

HOT TOPICS

N.Y. green groups fight leaf blower laws

Twenty-five complaints prompt controversial legislation in a New York city of 60,000.

WHITE PLAINS, N.Y.—Landscape contractors from New York towns and villages in and around Westchester County are protesting tighter restrictions on leaf blowers.

In September, 357 members of various New York green industry association chapters, nurseries, and product manufacturers and distributors held a rally outside city hall here, hoping that mayor Sy Schulman would hear them out. Schulman gave them about a minute of his time, but promised to hear more at a later date.

Joe Tinelli of the New York Turf & Landscape Association, Inc. (NYTLA) and president of Tinelli Landscape Co., Yonkers, called the rally "massive, organized and diplomatic."

It was also an attention-getter. Tinelli was interviewed later by a reporter for the *New York Times*, and a local television station picked up the leaf blower story for the nightly news.

"We want a compromise," said Tinelli, who claims a recent ban on leaf blowers has been declared unconstitutional in the New York suburb of Peekskill.

"We've contacted an attorney who won the case on the grounds that it's unconstitutional to remove a tool that's essential to a trade," says Tinelli.

Wake-up call—Tinelli says he under-

stands how someone could become upset over excessive noise caused by unthinking operators, but he puts the blame on "the unlicensed contractors who attack a job with three or four leaf blowers" during early morning hours or dusk.

Given the small number of actual complaints about leaf blowers, many wonder whether the problem is real or imagined.



According to Tinelli, only 25 people in White Plains, a city of with a population of 60,000, filed complaints.

The NYTLA says New York green industry associations have spent thousands of dollars on public relations and made many requests for compromise, but are still not being heard. And according to Tinelli, Westchester County landscapers were promised a voice when it came time to draft legislation restricting leaf blower use, but were eventually ignored by legislators.

Contractors seek a compromise which would let them use leaf blowers year-round, but only during certain times of

the day.

Tinelli and others believe the solution is for product manufacturers to continue developing quieter machines, and for operators to use common sense when running leaf blowers.

"We're very aware of (the need for) noise reduction," says Tinelli. "This year, the New York Turf & Landscape Association has an education program dedicated to noise reduction."

Manufacturer involvement—Robin Pendergrast, spokesman for Echo, Inc., says the company has been giving dealers and end-users in more than 200 cities across the U.S. the information they need to operate blowers responsibly. The company's "Be Smart" campaign is meant to eliminate complaints caused by the inconsiderate use of leaf blowers.

According to Pendergrast, advancements in leaf-blower technology continue to result in quieter equipment.

"(Decibel) levels have gone down dramatically and will continue to do so," says Pendergrast.

Leaf blowers save time, water and money for at least three groups: the commercial user; city parks and recreation departments; and the homeowners who choose to pay to have their yards serviced. One industry estimate suggests that a clean-up job that takes six minutes with a leaf blower would take 32 minutes if done with a broom and a rake.

The leaf blower battle has been fought in some states since the late 1980s, but only seven cities have banned the tool completely.

The need for blowers during the grow-

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ing season could become more pressing as more cities ban yard waste from landfills. Such a ban is under consideration in the city of Yonkers, N.Y.

Westchester County contractors can now use their leaf blowers through November, but the issue will be back in the spring. Kevin Fish, executive officer of White Plains, was quoted as saying he believes some compromise will be reached, and he promised the contractors will get to tell their side of the story.

—Terry McIver

Use blowers responsibly

LAKE ZURICH, Ill.—Echo's "Be Smart" campaign includes the following tips when using leaf blowers:

- Encourage workers to use lower—and quieter—throttle speeds; a full throttle is not always necessary. Try running it at half or three-quarter throttle.
- Avoid neighboring properties, open windows and other places where dust and noise might be a nuisance.
- Develop skill at using blower accessories like misters and nozzle extensions.
- Be polite by promptly cleaning up debris.
- According to the company, some employers tell workers to shut down blowers entirely when people pass by.

—T.M.

Secret to water conservation: intelligent use

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—California's landscaping industry is responding to the state's fourth-driest year on record by using innovative water-conserving techniques borrowed from high-tech experts, says the California Landscape Contractors Association (CLCA).

"As an industry, we are much more concerned and educated about water conservation than we were five years ago," says James P. Everett, CLCA president. "The secret is intelligent use of water. There are practical ways to reduce water consumption by as much as 20 to 40 percent and still protect the vitality of landscapes."

Citing necessity as the mother of invention, Everett says the landscaping industry has responded to more than seven years of drought when landscaping was targeted with mandatory water rationing and limitations on outside watering.

"Healthy lawns and greenery were a convenient symbol to attack by those who thought landscaping was a luxury we

California landscapers accept the challenge of using less water, but keeping the grass beautiful.

could do without," says Everett. "The fact is, landscaping offers benefits, such as fire protection and pollution control, that our state needs now more than ever before."

Examples of high-tech water monitoring cited by Everett: computer software, electronic sensing devices and satellite technology.

Besides CIMIS (California Irrigation Management Information System) weather stations that predict how much to water, the newest technique is "water auditing."

Information obtained in these audits provides landscapers with feedback on the design and installation of irrigation, thus enabling them to install more efficient systems.

"We analyze the performance of a landscape irrigation system," says Patrick Marion, past-chair of CLCA's Water Management Committee. "We look to see if the sprinkler heads are maladjusted or improperly spaced. Sometimes they are tilted so they are too low to effectively spray the grass."

Landscapers are also using water measuring devices like electronic sensors that detect ground moisture and computers to analyze audit results and develop irrigation schedules.

The CLCA was also involved in drafting AB 325, the Water Conservation in Landscaping Act, which took effect in 1991. It requires that all cities and counties have a written water conservation ordinance, unless they can show that one isn't needed.

"We see the act as a tool for assisting the development of new landscape installations," says Jon Ewing, owner of Landtrends, a San Diego-based landscape contracting firm.

Video on Signature Award will be available from N.Y. Audubon Society

WEST BEND, Wis.—A video to promote and inform interested organizations about the requirements and benefits of achieving "Signature Award" status from the New York Audubon Society will be available soon.

The video, being produced by Epic of Wisconsin, features interviews and wildlife footage shot at the Signature Award-winning Collier's Reserve Golf Club in Naples, Fla.

"The geography and environment of every site is different," says N.Y. Audubon Society president Ron Dodson. "This program has guidelines and principles that we both have to follow, but there's a built-in flexibility so (developers) can reach their economic desires, and we can together reach our environmental desires."

For more information, write the society at: 46 Rarick Rd., Selkirk, NY 12158.



Epic of Wisconsin, which shot an Audubon Society video, also produces a video magazine called 'Golf & Environment.'

William Meleen says the CTP course is difficult but fair.



Embracing certification in 'turfgrass'

FAULKNER, Md.—Even after 25 years in the industry, William Meleen admits there's a lot he still doesn't know about lawn care. But, he's willing to learn.

Meleen enrolled in—and completed—the University of Georgia/Professional Lawn Care Association of America national turf certification program. It's believed he was the first ever Certified Turfgrass Professional (CTP).

"I joined the program because I know that if I'm able to tell my customers why something happens in their lawn, then they trust me even more," says Meleen, owner of Action Lawn Service, Faulkner, Md.

"Tough," is how the longtime LCO describes the year-old certification program. "You have to study for it. You won't be able to pass the tests if you don't follow the program." Meleen estimates he spent about 120 hours studying for the course's two tests, the final one he passed in July. He was pleased to score 92 on the two tests. (PLCAA arranged for Meleen to take the tests near his home at Charles County Community College.)

Meleen describes the certification program as up-to-date and comprehensive. In 14 chapters it covers everything from soils to customer communications.

Also among the first graduate CTPs were:

Tony Atchison, The Yard Post, Atlanta; **Victoria R. Barnhill**, Holiday Golf Club, Panama City Beach, Fla.; **John T. Booth**, Athens, Ga.; **Samuel Easley**, Easley's Lawn Care, Inc., Woodville, Ga.; **Larry Ellmaker**, Moyer & Son, Inc., Souderton, Pa.; **Murray R. Neppi**, Sym Company, Seymour, Wis.;

GREEN INDUSTRY EVENTS

What's going on in the industry

NOVEMBER

8-10: Penn State Golf Turf Conference, Nittany Lion Inn, State College, Pa. Phone: Dr. Peter Landschoot, (814) 863-1017 or Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council, (814) 863-3475.

8-11: New York Turf & Grounds Exposition, Rochester. Phone: NYSTA, (518) 783-1229.

11: Landscape Maintenance Assn. Equipment & Supply Show, West Palm Beach. Phone: (813) 680-4008.

11-12: Golf Course Expo, Orlando, Fla. Phone: (207) 846-0600.

12-13: John Deere Team Championship Golf Tournament, La Quinta, Calif. Phone: by invitation only.

13-16: Carolinas Golf Course Superintendents Conference & Show, Myrtle Beach (S.C.) Hilton. Phone: (800) 476-4272.

13-17: Green Industry Expo and annual conferences for **Professional Lawn Care Association of America**, **Associated Landscape Contractors of America** and **Professional Grounds Management Society**, St. Louis, Mo. Phone: PLCAA, (404) 977-5222; ALCA, (703) 620-6363; PGMS, (410) 584-9754.

15: South Florida Chapter, STMA meeting, Mark Light Stadium, Miami. Phone: John Mascaro, (305) 938-7477.

16-18: Composting Council Annual Conference, Washington, D.C. Phone: The Composting Council, (703) 739-2401.

17: California Certified Nursery Professional Exam, Anaheim. Phone: C.A.N., (916) 567-0200.

17-19: Tree Care Industry Expo, Philadelphia, Pa. Phone: National Arborist Assn., (603) 673-3311.

17-20: International Golf Show, Madrid, Spain. Phone: (011) 34-1-350-1564.

18-20: Golf Summit '94, Scottsdale, Ariz. Phone: National Golf Foundation, (407) 744-6006.

19: Women in Horticulture Conference

"Profiting from Integrity," Doubletree Suites, Seattle. Phone: (206) 525-7844 or (206) 937-2815.

22: Alliance for Environmental Concerns Annual Meeting. Phone: AEC, (201) 595-7172.

28-30: North Central Turfgrass Exposition, St. Charles, Ill. Phone: Illinois Turfgrass Assn., (312) 616-0800.

28-30: Southern Turfgrass Assn. Conference and Show, Memphis, Tenn. Phone: (901) 749-5885.

29: "Practical Approaches for Effective Erosion and Sediment Control" Seminar, Orlando, Fla. Phone: International Erosion Control Association, (303) 879-3010.

29: Minnesota Sports Turf Managers Association Turf Seminar. Phone: Tom Rudberg, (612) 962-6545.

29-Dec. 1: Rocky Mountain Turf Conference & Trade Show, Colorado Convention Center, Denver. Phone: (303) 688-3440.

29-Dec. 1: Golf Course Europe, Paris, France. Phone: (510) 526-6922; (510) 526-5387.

29-Dec. 1: New Jersey Turfgrass Expo, Taj Mahal Casino, Atlantic City. Phone: (908) 821-7134.

DECEMBER

6-9: Ohio Turfgrass Foundation Conference & Trade Show, Columbus, Ohio. Phone: (614) 261-6750.

6-8: Georgia Turfgrass Conference & Show, College Park. Phone: (404) 975-4123.

7: Massachusetts Association of Lawn Care Professionals Annual Meeting, Concord, Mass. Phone: (508) 287-0127.

13: PLCAA Winter Workshop, Madison, Wis. Phone: PLCAA, (800) 458-3466.

14: PLCAA Winter Workshop, Pittsburgh, Pa. Phone: PLCAA, (800) 458-3466.

15: PLCAA Winter Workshop, Scranton, Pa. Phone: PLCAA, (800) 458-3466.

Thomas M. O'Kane, Professional Grounds, Inc., Lorton, Va.; **Carl Olson**, Crest Agrow Products, Long Beach, Ca.; **Lou Wierichs, Jr.**, Pro-X Systems, Fox Cities and Green Bay, Wis.

PLCAA introduced the home-study certification program at the 1993 PLCAA Conference in Baltimore. Since then over 300 have enrolled in the correspondence course.

The course is designed for green industry professionals including, but not limited to, lawn care pros, landscapers, golf superintendents, and athletic field and park managers. It meets the pesticide recertification credits in 25 states. Five other states are reviewing the course for credits.

For more information about the CTP

Program, stop by the PLCAA Customer Service Booth #1026 at the 1994 GIE in St. Louis. Or contact PLCAA at 1000 Johnson Ferry Road, NE, Suite C-135, Marietta, Ga. 30068. (800) 458-3466.

—Ron Hall

CORRECTION

Due to a production-related error, the photographs of Tom Mascaro and Eberhard Steiniger on page 39 of our October issue were reversed. We apologize for any inconveniences caused by this error.

INFO CENTER

Useful literature and videos for the green industry

CONTROL WEEDS... "Turf Weeds and Their Control" by Dr. A.J. Turgeon describes new chemistries and techniques for herbicide application, weed taxonomy, ecology and control. Priced at \$60, the book is available from CSSA, ASA headquarters Office; Attn. Book Order Dept., 677 South Segoe Rd., Madison, WI 53711-1086.

TREE CARE SAFETY... The new Tailgate Safety Program is now available from the National Arborist Association. The study program contains 40 lessons in accident prevention, most taking less than 20 minutes to administer. The information contained in each lesson can be put to use immediately. Contact the National Arborist Association, P.O. Box 1094, Amherst, NH 03031-1094; (800) 733-2622.

ALCA PUBS... The Associated Landscape

Contractors of America has a revised ALCA Publication Catalog now available. The free catalog includes descriptions of books on managing finances to worker safety and marketing. Contact ALCA, 12200 Sunrise Valley Dr., Suite 150, Reston, VA 22091; (703) 620-6363.

ORDER NOW! "The Pesticide Manual" is available from The Royal Society of Chemistry and the British Crop Protection Council in November. Much data has been revised for this 10th edition. Cost is \$165. Contact Gill Wood at (800) 473-9234.

BETTER PUBLICITY... The Communication Skills Institute offers the publication, "Take the Mystery Out of Media: Make Your Publicity Newsworthy," for small businesses seeking better relations with the media. Written by Lorraine B. Kingdon, the book is available from the Com-

munication Skills Institute for \$14.95. Contact CSI, 7049 E. Tanque Verde, Suite 302, Tucson, AZ 85715.

GARDEN GUIDES... Ironwood Press publishes a variety of guides to gardening in the West. Titles include: *The Low-Water Flower Gardener*; *How to Grow The Wildflowers*; and *Beautiful Gardens*. Prices under \$15, these large-size paperbacks are beautifully illustrated and clearly explained. Contact: Ironwood Press, 2968 West Ina Rd. #285, Tucson, AZ 85741.

TOOL CATALOG... Stanley Hydraulic Tools has issued a new edition of its hydraulic hand-held tool catalog. It features photographs and descriptions, performance and operational specifications and available accessories. Contact Stanley Hydraulic Tools, 3810 SE Naef Rd., Milwaukee, OR 97267; (503) 659-5660.

RESOURCES & REFERENCES

For Landscape Professionals

New & Best-Selling Books

Turf

- Turf Managers' Handbook**
by W.H. Daniel & R.P. Freeborg
437 pages **LSM-BK-110**.....\$39.95
- Controlling Turfgrass Pests**
by Shurtleff, Fermanian & Randell
449 pages **LSM-BK-220**.....\$56.95
- Turf Management Handbook**
by Howard Sprague
255 pages **LSM-BK-620**.....\$26.60
- Turfgrass: Science and Culture**
by James Beard
658 pages **LSM-BK-630**.....\$62.95

- Turf Irrigation Manual**
by James Watkins
364 pages **LSM-BK-640**.....\$32.95
- 1993 Turf and Ornamental Chemicals Reference**
930 pages **LSM-BK-645**.....\$110.00
- Compendium of Turfgrass Diseases**
by Richard Smiley, Peter Dernoeden & Bruce Clarke
128 pages **LSM-BK-650**.....\$30.00
- Landscape Management's Pocket Seed Guide**
36 pages **LSM-BK-655**.....\$10.00

Trees & Shrubs

- Insects that Feed on Trees and Shrubs**
by Warren Johnson & Howard Lyon
560 pages **LSM-BK-690**.....\$52.50
- The Shrub Identification Book**
by George Symonds
379 pages **LSM-BK-720**.....\$19.50
- The Tree Identification Book**
by George Symonds
272 pages **LSM-BK-750**.....\$17.95

- Diseases and Pests of Ornamental Plants**
by Pascal Pirone
566 pages **LSM-BK-410**.....\$58.00
- Tree Maintenance**
by P.P. Pirone
514 pages **LSM-BK-760**.....\$24.95
(half price!)
- Diseases of Trees and Shrubs**
by Wayne Sinclair, Howard Lyon & Warren Johnson
575 pages **LSM-BK-430**.....\$52.50

Business

- Winning Strategies for Lawn & Landscape Contractors A System for Success**
by Brent Demos
136 pages **LSM-BK-761**.....\$29.95

Golf

- Turf Management for Golf Courses**
by James Beard
642 pages **LSM-BK-615**.....\$77.00
- Golf Course Management and Construction: Environmental Issues**
by James C. Balogh & William J. Walker
976 pages **LSM-BK-617**.....\$67.50

Landscape Construction, Problems, Maintenance

- Landscape Problem Management**
by Balakrishna Rao, PhD
153 pages **LSM-BK-102**.....\$39.95
- Landscape Plants in Design**
by Edward C. Martin
496 pages **LSM-BK-365**.....\$37.95
(half price!)

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