

EQUIPMENT

Half of equipment service is in-house

Nearly half of the landscape management companies answering a WEEDS TREES & TURF survey have in-house equipment service technicians. Forty-nine percent said they have service technicians on the payroll. Most of the rest of the companies depend on either commercial service dealers or distributor service departments.

While the Midwest (54 percent) Southeast (54 percent) and Northeast (48 percent) depend most heavily on staff service technicians, the Southwest heavily favors commercial service dealers for maintenance (50 percent).

Other facts revealed by the survey conducted for The Toro Company:

- Seventy-one percent of the re-



spondents provide turf cultivation such as aeration.

- Four out of 10 landscape management companies mow between 50 and 200 acres of turf per year.

- Most common training practices employed are, in order of popularity,

hands-on demonstrations, lectures and a review of the owner's manual.

- Cutting season lengths: 7 months in the Northeast, 7½ months in the Midwest, 9 months in the Southeast, 10 months in the Southwest.

- 34 percent of the companies have daily preventative maintenance programs and record-keeping; 31 percent have weekly programs, 18 percent have monthly, and 17 percent have no programs.

- Companies typically have about twice as many front-mounted decks on riding mowers than center-mounted decks on lawn tractors.

- Price is not the top determining factor in making a purchase—parts availability is.

LAWN CARE

PLCAA not opposed to lawn sign-posting; planning to mount public relations blitz

The Professional Lawn Care Association of America has changed its policy toward lawn care companies which wish to adopt voluntary sign-posting of treated lawns.

The new policy reads:

"The PLCAA believes proper application of labelled pesticides by licensed, trained applicators is the primary issue in ensuring public and employee safety. The association is not opposed to the voluntary posting of lawns after application as a courtesy to customers as notice that an application has been made.

"The association further believes that, if notification of pesticide application is to be required, notification or posting requirements should not single out applications to a particular site such as lawns, or a particular type of applicator such as commercial applicators."

The PLCAA's previous written policy did not condone sign-posting. To make the change was a difficult decision, according to James Wilkinson, PLCAA president.

"The Board of Directors...given the fact that there were a number of companies most likely posting in 1987, decided that we should take a look at that policy," Wilkinson told LCOs at the PLCAA's annual conference last month. "The first thing we felt necessary was to avoid the issues of safety and health. Our policy and feelings are quite strong that the application of pesticides by professionals pose no health, safety or environmental problems whatsoever."

The change was greeted with mixed emotions by PLCAA members attending the conference.

Other "hot" topics covered during the volatile but informative conference included the recent media scare and the possible loss of 2,4-D herbicide from the list of EPA-



approved pesticides.

"The association will develop a pro-active public relations campaign to counter the negative attention that our industry has been receiving," said Wilkinson, referring to a barrage of bad national publicity directed at LCOs in 1986.

Here is the short-term program the PLCAA is implementing:

- reducing data gaps on the pesticides LCOs use;
- making a list of third-party experts the organization can turn to;
- providing "damage control" to LCOs who face local negative publicity;
- putting together a media information kit;
- organizing a "media alert network;"
- sending information to members to help them respond to negative publicity, including a booklet entitled "The News Media's Lawn Care Scare: Fact or Fiction?" and
- establishing industry advisory committees from manufacturers.

Because the costs of warding off negative newspaper articles and radio and television programs is running to \$6,000 per month, the PLCAA will solicit extra funds. The organization is asking for voluntary contributions from manufacturers and is assessing the membership quarterly. Member donations in 1987 will be a minimum of \$100 for the smallest companies to a maximum of \$1500 for the largest companies.

The seventh annual convention and trade show broke all records for number of exhibitors and attendance. More than 1700 LCOs visited Baltimore for the event.



Roadside officers

Bill Johnson (right), state landscape engineer for the North Carolina Department of Transportation, is the new president of the National Roadside Vegetation Management Association (NRVMA). Elected as vice-president at the annual meeting in St. Louis was Carl B. Wills (center), roadside environment state administrator for the Kentucky D.O.T. Re-elected as secretary/treasurer was Larry Munzenmaier (left), Du Pont sales representative.

INDUSTRY

Buy-outs, mergers affect green industry suppliers

Within the last several months, major shufflings have taken place among green industry suppliers.

Hoechst A.G. of West Germany acquired New York-based Celanese Corp. for \$2.84 billion, a merger which forms the world's largest chemical company.

Celanese and Hoechst together had 1985 sales of \$17.6 billion, which puts them ahead of Du Pont, which reported sales of \$16.6 billion last year.

Hoechst manufactures Acclaim, a post-emergence herbicide, for which registration is pending. The company also makes Trevira, a nonwoven polyester fabric used by Warren's in its Terrabond landscape fabric.

Lesco, Inc. of Rocky River, Ohio

has acquired Groves Industries, Inc. of Elyria, Ohio. Groves Industries works in precision machining, manufacturing, fabrication, painting and finishing.

"Groves is an important supplier to Lesco of various precision parts used in our greensmower and will expand into production of components for other turf care equipment which we manufacture and market," says Jim FitzGibbon, chairman of Lesco.

Steven Groves, former president of Groves Industries has joined Lesco as vice president, manufacturing.

The Alamo Group of Seguin, Texas has purchased the BMB Company of Holton, Kan. Alamo Group completed

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Chemical spills are one of the landscape manager's biggest fears. But pesticide expert Phil Catron says such spills can be avoided.

Catron told the Florida Turfgrass Conference causes of vehicular accidents:

- excessive speed;
- following too closely;
- not keeping your eyes on the road; and
- backing.

Catron says 90 percent of all accidents occur because of improper backing.

He defines proper backing of a tanker:

1. Check all mirrors.
2. Walk around the truck before backing.
3. Don't back up, if it can be avoided; drive around the block.
4. If people are in the truck with you, have them get out and watch you back up.

Tanker characteristics—height and weight—play a role in accidents. A tanker is most dangerous, Catron warns, when it is half full because of the shiftable fluid load.

Even with these safety precautions, accidents can happen, in which case Catron advises:

1. Save people first.
2. Contain the spill. If the spill is small, use kitty litter to absorb it. Keep the kitty litter in a plastic garbage bag and dispose of it in an approved landfill.

Lesco's Hazorb pillows are even better than kitty litter. The pillows should be carried in the truck.

If the spill is large, dike it up, using all available resources.

3. Notify your employer. He or she can dispatch help.

4. Always carry a registration sheet in your truck, telling what chemical you are carrying and its EPA registration number.

5. Have a list of emergency phone numbers readily available in case the accident leaves the driver unconscious.

Finally, Catron notes, keep an emergency plan outlined for your employees with the proper accident procedures listed.

"1-2-3," a column describing pesticide safety "by the numbers" is a regular feature of WT&T.

SHORT CUTS

BUY-OUTS from page 7
the acquisition in August.

BMB manufactures rotary mowers, rear blades for tractors and cultivators. BMB also manufactures rotary mowers for Ford Tractor under Ford's brand name.

BMB will continue its operations in Holton. The facility there will be expanded to allow increased production, including the manufacturing of the Rhino product line.

Thomas A. Herrmann of Easton, Conn. has purchased Locke Manufacturing, Inc., of Bridgeport, Conn. Locke is the manufacturer of professional lawn care equipment. Herrmann is Locke's seventh owner in the company's 62-year history. He will also become chief operating officer of the firm.

GardenAmerica Corporation has signed an agreement to purchase Irri-Trol Manufacturing of Valencia, Calif. for about \$7 million. Irri-Trol manufactures specialty irrigation controllers for landscape architects and installers. GardenAmerica manufactures lawn and garden products for residential and light commercial applications.

RSI Corporation, of Greenville, S.C. has acquired DeBra Enterprises, Inc., (Hollywood, Fla.) and Turf and Industrial Equipment, Inc. (Orlando, Fla.).

DeBra sells turf care products to golf courses, commercial customers and government units. Turf and Industrial Equipment sells and services turf equipment.

Sax Industries, Inc. of Nash, Texas, has purchased the assets and complete inventory of F.E. Myers power spray division in Ashland, Ohio. The company will produce and market general purpose and air sprayers for golf courses, parks, schools, cemeteries, lawns and municipalities.

The Agricultural Services Division of Land O'Lakes, Inc. has acquired 24 midwestern retail fertilizer plants from the International Minerals & Chemicals Corp. Land O'Lakes is a major supplier of fertilizer and agricultural chemicals in the upper Midwest.

PESTICIDES

Preemergence material works on 90 weeds

Elanco Products Co. hopes to have EPA label approval for EL-107, a pre-emergence herbicide, by early 1988.

The new herbicide for turf and ornamentals has broadleaf activity. It is the only experimental pesticide that

NO MORE COMPETITION... Competition has become cooperation for members of the ALCA Interior Landscape Division and the Interior Plantscape Association. The ILD, now the IPD, has assimilated IPA members, thereby almost doubling its membership, according to WEEDS TREES & TURF sources. The new, larger group, though remaining under the umbrella of the Associated Landscape Contractors of America, promises to be a more effective organization than either of its predecessors.

BOUT WITH THE DROUGHT... Golf courses on Hilton Head Island stayed green through the summer's severe drought despite restrictions on water usage. The reason: the courses are watered with sewage effluent rather than fresh water. This actually helps the level of the island's underground water aquifer. The earth's soil filters out the remaining impurities in the effluent before it reaches the aquifer to replenish the water source.

COUNT DOWN... Northrup King Seed Company has hit the market this fall with the first salt-tolerant sod, ideal for roadsides and rights-of-way. The company, a leader in researching native grass varieties, previously marketed only salt-tolerant seed mixes, primarily its Boulevard mix. But according to turf specialist Mark Grundman, the mix must be composed by seed count, rather than seed weight. Grundman says if its not done that way, certain aggressive native varieties will take over.

JUST DOWN THE RIVER A BIT... The Skokie River— well, actually it's more like a brook— flows through nine golf courses outside of Chicago, Ill. It starts at Lake Bluff Golf Course in Lake Bluff and flows from there to Deer Path Park Golf Course (Lake Forest) to Onwentsia Club (Lake Forest) to Old Elm Club (Lake Forest) to Highland Park Country Club (Highland Park) to Sunset Valley Golf Club (Highland Park) to Bob O'Link Golf Club (Highland Park) to Northmoor Country Club (Highland Park) to, finally, Glencoe Golf Club (Glencoe). That's about 10 miles "as a crow flies," says Onwentsia's superintendent Paul Boizelle.

THEY'LL GET YOUR GOAT... Way down in the lowlands east of Dallas, Texas, goats are everybody's friends. It gets a little messy at the city water plant in the summer when a combination of heat and oozing sludge produces lagoon grass that swarms up and swallows tractors. Enter seven Spanish goats who now keep the 67 acres groomed. The area previously needed twice-monthly mowings by seven men and a host of mowers. The animal maintenance unit is a neighborly arrangement between Samuell Farm and the nearby water plant. The plant saves gas and labor costs, while the goats eat for free.

Elanco is developing specifically for the specialty markets.

Company personnel say that they will probably recommend mixing EL-107 with a dinitroaniline (like pendamethalin or Balan) for sharper grass control. It also controls dandelions and buckhorn.

The product has been shown to work on 90 species of ornamentals for weed control, both alone and in combination with another Elanco product, Surflan.

TECHNOLOGY

Plant stress monitor measures turf's health

Standard Oil is testing a plant stress monitor that yields a "stress index" to enable turf managers to more accurately program irrigation needs.

The instrument has been placed in the hands of two golf course superintendents—one in the Cleveland, Ohio area, and one in the Atlanta area—for field trials. If tests are positive, it will be marketed to golf course superintendents and other turf managers.

The monitor, a hand-held "gun" attached to a computer worn at the waist on a shoulder strap, monitors the physiological state of the turf. After measuring the plant's leaf temperature, ambient temperature, relative humidity and solar radiation load, the data is processed by the computer. The resulting "stress index" gives the turf manager information needed to analyze irrigation effectiveness and project irrigation requirements.

"There's still a question as to how we're going to release this

product," notes Steve DeSutter of Standard Oil of Ohio. "But we're working on an agreement with one of the major irrigation suppliers to the turf industry."

A specific release date is yet to be determined.

FERTILIZER

Lebanon Chemical expands fertilizer line

With the purchase of Tidewater Agricorp Inc. of Chesapeake, Va., Lebanon Chemical Corp. significantly expands its liquid fertilizer line.

Tidewater has 20 fertilizer outlets in the coastal regions of Virginia and North Carolina. Last year, Tidewater's liquid fertilizer retail sales were in the multi-million dollar range.

Mark Nuzum, manager/agronomist at Tidewater's Chesapeake facility, will handle marketing and sales of the acquisition.

RESEARCH

Dutch find treatment for Dutch elm disease

Scientists at the Institute of Applied Chemistry in Zeist, Holland, have found a way to treat Dutch elm disease.

They have found that injecting a tree with fenpropimorph, a fungicide also used to treat mildew on cereal crops, will block the spread of the fungus that causes the disease. Fenpropimorph has been proven harmless to Dutch elms, but prevents the fungus from giving off

spores that spread the disease.

It can be used either preventatively or curatively. Used preventatively, it has been 100 percent effective.

Treatments of this kind are labor-intensive and, thus, expensive. But researchers at the Institute say a Dutch elm "vaccine" could be on the market as early as next year.

CHEMICALS

Turf regulator shows promise in Northwest

While turf growth regulators have won increasing acceptance in many parts of the country, they haven't been widely available in the Pacific Northwest. But research conducted with Limit turf regulator shows promising results for reducing grass growth in the particular growing and climatic conditions of Washington and Oregon.

Tom Cook, associate professor of horticulture at Oregon State University, has been testing the product in Oregon's Willamette Valley.

"We've seen the most impressive results on bluegrass," he says. "The treatment with Limit did not completely stop grass growth as some growth regulators do, but it did slow it down significantly. There was no visible discoloration or loss of turf quality."

Mike Vandecoevering of the Wilbur-Ellis Co. adds, "From what we've seen so far, it appears to have a real nice fit in our landscape management programs." The Wilbur-Ellis Co. has begun distributing Limit on a test market basis in Washington and Oregon.

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RESEARCH

Gypsy moth populations self-destructive?

According to researchers at Cornell University, gypsy moths may carry a chemical toxic to them in their bodies.

At least 10 percent of the moths in a test at the Boyce Thompson Institute for Plant Research are infected with a virus deadly to them which passes on to offspring. The virus produces no recognizable symptoms until it is triggered by an unknown catalyst.

Scientists at the institute plan to bombard a colony of infected gypsy moths with different types of stress in order to find the catalyst.

Virologist Alan Wood suspects that the trigger may be chemicals produced by trees or shrubs which the moths feed on, such as tannin. If they are right, they could eliminate whole populations of moths by spraying this chemical on infested areas.

Gypsy moths have destroyed millions of acres of forests in this country, mainly in the Northeast and Midwest. They attack more than 100 species of trees and shrubs.

INSECT CONTROL

New insecticide is tree extract

A new type of insecticide is based on extracts of neem, a common tropical tree. Tests show that more than 80 major insect pests can be controlled by neem extracts.

The first label for a commercial neem product was recently granted by the EPA for insect control on some

horticultural crops.

In tests, neem gave safe and inexpensive control of two formidable insects—the sweet potato whitefly and the Colorado potato beetle—which have gained resistance to many other insecticides.

PESTICIDES

Ciba-Geigy refutes EPA diazinon decision

Ciba-Geigy says the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's decision to revoke the use of diazinon on golf courses and sod farms by the end of the year is based on "inadequate scientific review."

The insecticide has been linked to bird kills, according to the EPA.

Ciba-Geigy, major producer of the pesticide, says the EPA has "ignored the company's efforts to scientifically resolve concerns of certain uses."

The decision to ban use on golf courses and sod farms was based on documented evidence of bird kills, claims the EPA's George Larocca. The evidence was examined by the agency's Scientific Advisory Panel.

Diazinon has been registered for use on golf courses and sod farms for more than 30 years, and has been used on turf for more than 20.

Ciba-Geigy says in the news release that it tried twice in the last year to discuss the concerns with the EPA and was rebuffed both times.

"We were completely ignored," says Dr. Haney B. Camp, vice president of research and development for Ciba-Geigy's agricultural division. "Ciba-Geigy and the EPA have successfully resolved concerns many times in the past. We do not under-

stand why the agency has turned a deaf ear to us this time, in comparison with past experience."

This fall, the company will test new application rates and new formulations to reduce hazards to birds.

Use on residential and commercial lawns is presently under review by the EPA. That review will be completed by the end of the year.

PEOPLE

Adikes chairman passes away

Philip Adikes former chairman of J&L Adikes seed company of Jamaica, N.Y., died September 27th. He was 75. Adikes had been with the company for 34 years. He was a grandson of the founder, **Robert A. Russell**, Adikes president, will become chairman when purchase arrangements are complete.

Rain Bird Sales makes the following appointments: **Dick Schaeffer** is named a golf manager; **Bob Olson** is appointed Eastern regional sales manager for the turf division; **Bob Bernards** is Pacific Northwestern district manager for the turf division; **Bill Tullos** is named North/Central Florida district manager for the turf division. Rain Bird is headquartered in Glendora, Calif.

The American Society of Golf Course Architects accepts three associate members: **Bruce Borland**, Long Grove, Ill.; **Brian Silva**, Whittinsville, Mass.; **Michael Dasher**, Orlando, Fla.

Michael E. Leeson resigns as exec-

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Dick Schaffer

utive director of the **California Landscape Contractors Association**. He leaves the group after 14 years to enter private business.

Roy C. Ontiveros joins **Pacific Sod** as turfgrass advisor and technical representative in Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernadino counties. He is an 18-year green industry veteran.

Alamo Group names **Frank Hernandez** territory manager for the states of Nebraska, Kansas and Missouri. He's been with the company since 1980.

Yardmaster names **Michael S. Whitman** staff designer and **Kerry G. Kitchel** horticulturist in the sales and service areas. Whitman is the sixth landscape architect to join the company.

Michael S. Pratt joins **Erosion Control Systems** business of Gulf States



Bob Olson



Bill Tullos

Paper Corporation as product manager.

Jacobsen Division of Textron Inc. names **Anthony Saiia** vice president of engineering and **Earl Klepel** vice president of manufacturing. The company names **Robert Krick** product manager while **Mark Foree, Jack Ball and Bill Swann** are appointed dealer sales managers for the Commercial Products line.

E-Z-Go/Textron names **Frank Smith** national sales manager for the reorganized Turf, Industrial and Commercial Vehicles Division. The restructuring divides the country into three regions—West, Northeast and Southeast—each under the direction of a regional sales manager. **Bill Manning** is West sales manager; **Steve Cotton** is Southeast sales manager; and **Jim Simmons** is Northeast sales manager.



Frank Hernandez



Anthony Saiia

ger. **E-Z-Go/Textron** names **J. Hampton Manning** vice president of Turf, Industrial and Commercial Vehicles Sales.

Bob Knoche joins the Landscape and Turf Division of the **L.R. Nelson Corporation** as district sales manager for Southern California, Arizona and Southern Nevada. He has over 15 years of industry experience.

Tom Hashman is promoted to product development manager, Midwest region, for **Staufer Chemical's Agricultural Products Division**. He joined the company in 1979.

Barbara Craycraft is manager of all large accounts.

Cyanamid International Agricultural Division names **Bruce Andrews** vice president, pesticides. He was formerly director, animal products.



Earl Klepel

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