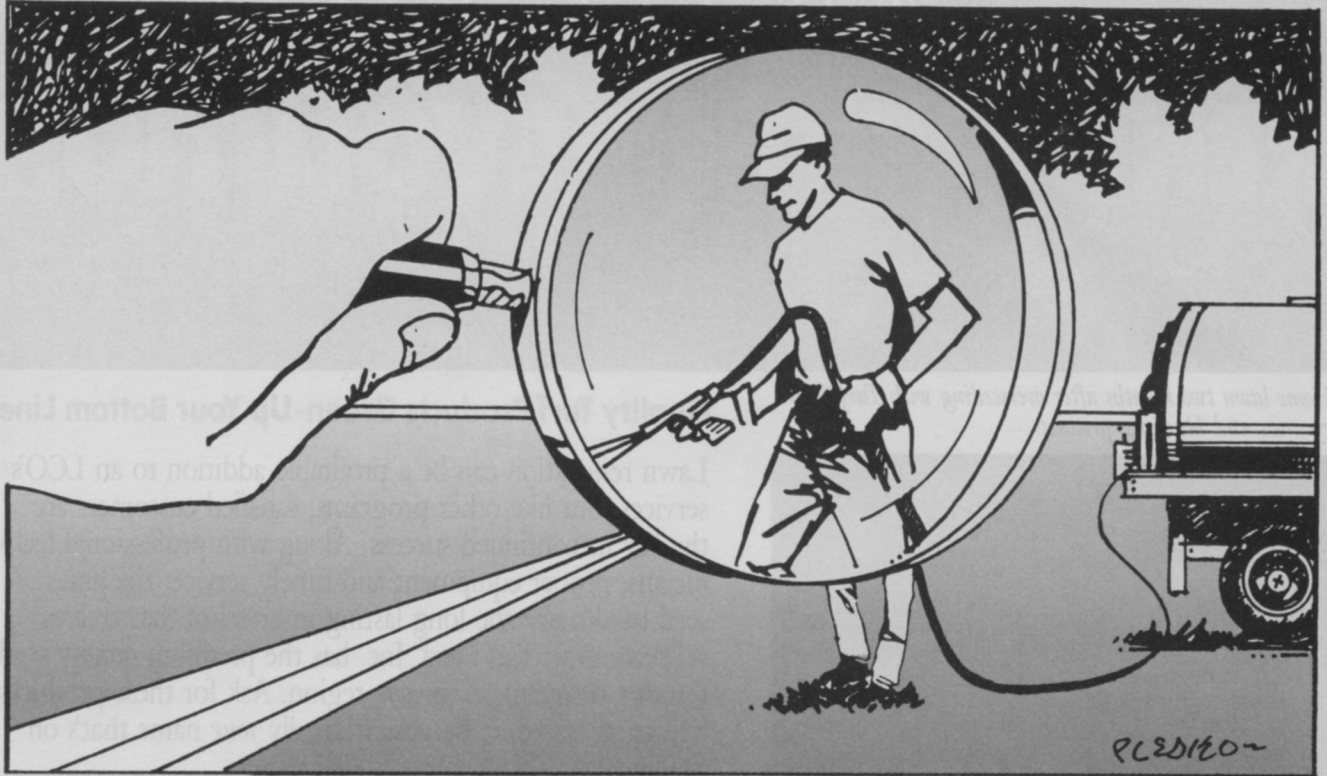


GREEN INDUSTRY NEWS

NOVEMBER 1990, VOLUME 29, NUMBER 11

LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT



LAWN CARE

Lawn care ad claims are ripped by angry lowans

IOWA CITY, Iowa — Advertising for lawn care services is again under scrutiny, this time from an anti-pesticide group here.

Environmental Advocates, Inc. recently filed a complaint against three lawn care companies for publishing what it believes are misleading statements.

The companies are All-American Turf Beauty, ChemLawn Services Corp., and Spring Green Lawn Care.

According to Daryle Johnson of All-American, in one of the complaints, his company was singled out

for claiming that, "For your convenience, All-American Turf Beauty will post a small sign on your lawn to indicate when a pesticide application has been made."

Johnson says the company was also criticized because its literature says that products, "once properly diluted and applied according to label directions, pose no unreasonable health or safety risk to people, pets or the environment."

Ron Vogel, a member of the anti-pesticide contingent, told LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT he believes

the attorney general would decide in the group's favor.

But Steve Moline of the Iowa attorney general's office says the issue is not about chemical safety.

"We're going to focus on the information given to the consumers of that product," says Moline, "and whether or not it's accurate or misleading. As to whether the chemical should or shouldn't be used, that's not part of our determination."

Environmental Advocates believes a recent settlement in New York state over lawn service advertis-

ing gives it a leg up in the matter. In the New York suit, ChemLawn agreed not to imply that the pesticides it uses are "safe" or "non-toxic," even though it had never made such statements prior to the suit.

When asked about what he had in mind to replace chemical maintenance, Vogel said, "We have to remember that these (control products) have only been in existence for 30 to 40 years, and certainly humans existed perfectly all right without them before. It's not like it's a necessity."

—Terry McIver □

Bermuda is well-adapted to California

RIVERSIDE, Calif. — Hybrid bermudagrass is well-adapted to much of the state of California, according to research findings from the University of California cooperative extension.

A three-year study by Dr. Victor Gibault revealed that bermuda has the necessary deep root systems, low water use rates, good foot traffic tolerance during warm months and low pest susceptibility.

In another study, this by Dr. Stephen T. Cockerham, the quality of common bermudagrass overseeded with different cool-season grasses was found to vary significantly, depending on subsequent foot traffic.

Gibault says his study was done "to compare the winter color of different lines and to identify the environmental factors most responsible for their dor-



Gibault

mancy."

One reported drawback is that not all the hybrids showed good winter color, and winter dormancy remains a problem.

Gibault reports that the least dormancy among commercially available grasses was found in Santa Ana, Tifway II and Tifway.

"In contrast," adds Gibault, "Tifgreen and Tifgreen II were dormant for a long time."

Little differences in dor-



Cockerham

mancy were noted among the common bermudagrasses Sahara and Arizona common. "They showed more dormancy than the good performing hybrids, but less than Tifgreen or Guymon," says Gibault.

Soil temperature was most closely associated with dormancy. "Once soil temperatures dropped below 50°F for one to two weeks," says Gibault, "all bermudagrasses lost all of

their color."

In the Cockerham study, turf plots were overseeded with six cool-season grasses. Control plots were left free of simulated sports-cleat traffic. The others were subjected to simulated traffic equivalent to two-thirds of a football game, for one day a week beginning in February, 1987. The highest quality overseeded bermudagrass turf without traffic was produced by the two perennial ryegrasses followed closely by three fescues. Rough-stalk bluegrass and annual ryegrass were acceptable, but their quality was significantly lower in the traffic plots. Annual ryegrass and two fine fescues performed slightly better.

Two perennial ryegrass overseedings performed "remarkably well" under traffic through a wide range of temperatures. □

PESTICIDES

Consumers reveal desire for strict pesticide regs, says Waste Management

OAK BROOK, Ill. — Consumers would sharply increase the level that professional pest control companies are state and federally regulated, according to a new national survey of Americans.

Only 29 percent of U.S. households feel that current state and federal regulations concerning professional pest control companies are adequate. Almost 55 percent feel that such regulations need either "substantial" or "some" improvement. This concern is balanced by strong feelings regarding the important benefits of professional pest control services in public places.

The survey, was commissioned by WMI Urban Services, Inc., a subsidiary of Waste Management, Inc.. Among its other key findings were:

- More than 86 percent of respondents felt that implementa-

tion of more rigid testing and licensing procedures for pest control technicians was either "extremely" or "very" important.

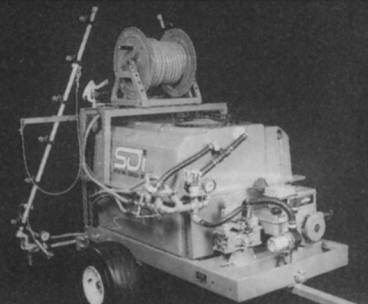
- More than 78 percent of those surveyed indicated that chemicals and other materials used by professional pest control technicians should be restricted to their use and should not be available to the public through retail stores.

- Almost nine out of ten respondents (88 percent) feel that it is "very important" that public places use professional pest control services to protect the health of all who visit those places.

"This research indicates that the general public strongly supports increased state and federal regulation of the professional pest control industry," said Dave Quarterson, WMI Urban Services vice president. □

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Circle No. 124 on Reader Inquiry Card

Three cheers...

To the editor:

Three cheers for LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT!

I read your editorial in the August issue. If we can extract 10 percent of the quality companies in the landscape contracting field (if they will give us a try), I know through the quality programs that our association has, we well retain 50 percent of them on a second-year basis.

The Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA) is one of the best-kept secrets in the green industry. There is a lot more than meets the eye.

Thank you for your recent comment. We really appreciate it.

Robert M. Maronde Jr.
ALCA president
Falls Church, Va.

...And a boo

To the editor:

As a professional in the landscape management field, I highly regard your publication. I have never been offended by any of your ads before, as many can easily be geared toward the male readers.

I was, however, taken aback by the advertisement on page 49 of your August issue. I am sure I speak for many of my female colleagues when I say, "Wake up, the times have changed!"

Professional publications are no place for sexist ads, especially in a field where women represent a growing force. Granted, the advertiser is to blame for implementing antiquated advertising schemes, but it seems your editing department would do a better job

of selecting what goes into your magazine.

K. Squares

Golf course horticulturist
Richmond, Va.

Late-season N

To the editor:

I read with interest the August article about late-season fertilization. Its importance has not been emphasized enough as a way to promote shoot, rhizome and stolon growth on cool-season grasses.

The article discussed several nitrogen sources for late-season applications, including quick-release inorganics, slow-release synthetic organics and natural organics such as Ringer's high-protein meal-based fertilizers. The article stated that using a product such as Ringer's which relies on microbial activity for N release would be the equivalent of a dormant fertilization.

Research conducted by Dr. Tony Koski at Ohio State and Colorado indicates that using Ringer in a late-season fertilization program enhances turf color and quality later into the season than other N carriers tested. The turf greened up faster in the spring as well.

It appears from Dr. Koski's work that Ringer's natural organic product is an effective late-season fertilizer despite dependence on microbial activity.

I look forward to reading more about natural organic management of turf and ornamentals.

P.J. McGinnity, Ph.D.

Ringer Corp.
Minneapolis, Minn.
(Dr. Koski likes Ringer's fertilizer. "It yields a nice even nitrogen release curve, good color response and residual activity," he says. "At Ohio State, it worked much better than we anticipated as a late-season fertilizer" with tendencies toward enhanced water infiltration rates and higher soil carbohydrate levels.—ED.)

LAWN CARE

PLCAA urges small LCOs to join up

MARIETTA, Ga. — The Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) says it remains firmly committed to all segments of the lawn care industry, and hopes to see smaller companies in attendance at its annual meeting in Nashville this month.

"PLCAA has an enthusiastic and professional staff who are being creative and who are looking for new ways to help this industry meet the challenges ahead," says Bob Andrews, a PLCAA board member, and president of The Greenskeepers of Carmel, Ind.

The theme for the Nashville meeting, "One Day's Drive," is meant to encourage smaller lawn care companies to take the time to make it to the show.

continued on page 11



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Circle No. 102 on Reader Inquiry Card

Paul Garris



PEOPLE

Landscape Mgt. adds to staff

CLEVELAND — Paul N. Garris has been added to the marketing staff of LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT magazine, according to associate publisher Jon Mid-ucki.

Garris will serve as North Central States sales manager with responsibilities from Ohio to the upper Great Lakes region. He brings seven years of newspaper advertising experience with him.

Look for LM's entire marketing staff at the Green Industry Expo's Early Bird Reception, which the magazine is co-sponsoring Nov. 12 in Nashville, Tenn. □

NEWS BRIEFS

NRVMA AWARD WINNERS...The National Roadside Vegetation Management Association presented its 1990 awards during its annual meeting in Albuquerque, N.M. The awards are given annually for exceptional performance by state, city and county highway departments. Accepting the awards for their respective departments were:

- **Roy L. Smith**, Texas State Department of Highways and Public Transportation;
- **James Mathews**, Orange County (Fla.) Highway Maintenance Department;
- **Dempsey Benton Jr.**, Raleigh, N.C.;
- **David Spatcher** of Dupont received the "Roadside Support from Industry" award.

NEW CHEMLAWN PRESIDENT...David Siegfried has been named president of Chem-Lawn. Prior to joining the Columbus, Ohio-based company, Siegfried was president of Burlington Airline Express in Irvine, Calif.

HARDER AND HARDER...It is getting more difficult to register a pesticide for use on turf, according to statistics from the Mobay Corporation, a division of Bayer USA. Speaking at the Kentucky Turfgrass Conference, Mobay's **Sue-Ann Sietz** noted that just one or two of 20,000 chemicals screened each year actually makes it to the market. "It costs a minimum of \$28 million to bring one compound to market," she noted. Sietz says that it takes eight to 18 years for a chemical to go from synthesis to sales. That includes 10 to 12 months to get federal approval on a new product. "And individual state registration is becoming a major concern," she said, noting especially tough state laws in California, New York and Massachusetts.

A CHANGE AT AAN...Larry Scovotto is no longer executive vice president of the American Association of Nurserymen, reports association president **Rick Henkel**. A successor will be named soon by the board of directors.

OAK TREE JUSTICE...The venerable Treaty Oak in Austin, Texas, received judicial standing in the courts earlier this year when Paul Stedman Cullen was sentenced to nine years in jail. Cullen was convicted of maliciously poisoning the historical tree, valued at \$46,000, last summer (see LM, Sept. 1989). According to a report in *Urban Forests*, only 20 percent of the tree's crown came to leaf this season. Some of the dead wood is being slated to become artwork and more than 80 seedlings have been propagated to ultimately replace the oak, according to city forester **John Gedraitis**.

PLCAA from page 8

"This program," says Andrews, "will focus attention on the need for smaller lawn care companies across the country to actively support the national association."

Andrews is excited about PLCAA's new-member incentive programs, which he describes as "more relevant to the smaller operator." To boost membership, Andrews says

companies which join PLCAA during the Nashville show will receive a special incentive package worth hundreds of dollars. Additionally, Andrews says the association has strongly committed itself "to developing a program of member services that will bring all members true value for their membership dollar."

To register for the conference, call the PLCAA at (404) 977-5222. □

NEXT MONTH:

Our annual "State of the Green Industry" report mixes the good news with the bad news. Also:

- **Community and worker right-to-know laws and how they affect your business**
 - **Should you buy or lease large equipment?**
 - **Complete Green Industry Expo report from Nashville, Tennessee**
- (P.S. — Look for our gala January, 1991 GCSAA golf show issue.)

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Overseeding should be thought about 12 months of the year, Bruneau says

RALEIGH, N.C. — Winter overseeding is an annual event we should be thinking about all the time, says Art Bruneau, Ph.D., of North Carolina State University.

"Overseeding bermudagrass ought to be in the back of our minds 12 months out of the year because we need healthy, dense turf in order for it to endure the physical abuse it takes during the actual overseeding process," says Bruneau.

Year-round proper mowing frequency and height, fertilization, and manageable thatch levels are essential to successful overseeding, says Bruneau.

Speaking at the North Carolina Turfgrass and Landscape Field Day, Bruneau adds that the best time to overseed is when soil

temperatures are between 76 and 78 degrees, or about 30 days before the first frost.

"The rationale is that if the seedlings start coming up (hopefully within 30 days) the bermudagrass will start going off color, slowing in growth and then the overseeding will kick in and no one will be the wiser for what you've done out there."

Bruneau suggests we aerify four weeks and verticut two weeks in advance of overseeding in order to give the bermudagrass time to heal. Two to three days prior, stop mowing. The taller turf will slow down potential washing of seed.

As for seed selection, Bruneau suggests we use certified, blue tag seed. Ryegrass is the most common, alone or with fine fescue or *Poa trivialis* (rough

bluegrass). Seed treated for disease prevention is desired. "We need that treatment to prevent the loss of grasses when we reach the higher summer temperatures," he notes.

Bruneau prefers higher rates: 30/lb. per 1,000 sq. ft. for greens; 200 to 225 for fairways; 5 to 15/lb. per 1,000 sq. ft. for home lawns. (Note: ryegrasses won't have great density at lower rates. Use 10 to 15/lb. per 1,000 sq. ft. if density is a major concern.)

"If you go with the higher rates you'll hopefully end up with plants

that will stay in the juvenile state throughout the fall and into early spring. If you plant too early, the plants mature, persist longer and probably won't go out when you want them to."

Also, don't fertilize two to three weeks after seeding, says Bruneau. After three weeks, use ½ lb. of quick-release N per 1,000 sq. ft. every 3-4 weeks.

During the transition period, adds Bruneau, verticut weekly, lower the mowing height to put stress on cool-season grasses, aerify and lightly verticut. □

RIGHTS-OF-WAY

Plant research seeking to alleviate three 'syndromes'

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — Harlow Landphair of the Texas Transportation Institute believes that three "syndromes" as related to perception of highway maintenance need to be corrected:

- In "The Green Scrap Syndrome," the highway and its rights-of-way areas are considered to be "left-overs."

- "The Green Fantasy Syndrome" causes the highway corridor to be viewed as similar to, or an extension of, the surrounding landscape.

- In "The Green Belligerence Syndrome," roadside plants are viewed as "little green things" that defy permanent solutions.

In a new research program at Texas A&M University, Landphair works in cooperation with the state highway department to clearly define the purpose and importance of roadside vegetation.

A "field laboratory" consisting of sections of roadside area near the Texas A&M campus in College Station is being used for the research.

"The initial research in-

cludes four areas of inquiry," explains Landphair: slope stability and erosion control; plant dynamics; moisture and plant hydraulics; and drought and pollution tolerance.

"The specific objective of this program," he continues, "is to better understand the engineering properties of plant materials so they can be used more effectively and reduce the cost of roadside maintenance."

The basic functions of the roadside, says Landphair, make it more deserving of special attention.

"The immediate shoulder provides information, lighting, emergency stopping areas, and runoff recovery. The middle zone is usually occupied by drainage channels. The back slope generally provides space for large information standards and lighting, as well as access to and screening from adjacent property."

According to Landphair, environmental conditions surrounding the roadside also make it worthy of more care.

—Terry McIver □



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