

Industrial Park Management

Managers see need for finding qualified personnel, keeping quality up and expenses down and increased emphasis on weed control.

What types of services do you manage for the industrial or office park?

WEED CONTROL	92 percent
MOWING	88 percent
FERTILIZATION	80 percent
TREE CARE	72 percent
PLANTING	64 percent

Dealing with shriveling budgets, controlling weeds and finding qualified personnel and contractors are three of the major areas where industrial/office park landscape managers are finding their greatest challenges.

Most purchasing decisions for equipment are made in February and March and in the spring and fall for chemicals.

These are the findings of an informal WEEDS TREES & TURF survey done among industrial/office park landscape managers across the country.

"We're finding it increasingly hard, due to lack of money, to provide proper care and attention to our labor force, equipment and

chemical supplies," said one respondent.

"Finding conscientious employees - both skilled and unskilled - is our biggest headache," said another.

The average WT&T respondent managed a 144 total acreage site, with eight companies comprising it. Landscape firms employed seven full-time employees, two part-time and six seasonal. The companies in the park paid a monthly maintenance fee or annual fee. The landscape contractor's biggest headache is weed

control. The greatest number of respondents came from firms which contract landscape maintenance and planting to industrial/office parks, followed closely by industrial/office park management firms. The majority of parks had yet to be fully developed.

Weed control tops the list of services provided with mowing, fertilization, treecare, planting, irrigation and interior building

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maintenance following. A few also included sweeping parking lots and snow removal. Average area irrigated is 31 percent.

Ninety eight percent of the respondents made purchasing decisions for the landscape products they use, with most purchasing decisions being made for equipment in February and March and in the spring and fall for chemicals.

Industrial/Office Park Managers' Greatest Concerns:

- Finding Qualified Personnel
- Quality Control
- Weed Control





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Most frequently-owned equipment:

1. push mowers, small sprayers
2. riding mowers, line trimmers, pick-up trucks
3. spray trucks, chain saws

Approximate budgets this year for herbicides is \$3,686; \$3,913 for fertilizer; \$1,510 for insecticides, and \$7,407 for equipment.

Push mowers and small, hand-carried sprayers were the most frequently owned equipment. Firms also owned riding mowers, line trimmers, pick-up trucks, spray trucks and chain saws. Least

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owned equipment were trenchers, wood chippers, motorized spray units, dump trucks and turf aerifiers.

Some managers are finding they would like more management support.

"We have to try to get management to recognize grounds management as a profession," said one manager. "When this is done, it is realizing the importance of maintaining a landscape investment."

Another respondent said he, too, noticed a "decreased interest in grounds maintenance."

Others, however, are having "problems" others would envy.

"Our biggest problem now is deciding on whether to get bigger and do a larger volume or just stay our current size," said one. "Being a smaller company enables us to better serve our customers, but we are at a point where we can't do anymore jobs than what we have now." **WTT**

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