

numbers at home and work and a time when you can call back or meet with them.

In addition, the phone person should have a checklist on hand of the types of projects you perform. That way, they can more accurately record what type of project the caller has in mind. If it's a commercial project, get the name of the purchasing agent or building manager you'll be working with.

"If you're not getting that information, you're missing the first chance you have to sell your company," says Wandtke.

On your initial visit, show up early, take morning, daytime and evening photographs of the site and never ask the question, 'how much do you plan on spending for this project?' "Who really wants to reveal that kind of information?" asks Wandtke, who advocates offering the client a more expensive design

they may finance over the course of several years.

If you're invited into the customer's home or office, make a mental note of their tastes in design. "Your mind needs to start building an inventory of ideas about what these people are like."

Here are some additional tips from Wandtke:

- When presenting the plan, let the drawing speak for itself. "Just let it happen," says Wandtke. "You can sell more effectively by waiting than you can by pushing them into an opinion."

- After the project is sold, always keep quality, price and time in mind. All your projects should be done well, but if the client wants the cheapest design possible, schedule the work for when your more important projects are finished or near completion. If they want it done right away, it should cost them more, and remember that the customer

is always right, says Wandtke. "If they say, 'I can get it done cheaper,' tell them that they could have bought cheaper clothes, a cheaper car or a cheaper house. Tell them 'I don't design cheap projects. I designed one for you.'" □

RESEARCH

Researcher after the truest green

RIVER FALLS, Wisc. — Some day, millions of golfers will owe a debt to Donovan Taylor.

The University of Wisconsin-River Falls professor has spent the last three summers conducting experiments at a Falcon Heights, Minn. golf course to determine bentgrass performance in five types of soil.

According to Taylor, bentgrass is usually planted in a sand/soil mix for less compaction and better drainage. Golfers prefer sand for its truer and faster putting results. The stumbling block has long been sand's inability to hold moisture, resulting in thinning greens.

Taylor's experiments involved five different mixtures:

- 80 percent sand mixed with 17.5 percent silt and 2.5 percent clay

- 94.5 percent sand with 4 percent silt and 1.5 percent clay

- 85 percent fine mortar sand, 15 percent reed-sedge peat

- 100 percent sand with sphagnum peat tilled into the first four inches

- 85 percent uniform medium sand and 15 percent reed-sedge peat.

Taylor reports that due to the dry summer of 1988, the grass grown in 100 percent sand experienced more water stress than other mixes with lower sand ratios. Grass grown in this mixture showed water stress after 24 hours without water. Constant turf growth was a problem, even though irrigation was used almost all summer long.

Taylor believes that with more water, the green with

sandy soil might have stayed as dense and healthy as the other sections. The mixtures other than 100 percent did the best and did not show any drought damage. □

INDUSTRY

Urban tree success not easy

SEA ISLAND, Ga. — Arborists should help local tree specifiers introduce the right tree into the urban environment, says Nina Bassuk, Ph.D., director of Cornell University's Urban Horticulture Institute.

The limit on space for tree roots causes compaction, which leads to nutrient deficiencies. Street salt, carbon monoxide, heat reflection from buildings and absorption of black masses such as asphalt also cause stress.

Dr. Bassuk advises planting trees adaptable to the urban environment and recommends diversification—planting no more than five percent of any one species. □

EQUIPMENT

Drought affects power equipment

OLD TOWN ALEXANDRIA, Va. — According to figures from the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute, the drought of 1988 has affected power equipment shipments.

Although fiscal 1988 shipments topped the 7 million units figure for the second straight year, a decrease of three percent over fiscal 1987 was recorded.

An OPEI press release stated, "The industry attributes the average decrease in shipments to the drought during the latter part of the shipment year (July, August).

Walk-behind mowers, in particular, showed a five percent decrease. Rear engine riding mowers remained steady while garden tractors increased 13 percent. □

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