

Guaranteed Results Build Custom Applicator's Business

Referrals are the best salesman for Weeds, Inc., Yeadon, Pa. The company works on the principle that if you do a good job and stand behind it, soon you will have an outstanding reputation. The organization is one of the nation's largest commercial applicators with offices also in Baltimore, Richmond, Elizabeth, N.J., Pittsburgh, Toledo and St. Louis.

"We guarantee our work for the whole growing season and automatic follow-up checks are done to see how well the spraying treatment did," explains Earl Antes, co-owner with John Woronick.

The firm specializes in commercial industrial spraying such as railroad yards, railroad rights-of-way, oil tank farms, and inventory areas.

"We have found many firms try to do their own spraying with poorly trained personnel," states Antes. "Sometimes they don't even know what material they have been using. They will often show us a half-empty drum with a skull and crossbones painted on it but don't have the slightest idea what is inside."

Antes believes companies are just now becoming interested in having professionals handle their spraying needs on a year-to-year basis under contract. He says OSHA as well as environmental concerns seem to be encouraging this interest.

For the first year and a half of employment, Weeds, Inc., employees are considered to be under training. After that, they can accept ma-

job responsibility for their work and require less supervision. "We employ our people full-time, year-around," explains Antes. "Seasonal or part-time help means more risk because your personnel won't have the necessary training to do a trustworthy job. We want to provide the best possible service, fully guaranteeing our work, and it takes well-trained people to achieve this."

Though Weeds, Inc., has a sales staff, the basis for the rapid growth of the company is referrals. "We have plans to expand into the South and are already doing some work in Florida," says Antes.

"Companies find out about us from other companies, so the word is spread and our business just keeps growing." Some of the Weeds, Inc., employees are both salesmen and applicators. They sell during the winter months and operate the spraying units during the growing season.

Antes said the firm is getting very good results with a relatively new non-selective herbicide. "It is consistent and very reliable. We think it is the best thing for Johnsongrass and other deep-rooted perennials. Before using this new herbicide, the firm relied heavily on various systemic herbicide combinations to control perennial growth. Antes said the herbicide does an excellent job of eliminating problem perennial weeds either before or after soil sterilants are applied. He said by using the herbi-

cide on perennials, follow-up treatments have virtually been eliminated.

He said the initial per gallon cost is higher than other chemicals but that at the rate it is used it is more economical on a per acre basis. "Other chemicals were costing us \$125 to \$130 per acre to control Johnsongrass," says Antes, "But this herbicide's cost is only about \$55 to \$65 per acre."

Antes says his firm has never had any problems with application or safety. "It is a reliable and consistent product which we appreciate because of the guarantee we have on our service." Its low level of toxicity makes it much less hazardous to humans and animals than many other weed control materials.

Roundup, Monsanto Co., is cleared for non-agricultural or industrial uses for 2 years. It can be used on non-crop areas such as railroad, pipeline, highway, power and telephone rights-of-ways; petroleum tank farms and pumping sites; roadsides, storage areas, fence rows, manufacturing plant sites; parking areas; airports; and other similar uses. It will control many annual grasses and broadleaf weeds at the rate of one to 1 1/2 quarts in 20 to 30 gallons of water per acre as a broadcast spray. It will control many perennial grasses and broadleaf weeds at the rate of two to four quarts in 20 to 30 gallons of water per acre as a broadcast spray, the company told WEEDS TREES & TURF. □