

Lower temperatures signal increased care for equipment

by Bill A. Garratt

■ Snow, ice and subzero temperatures are no less wearing on landscaping equipment than they are on those of us who live and work with these elements for months on end. This is true for equipment in use and storage.

So when the job has to get done, whether the next frozen morning or next March, cold weather maintenance can help insure your fleets will start when the work shift does.

Most winterizing tips are applicable across product lines. With that in mind, this chart offers some guidelines that will help keep equipment productive despite the wrath of winter.

By making a conscious effort to follow these winterizing tips, your equipment will remain productive despite the threatening snow and subzero temperatures.

—The author is manager of service training at JI Case, a Tenneco Company, in Racine, Wisc.



Sufficient warm-up time prepares engine and hydraulic systems to perform properly under heavy loads.

WINTER EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE

Proper warm-up

1. Wait until dashboard signal lights indicate machine is ready.
2. Warm up on one-half to one-quarter throttle.



Batteries

1. If possible, store batteries indoors overnight.
2. Disconnect positive terminal when machine is off.
3. Check electrolyte levels regularly.
4. Keep battery charged.
5. Electric warning pads help batteries work in the cold.



Starting aids

1. Keep cold start kits available.
2. Use ether kits and electric coolant heaters when possible.



Lubrication

1. Lubricate regularly.
2. Retract cylinder rods to circulate oil whenever possible.



Winter storage

1. Start the machine at least once a month, and run until engine reaches normal operating temperature.
2. Check cooling system and top off all fluid levels.
3. Wherever possible, position cylinder rods inside cylinders.
4. Cover all intake and exhaust ports.
5. Check tire pressures and fill to specifications.
6. Lubricate fittings and linkages per maintenance schedule.
7. Drain all water traps after last machine use.
8. Cover or remove all seats not protected by cabs.



Source: The author

Helpful hints: Dealing with your friendly bank

by Ed Wandtke

■ Financing the continued success and possible expansion of a business is becoming more challenging for most green industry companies.

Determining the amount of money needed to maintain the company during the off-season is increasingly difficult. Here are questions that need answering:

- 1) What can be done to increase its viability and secure adequate financing later?
- 2) What needs to be done to survive the

financial crisis in the banking industry today, especially in light of the industry's seasonal nature?

Winter bank loans—For years you have been able to borrow the necessary funds to weather the winter cash crunch. This year—thanks to bank failures, declining profitability and increased deposit insurance premiums—banks will examine loan applications more closely.

When you go to the bank this winter, don't be surprised at the number of questions or the amount of additional information you'll need to supply. Bankers now want to know how last

Need a loan? Don't be surprised if your banker wants to see more proof than usual of your financial stability.

year's performance compared with the budget. They may even ask for the same information for the prior year if it has not already been supplied. In addition, don't be surprised if your banker asks for financial statements prepared or reviewed by your accountant. An audit will not be needed, but be prepared to supply more detailed financial information to your banker.

1992 may be the year you will be asked to supply personal tax returns for the past three