in this industry. For this reason, among others, we were disturbed with the release we received. The material issued from these sources usually goes to the consumer press also, and could be played up in newspapers which reach the general public. This particular story, fortunately, ended with recommendations on how to choose a reputable company for tree work, but the suggestions were contained near the end and could have been omitted by a local paper seeking a "sensational" story.

How can tree specialists and other vegetation maintenance practitioners avoid the effects of these occasional outbursts of bad publicity? There are a few tried-and-true steps which, while not new by any means, should prove helpful. We list them here for managers to check as another reminder of the necessity for effective communication with the public:

(1) Join national, local, and state trade associations when they are available; then work on the public relations programs these groups traditionally offer;

(2) Join the local Chamber of Commerce and Better Business Bureau. This will enhance your public image while making the individual firm better known among others in the business community;

(3) Maintain *high standards and low pressure* in sales and advertising techniques;

(4) Strive to make known, to universities, industry groups, and other business organizations, the high ethical standards which prevail as a whole in the weed, tree, and turf business; and

(5) Insist on the highest standards of competence and responsibility in your work and make sure your personnel, from office boy to president, maintain a businesslike or professional bearing. This last, of course, is most important.

Most people want, by nature, to believe in the integrity of the people they do business with; let them know they can depend on you!

WEEDS TREES AND TURF is the national monthly magazine of urban/industrial vegetation maintenance, including turf management, weed and brush control, and tree care. Readers include "contract applicators," arborists, nurserymen, and supervisory personnel with highway departments, railways, utilities, golf courses, and similar areas where vegetation must be enhanced or controlled. While the editors welcome contributions by qualified freelance writers, unsolicited manuscripts, unaccompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelopes, cannot be returned.