

# HOT TOPICS

## Homeowners spend billions, but don't know real benefits

**BURLINGTON, Vt.**—Seventeen million U.S. households spent \$12.5 billion on professional landscaping and lawn care services in 1993, according to a recent Gallup survey sponsored by three green industry organizations.

But surprisingly, most homeowners do not recognize the real benefits of a well-kept lawn, the survey revealed.

The survey also noted that the number of homeowners using landscape professionals was up 29 percent over 1992, and expected to grow by an additional 6 percent this year.

Results (accurate to  $\pm 3\%$ ) were based on personal interviews with a representative sample of 1,665 U.S. households about their 1993 spending on these services:

**1) lawn/landscape maintenance:** fertilization, mowing, renovation, insect/weed control, pruning, mulching;

**2) landscape installation/construction:** plants, walkways, fences, decks, pools, other water features;

**3) landscape design:** professional design/architecture services.

Average 1993 household spending on landscape services was \$721. Lawn/landscape maintenance received the largest share of total homeowner dollars at \$6.4 billion. Installation/construction was next at \$5.6 billion, then design at \$381 million.

The largest average household expenditures were on installation/construction at \$2,791, followed by maintenance at \$445 and design at \$424.

Other highlights:

● Americans 50 years of age and older accounted for nearly half of all expendi-

### 1994 U.S. HOMEOWNER LANDSCAPING AND LAWN CARE SURVEY Conducted by The Gallup Organization

| Service                   | 1993 Expenditures |             |                |                              |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------|----------------|------------------------------|
|                           | Households %      | (millions)  | Avg. \$ Spent  | Total \$ Spent (in billions) |
| Maintenance               | 15                | 14.5        | \$445.2        | \$6.455                      |
| Installation/construction | 2                 | 1.9         | \$2,971.0      | \$5.645                      |
| Design                    | 1                 | 0.9         | \$423.8        | \$0.381                      |
| <b>TOTAL</b>              | <b>18</b>         | <b>17.3</b> | <b>\$721.0</b> | <b>\$12.481</b>              |

| Service                   | 1992-4 Expenditures |             |           |             |             |             |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
|                           | 1992                |             | 1993      |             | 1994 (est.) |             |
|                           | %                   | (millions)  | %         | (millions)  | %           | (millions)  |
| Maintenance               | 13                  | 12.1        | 15        | 14.5        | 14          | 13.2        |
| Installation/construction | 1                   | 0.8         | 2         | 1.9         | 4           | 3.5         |
| Design                    | 0.1                 | 0.5         | 1         | 0.9         | 2           | 1.6         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>              | <b>14.1</b>         | <b>13.4</b> | <b>18</b> | <b>17.3</b> | <b>20</b>   | <b>18.3</b> |

Source: The Gallup Organization

tures on maintenance services.

● The western U.S. had the highest average expenditures on maintenance services, \$536.

● Americans 30-49 years old accounted for 83 percent of installation/construction sales, plus highest average spending in this category, \$3,482.

● Homeowners in the South had the highest average spending on installation/construction: \$6,147.

● Women accounted for 70 percent of spending on design services, twice that of men.

● The mid-Atlantic region accounted for nearly half of all landscape design spending.

**Non-recognition**—Yet, only 12 percent of American households recognize turf's environmental benefits, the survey noted. Helping purify and cool the air, and filtering groundwater lagged far behind such benefits as beautifying the neighborhood.

"It's surprising to those of us in the turf care profession that the environmental benefits are not recognized more widely," says Lou Weirichs, president of the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA). "Our society is the most environmentally conscious in history, yet the public apparently isn't aware that they are doing their part to help the environment just by taking care of their lawns."

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### ELSEWHERE

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**VNS seed: a bargain or a threat to quality?, page 56**

Not surprisingly, demographic groups that rated lawns most highly include people still in the active workforce, the over-30s, college-educated householders, married couples, those with business or professional occupations, wage earners with annual incomes of more than \$40,000, and people who live outside the central cities.

Besides the PLCAA, other groups that sponsored this first-of-its-kind national survey were: American Association of Nurserymen (AAN), American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA), International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) and National Arborist Association (NAA). It was conducted in cooperation with the National Gardening Association.

### RECOGNIZED BENEFITS OF A PROPERTY WITH A WELL-MAINTAINED LAWN AND LANDSCAPE

| Benefit   | % of sample |
|---|-------------|
| A property that helps beautify the neighborhood                                     | 45.0        |
| A place of beauty and relaxation for the family, employees or visitors              | 38.6        |
| A property that reflects positively on its owner                                    | 38.4        |
| A property that has increased real estate value                                     | 35.3        |
| A comfortable place to entertain, work at or visit                                  | 32.5        |
| A property that provides a safe, high-quality play area for children                | 26.7        |
| A place that provides a pet exercise area   | 12.7        |
| A property that helps to purify the air   | 12.4        |
| A property that helps to cool the air   | 12.2        |
| An environmentally friendly property that filters water that drains into the ground | 12.1        |
| Other   | 1.2         |
| None of the above   | 7.4         |

(Totals greater than 100% due to multiple responses)

Source: The Gallup Org.

## Lawn equipment prices could zoom if EPA finalizes new law

**WASHINGTON**—Prices of lawn/landscape equipment could jump if the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalizes a draft proposal on new emission controls for two- and four-stroke lawn mowers, chippers, tillers, tractors, leaf blowers, trimmers and edgers.

If adopted, the proposal would establish emission ceilings for hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxide. Engine manufacturers would have to get engines certified at those levels by Aug. 1, 1996.

These controls would be just the first of a two-phase control program. Additional, tougher restrictions would be imposed by the agency by the end of the decade.

**Industry reaction**—Jed Mandel, a spokesman for the Engine Manufacturers Association, says the EPA proposal "is substantially different and significantly more stringent than anticipated."

Don Purcell, president of the Portable Power Equipment Manufacturers Association (PPEMA), says the Phase 1 standards are feasible. But he also says he expects prices to increase, and some models to be taken out of production. And certain parts of the proposal should be changed, he adds.

The EPA promised that its small non-road engine emissions program would resemble the one adopted by the California Air Resources Board (CARB), which goes into effect in 1995.

Once the EPA approves the CARB program, other states will be free to adopt it, instead of following the EPA program. Manufacturers are therefore hoping for the CARB and EPA programs to be similar.

The new proposal, however, contains engine requirements that are not part of the California program. Mandel says that Phase 1 provisions "would be very, very

expensive" for manufacturers, and the costs would be passed along to buyers.

The EPA estimates that the price of lawn mowers would increase about \$5 per unit as a result of Phase 1. Mandel argues that engine manufacturers feel that is too low an estimate.

According to Mandel, the carbon dioxide standard for four-stroke lawn mowers is unachievable.

"At such levels, significant in-use performance problems and customer dissatisfaction occur on certain production-line engines," he says. "Field-testing shows that the lean performance levels cause engines to stumble, die or otherwise be unable to accept their loads." He is pushing for a more relaxed standard.

**Needs more time**—Mandel says the industry would need at least an additional year beyond 1996 to get all engines certified, because there is no existing technology available to reach Phase 1 standards.

Purcell would also like to see the deadline moved back. PPEMA members realize that the EPA requirements cover the large trimmers and blowers used by the landscape industry, and the CARB standards omit those products.

Companies such as Toro have also had complaints about the EPA proposal. David McIntosh, vice president and general manager of Lawn Boy's consumer division—a Toro subsidiary—says that Lawn Boy's two-stroke lawn mowers might have to be removed from the market if they had to meet Class 3, 4 or 5 emission levels for non-handheld equipment, as proposed by the EPA. Toro wants two-stroke lawn mowers moved up to Class 1 or 2, with the four-stroke lawn mowers.

—Stephen Barlas

## GIE show is set through 1999

**MARIETTA, Ga.**—The Green Industry Expo is "go" through 1999.

The three sponsoring associations of the annual fall trade show for lawn and landscape professionals entered into another shareholder agreement through that year. Lou Wierichs negotiated for the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA), Jeff Bourne the Professional Grounds Management Society (PGMS) and Rick Doesburg the

Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA). PLCAA continues as trade show manager.

The 1994 GIE is set for St. Louis, Nov. 14-17. It's held in conjunction with educational conferences sponsored by ALCA, PLCAA and PGMS. For more information contact GIE at 1000 Johnson Ferry Rd., NE, Suite C-135, Marietta, GA, 30068-2112. Phone: (404) 973-2019; fax: (404) 578-6071.

# Turf managers help make World Cup soccer story one for the record books

**WORLD CUP CITIES**—The announcers might still be shouting over the winning scores (Brazil 3, Italy 2 in a finals shootout), but World Cup soccer '94 is one for the books. And although the U.S. soccer team was eliminated along the way, American sports turf managers won considerable accolades for the way they prepared and cared for the playing fields, indoors and out.

In retrospect, the World Cup soccer championships may represent the greatest challenge ever to face American sports turf managers.

"The U.S. may not lead the world when it comes to the game of soccer," says Doug Fender, executive director of the American Sod Producers Association, "but the contribution we can make to excellent playing conditions is unmatched."

Crews worked within tight schedules, on multiple-use fields. Foxboro hosted a "Pink Floyd" concert, Stanford, a graduation ceremony. At both sites, a protective material called Terra-Plas was used to minimize field damage.

Seven of the eight fields were resodded. San Francisco's Stanford Stadium was only partially sodded, but still required covering a portion of the running track with turf.

"We were dealing with an extremely tight schedule," says Neal Beeson, owner of Sports Turf & Facility Management Company, Anaheim, Calif. Beeson's company sodded the Rose Bowl, which required the entire field to be regraded and resodded.

"After removing and hauling away the existing sod, and regrading to bring the field to a consistent one percent grade



**A groundsman looks like he's ready to play as his turf teammates re-sod the Rose Bowl in preparation for World Cup soccer.**

Photo courtesy Southland Sod Farms

from crown to within 12 feet of the stadium perimeter, we began laying 137,000 square feet of sod on May 1," says Beeson. Games there began on June 3.

The biggest challenge fell to the crew at Michigan State University, where sod grown on plastic sheeting was placed in large, soil-filled, metal modules of varied shapes. (See July, 1993 LM)

**All-star turf team**—The Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) organized a special task force to engineer the field logistics.

Don Lockerbie, president of the Olympus Group, was venue coordinator for the STMA's Architectural, Construction and Turf (ACT) Team.

Steve Cockerham of University of California Riverside served as ACT Team agronomic coordinator and manager of field playing conditions testing. Cocker-

ham went so far as to invent a Field Performance Indicator to measure ball bounce, roll distance and deflection, to assure similar conditions at all venues.

Dr. Jim Watson also served as an ACT agronomic coordinator.

Serving as ACT Team turf technicians:

- George Toma, Chicago's Soldier Field, Detroit's Silverdome;
- Chip Toma, Foxboro (Mass.) Stadium, New Jersey Meadowlands;
- Steve Wightman, the Rose Bowl (Pasadena, Calif.);
- Tom Lujan, Stanford University Stadium (San Francisco);
- Don Follet, the Dallas Cotton Bowl, Orlando's Citrus Bowl;
- Tony Burnett, RFK Stadium (Washington, D.C.);
- Eugene Mayer, all practice fields.

## This course battles late sleepers in Keizer, Ore.

**KEIZER, Ore.**—Golf managers at McNary Golf Club here had to battle to get a variance on noise curfews set by city council.

Gregg Smith, a resident whose condo is two blocks from McNary—but right near its maintenance facility—convinced city fathers to outlaw any mowing activities before 7 a.m.

The Keizer police warned the course about violations in April. Not much later, a public hearing was held, at which 200 McNary Development homeowners showed up in support of their course.

"City council decided we could mow our

greens only at 6 a.m.," says golf course superintendent Dave Bashaw. "All other mowing has to wait until 7 a.m."

Interestingly enough, the ordinance outlaws a gang mower hooked to a tractor, but not a fertilizer spreader hooked to the same tractor. Nonetheless, "We haven't pushed things; we want to be a good neighbor," Bashaw contends.

The council legislation also established decibel levels for other golf maintenance tasks, which are measured at the corner of Smith's property.

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## Dr. Jim Watson to get 'Old Tom'

■ A giant figure in the history of the golf course and turf industries, Dr. James Watson, will receive the Old Tom Morris Award from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

The award was established in 1982 to acknowledge individuals who have made outstanding lifetime contributions to golf. It will be presented during the closing banquet of the International Golf Course Conference and Show on Feb. 27, 1995 in San Francisco.

"Dr. Jim has been a great friend to the GCSAA and its members for half a century," says GCSAA president Joe Baidy. "His career provides a perfect example of how one person can make a tremendous impact on an entire profession."

Watson studied turf at Penn State under the famed Dr. Burton Musser following military service in World War II.

He went from assistant agronomy professor at Texas A&M in 1952 to direc-

tor of agronomy at The Toro Co. For more than 40 years with Toro, Watson's research touched on nearly every aspect of turfgrass management.

Later, as Toro's agronomist and vice president of customer relations, Dr. Watson helped develop and evaluate equipment and served as liaison to professional turf groups.

He won the USGA Green Section Award in 1976, the American Society of Agronomy's Agronomic Service Award in 1977, the GCSAA's Distinguished Service Award in 1983 and the Golf Course Builders Association's Don Rossi Award earlier this year.

Watson joins other "Old Tom" winners Arnold Palmer, Bob Hope, Gerald Ford, Patty Berg, Robert Trent Jones, Gene Sarazen, Chi-Chi Rodriguez, Sherwood Moore, William Campbell, Tom Watson, Dinah Shore and Byron Nelson.

## GREEN INDUSTRY EVENTS

What's going on in the industry

### AUGUST

**10: New England Sports Turf Managers Association Field Day**, College of Holy Cross. Phone: Mary Owen, Univ. of Mass. Coop. Extension, (508) 892-0382.

**10-11: Penn State University Turfgrass Field Days**, University Park. Phone: Christine King, (914) 355-8010.

**16: New York State Turfgrass Association Golf Course Design/Construction Seminar**, SUNY Delhi. Phone: NYSTA, (800) 873-8873 or (518) 783-1229.

**16-17: California Pesticide Regulations Course**, Holiday Inn, Capitol Plaza, Sacramento. Information on new registration and regulations. Phone: Western Ag Chemicals Assn., (916) 568-3660.

**17: Massachusetts Assn. of Lawn Care Professionals Golf Classic**, Glen Ellen Country Club, Millis, Mass. Phone: Dick Ficco, (508) 238-8550.

**24: Michigan Nursery and Landscape Association Summer Field Day**, Twixwood Nursery, Berrien Springs, Mich. Phone: MNLA, (517) 487-1282

**19-21: TAN-MISSLARK '94 Trade Show & Exhibition**, George R. Brown

Center, Houston, Texas. Phone: TAN, (800) 880-0343.

**21-23: National Aglime Conference**, Radisson Hotel, Keystone Crossing, Indianapolis, Ind. Phone: NSA, (800) 342-1415.

**24: University of Rhode Island Turfgrass Field Day**, URI turfgrass research farm, Kingston, R.I. Phone: Dr. Noel Jackson, (401) 792-2932; or Bridget Ruemmele, (401) 792-2481.

**25: Indiana State Lawn Care Association's Summer Field Day**, Oakhill Mansion & Northern Beach Park. Phone: ISLCA, (317) 575-9010.

**30: Nebraska Turfgrass Field Day and Equipment show**, Mead, Neb. Phone: Dr. Roch Gaussoin, (402) 472-8619.

### SEPTEMBER

**8-11: Responsible Industry For a Sound Environment (RISE) Annual Meeting**, Ritz-Carlton, Naples, Fla. Phone: RISE, (202) 872-3860.

**8-9: Southwest Horticultural Trade Show**, Phoenix (Ariz.) Civic Plaza. Phone: Arizona Nursery Assn., (602) 966-1610.

# INFO CENTER

Useful literature and videos for the green industry

**GARDEN DESIGN IDEAS...**From Taunton Press, compilations of the best articles from its "Fine Gardening" magazine. The "best of" series includes *Great Gardens*; *Garden Design Ideas*; and *Shrubs & Trees*. *Garden Design Ideas* contains 21 articles from past "Fine Gardening" issues. The *Garden Design Series* costs \$14.95. To order, write to P.O. Box 5506, Newtown, CT, 06470-5506.

**FOR TREEWORERS ONLY...**The National Arborist Association publishes a monthly, six-page newsletter called *The Treeworker*. According to editor Brian Barnard, it is written specifically for field personnel. It contains articles on proper tree care, safety tips, detailed drawings and more. *The Treeworker* is available by subscription only, \$15.95 per subscription for the first nine, less thereafter. To order, send your check to N.A.A., P.O. Box 1094, Amherst, NH 03031.

**BUY/SELL TREE EQUIPMENT...**Jones Tree Service of Rockford, Ill., has started a network of contacts for persons interested in buying or selling used tree equipment. The monthly newsletter will carry ads at \$25 each, and will reach about 8,000 readers. Subscriptions cost \$30. Contact Larry Jones, (815) 968-9534.

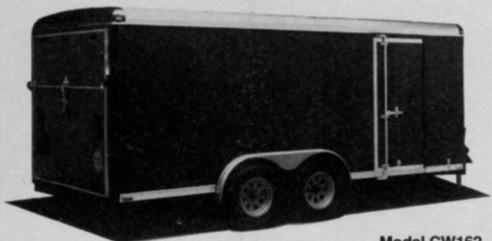
**GOLF ENTREPRENEURS...**The American Society of Golf Course Architects offers "Golf Course Development Planning Guide," for persons interested in developing a new golf course. The 16 pages include info on the key components of a new project, average cost of a new course, site selection, financing and sample operating projections for a daily fee course. Send a stamped, business-size envelope to: ASGCA, 221 N. LaSalle St., Chicago, IL 60601.

**TURF MANAGEMENT GUIDE...**The University of Mass. cooperative extension offers the "1994 Professional Turfgrass Management Guide for Massachusetts." It covers turf culture, insect, diseases, nematodes and weed management. To order, send a \$7 check per copy, payable to University of Massachusetts, to: Bulletin Center, Cottage A, Thatcher Way, University of Mass. Amherst, MA 010034.

**PRACTICAL MARKETING...**The Landscape Horticulture Center for Personnel Development offers the third edition of "Practical Marketing Techniques for the Landscape Company." It is a collection of anecdotes, charts, graphs, examples, case histories and common sense that have proven successful. It sells for \$22.95 plus \$3 shipping and handling. To order, call (800) 359-6647.

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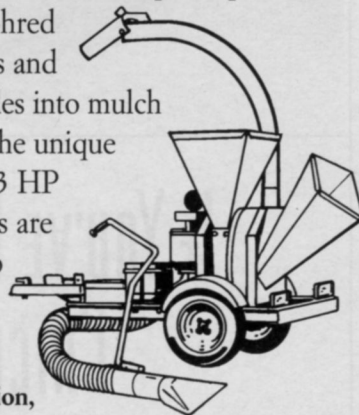
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