

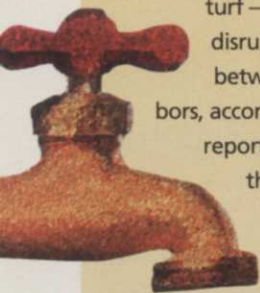
Grab Bag

Drought turns neighbors into rats

This summer's drought in the mid-Atlantic area has taken its toll on more than turf — it's seriously disrupted relations between neighbors, according to news reports. It seems that strict anti-watering bans have unleashed a rash of calls to police, informing on neighbors who wash cars or water their landscapes.

According to Associated Press reports, authorities in the area have gotten calls reporting people for collecting condensation dripping from air conditioners, washing their luxury cars with bottled water and even complaining a neighbor's lawn was "too green." One sour grapes call came from neighbors who had been snubbed from a holiday party.

Most offenders get off with a warning, but some persistent ones have been fined several hundred dollars for watering flower beds full of expensive plants. AP quotes a local police officer on the phenomenon: "They figure 'If their lawns are going to have to die, all the lawns in their neighborhood are going to die.'"



Colorful Clock

Up to 20 million people visit Niagara Falls each year, and one of the attractions of the park is the 40-ft. diameter clock made entirely of flowers. The colors on the clock face change twice a year. John Dick, manager of horticulture, keeps the clock (which keeps accurate time) and the 35 miles worth of landscapes that make up the park in shape on a budget of \$7.5 million (Canadian) and 190 workers. The park never closes, and during the winter, ice packs one foot thick can form on plants overnight.

Clarence Davids, Sr., tells his story

Look for Clarence Davids Sr. on the speaking circuit this fall and winter. The founder of Clarence Davids & Co., one of the foremost landscape companies in the Chicago area, officially retired July 1, but he apparently has no intention of slowing down. Davids is writing an autobiography entitled "Out of the Air and on the Ground—the Clarence Davids Story." It's due to be released soon.

Why did they pick you?

Consumers are notoriously fickle, but they do have some logic when picking professionals to handle their landscapes. Here's what a recent Gallup Poll reported as reasons to choose landscape and lawn care professionals:

Reason	Percent
Good references and reputation	67.4
Satisfaction guaranteed	39.5
Provides free estimates	33.8
In business for years	32.9
Locally owned and operated	32.4
Insured and bonded	27.9
Member of professional trade association	13.3
Certification of professional training	12.4
Licensed by government	7.4
Local representative of national company	5.7
Other	4.6
Award-winning company	3.0

SOURCE: AMERICAN NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION, FOR MORE