

Editorial

Applicator's Dilemma

"Mother, may I go down to swim? Yes, my darling daughter. Hang your clothes on a hickory limb, but don't go near the water!"

This old childhood poem has been exhumed because the applicator of environmental protection chemicals is in a similar plight. Never before has he had so much and yet so little.

The positive facts speak for themselves. Thirty-eight states currently enforce the licensing of applicators through various applicator use laws. Several other states require permits or registration within the state. The Federal Environmental Pesticide Control Act of 1972 has become law. The organized voice of the applicator, the International Pesticide Applicators Association, Inc., has pledged a more active role in meeting both interior and exterior goals.

However, one negative fact indigenous to the state use laws appears to stifle most any attempt to perpetuate the importance of today's applicator in improving the environment. Currently, only three states authorize the training of applicators as a part of the administration of the state application and use law. While we do not know that training is actually being accomplished, Colorado, Oregon and South Dakota have at least made provisions in the law to conduct courses for applicators. Another notable exception is Nebraska. The state legislature recently passed a resolution to expand at the local level the educational program in the use of chemicals by farmers and ranchers. Hopefully this would also include professional applicators.

We submit that training is a function of education, a process as old as mankind. It is appalling, therefore, to discover that 46 states have taken the attitude of "don't pay any attention to it and maybe it will go away."

Unless you are skilled in the application of chemicals, most candidates for license may never get one. We recently asked several applicators how they obtained their license. One said he kept taking the exam until he passed it. Another mentioned something about picking the brain of a licensed professional. A third said he applied chemicals on the farm in a state that exempted farmers from license. He noted that there really wasn't much similarity between applying chemicals from a tractor seat and spraying a yard bordered by valuable shrubs.

We believe that licensing and training must be a joint venture. The Federal Environmental Pesticide Control Act has provisions for training which will be implemented with the various states. But this may take several years to become fully operational. We would suggest, as a interim, that each

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ARBORIST SHOP TALK

By Hank Harvey Jr.
Rutledge, Pennsylvania

Winter Survival Kit For Business

Well, it's snowy white outside and cold as the arctic so you're just going to throw another log in the fire and read some old magazines or turn on the T.V. or get back in bed next to something warm, right?

Wrong!

Just because the weather is bad doesn't mean the day has to be an unprofitable one. In fact, those shut-in days should be looked on as a welcome opportunity to catch up on old business. Such as what?

Well try any of the following:

Follow Up On Job Leads: Remember that neighbor Mrs. Jones said wanted to see you but you didn't have time? What was her name? Call up Mrs. Jones, get the name and call the neighbor to see if she still needs your services, when the weather breaks of course. Or that customer who said come back and do such and such in a couple of months. Good time to call and firm up that job and when you can do it. A couple of hours making phone calls to hot leads should drum up a number of new jobs.

Collecting: Next, call up those "slow-pays" and remind them in a friendly way that you've been looking for their check and perhaps you could stop over today and pick it up. Any time you can collect payment on old accounts it's worth going out even in foul weather to get it done. And don't worry about calling to ask for your money. You're not asking for anything you didn't earn. Remember, too, every day that goes by, your chances of ever collecting an old debt decrease and you can be sure that your continued patience and silence will in no way expediate payment.

Customer File: Remember that up-to-date complete customer file you always wanted to make? Why not start it next time you're rained out or snowed in? All you need is a stack of index cards (preferably the big 4" x 6" kind) and a cheapie file box. Gather up all those scattered scraps of papers and little note books with customer names, phone number, etc. on them. Write the name at the top left (last name first) with address and phone below it. Then write down whatever information you have or can remember about what you did, when you did it, how much you charged, etc. *Then keep it ever handy and always up to date.* Sure it takes time to get the customer file started, but they're valuable to have. On those otherwise worthless days you have time to spare, use it!

Tools and Supplies Check: It may be too cold or damp out in the shop to stay there very long but then it doesn't take very long to check out what needs to be fixed, what parts are needed to do the fixing, and what supplies are getting low. (Take your pen and note pad out with you so you don't forget what you need.) A few min. in the shop and a few on the phone may save you precious hours that could be otherwise wasted when

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For More Details Circle (117) on Reply Card



you got on a job without the supplies you need, or with a tool that didn't work. Sometimes getting the right part to fix a tool can be as time consuming as the repair itself. So by consolidating several trips into one you are saving yourself lots of time . . . and money.

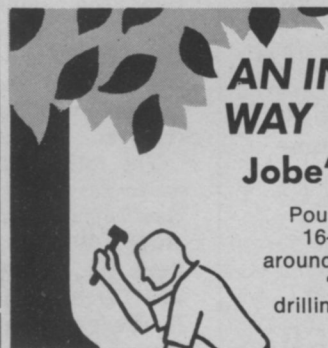
Even if the weather is severe there are jobs such as tool cleaning, sharpening, lubrications, etc. which can be done in short periods of time. And in many cases could be brought inside to a warm cellar if your shop or garage is not heated.

So now that you know what you can do with yourself when you can't work outside, next time the weather is lousy, cheer up and get busy!

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state publish a "Rules For Applicators" booklet similar to those published by auto licensing bureaus. The candidate could then study the rules, chemical uses or other pertinent data and be better prepared to take an examination. If there is doubt as to experience, a practical spraying test could be devised.

We commend the professional applicator for his patience. The authority granted the Environmental Protection Agency in developing training programs is now official. Help for the applicator is on the way.



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