

# Best seasonal help can easily be yours

**Seasonal workers can make welcome contributions. Determine your needs, and how they can fit into the picture.**

by E.T. Wandtke

■ Using seasonal, temporary workers lets companies avoid extra costs which come with full-time personnel, and at the same time bring new enthusiasm into the lawn or landscape company.

**Why they'll work**—The skills and quality of potential seasonal employees applying for jobs with your lawn or landscape business will change in 1992. The

applicant will possess more skills, be more performance driven, and may be an overall better potential employee than you have seen in the past.

Generally, these people are looking for more than just a job; they are seeking the opportunity to learn more skills and a way to apply their knowledge. In the past, the seasonal employee has typically not been motivated. But the current economic conditions make this a buyer's market. Look for a way to meet the challenge good seasonal workers will present to your company, rather than someone to just "fill in."

**How many?**—A key factor influencing the local job market is obviously the unemployment rate.

Need for some kind of financial restitution will lead many over-qualified individuals to your doorstep if the unemployment rate is very high. Be careful in hiring these job-shifters. If an individual has been highly compensated in the past and your job opening does not pay that well, expect them to leave you as soon as a job close to their previous pay level opens.

**Where are they?**—Seasonal workers are found among farm hands, people laid-off from other businesses, new immigrants, retired people, and those seeking to supplement their family income with a second job.

A big mistake made by personnel managers and owners is failing to properly advise a prospective employee about the physical and environmental stress involved in the job. Many newcomers to the green industry leave in the first two to four weeks.

It is extremely important when hiring seasonal help to properly advise them:

- the job is physically demanding
- they will be expected to work in almost all weather conditions; and
- the hours are sometimes longer than usual.

**When to recruit?**—Establish how many extra people you need two months before you advertise. Let current employees know of your needs, and perhaps they can recruit for you.

Post notices at local churches. The quality of those applicants, their integrity and highly dedicated work ethic often has resulted in higher-than-expected performance from all of the employees they come in contact with.

Consider hiring retired people. They may not be capable of performing all of the jobs, but they may surprise you. In addition, their dedication is unbelievable.

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# PRODUCT REVIEW

## Seasonal from page 20

I often hear how they provide companies with a new view on how to do the work.

Seasonal recruitment is an ongoing process; employees will quit at some of the busiest times. A ready reserve of pre-qualified candidates gives you the power to react whenever turnover hits.

If you recruit seasonals at the start of the season, you will be forced to make decisions on the hiring of individuals based on immediate needs. As a result, you will not be choosing the individuals who can satisfy both your short-term and long-term needs. These last-minute hiring decisions often result in more turnover, or in choosing someone who doesn't work out. Avoid this by making the seasonal employee interviewing process a year-round activity.

**What skills?**—Have a job description for each position in the company. This makes assigning both seasonal and full-timers easier. It is important to let seasonal workers make decisions and assume authority and responsibility. These opportunities will help the employee become an integral part of the company.

Allowing permanent employees to make decisions will encourage the seasonal employees to speak out and know they will be listened to.

Evaluating the performance of your seasonal employees as well as your full-time employees will encourage everyone not to be concerned with job titles.

**Personality matches**—Choosing the individual who will work best in your company requires you to know your company's "personality." You must know this before you hire, or you may wind up with quality people who don't fit in.

For most green industry companies, the characteristics I have most observed are: competitiveness, team attitude, aggressiveness and personable nature.

Adaptability is important. Flexibility, cooperation and teamwork are the key characteristics which an individual needs to bring to the job in order to contribute to the overall profitability and effectiveness of your company.

—The author is a principle in Wandtke & Associates, a management and marketing consulting firm in Columbus, Ohio.

## Ultrasonic transmitter is the smallest available

Flowline has added another sensor to its family of level products for plastic tanks.

A new electronic design offers an ultrasonic level transmitter in the smallest



package available.

The transmitter provides a two-wire, 4 or 20 mA or TTL compatible voltage signal output.

Flowline says the transmitter is excellent for difficult liquids where fouling of floats from foam or turbulence is a problem.

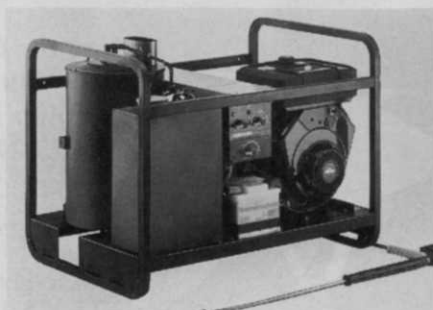
The transmitter is highly sensitive and well-suited for leak detection and point level measurement, resisting variations in temperature, light, viscosity, dielectric value and density.

**Circle No. 209 on Reader Inquiry Card**

## High pressure washer is direct driven, skid mounted

Karcher has a new Cold-Hot Steam High pressure washer.

The direct drive, skid mounted unit is durable and designed for applications where optimum cleaning power and gasoline independence is a must.



The HDS 1200 BE comes complete with infinitely variable operating pressure, water volume temperature control, and

chemical metering.

A high-performance electric-start unit, it features a plus-90%-plus fuel efficient burner system, automatic idle down when the trigger gun is released, and low water, fuel and oil cut-off which protects the machine from damage.

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## Vegetation mat speeds uniform turf growth

Contractors and landscapers can achieve fast, efficient lawn growth over large problem areas by using large-sized, natural, biodegradable Futerra revegetation/erosion control mats.

To use the mats, apply seed and fertilizer to the ground and roll out the mats. After an initial watering, the mat bonds to ground contours.



Seed held in place by the mat is secured evenly over irregular terrain and protected against weeds, birds, dry spells and high volume rain washouts. The Futerra mat is made of natural wood fiber and decomposes into a healthful natural mulch to feed and nurture the emerging sprouts.

**Circle No. 211 on Reader Inquiry Card**

## Correction

■ A product news release in our February issue incorrectly described products from Great Salt Lake Minerals Corporation as containing sodium of potash. This should have read "sulfate of potash." The products, Mini-Granular and Greens Grade Turf Blend, contribute a highly pure source of potassium, and protect growth environments from excess salt and chloride.

LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT regrets any confusion caused by the error.