

## Landscape contractors top billion dollar mark

An accurate demographic sample of the Associated Landscape Contractor Association's membership has shown that the average commercial firm in the country has a business volume of \$340,000. This average firm owns \$122,000 worth of equipment, purchased almost \$30,000 worth of equipment in the last 12 months and also purchased approximately \$153,000 worth of supplies and materials during that period.

Categorized, a small contractor (under \$½ million) had an average volume of \$244,000, presently owns \$77,600 worth of equipment and purchased \$16,000 worth of equipment during the past 12 months. He purchased \$71,000 in supplies during that period.

The medium contractor figures are \$915,000, \$150,000, \$15,000 and \$256,000, respectively. The large contractor figures are \$3,440,000, \$686,000, \$225,000, and \$1,057,000, respectively.

Extrapolated to cover the entire industry, an estimated 3200 firms who are primarily landscape contractors, total annual business volume was \$1,084,000,000. Equipment purchased over the last year amounted to \$89,600,000 and supplies were \$490,000,000.

## ALCA network to provide wage input

ALCA has set up a network of landscape contractors to provide some input into the Davis Bacon Prevailing Wage situation when a government landscape job is put up for bid.

Basically, what happened in the past was that, when the government had a job to let in a certain county, they would send a request to the local labor hall, asking them to certify to the Department of Labor the wages that had been paid for landscaping work in that county during the past 12 months.

That figure would often get distorted and a landscape contractor who bid the job under his usual wage scale would suddenly find that his bid had been accepted but that he had to pay a much higher wage than normal. The contractor can go in and renegotiate at that stage, but success is questionable.

ALCA has been able to get the Wage and Hour people at the Department of Labor to send them a copy of the prevailing wage request. They then contact one of ten regional people across the country who in turn try to contact someone who has actually performed landscape work in that county.

While that sounds good in theory, it doesn't always work, according to John Shaw, Executive Director of ALCA.

There is a problem in finding someone who has performed work in that certain county. And when you do find someone, there is always the question of whether he will fill out the form and return it to the Department of Labor, says Shaw. Many feel that it behoves them to maintain a low profile with all the government agencies running around that check on them.

Accepting the responsibility could prevent a "horror story" such as bidding a job, while planning to pay \$4.00/hour and suddenly finding out you get the same money but have to pay \$11.00/hour.

## NLA survey finds guarantee confusion

A postcard survey by the National Landscape Association has uncovered considerable disparity in the meaning of growing season in guarantees. Consequently, consumers have little understanding of the term. It should be explained exactly what is meant by growing season during sales transactions, NLA advises.

mowers, walk-behind rotary mowers, snow blowers and rotary tillers.

These assets will become part of, and the Hahn product line will be manufactured by the Gravely Division, a manufacturer of lawn and garden tractors.

Lloyd Hahn will act as full-time consultant to Gravely. The acquisition of the Hahn assets allows Gravely to become a full-line producer of lawn and garden equipment.

The present distributor organization for Hahn will continue to distribute the line.

## RECREATIONAL TURF

### Symposium is set on wastewater irrigation

"Wastewater Irrigation of Recreational Turf" is the topic of a two-day symposium Nov. 12-14 at the Arlington Park Hilton outside of Chicago.

The conference is a joint venture of the U.S. Golf Association Green Section, the American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA) and the National Golf Foundation (NGF). More than 300 persons are expected to attend.

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## EQUIPMENT

### Ransomes, Wisconsin in new venture

England's Ransomes Sims and Jefferies, Ltd. has acquired equity interest in Wisconsin Marine, Inc., Lake Mills, Wis, according to Wisconsin Marine president Dane T. Scag.

Ransomes is Europe's largest manufacturer of professional grass machinery. The company manufactures reel-type machines ranging in size from 20 inches to 15 feet.

Wisconsin Marine has been a manufacturer of snow thrower equipment for more than 20 years. In 1974 the company introduced a line of commercial rotary mowers under the trademark "Bob-Cat." Ran-