

## TO OUR READERS —

I have always had the feeling that climatic variations, regional problems and techniques were minimal differences when compared to the common goals and interests of the Green Industry. But this morning I'm not so sure. I'm having a hard time relating to those of you who live and work in the Sun-Belt.

We have been putting together this issue of WEEDS TREES & TURF in record cold. Last night the temperature dropped to 21 below and the expected high today is zero.

Schools have closed, some industries have shut down temporarily because of natural gas curtailments. The snow crackles as you walk. Hands and face go numb as you wait for the car heater to warm up. But this is our deadline week and neither sleet nor rain. . . .

This month's cover says it all — our Green Industry as it is today. The illustration was done by talented Cleveland artist Sam Capuano. If you look carefully you'll see golf courses, cemeteries, schools, parks, rights-of-way areas, airports, utilities, the whole gamut. And our February issue practically covers the whole gamut of professional applications.

First, we take a hard look at the specialty fertilizer market today. In Washington, Don Collins, vp for the Fertilizer Institute, told me the future looks good for the specialty fertilizer industry. As turf managers become more sophisticated they are demanding better fertilizers and getting them. But he does see possible problems in the areas of supply. See story on page 32.

Speaking of fertilizer you'll want to read Roger Brown's outstanding article on blended versus granulated on page 24. Brown told WEEDS TREES & TURF: "I've been connected with the turf chemical and fertilizer industry for 25 years. I've been employed by fertilizer manufacturers on both sides of the fence and there is considerable confusion. I believe this article will help many professional turf people make a fair judgement."

When it comes to the pesticide market, George

Kozelnicky of the University of Georgia is the man to know. He tells us he thinks of pesticides as plant protectants. On page 42 he gives some practical advice on how to save money with protectants.

Last month we told you about the most successful Ohio Turfgrass Conference. One featured speaker was Dr. Harry Niemczyk of the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center who presented some enlightening information on thatch. He graciously agreed to prepare this information and more for WEEDS TREES & TURF. Some major new developments have taken place in the area of thatch as a barrier to insecticide effectiveness. But find out for yourself on page 16.

Our market looks strong and ever-changing, but this adds to the excitement. The best thing I've read this month about the future is the Crystal Ball Committee Report of the American Landscape Contractors Association. The report predicts the emergence of the Environmental landscaper, who will handle the big jobs resulting from ever-increasing regulations to protect the environment . . . mining revegetation, rights-of-way maintenance work . . . The report is mentioned in our Industry News on page 12. It's well worth the investment.

Things are looking brighter now that I write about the positive aspects of the business. The snows will melt, the ground will thaw and hopefully we cold-weather dwellers will survive for spring, the season of lawn care specialists. But that's another story and one we'll cover in full in March.

