

Expo set for Louisville

The outdoor demonstration area continues to be a top draw at International Lawn, Garden and Power Equipment Expo 97 set for July 26-28.

The Outdoor Demonstration Area makes the 14th Annual International Lawn, Garden and Power Equipment Expo 97 unique. Expo 97 is being held July 26-28 at the Kentucky Exposition Center in Louisville, Ky.

Expo opens one day earlier this year as the show's traditional Sunday start has been moved up to Saturday in order to:

- ▶ provide more weekend time for servicing dealers to attend,
- ▶ better accommodate domestic and international airline schedules, and
- ▶ take better advantage of the City of Louisville's weekend social activities.

Even so, most of the action on the last weekend in July in Louisville is going to be at the Kentucky Exposition Center grounds with its combination of showroom product exhibits inside and nearby outdoor demonstrations.

Dennis Dix, president and CEO of the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI), recalls that prior to the first show in July 1984 some people didn't see a need for the outdoor demonstration area.

"As soon as we had our first show, everybody headed out to the demo area, and the demonstration area has been a valuable part of the Expo ever since," Dix says.

Expo has grown significantly since 1984. It's also evolved as the industry's evolved. "While we are a mature industry, we are experiencing a growth



Dix: growth in Expo's commercial segment.

segment which is commercial," says Dix. "The landscape aspect is also taking on an added dimension. So, we've shifted from primarily a dealer/distributor and mass merchandiser show to one which is really even more broad-based encompassing the commercial, landscape and rental areas. The dealers, distributors, and mass retailer reps are still there and continue to be vital to the show's composition.

"Despite decreasing numbers in some buying categories, registration hit an all time high in the '96 show, as did the number of exhibitors," adds Dix. "And that is a reflection of the many audiences or publics that

we are trying to attract. It is sort of a 'Heinz 57' varieties, so when they do come to Louisville, synergism will take place and they benefit from interacting with each other."

In 1996, more than 30,000 people from 51 countries roamed the 500,000 square feet of indoor exhibit space as well as the 20-plus-acre outside demonstration area.

"What domestic and overseas buyers and manufacturers are looking for is one-stop shopping combined with the broadest selection of lawn, garden and power equipment in one, centrally located show," says Warren Sellers, show director.

This year 10 trade associations are involved with Expo, including AAN, ALCA and PLCAA. In fact, ALCA and PLCAA are sponsoring free seminars. They are:

Saturday, July 26, 8 a.m.-10 a.m.,
"Estimating & Bidding for the Lawn & Landscape Professional," presented by Phil Nisson, a green industry consultant.

Sunday, July 27, 8 a.m.-10 a.m.,
"Sales Success Everyday," by Dr. Larry Helms, an industrial psychologist who often speaks at green industry events.

Monday, July 28, 8 a.m.-9 a.m.,
"Learn from the Experts," discussion panel.

But OPEI President Dix says the heart and soul of Expo remains the trade show, and this year, with a streamlined program of seminars, Ex-pogoers will get even more time to attend it.

For complete show information and a registration order form, call 1-800-5588-8767, or visit Expo on the internet at <http://EXPO.mow.org>. □



The Expo show combines showroom product exhibits and outdoor equipment demonstrations.