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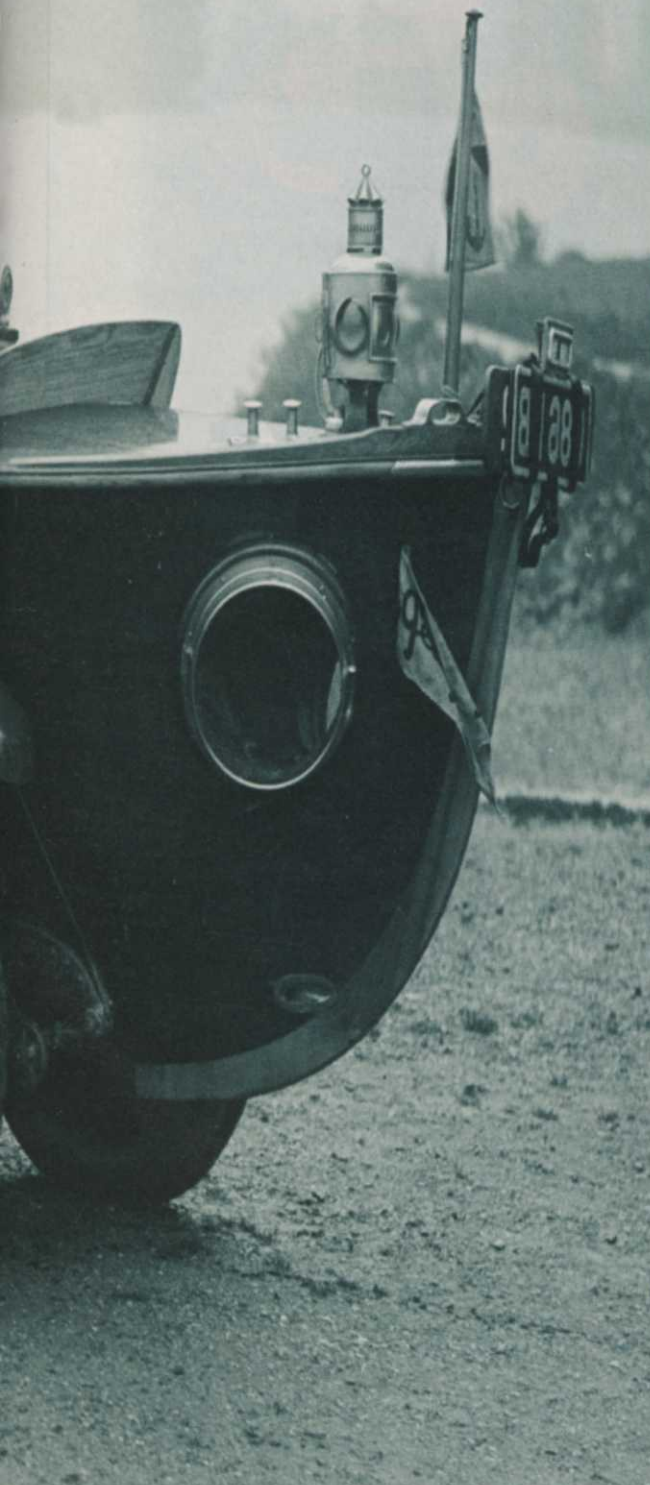
State of the Industry 2000



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Landscape MANAGEMENT

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Editorial staff

Associate Publisher/ Executive Editor	SUE GIBSON / 440/891-2729 / sgibson@advanstar.com
Senior Editor	RON HALL / 440/891-2636 / rhall@advanstar.com
Managing Editor	JASON STAHL / 440/891-2623 / jstahl@advanstar.com
Senior Science Editor	KARL DANNEBERGER, PH.D. / danneberger1@osu.edu
Group Editor	VERNON HENRY / 440/826-2829
Art Director	LISA LEHMAN / 440/891-2785

Reader advisory panel

JERRY GAETA	The Good Earth Inc. / Mt. Pleasant, SC
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Business staff

Group Publisher	JOHN D. PAYNE / 440/891-2786 / fpayne@advanstar.com
Admin. Coordinator	DANIELLE HAGAN / 440/891-2734
Production Manager	KAREN LENZEN / 218/723-9129
Production Director	ROSY BRADLEY / 218/723-9720
Circulation Manager	DARRYL ARQUITTE / 218/723-9422
Green Book Coordinator	MARY MOBLEY / 218/723-9127

Advertising staff

Group Sales Director	TOM GALLIGAN / 262/653-9523 Fax: 262/653-9524 3901 52nd Ave., Kenosha, WI 53144-1830 tgalligan@advanstar.com
Cleveland Headquarters	7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130-3369
Eastern Account Executive	HEATHER M. FOX / 440/891-3168 Fax: 440/891-2675 hfox@advanstar.com
Midwest Account Executive	KEVIN STOLTMAN / 440/891-2772 Fax: 440/891-2675 kstoltman@advanstar.com
Western Account Executive	GRETCHEN WAGNER / 760/837-3734 Fax: 760/837-3785 74563 Pepper Tree Dr., Palm Desert, CA 92260 gwagner@advanstar.com
Account Executive	ANTHONY LAVDAS / 440/891-3118 Fax: 440/826-2865 tlavdas@advanstar.com
Classified Showcase / Account Executive	LESLIE ZOLA / 440/891-2670; 800/225-4569 x670 lzola@advanstar.com
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Marketing services

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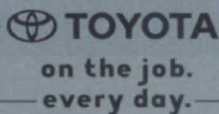
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BY SUE GIBSON / EXECUTIVE EDITOR

It was a done deal

Excuse my naivete with the United States Environmental Protection Agency's pesticide reassessment process. I actually thought that when the Food Quality Protection Act was passed in 1996, the EPA and the specialty pesticides industry would sit down together and figure out how to reasonably estimate exposures of pesticides for children and adults. I thought that many professional users would step forward and tell the Agency just how valuable these chemical products are for landscape management.

Silly me, I thought that the reams and reams of test data and the millions of research dollars spent by the manufacturers to meet the EPA's product registration scrutiny would be taken seriously as a useful body of knowledge.

But the anti-pesticide activists within EPA had another idea, and it was to put their agenda forward without giving the industry's body of knowledge more than lip service. After all, this is a political world and the EPA is one of the more politically active and biased of our federal agencies.

It was clear early on that EPA's regulators had organophosphate products in their sights, and they haven't wavered since. This is their mission — to put organophosphates and other products out of everyone's reach — rather than to build a logical and scientifically valid definition of what's safe and what's not. They changed the rules in the middle of the game, making many of our products vulnerable.

Most of us want manufacturers to keep developing safer, more targeted and more effective products. And many of us really wanted to see realistic definitions of the safe exposure limits. But after EPA made up its

own definitions and its own rules, the "reassessment" process seemed more like a done deal.

What surprised me was the lack of comment or debate from our side of the industry. I didn't hear many product users telling EPA these products are important. I didn't see many industry associations or leaders step up to the bat for this.

Maybe you think it will stop after a few products and you'll still have a variety to use in your control toolbox. I wonder about that, because I hear about several activist networks pushing not only for limitations on use, but also outright bans on pesticides around schools, public parks and even home lawns. These people are organized, determined and vocal.

I'm troubled when I see professionals point fingers at each other, saying, "I don't use that stuff — they're the ones who do." In reality, thousands of you in lawn care, landscaping and grounds management depend on these products.

I hope I'm not naïve to think that someday we'll have a strong, united industry voice to present to government regulators, investors and the public. We sure could have used one recently. In this case, it would have made the EPA think twice before being so cavalier with the products that you use.

Contact Sue at 440/891-2729 or e-mail at sgibson@advanstar.com

Silly me, I thought the reams of test data and millions of product research dollars would be regarded by the EPA as a useful body of knowledge.



events

WHAT, WHEN & WHERE

July

18-21 Turfgrass Producers International Summer Conference and Field Days / Spokane, WA; 800/405-TURF

22-24 International Lawn, Garden and Power Equipment Expo / Louisville, KY; 800/558-8767

24-25 PLCAA Legislative Day On The Hill / Washington, D.C.; 800/458-3466

25 Midwest Regional Turf Field Day / West Lafayette, IN; 765/494-8039

25-27 Penn Allied Nursery Trade Show / Fort Washington, PA; 800/898-3411

30-3 Plant Growth Regulation Society of America meeting / Kailua-Kona, HI; www.griffin.peachnet.edu/pgrsa/

30-5 Perennial Plant Symposium and Trade Show / Toronto, Ontario, Canada; 614/771-8431

August

3 University of Illinois Turfgrass, Nursery, Landscape, and Trial Garden Field Day / Urbana, IL; 217/333-7847

4-6 Southern Nursery Association Convention / Atlanta, GA; 770/953-3311

8-12 APLD Summer Conference / Toronto, Ontario; Sponsored by the Association of

Professional Landscape Designers; 630/579-3268

9 Ohio Turfgrass, Landscape, Horticulture Field Day / Columbus, OH; 888/683-3445

9-10 Penn State Turfgrass Field Days / University Park, PA; 814/863-3475

10 Michigan Nursery and Landscape Association's Summer Field Day / Okemos, MI; 800/879-6652

14-18 Florida Turfgrass Association Annual Conference and Show / Gainesville, FL; 800/882-6721

15 Cornell Field Day / Ithaca, NY; 607/255-1792

23 Michigan Turfgrass Field Day / Lansing, MI; 517/321-1660

30-2 CIPA Annual Conference and Exhibitor Showcase / San Jose, CA; 707/462-2276

September

7-8 Southwest Horticultural Trade Show / Phoenix, AZ; 480/966-1610

12-13 Turfgrass and Landscape Research Conferences and Field Days / Riverside, CA; 909/787-4430

13 Hampton Roads Agricultural Research and Extension Center Field Day / Virginia Beach, VA; 757/363-3906

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Washington, DC 20005
202/789-2900



Independent Turf and Ornamental Distributors Association
25250 Seeley Road
Novi, MI 48375
248/476-5457



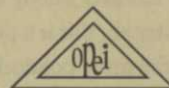
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8260 Willow Oaks Corporate Dr. Suite 120
Fairfax, VA 22031-4513
703/573-3551
www.irrigation.org



National Arborist Association
The Meeting Place Mall,
P.O. Box 1094
Amherst, NH 03031-1094
603/673-3311
www.natlarb.com



Ohio Turfgrass Foundation
1100-H Brandywine Blvd.,
PO Box 3388
Zanesville, OH 43702-3388
888/683-3445



The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute
341 South Patrick St.
Old Town Alexandria, Va. 22314
703/549-7600
opei.mow.org



Professional Grounds Management Society
720 Light St.
Baltimore, MD 21230
410-752-3318 (tel)
PGMS@assnhqtrs.com



Professional Lawn Care Association of America
1000 Johnson Ferry Rd., NE, Suite C-135
Marietta, GA 30068-2112
770/977-5222
www.plcaa.org



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www.aip.com/stma



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612/758-5811

No reason to turn back now

The genie is out of the bottle and if we use her wisely we'll discover that she'll do wonderful things for us. Her name is biotechnology and she's tantalized us with small proofs that she can help feed the hungry and cure many of our illnesses.

This has led us to investigate what else she can do for us, including developing grasses to better control erosion along our highways, beautify our lawns and reduce the amount of chemicals and water needed to keep the turf on our golf courses green and healthy.

Most of us are willing to give biotechnology a chance to work its magic, but only after we're sure that we can direct it.

Some people, however, don't think that it's possible to control this genie. They fear that engineering the genetic material of living organisms is inviting catastrophe. Others maintain that this technology isn't needed. Some of these people, acting upon these beliefs, commit foolish, destructive acts.

A senseless act

On the evening of June 4, a group calling itself the Anarchist Golfing Association (AGA) traveled a dark, back-country road to the Pure-Seed Testing turfgrass research facility near the farming community of Canby, OR. These people — it's not known how many — entered two greenhouses there and destroyed research on genetically modified creeping bentgrass along with collections of traditionally bred grasses. They also stomped and pulled turfgrasses from research plots outside of the greenhouses. These selections were being evaluated for their resistance to disease or their ability to grow using saline irrigation.

The AGA left other reminders of their attack, including slogans on the walls of the green houses and golf balls with symbols drawn upon them. The vandalism to the turfgrass plants caused the most distress to Pure-Seed Research though. The process of developing improved varieties requires incredible effort.

The raid's irony

What the AGA didn't know (or didn't want to know) when it trashed the seed company was that the research that it damaged was directed at developing turf varieties that require fewer pesticides, less water and grasses that can prosper on saline and waste water.

While the company was, in fact, working on genetically modified bentgrasses, that research was reportedly assessing the suitability and safeguards needed to grow these modified grasses in eastern Oregon. Pure-Seed Research uses traditional selection and breeding methods to develop its varieties.

What effect will the midnight raid have on the grass seed industry? Probably not a lot.

Plant breeders will continue to develop improved grasses through traditional means *and* through genetic manipulation.

The genie of biotechnology has awesome powers to serve us. We just have to make sure we know how to guide her.

Contact Ron Hall at 440/891-2636
or e-mail at
rhall@advanstar.com

That genie of biotechnology is out of the bottle, and we can't put her back in. But we can guide her and make her work for us.



Refusing a job because it's not in your area of expertise is professional. It says that you're an expert in what you normally do, but not in that particular task.



Know your boundaries

Recent magazine articles on the sale and consumption of smaller landscape maintenance firms by larger ones show that the trend is toward more efficient, larger and theoretically more profitable companies. But smaller companies must also develop strategies to focus on services suitable for them and how to keep customers from leaving for the big boys.

Your strategy must be clear and focused -- a defined set of services that determine the type of equipment, staffing, customer base and expertise you need for those tasks. One step we all should take is to ask: How far will we go to satisfy our customers with services we don't normally provide and what are we qualified to do? These questions need to be asked before we get in over your head.

Above and beyond

There are two areas of consideration when considering offering "special" services, strategic and tactical. Here are several strategic questions we try to answer before we go any further on a job:

- ▶ Can we make it safe and profitable?
- ▶ Is it something we are qualified to do?
- ▶ Is this a one-time job or a new service we will regularly provide?
- ▶ How successful can the task be?
- ▶ What are the consequences of a problematic completion?
- ▶ What are the long-term affects to the customer?

Then, we look at the tactical, or practical, side of the job:

- ▶ Am I qualified to teach it to my employees?

- ▶ Do we have the necessary equipment?
- ▶ Are we willing to invest in new equipment if we don't already have it?
- ▶ Will we rent equipment?
- ▶ Do we have the necessary licensing?
- ▶ Do we have the necessary insurance?

With these questions in mind, here are our options:

1. Do the job.
2. Hire a subcontractor.
3. Refuse the job.

Take on the job

Just recently, I ran into a manager of an established lawn maintenance firm with an excellent reputation for service. The company, located in southeastern Michigan, also prunes, weeds and mulches the properties of homeowners and commercial sites.

The owner told me that a long-time residential customer asked them to plant a row of Colorado spruces. You may already have guessed that this project was a disaster with long-lasting effects. Although a valuable customer asked for the installation, the manager refused at first, saying that it wasn't the kind of work that he did any longer. He eventually made an exception because he didn't want his customer looking for another contractor who could do the work (and perhaps take over what he had been doing for years). Needless to say, the project was over budget, took too long and the trees died.

You may have acquired some experience performing a certain type of service, but do you know enough about it to be able to teach it to your staff? Those are two different standards. And your staff should understand more than the basics — your employees

continued on page 12

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should also know the safest, most efficient and most practical way to perform a task.

Insurance is invaluable. If anything can happen, it just might. Insurance companies may give you performance ratings. These numbers designate the type of services you provide. Some insurance policies are more

Well into an ongoing landscape job, the owners decided they wanted this large, damaged tree removed (above). How successful do you think this guy (inset) will be?



general than others. For instance, insurance for a lawn maintenance firm may not include snow plowing services, even though we often associate the two together.

The lack of equipment can have nasty consequences, particularly when it comes to safety and profitability. For instance, a customer sees how well a company is installing a landscape and asks if a large oak can be removed at the same time. You're there, the customer wants it and they

might pay more for the work because it makes it easier on them.

Often it's best to sub out the job

Now you have a problem because you have to figure out how that tree will come down, where it will land, how you will dispose of it, how you will clean up, if your

staff can do the work and if your insurance will cover the tree removal.

It may be better to hire a subcontractor. If you already have a subcontractor for that particular service, you already know the routine. If you don't, you must do your due diligence, both as a service provider and as a consumer.

If the job must be done quickly, don't

use a subcontractor you don't know. Ask other customers whom they have used and take your time finding one who does the level of work you want.

I work a lot with deck, brick and tree contractors. I use two contractors for each category depending on the type of work and time schedule. This kind of subcontractor may be the way to go. You can provide the service without making sacrifices with potentially dangerous outcomes. Be aware, though, that subcontractors can just as easily ruin as well as strengthen a customer relationship with your firm.

Turn it down

Refusing a job is one of the more difficult aspects to contracting. One of the advantages of a smaller company is the ability to provide services at many different levels and be a one-stop shop for your customers. But after balancing a job's requirements with your capabilities, refusing a job may be the best alternative.

In fact, refusing a job because it is not in your area of expertise is professional. It says that you are an expert in what you normally do, but not in that particular task. Customers, believe it or not, will respond better than you might have expected.

There are all sizes of companies out there. Many full-service contractors have been successful by providing convenient multiple services to their customers. But it must work both ways, for you and your customers.

Consider your boundaries and stay within those limits. It will ultimately make you, your staff and your customers much happier in the end.

— *The author is president of Natural Landscape Design and Maintenance Inc., Keego Harbor, MI*

When people do start thinking about retirement, they think it's too late. But that's not so. You can start your retirement plan any time and have success.



Plan for your future: It's never too late to save

Retiring in style is virtually everyone's dream. For most of us, unfortunately, we are least likely to plan for it when we're young. And obviously, this is more difficult than dreaming because there are senior citizens who never achieve the goal of financial freedom.

One of the reasons seems to be that when people do start thinking about retirement, they also tend to think it's too late. But that's not so. You can start your retirement plan in your 20s, 30s, 40s, even your 50s, and have success. But remember that starting later does make it more difficult.

Where do you start?

There are a number of considerations when preparing to retire. Truthfully, it's hard to decide how much money you need to retire. Much depends on your lifestyle. I like the idea (as a minimum) of having your house paid for in full and a million dollars in the bank. Then, if you don't take more than one world cruise a year or blow a ton on the lottery, you're probably going to be in good shape. Your dreams may be different.

Although \$1 million may not be your goal, let's look at what it takes (and how long) to amass that million if you're able to invest it and gain a 13% return. (According to Ibbotson and Associates, that's what the stock market as a whole has averaged over the past 25 years.)

\$1 million equals:

- ▶ \$10,000 lump sum invested for nearly 40 years

- ▶ \$100 per month invested for 38 years

Compare that with what you have to do in a shorter time to reach your \$1 million:

- ▶ \$294,590 lump sum invested for 10 years
- ▶ \$48,040 per year invested for 10 years

These are fairly big numbers for most people to generate. This also makes no allowances for taxes, and it assumes that you will make 13% per year — by no means a guarantee. In other words, it's anything but an easy task for most of us. And the less time you have, the harder it is. Consequently, the sooner you start saving, the better.

Here is another example:

- ▶ \$2,000 per year invested at 10% grows to \$100,000 in 18 years

- ▶ \$2,000 per year invested at 15% grows to \$100,000 in 14 years

The point of all this is twofold:

- ▶ The more you can invest and save now, the better
- ▶ The higher your rate of return, the faster it will grow

Most of us can come up with \$2,000 a year. And \$100,000 is a heck of a lot better than nothing. Again, this assumes you're going to do well on your choice of investments, but says nothing about how you're going to achieve these lofty rates.

Investment help

It's no longer difficult for the average investor to keep pace with the financial world and monitor his investments. If I had one place to go to get do-it-

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yourself investment advice, it would be the Motley Fool on the Internet. One of their model portfolios, which is called the "Rulebreaker," turned \$50,000 into over \$800,000 in less than six years. No foolin'!

Can they do it again? Who knows, but they also explain how they do it, and you owe it to yourself to learn everything you can. The site has a "Fool School" full of incredible information and investments ranging from the very conservative to the flamboyant. They give you a sound ap-

proach for where to put your hard-earned dollars, not to mention how to monitor them.

Another factor most of us don't calculate is the effects of inflation. Nevertheless, even a low rate creates big effects over long periods of time. If you factor in our current reduced rate of 2% vs. a 100-year average of 3%, in 30 years, a \$20,000 car will cost about \$35,000! A \$10 meal at a fast food restaurant will run about \$17. (Retrospectively speaking, some of us may even remember when you could get a

McDonald's hamburger for 15 cents). Today's social security check would go a long way in yesterday's marketplace. Unfortunately, it's not likely to ever work that way.

— *The author is a registered principal/independent stock and commodity broker with more than 20 years' experience in the financial industry. Contact him at 800/643-1155.*

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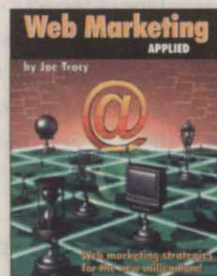
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NEWS YOU CAN USE

Say goodbye to Dursban

EPA SAYS PESTICIDE POSES HEALTH RISK TO CHILDREN

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Landscape managers will no longer be able to apply the popular pesticide Dursban now that its manufacturer, Dow AgroSciences, has agreed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to voluntarily cancel most in and around the home uses of it in the U.S.

The EPA contends that Dursban, manufactured by Dow AgroSciences, poses a health risk to children because it could harm their brains and

nervous systems. The contention is based on a study by Dow that found that chlorpyrifos, sold under the trade names Dursban and Lorsban, causes brain damage in fetal rats whose mothers were given the pesticide.

Despite the study, Bruce Miehle, general manager for Turf and Ornamental Products at Dow, insisted on chlorpyrifos' safety. "Because of FQPA (Food Quality Protection Act),
continued on page 19

Life after Dursban?

Now that the EPA has canceled Dursban, the question is, "Is there life after chlorpyrifos?" The answer in many corners is, "Yes."

First, remember that you can use Dursban under its current label indefinitely, and the EPA stated in *The Washington Post* that "the compound (Dursban) poses no imminent threat to public health, and consequently won't order a recall of products containing it." But there are alternatives.

Tim Maniscalco, Leader, Government & Public Affairs Urban Pest Management for Dow AgroSciences, says that while they don't cover as broad a spectrum and usage as Dursban, Dow products Spinosad and Conserve are comparable alternatives. Pyrethroids such as Talstar, Astro, Scimitar and Deltagard help manage surface insects such as chinch bugs, billbugs and sod webworms. Mach 2, Merit and Flagship can handle white grubs and a number of other chewing pests.

As to whether Dow's production of Dursban alternatives will step up, Maniscalco said he was not sure. "Production will depend on demand," he said.

Maniscalco couldn't offer specifics on any new products being developed for the turf and ornamental market. "We have a continued, on-going research effort in the turf and ornamental area, and we will focus our research people on that," he said.

Green Industry responds

Since the EPA's announcement regarding Dursban, Tom Delaney, executive vice president of PLCAA, has fielded calls from concerned PLCAA members.



Tom Delaney

"Where landscape professionals may have more problems is with commercial accounts or in public areas like parks or recreation sites," Delaney said. "And there's a different relationship between the homeowner and a landscape company and the general public and a company. The homeowner has more trust and receives specific benefits from the company. But the general public has more questions and are more likely to say, 'I don't want it on my ball-field where my kids play.'"

"Customers happen to be more educated than the general public," Delaney said.

"They hear all kinds of stories about saccharin and everything and are less likely to put a lot of weight on a flash in the pan article in the news."

Allen James, executive director of Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE), predicted a bleak future for other pesticides. "Compared to earlier decisions on other pesticides, it sets a track record and future ones will be treated the same," he said. "There's nothing to say they'll be more even-handed with other products. The process is broken, not the pesticide."

Debra Holder, executive director of ALCA, also voiced concerns about the future.

"With Dow AgroSciences announcing their agreement with the EPA on changes in the use of insecticides containing chlorpyrifos, we recognize that there will be changes and recommend that our landscape contractor follow the guidelines outlined," Holder said. "However, we do have concerns that the Food Quality Protection Act of 1996 appears to be setting standards that are not necessarily accepted by the scientific community or other regulatory boards internationally."

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Circle No. 141 on Reader Inquiry Card

Egarden joins with hardware co-ops

RALEIGH, NC — Egarden.com signed long-term strategic e-commerce agreements with Ace Hardware Corp., Do It Best Corp. and TruServe Corp. with the goal of establishing a strong initial base of buyers of lawn and garden products.

Textron unites E-Z-GO and Turf Care

AUGUSTA, GA — In a move aimed at strengthening its position in the golf, turf care and industrial markets, Textron consolidated management of E-Z-GO Textron and Textron Turf Care & Speciality Products into a single organization called Textron Golf and Turf.

Textron will continue to offer golf cars, professional/commercial turf care equipment and utility vehicles under the Bob-Cat, Brouwer, Buntton, Cushman, E-Z-GO, Jacobsen, Ransomes, Ryan and Steiner brand names.

Shemin Nurseries buys Schumacher's

DANBURY, CT — Shemin Nurseries Inc. acquired Schumacher's Wholesale Nursery and Landscaping Supplies, South St. Paul, MN.

Shemin, one of the nation's largest wholesale distributors of horticultural products and services, will now be operating 24 distribution centers in 12 different geographic markets.

Tyler opens Indy delivery operation

ELWOOD, IL — Tyler Enterprises opened a full-service 7,200-sq.-ft.

continued on page 20

Andersons completes acquisition of Scotts' U.S. turf business

MAUMEE, OH — The Andersons, Inc. has completed its acquisition of The Scotts Company's U.S. Professional Turf business and can now focus on the process of implementation.

"We have a plan in some stage of implementation," said Rick Anderson, president of The Andersons, Inc. Processing Group. "Part of our management philosophy is to take the strength of what we acquired and our own inherent strengths and make them work well together to achieve a 1+1=3 phenomenon. Part of doing that well is putting a team together that is a combination of both and

getting ideas from everyone involved."

The transaction included a long-term supply agreement under which Scotts will use its own manufacturing processes to produce value-added products for The Andersons. Specifically, the acquisition included ProTurf®, Contec™, PolyS® and other brand names, the distribution network, customer lists and all trademarks, patents, technologies and copyrights associated with the professional turf market. The transaction didn't include use of the Scotts® brand or any of Scotts' consumer, professional grass seed or professional horticultural businesses.

Weed Man ups the ante

Look for Weed Man to move into United States markets more quickly than planned, said company executives in an exclusive interview with Landscape Management. The Mississauga, Ontario-based lawn care franchise company, which is the largest in Canada, has restructured its original U.S. marketing plan and stepped up the pace, based on early and enthusiastic response.

According to Roger Mongeon, president of the U.S. subsidiary, "The initial interest was so great we started looking for the most efficient way to attack the United States market."

In response, Weed Man's U.S. company, Turf Holdings Inc., signed six sub-franchisors in key markets. Each of these will be responsible for high population or multi-state areas and will sell a number of local Weed Man franchises to lawn care operators, pest control operators and other interested parties.

Currently, the large sub-franchisor territories cover much of the Midwest and mid-Atlantic areas. For more information on Weed Man, contact Turf Holdings Inc. at 416/269-5754 or visit the Web-site at www.weed-man.com

Shaner appointed PGMS executive director

BALTIMORE, MD — The Professional Grounds Management Society (PGMS) recently named Thomas C. Shaner as its new executive director.

The PGMS also announced it has contracted with Joseph E. Shaner Co. (JES), of which Thomas Shaner is president, to provide full administrative and management services.

"Through the association management company approach, PGMS volunteer leaders will be able to spend most of their time focusing on the future for their society," Shaner said. "Operational details will be handled routinely from our offices. We are staffed so that PGMS services can be expanded and improved to meet the needs of the membership, now and in the future."

[CLIPPINGS]

continued from page 16

the rules have changed," Miehle said, "but the safety of chlorpyrifos hasn't. We ultimately felt that we had to reach an agreement with the EPA, but this does not change our conviction in the safety of chlorpyrifos for all labeled uses."

Users speak up

The decision hits companies across the industry in a variety of ways. Some landscape managers have stopped using Dursban, or plan to now, despite the fact that they will still be able to use it under its current label indefinitely and find it on store shelves until Dec. 31, 2002.

"Our company made a position as of Jan. 1 to suspend purchases of Dursban, work off our existing inventory and phase it out," said Kirk Hurto, Ph.D., director of

"I quit using it (Dursban) some time ago when I saw this coming."

— Michael Hornung, president, Valley Green

technical services for TruGreen-Chem-Lawn. "We had already brought down our inventory level significantly in the past with some development of alternative products."

Part of the company's decision, Hurto said, was not based on safety but rather the fact that it was a public issue. "Right now, when customers call, instead of putting our branches in a position of dealing with anxiety or clarifying information, we believe it's a lot easier to explain to customers that we want to phase Dursban out," Hurto said. "It's just so much easier to take a proactive stance, and customers in our business are looking for leadership and peace of mind. It's no longer a scientific issue than it is public policy."

"I quit using it some time ago when I saw this coming," says Michael Hornung, president of Valley Green, a lawn care

firm in St. Cloud, MN.

But it's not that simple for others who have come to rely on the material's broad spectrum of control. "The loss of Dursban is going to destroy us down here," notes Jerry Gaeta, partner in The Good Earth, a

full-service landscape contractor in Mt. Pleasant, SC. "We use it for termite treatments, fire ants, as a chemical in all potting plants, for a number of things. I don't know what we'll use in its place."

— Jason Stahl

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continued from page 18

warehouse and delivery operation in Indianapolis. The building will serve as a distribution center for Tyler's custom-blended fertilizer products and speciality chemicals.

Wright Mfg. moving to expand

GAITHERSBURG, MD—Wright Manufacturing, Inc., is moving its headquarters to a new building in Frederick, MD, 21 miles north of its present headquarters.

Milliken new distributor for Sybron

SALEM, VA—Milliken Turf Products, Spartanburg, SC, recently became Sybron Chemicals' newest distributor for global turf markets.

Echo expands Lake Zurich facility

LAKE ZURICH, IL—Echo Inc. is adding over 155,000 sq. ft. of office and distribution space to its Lake Zurich facility. This is the third expansion at the Lake Zurich facility since the original building was built in 1989.

IGP acquires Vandenburg

BOSTON, MA—International Garden Products (IGP), Boston, MA, acquired Vandenburg Bulb Co., Chester, NY. IGP is a grower/supplier of ornamental plants and horticultural specialty products to U.S. garden centers and retailers. Vandenburg is a processor of perennials and flower bulbs from Holland, the U.S. and other sources worldwide.

[CLIPPINGS]

Info Center

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People & companies

Netafim USA began a facility expansion project that will add 20,000 square feet and new production lines to its existing facility. The project is Phase 2 of the company's expansion plans which have involved capital investments of close to \$4 million.

Nature Safe hired **Chuck Barber** as regional sales manager for



the mid-Atlantic and New England states and **Ibsen Dow** as regional sales manager for the western U.S.

Environmental Industries (EII), the parent company of **Environmental Care (ECI)**, named **Richard Sperber** president of ECI. Sperber will also continue to serve as senior vice president and chief operating officer of EII.

Simplot Turf and Horticulture named **Bill Whitacre** president.

Bayer Corp. named **Dan Carrothers** head of marketing for the company's Garden & Professional Care unit. The company also named



Phil McNally, Ph.D. field research and development representative for the western U.S. and **Chuck Silcox, Ph.D.** field research and development representative for the northeastern U.S.

One *hot*
economy
Page 24

How you
handle labor
Page 36

Strategies
for 2001
Page 42



State of the Industry 2000

BY THE **Landscape** STAFF
MANAGEMENT

Remember life before Dursban?





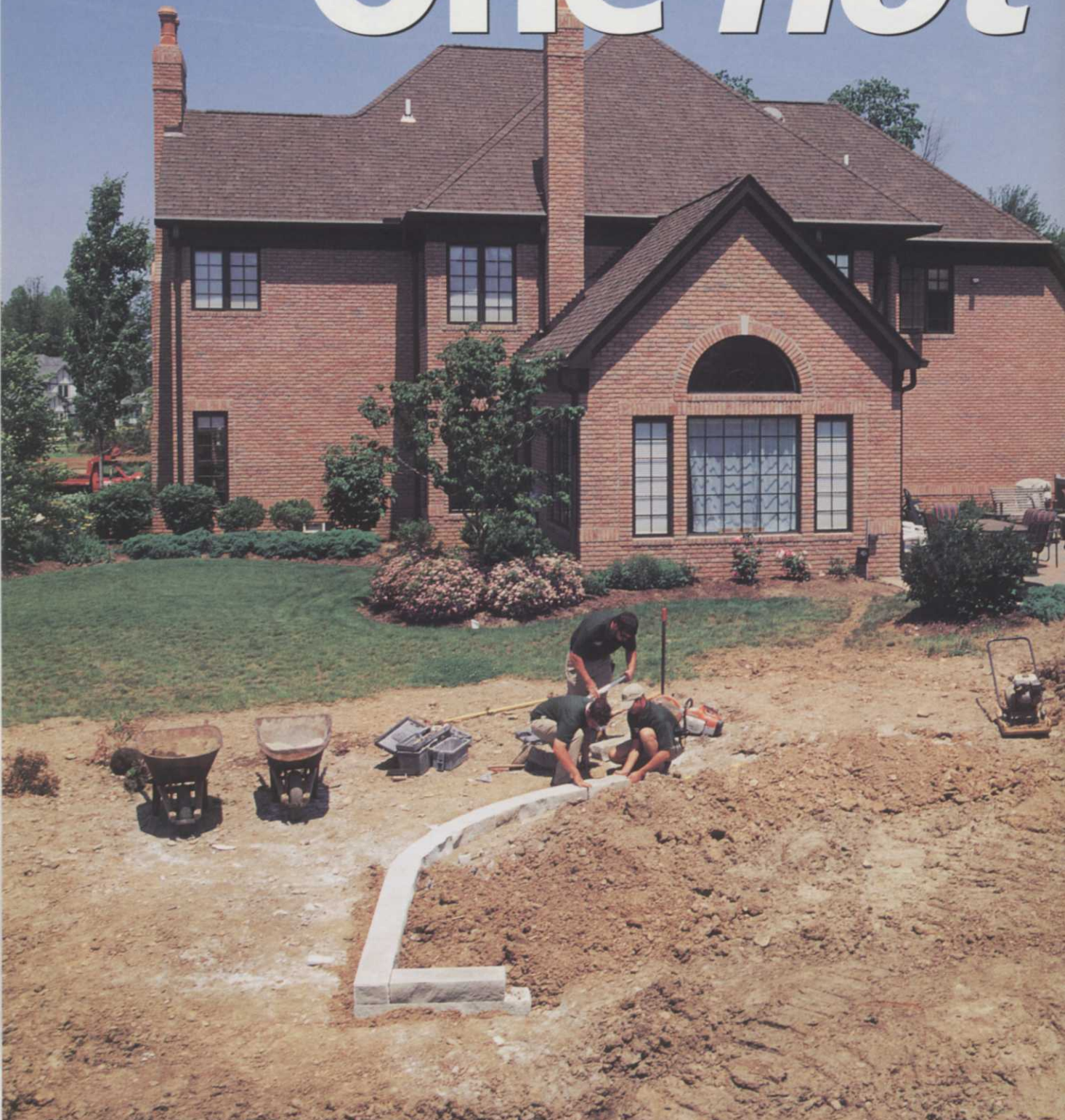
Before Dursban[®] insecticide, insect pests were, shall we say, a little out of control. Then Dursban came along and helped you get them under control. Low odor Dursban Pro has the power to protect turf and ornamentals from more than 280 insect species, all while providing long residual control. Simply put, when you apply Dursban Pro, insect pests are history.



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One *hot*



economy

PART 1:

Great growth, but for how long?

BY SUSAN GIBSON AND JASON STAHL

John Wheeler can forecast his landscape maintenance contracts through the year's end, but it's the design/build side that is harder to forecast. The president of Wheeler Landscaping Inc. in Chagrin Falls, OH, has a variety of design/build jobs lined up now but wonders how long that trend will last, especially if the economy "cools" as the experts say it will.

"We've budgeted an increase in our design/build work this year, but most of the work comes not that far in advance. We had a record month in April but will it hold out?" he asks.

That's the question on many people's minds as they juggle two conflicting trends: managing today's strong demand and dealing with uncertain prospects about next year's business. Economists tell us that the Federal Reserve's six interest rate hikes, the stock market's volatility and some rising prices in certain sectors are starting to have that "cooling" effect. The question is, how much and how long will it last?

Certain economic trends seem to point to a slight slowdown, but what will that mean for the landscape and lawn care industry? Currently, few industry professionals see any signs of a slowdown.

"It's not here yet," says Neil Thelen, president of Landmark Landscapes in Norcross, GA. "Landscape normally is at the back end of a slowdown. We could see something in about 12 months."

The next year isn't looking bad for Mike McCoy, president of McCoy Landscape Services in Marion, OH, who says the strong economy has made business easy. He reports that most of his contracts came unsolicited, boosting the firm over its previous goals.

Right now, the problem isn't so much a slowdown as it is managing the incredible growth this industry has seen during the last nine years. The profile of the Green Industry in 2000 is one of untapped opportunities for more business, labor shortages that continue to plague landscape managers and a host of new issues, regulations and market developments that may make life even more interesting in the next few years.

Year in review:

Full steam ahead

Last year, landscape managers predicted an average of 15.5% growth for 1999. Our research this year (see "How we got this information," page 36) shows even more optimism, with expectations of a mean revenue increase of 18% for 2000.

Where are they getting this growth? Some landscapers and lawn care operators are expanding via franchises while others are opening up new branches, up-selling existing customers, finding new clients on the Internet and squeezing more profits through greater efficiencies.

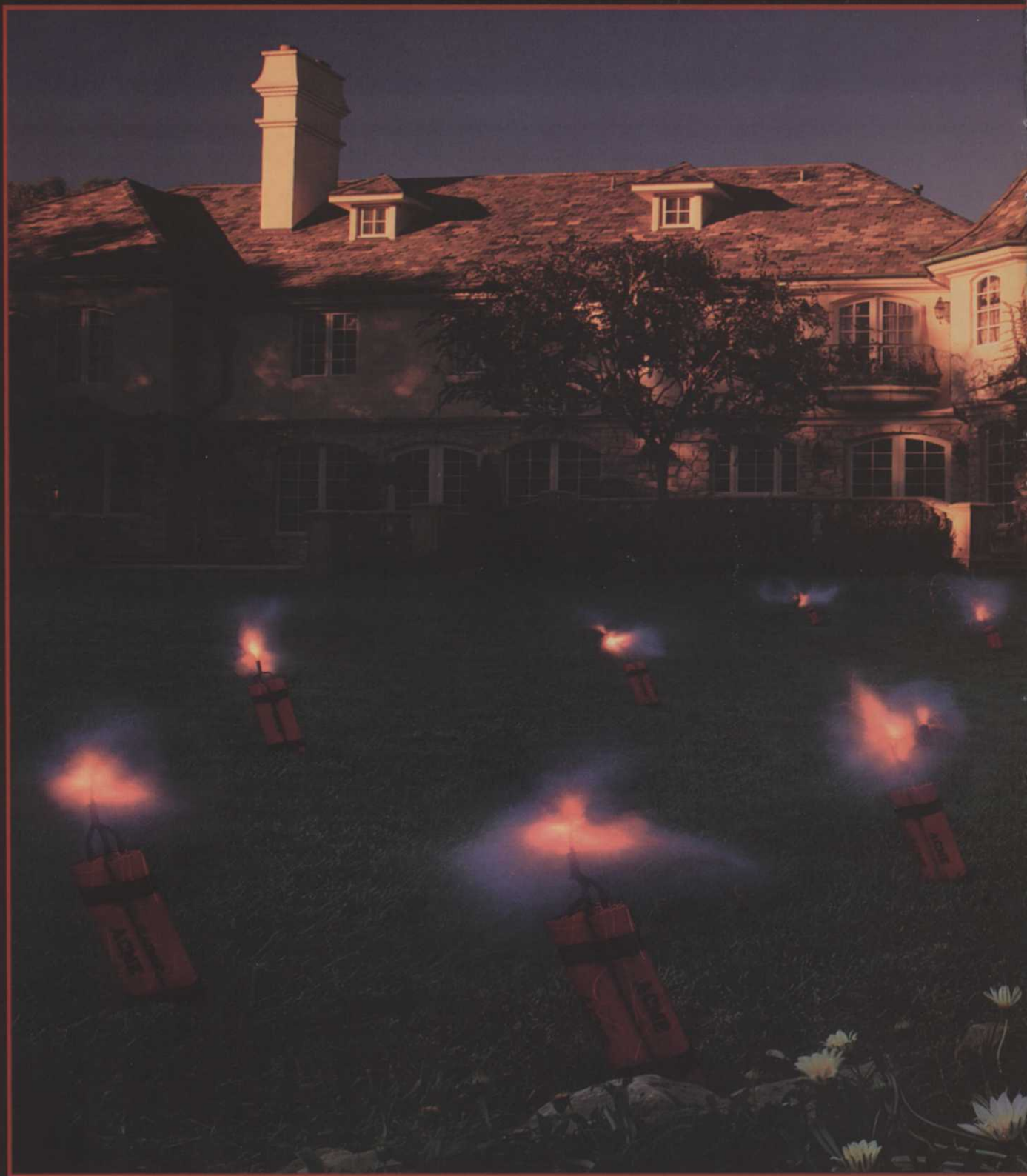
Nevertheless, there are several factors that make life difficult today or hold the promise of having a major effect on tomorrow's business.

Down and dirty competition

Low-ball competition keeps maintenance prices (and profits) low, especially in the head-to-head residential markets. Few contractors voluntarily get into this price-war situation and several, in fact, are planning to boost their prices this year.

"We're shifting to a new pricing structure and are looking to grow

continued on page 28



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through that, not through volume," says Jerry Gaeta, a partner with The Good Earth Inc., a full-service landscape firm in Mt. Pleasant, SC. The time seems right, he notes. "We have a backlog of work and enough people who want our services that they will wait two to three months."

Michael Hornung, president of Valley Green, a lawn care services firm in St. Cloud, MN, says that low-balling is nothing new. "We've had some low-balling in our market, but it seems someone is always going to do it. Some of those who used to low-ball finally raised their prices and their businesses are growing as well as ours."

Despite the competition, Hornung reports Valley Green's 30% to 40% average growth has caused him to finally set limits. "It has just been nuts and we've started to hold growth back. Actually, that's worked well because we can be on the customer's property more often and we're not working our people to the bone."

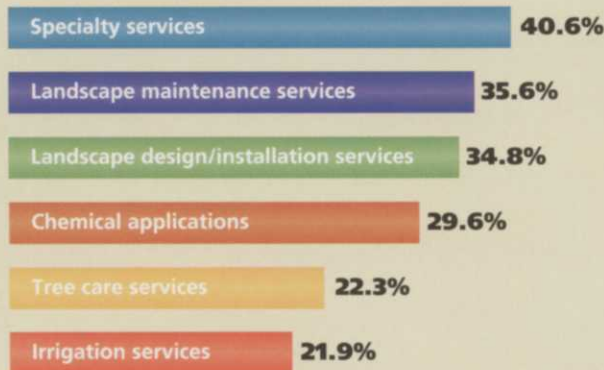
While low prices are a valid option, too many landscapers price themselves out of the profit picture.

And many of the prices are too low to encourage professionalism or growth of the industry as a whole, say some insiders.



Chris Karcher finds "good" customers

Average profit margins for various services



SOURCE: LM READER SURVEYS

"It's very competitive out there," says Chris Karcher, owner of a new NaturalLawn franchise in Shawnee, KS. "A lot of companies want to compete by offering low prices, but they're doing a disservice to the industry. Our challenge right now is targeting customers who are convinced that lawn care isn't about who is cheapest."

Tom Davis, president of Bozzuto Landscaping in Laurel, MD, agrees: "Competition is stronger and pricing is still tight. Personally, I hope the low-ballers get acquired soon."

"Low-balling used to be an issue for us," notes Billy Gray, vice president of The Southern Landscape Group in Pinehurst, NC. "But now that our reputation's out there, it no longer is an issue because people know we deliver high quality."

Gray says that while more new start-up companies have joined the market in the past year (mainly "guys with one truck and a lawn mower,"

he notes), the number of larger companies offering quality service has stayed the same.

The firm's emphasis on quality lifts it out of the price-cutting muck and has another important benefit — attracting quality employees. "We are the employer of choice locally because we offer good pay and benefits," Gray reports.

Gary Nichols, owner of Twin Oaks Landscaping Inc., in Fairfax, VA, rarely comes in as the low bidder. He expects his \$300,000 firm to increase revenues as much as 15% this year, but not by low-balling on landscape design/build. He won't bid on such work because "that's on a low-ball situation. There's a totally different profit margin involved there," he adds.

Dwight Hughes, president of Dwight Hughes Nursery, Cedar Rapids, IA, expects more competition to continue. "New competition is a national

issue. There is a new interest in horticulture and more people in the community college programs. They'll keep entering the business."

Don't expect the debate on low-balling to go away. Like Hornung, many feel that pricing plays a major role in setting industry standards for success and an appearance of professionalism.

"Everyone is so focused on saving money on payroll, yet they're not charging enough to do the work," he says. "Plumbers are getting \$100 per hour and we're still getting \$30 to \$40. That's why we can't find the employees we want. When we're getting a customer on price and not on service, we suffer for it."



Dwight Hughes: Interest is high

Inflation & the hunt for profitability

Like other industries, many landscape operations undoubtedly found higher profits by reaching new levels of productivity, rather than through increases in prices.

While our economy has enjoyed an unprecedented run of stable prices, some prices are creeping up — health care costs, gasoline, water and wages. And some operations are starting to feel the pinch.

"I'm feeling significant cost pressures, especially in the areas of insurance (mainly health care

costs) and gasoline," reports Neil Thelen. "I'm going to take a pricing action of a broad nature this year, which is something I haven't done for six years."

While Thelen considers his pricing options, some contractors like Jerry Gaeta have already decided to tack on a gasoline-hike surcharge.

"We're going to be moving our prices up because the cost of gasoline is moving so fast it's not giving us room to pass it along to our customers," he explains. "I'm on fixed maintenance contracts, but with 30 trucks running a week, I can't pass it along. We'll have to readjust all our equipment rates to cover it."

The LM reader surveys report that 71.6% of our respondents plan to raise prices this year, with only 28.4% holding at current levels.

Profit margins also depend on growth and healthy revenues. According to the survey respondents, the most profitable services continue to fall to specialty work and landscape maintenance, with design/installation close behind.

Within those wide segments, of course, there is plenty of variation. Take the profit you can expect for a single plant sold to either residential or commercial customers, says Gaeta. "That \$24 plant you sell to the residential customer will only get

you \$15 or \$16 for a commercial landscape." That's one reason why his firm focuses on high-end residential landscapes.

Consolidation fallout keeps coming

The consolidation in both landscape and lawn care markets continues, as do mergers and acquisitions on the supply side. This causes uncertainty in local marketplaces, changes in the way landscape managers must operate and, sometimes, rational pricing!

Landscape contractors in several markets have commented on three developments relative to the consolidation of firms:

1. Some consolidated firms are backing away from their higher proportion of design/build work to concentrate on developing steady maintenance business;

2. Some consolidators are hard at work trying to systematize and standardize their diverse operations — a process that may yet take some time;

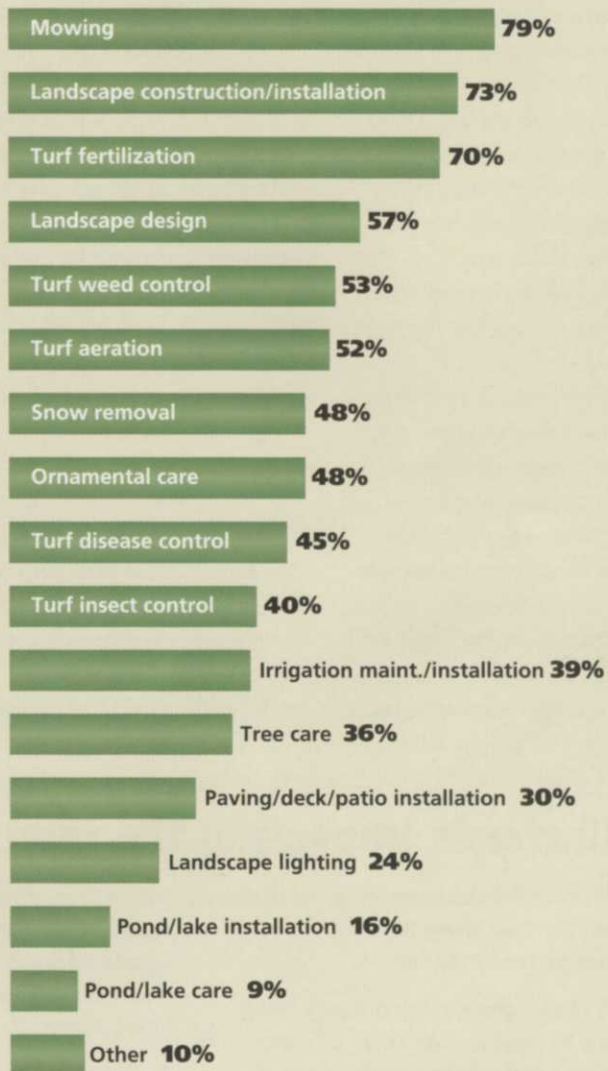
3. Some firms are "buying" business through low, unprofitable pricing (and denying they're doing it).

It may take some time before the consolidators develop the operations they want, but, in the meantime, several non-consolidators landscape companies are benefiting from the situation.



Jerry Gaeta says prices must rise.

Most popular landscape services offered in 1999



SOURCE: LM READER SURVEYS

"The mergers in our marketplace have caused those firms to move on to the largest projects," explains Larry E. Brinkley, president of BLT Landscape Services, Dallas, TX. "That's left a void with the medium to small-sized jobs." This has been advantageous for BLT, which concentrates on medium-sized commercial and high-end residential work.

The shakeouts that are in-

evitable when competitors merge are also proving beneficial for landscape managers looking for experienced managers. Several commented on their good fortune to hire experienced people from consolidating firms.

While the nearest consolidated firm is 100 miles away from Mike McCoy's company in Marion, OH, they compete

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in the same market — Columbus. Since he hasn't gone head-to-head with the bigger firms on bid jobs, he has a rather charitable view of them. "It seems that consolidated companies are doing a great job," he says. "I think there will always be room for smaller companies, though."

Neil Thelen is waiting for the consolidated firms in Atlanta to make a serious play. "Our market is atypical — we have several top firms who have always been competitors, and now they're working hard to figure it out," he says. "With that many firms, you're going to have some confusion, but it will be a juggernaut when they

eventually do figure it out."

He's watching closely. "It will be really interesting to see how this plays out. I think the consolidation will improve the professionalism of our business here in Atlanta, but everyone needs to be prepared for almost anything. You can't have too many prima donnas on the dance floor."

On the lawn care side, both Centex of Dallas and Weed Man of Mississauga, Ontario, are making active moves into the marketplace. Weed Man just announced revised plans to penetrate the United States lawn care market through a series of sub-franchise arrangements and has attracted several high-profile lawn care owners,

while Centex is concentrating on acquisitions.

Supply chain changes

Supplier mergers and acquisitions are changing traditional distribution systems, the availability of certain products and many face-to-face relationships.

Just a few examples of the activity on the supplier side include: the BASF/American Cyanamid deal; the merger of Novartis and Zeneca into Syngenta; The Andersons' and NuGro's combined purchase of the professional turf business from The Scotts Co.; John Deere's new emphasis on moving its dealers into after-sale services; Turfco's direct sales program; Ferris Industries' pur-

chase by Simplicity; the launch of several e-commerce sites focusing on the landscape industry; and AgriBioTech's bankruptcy.

All of these are expected to impact the normal buying and distribution systems, but time will tell if those impacts are positive or negative. Most likely, here's what you'll find:

► New names, new faces and new ways of buying. As suppliers merge or tweak existing distribution chains, some will cut staff, reassign territories or "streamline" the buying process.

► Less products and potential limitations on developmental research. Some crossover prod-

continued on page 34

10 trends impacting the industry

Whether the economy continues to expand or slow, these 10 trends won't change. Here they are:

- 1. "Easy" growth** – It's not only fairly easy to grow an operation, it's sometimes a real challenge to limit growth. Survey respondents named landscape design/installation the fastest growing segment, followed by maintenance.
- 2. Uncertainty about the future** – Is the economy cooling? Will it affect construction, disposable income for consumers and commercial maintenance budgets? It's hard to prepare for this.
- 3. Consolidators are getting it together** – While the rate of consolidation has slowed, the consolidated companies are starting to standardize operations and bring on some real competition.
- 4. New, tougher competition** – New

competitors enter this market constantly, making competition tough and squeezing prices, particularly in the maintenance side of the business. This won't stop.

5. Demanding customers – Blame it on instant messaging if you like, but today's residential and commercial customers are much more fussy and pushy about getting "extras" in a deal. And they want it now!

6. Ouch! Lack of labor hurts – Labor shortages are a fact of life and there is no solution on the horizon. Some organizations make the most of the situation with good management, benefits and mechanization.


7. Regulations with bite – Key issues challenge landscapers around the country, including: availability and use of

pesticides; blower noise and engine exhausts; ozone-alert restrictions; control of irrigation installation; and water restrictions.

8. Diversity in services and customers – Innovative contractors and LCOs are expanding into new areas, franchising new services and seeking employees from new sources.

9. Supply chain blues – Manufacturers are merging at a dizzying rate, the ABT seed consolidation's fallout has yet to fall out and dealer/distributor chains continue to confuse and frustrate industry professionals. This will continue as long as mergers and acquisitions are profitable.

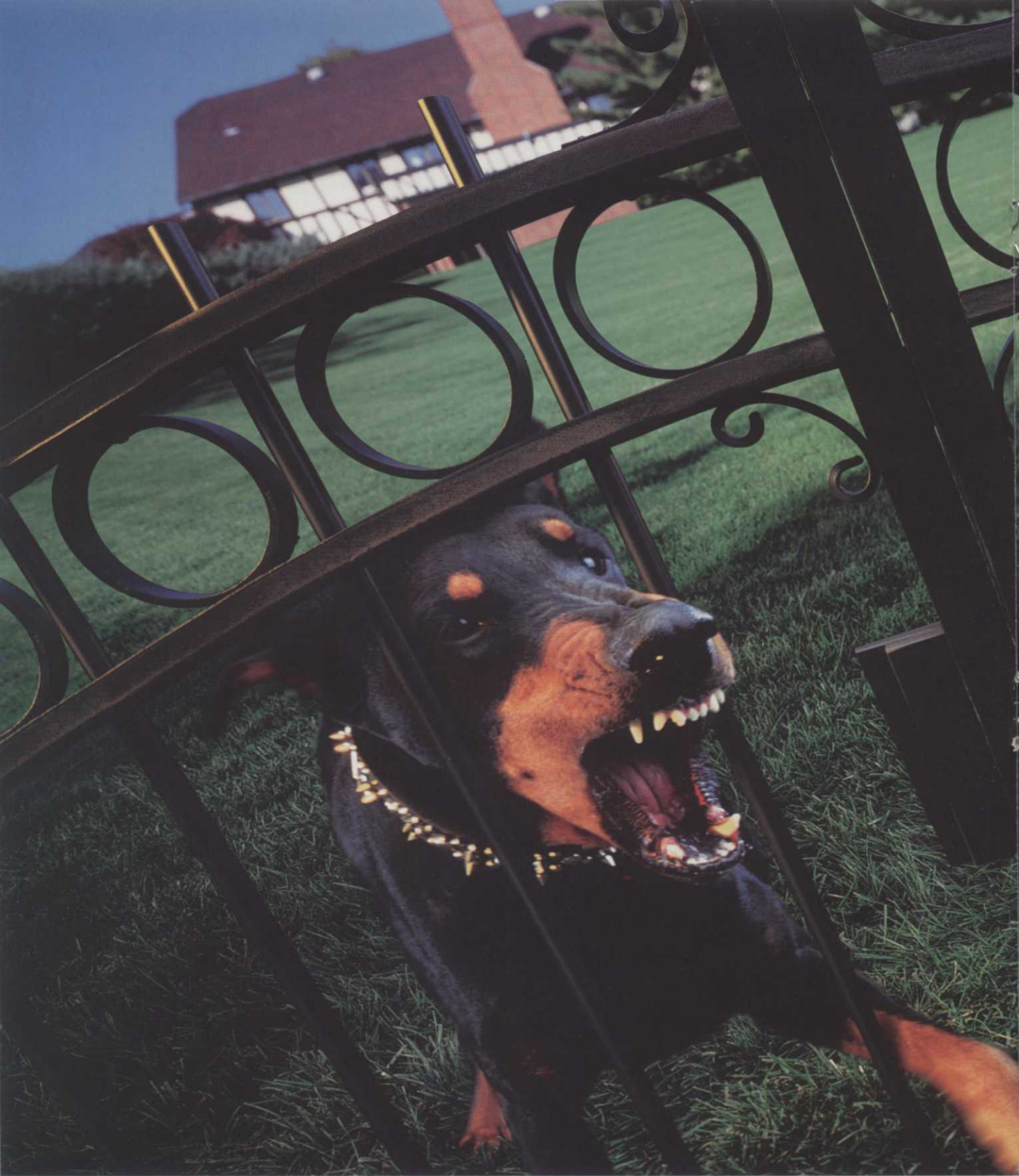
10. High-tech goes "green" – Laptops, palm devices, digital photography, new software and the Web continue to attract the attention of tech-savvy landscape managers. But how many are mechanizing for better productivity?



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continued from page 30

ucts may not be economically feasible for production anymore, so expect to try new ones. Others may have to be spun off if they compete within a merged organization.

► Expect some rocky transactions if you've always worked with the same suppliers and supply chains. New people and systems mean a new learning curve for everyone.

► E-commerce sites promise much but it will take some time to see how well they deliver. Some have the potential to influence pricing/delivery both positively and negatively.

Winning the retention game

How landscape managers keep their employees

Incentives/bonuses	67.4%
Uniforms	52.2%
Retirement savings plans	38.0%
Promotions	31.5%
Transportation	28.3%
Recognition programs	23.9%
Education reimbursement	21.7%
Profit-sharing plans	19.6%
Health care programs	9.8%

SOURCE: LM READER SURVEYS

In-your-face regulations

Moves to regulate landscape operations at both local and national levels are becoming more visible and aggressive, especially in certain markets. Last month's loss of Dursban is a prime example (see story on

page 16). Massachusetts's strict regulation of pesticide use on public properties is another major development.

The Dursban move was not a surprise; rather, it was the speed of the decision that hit the industry so hard. Several landscape managers say they saw it coming and had made their plans accordingly.

Michael Kowalchuk, former owner of Gro-Control Inc., Westland, MI, stopped using it six years ago because of a state law requiring him to put a warning plaque on his truck. He's spent enough time in the industry to know that pesticide regulation will ultimately affect business, despite the emergence of alternative products.

"People want results if they're paying for a service," he says. "They're pretty impatient. If you can't deliver because you don't have the tools to do the job, your market will definitely be affected."

Many landscapers are dealing with restrictions brought on by drought or overbuilding, and they have had to defend the use of water for landscaping.

"We're down 20 inches below normal for the last 18 months and may be looking at severe restrictions or bans," reports Neil Thelen. "Malta (Metro Atlanta Landscape and Turf Association) has been speaking up for water rights in our area."

Larry Brinkley reports an informal coalition of landscape managers in the Dallas area has

organized to discuss water issues and develop information for use in public debates. Thanks to the information, many of the restrictions were limited, he says. "They backed off on it."

He also reports talk of restrictions on the use of backhoes, mowers, fork lifts and other equipment during Dallas' many ozone alert days. "They're talking about limiting use until after 10 a.m.," he says, noting that those rules create new logistical problems for his managers.

Regulators in Illinois and Minnesota have been stepping up pressure to make sure that installation of irrigation lines is limited to plumbers or electricians. For someone like Michael Hornung, who has seen his irrigation business double in each of the past three years, Minnesota's move is a threat. "This is going to hit me directly," he says.

The controversy about blower noise continues to bedevil landscapers in some areas of the country, especially California.

Wayne Richards, COO of Cagwin & Dorward, Novato, CA, explains, "The banning of blower use in cities is a big concern. Even though suppliers and contractors actively try to educate the public about the value of blowers, this is a purely emotional issue spearheaded by resi-

dents who are not concerned about the economic impact resulting from the bans. The California Landscape Contractors' Association is actively soliciting political support to arrive at compromises."

"Government regulations on the H2B program have had a negative effect, with increases in the prevailing wage rates," says Ronald Schmoyer, president of OneSource Landscape & Golf Services, Tampa,

FL. He also cited EPA regulations and Florida restrictions on water use as serious issues.

'Spoiled' customers?

Aren't you a more discriminating customer with your purchases these days? Maybe it's logical to expect your clients, both residential and commercial, to be pickier. But how picky is okay? Some landscapers complained that unrealistic expectations, burdensome communication schedules and requests for "extras" are driving them crazy.

"My number one challenge is dealing with people," says Dwight Hughes. "They want immediate communications. If you don't call them back the same day they call, they'll be calling you back again."

It's not an issue of customers as much as managing their expectations, Hughes explains. "I have the greatest cus-



Larry Brinkley says water is a big issue.

"You have to be flexible and give customers all they want and more. But we've been training them to expect it — now it comes back to bite us."

— Michael Hornung

tomers in the world, but they all want it now. I had a customer call me three times and all she wanted was for us to take out one plant. Then, a new fast-food restaurant here gave me six days' notice to schedule and get their entire landscape placed."

Michael Hornung agrees. "You have to be flexible and give customers all they want and more. But we've been training them to expect it — now it comes back to bite us."

"Seven years ago, less than 1% of our customers wanted us to call before visiting. Now, 8% do," he notes. "We treated one lawn all year and then found bugs in the trees. The owner expected that he wouldn't have to pay for the extra tree treatment. He cancelled on us."

Jerry Gaeta sees it as a continuing trend. "Yes, customers are getting to be fussy, but that's how they are. Many of them are wealthy and want something extra. People everywhere are more demanding."

Snapshot 2000: Overview of an industry

Individual stories of growth range from 20% below 1998's levels to more than 100% growth in the last 12 months. How do they get these levels? Respondents to LM's State of the Industry survey showed the usual wide range of services offered in 1999 (see chart below). More than half of the respondents named at least six of these services in their mix.

Rising revenues

The optimism continues, with 69.4% of respondents reporting they expect an increase in revenue for the next 12 months and only 27% expecting revenues to stay put. Merely

3.6% of them expect a decline in sales.

The average landscape contractor's approximate revenues for 1999 were \$1.22 million, compared to the average lawn care company's revenues of \$322,000.

Current customer mix on average is 59.2% residential, 37.2% commercial and industrial and 3.7% other.

"We're seeing high demand for services in installation, maintenance, irrigation, tree care and environmental restoration," reports Wayne Richards.

Hornung sees other areas of growth. "Irrigation has really taken off with virtually no advertising," he says. "And after marketing (a year-round lighting franchise) one week, we've picked up \$35,000 in revenues."

Operating lean, mean and green

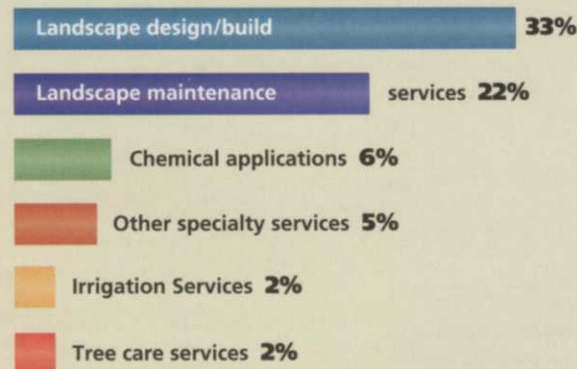
How can you be lean and mean without a clear picture of your operating budget? Readers in our survey knew their budgets inside and out, and had an average operating budget of \$495,000. This breaks down to an average budget for grounds management of \$1.34 million; landscape contracting \$518,000; and lawn care company \$240,000.

Our survey's respondents had several challenges this year. The average rankings show that 72.6% listed labor availability as their number one challenge, followed closely by developing good field supervisors/foremen.

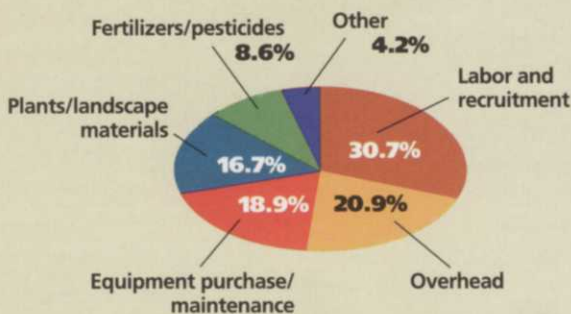
continued on page 36

Fastest growing service segments

(percent chosen as fastest growing business segment):



Typical '99 annual operating budget



continued from page 35

men (54.7%) and managing growth (51.3).

The problems of managing effective operations go deep into the labor situation and also ways to increase efficiency. And the solutions are not quick and dirty.

"You can make major changes in about three weeks, but they can fall apart a month later if managers don't stick with the changes," Jerry Gaeta advises. His firm is currently undergoing changes to allow growth through pricing, not volume.

"Our structure is holding us back" from the growth they want, he notes. "The challenge is in finding new managers and putting the right people underneath. This involves training."

Michael Hornung also feels stymied. "We could double our business if I could double the number of good employees I have."

How you handle labor

That most precious commodity — labor — needs extra care, say landscape managers across the country. They were unanimous in naming it their first and most troubling priority.

"It's still a problem here in Dallas," reports Larry Brinkley. "Employees are moving from our company to a competitor for 25 cents an hour. Some of the competition are recruiting them on our job sites."

Brinkley says his firm's policy to hire only legal immigrants also hurts, and the requirements for housing and insuring H2B employees can be cumbersome. "Unless the government institutes an amnesty program for illegal immigrants, labor will be in trouble," he forewarns.

Labor has been tight since the Atlanta Olympics, notes Neil Thelen, and it has gotten worse during that time period as labor costs have increased an

How we got the information

It's not easy to chronicle an industry as diverse as the Green Industry. Each operation and market is so different from the others that it is hard to generalize. Regulations may impact one operation but not another. But that's what this industry is all about — a robust, restless, innovative, youthful and beleaguered group of landscape professionals.

This report combines two proprietary research projects by *Landscape Management*, data from this year's Gallup poll and reports from sources such as the Federal Reserve and other economic groups.

Our surveys were mailed to a random sample of readers in early and mid-April. The first survey received a 20% response rate and was tabulated according to standard statistical analysis by Penn and Associates, an independent market research firm in Cleveland, OH. The second survey used a systematic, stratified selection of readers and was tabulated according to standard statistical analysis by Readex, an independent research firm in Stillwater, MN. It received an average 38% response rate.

The Readex survey represents the following groups: 69% landscape contractors, 25% lawn care companies and 5% grounds managers. Due to its higher rate of response, the Readex material is cited where we have comparative data from both surveys.

Respondents represented a mix of locations, services, sizes and years in operation. Locations ranged from the Midwest (32%) to the South (27%); the Northeast (21%) and the West (20%).

How you recruit employees

Recommendations from current employees **75%**

Newspaper ads **46.3%**

Hiring from competitors **15.7%**

Walk-ins/word of mouth **14.8%**

Employment agencies **13.0%**

Help wanted signs **13.0%**

Schools/job fairs **13.0%**

Internet **11.1%**

estimated 15 to 20%. "We're careful with our people resources and have a good development program" to keep employees with his firm, he says.

Difficulty attracting lawn care technicians is one reason Mike Kowalchuk sold his firm to TruGreen-ChemLawn late last year. "In Michigan, you have to be certified or registered by the state to apply chemicals. On a regular landscape crew, you don't have to be certified to cut grass and you can have one guy who's the crew leader and who knows what he's doing. But in chemi-

cal application, you have one guy in one truck and that person has to be a self-starter, someone who is motivated and can think for himself. That type of person is hard to find."

Paul Harder cited more opportunities for his employees as one reason he sold his firm, Prescription Turf Services in Middleton, MA, to TruGreen-ChemLawn in February. "I wanted my employees to be able to take advantage of better opportunities. Plus, it has become excruciatingly difficult to find good people and keep them."

Although the average orga-

Two sides of the "contractor" coin

We combed our research to develop two profiles of "typical" landscape managers. For comparison, we selected data of small organizations (revenues less than \$100,000) and larger ones (revenues over \$500,000) from our Penn survey. Both could describe themselves as "landscape contractors."

	Joe Lawn Service	Dan Green Guy
Company revenues	Less than \$100,000	More than \$500,000
Services offered (by rank)	Mowing Landscape construction Turf aeration	Landscape construction Mowing Turf fertilization
Customer mix	Residential – 67% Commercial – 25%	Residential – 55% Commercial – 41%
Years in operation	5 to 10 years	11 to 20 years
Location	Northeast or Midwest	South
Expect increased revenue for 2001?	Yes – 61%	Yes – 72%
Expect higher prices for 2001?	Yes – 69.2%	Yes – 71.4%
What are your top 3 challenges in business?	Growth management – 66.7% Labor availability – 54.8%	Labor availability – 84.8% Developing field supervisors/ foremen – 78.8%
Hourly rate for employees	Financing availability – 42.9% Best employee – \$12/hour New employee – \$8/hour	Growth management – 51.5% Best employee – \$18/hour New employee – \$8/hour
Number of employees	Full time – 4 Part time – 4	Full time – 30 Part time – 13
Employee retention programs used	Incentives/bonus – 74.1% Transportation – 37% Uniforms – 37% Retirement plan – 29.6%	Incentives/bonus – 66.7% Uniforms – 60% Retirement plan – 60% Promotions – 43.3%
Full time mechanic?	No	Yes
Have a Web site?	Yes – 9.3%	Yes – 33.3%
Highest level of education	High school graduate	Bachelor's degree
1999 personal income	\$61,889	\$95,174
Hours worked per week	55	64
Age	40	42
Years in industry	15	21

nization in our survey employed 17.5 full or part-time people in 1999, the results vary dramatically with the service segment:

AVERAGE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	
Grounds management	64.8
Landscape contractors	17.6
Lawn care companies	7.2

Paying and keeping people

The average rate paid by survey respondents for new hires is \$8 per hour. Average wages paid for the "best" employee was \$14 per hour, ranging from \$12 per hour for the smallest operations to a \$18 per hour for large organizations.

As far as recruiting goes, about 75% of our respondents act on recommendations from current employees.

The smallest organizations

focus on recommendations (61.1%), newspaper ads (27.8%) and walk ins/word of mouth (22.2%). Large organizations concentrate on recommendations (87.5%), newspaper ads (62.5%) and hiring from competitors (37.5%).

Several landscape managers are learning to deal with the



Kent Miller says strategies in place

labor situation in a creative way.

"Everyone wants to focus on human resources, but we don't like to focus on that," says Kent Miller, vice president at The Groundskeeper, Tucson, AZ. "Yes,

it's a challenge, but we have over 30 different strategies to overcome it."



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PART 2:

What's on the horizon?

A 'cooling' economy?

How are today's leading indicators expected to impact the Green Industry? After a record six increases of the interest rate, signs show that the Federal Reserve's policies may be working, gradually slowing an unheard-of rate of growth near 7%. Here's what happened recently:

- ▶ We're getting richer, but at a slower rate than 1999, says the Fed. First quarter household net worth grew only 2% in the first quarter of 2000, down from 8.1% in the last quarter of 1999.
- ▶ Unemployment rises only marginally — not enough to affect hiring opportunities in our industry. This may also be temporary.
- ▶ Housing starts dipped slightly earlier this year, which may or may not continue.
- ▶ Home mortgage demand fell by 56% in early 2000 and business load demand fell 25% for the same period. Banks are tightening lending standards.
- ▶ April reports show consumer spending still strong, but at the slowest rate since July 1999.

The Fed's actions typically take six months to filter

through the economy, so this is the big question mark. Growth may be slowing to the 3.5% or 4% the Fed thinks is sustainable, down from the 7% rate it reached in the fourth quarter of 1999.

Still a toss-up

Clearly, economic forecasts are still a toss-up. Economists may argue about the trends they see, but several trends may help you plan for late 2000 and into next year. Watch:

- **Interest rates, which are keyed to inflation.** Despite jumps in prices for gasoline, food and wages, inflation is steady due to drops in other prices. If inflation steadies, expect interest rate hikes to stop.
- **Housing starts.** Everyone expects higher interest rates to slow corporate and consumer

borrowing, which in turn will slow investment and housing starts. How will this affect you? Some contractors feel that this will slow their landscape design/build business, but others think it will merely shift dollars into landscape renovation as clients stay put.

- **Disposable income.** This is money consumers spend on big-ticket items — like landscapes, maintenance and special services. High rates of this generally means good news.
- **Unemployment rate.** Don't expect this to change for years. While good economic health continues, labor will be tight. Your competitors include other landscapers and anyone who offers higher wages, more benefits, easier work and a more pleasant organization.

continued on page 42

Data at a glance

Average organization's approximate revenues for 1999 were \$984,000.

Average organization's annual operating budget for 1999 was \$495,000.

Average customer mix is 59.2% residential, 37.2% commercial, 3.7% other.




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continued from page 40

● **Productivity rate.** If you're more profitable with the same operation, chances are you're more productive. But are you getting the maximum levels of productivity? We suspect this industry has far to go before reaching those levels.

Landscape managers look ahead

Bozzuto Landscaping is focused on community housing projects in Maryland — on the front end of the housing market. Tom Davis hasn't seen any movement either way, yet. "Our parent company, which is a real estate developer, has 16 communities in construction and as many in development. It's too early for any slowdown to trickle down to us. And if new homes slow down, apartments may pick up."

The recent difficulties of regulation and labor encouraged both Paul Harder and Michael Kowalchuk to sell their businesses. Others are restructuring their management, instituting new and advanced operating software or working hard to develop employees.

Neil Thelen's investment in six-people Isuzu trucks and the switch to six-person crews is an effort to squeeze more efficiency from his organization while also developing his people. "Each crew has a senior and

junior foreman because one person can't manage six people," he says. "The younger manager can then get trained and eventually move into a senior position."

Dwight Hughes also remodeled his operations, using a new design of truck to carry people, equipment and plants. Hughes constantly searches for more efficiency and looks to equipment, rather than electronics, for solutions.

"Our industry is caught up in a trend of more computing, but computers are just a tool — not the answer," he says. "You have to ask, who's making the money for you? Is it a crew of workers pushing a B&B tree by hand or your computer?"

Keep the momentum coming!

As usual, fortune telling is an art few of us have. Experienced insiders like Rick Randall, CEO of Randall & Blake Inc., Littleton, CO, have business spread over several states. He sees some clouds on the horizon.

"It appears there is sufficient momentum to sustain adequate contracting opportunities at least through the first six months of 2001.

After that, we do see some softening brought about by higher interest rates," he explains. "The higher rates have begun to slow down residential development,



John Wheeler: Will economy slow?

What's your best strategy?

It pays to be prepared for any eventuality, say several landscape managers. Here are their ideas:

► **Landscape maintenance.** This can be a constant battle to eke out the profits you need because of low-balling. Try to balance the investment needed to get efficient equipment with money to pay a competitive wage and keep good employees. Some vow to raise their prices in coming months, both to accommodate fuel and other price increases and to position their firms above the "price-war" fray.

► **Landscape design/installation.** This is a more complex business to manage because it's hard to assure a manageable flow of projects, price goods and services for profit, invest in efficient equipment and organize the work for productivity. A clear niche, steady pricing, quality work, strong customer contact and investment in appropriate equipment may make a difference this year.

► **Chemical lawn care.** LCOs still grapple with the issues of low-balling, large competitors "churning" business, managing crews and routes for maximum productivity and balancing a simple and profitable mix of services. If you find the self-starters to handle your routes, do everything to keep them. Long-time players insist a solid treatment program, attentive customer service and add-on services will continue to make this segment profitable.

► **Irrigation maintenance/installation.** Landscapers are finding plenty of opportunity to offer irrigation services. The key to success depends on thorough knowledge, the ability to make this segment profitable and the capability of servicing all your potential customers.

► **Customers.** Both residential and commercial customers are impatient, spoiled and sometimes annoying. Develop a strategy to manage your customers' expectations and weed out those who are more trouble than they are worth.


► **Client mix.** Diversify. If you have only a few main customers, it's time to spread out and get others. If you're in a well-defined niche, expand within it.

which will slowly begin to pull down the rest of the economy."

John Wheeler also has some misgivings about the prospects for his design/build division: "It's too early to celebrate (for

this year). It's a good year now and we budgeted for an increase in business, but higher interest rates may slow down business. We hope the momentum keeps coming." **LM**

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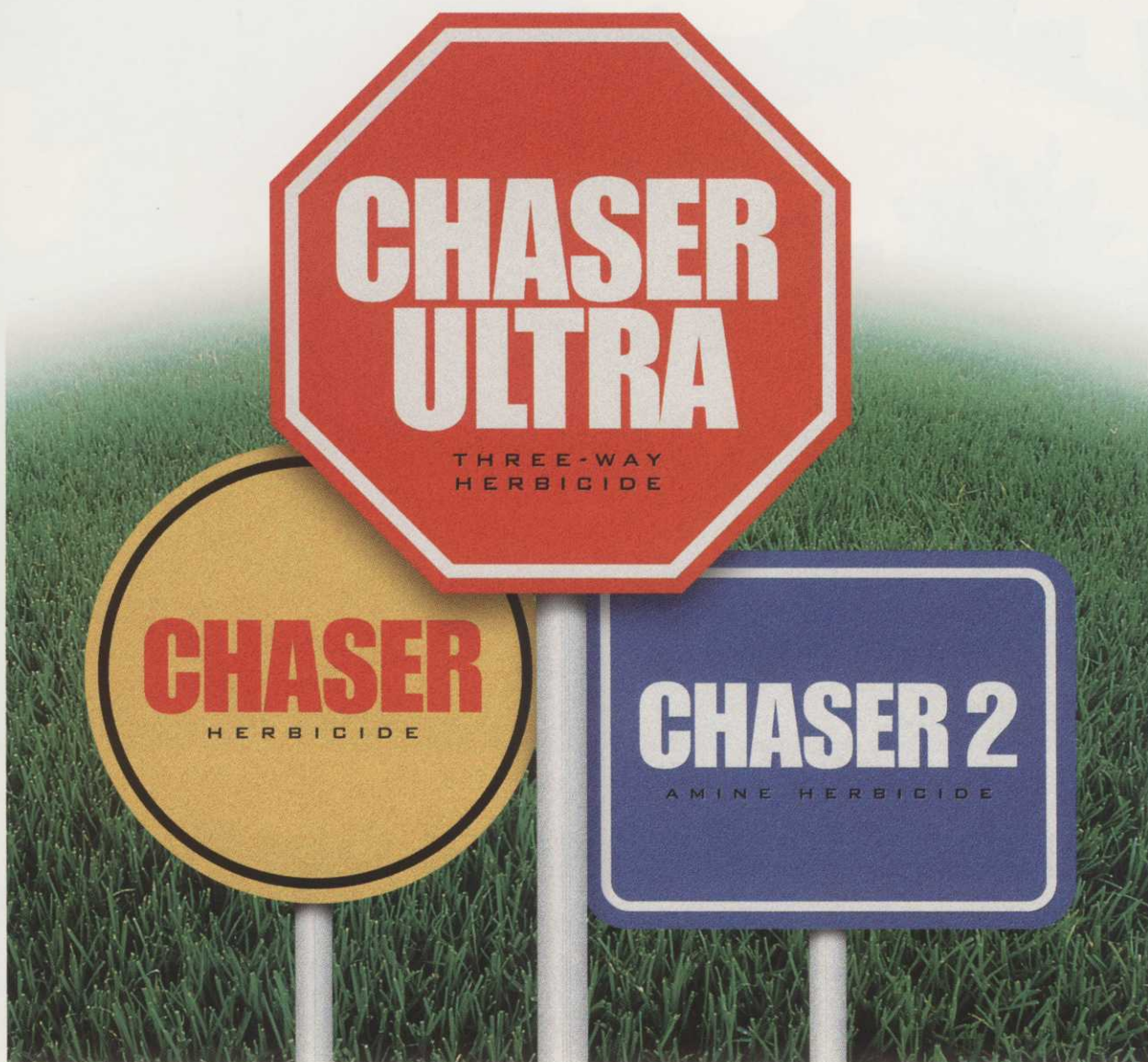
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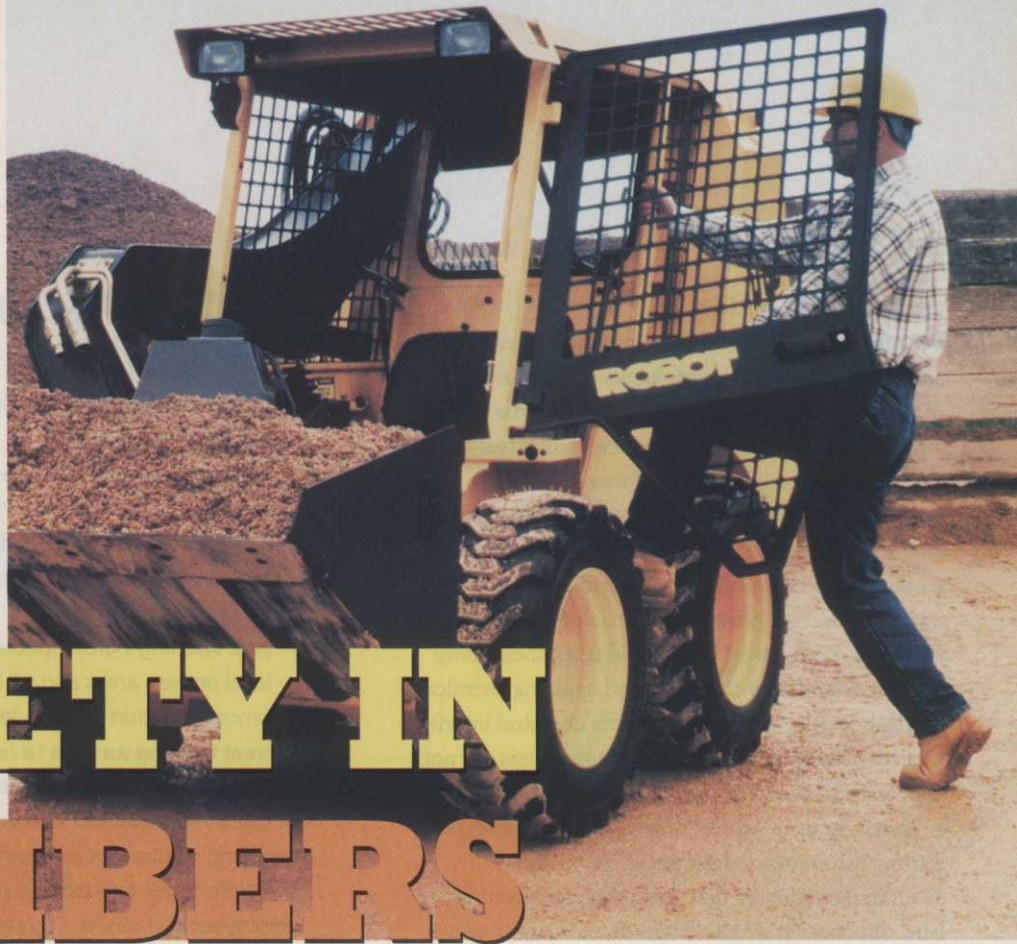


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SAFETY IN NUMBERS



**Workers' comp rates too high?
These tips may help you and your
crews operate more safely while
you cut your insurance costs**

BY BOB DECKER & ANDREW J. MAUSCHBAUGH

How much are your workers' compensation claims costing? Keeping your employees safe makes sense — and saves dollars. In fact, according to the National Safety Council, U.S. companies lost over \$127.7 billion in workers' compensation claims in 1998. But by correcting unsafe conditions on your property and teaching safe equipment operating practices to your crew members, you can reduce costly lawsuits and unnecessary damage to your business.

During the last 100 years, loss control representatives at our firm have inspected thousands of landscape operations. They have found that the most common office workplace hazards are those that would seem to be the most obvious (see sidebar on page 50).

Leading safety hot buttons

Because landscape contracting, grounds maintenance and chemical lawn care employees perform a variety of tasks, there are several areas where hazards and hazardous operating procedures can be eliminated. Here are two of the key practices to focus on:

Improper chemical protective gear — Make sure your employees wear the proper protective gear when working with chemicals, especially in their concentrated forms. Loss prevention specialists say the time when employees most often avoid using their safety gear is while mixing chemicals and applying chemicals during hot days. To avoid employee chemical injuries,

- ▶ arrange spray schedules so your employees are not applying chemicals during the hottest part of the day,
- ▶ check chemical labels for specific information regarding recommended protective gear, and
- ▶ remind employees that using chemicals contrary to label directions is a federal offense and may endanger their health.



Make training for safe and proper equipment use a priority.

Inadequate machine guards and power equipment safety practices — While it has been said that “familiarity breeds contempt,” it may be more accurate to say that “familiarity breeds carelessness” in the case of power equipment used daily in many landscaping operations. That’s why it is important that your employees keep safety measures in mind all the time to avoid injuries and costly workers’ compensation claims.

To protect your employees from serious injury or death resulting from contact with moving machine parts, check regularly to see that all power equipment

On-site risks to avoid

Based on the observations of loss control specialists, we’ve listed three of the most common office site risk factors, along with advice on how to correct potential problems.

1. Wet surfaces/floors. Uneven surfaces, walks, holes and changes in level are major sources of “slip and fall” injuries, both indoors and outdoors. Wet areas made slick by frequent watering and algae growth are also a problem. To cut down on the possibility of these injuries,

- ▶ post warning signs, especially in slippery areas,
- ▶ level uneven areas and fill in holes,
- ▶ fence areas that can’t be leveled,
- ▶ treat walking surfaces to reduce algae growth and
- ▶ routinely inspect walkways.

2. Cluttered aisles and walkways. Hoses left in walkways, as well as trees and shrubs that protrude, are tripping hazards. Bags of seed and/or fertilizer and storage pallets also present safety hazards for employees and others. To prevent these types of injuries, you should:

- ▶ check walkways on a daily basis to be sure they are clear of obstacles,
- ▶ be certain hanging items above walkways and doorways are secure and out of reach, and
- ▶ make sure tool storage areas are secure (tools don’t protrude).

3. Poor electrical wiring. Poor wiring is one of the biggest causes of fires. The most common electrical violations found are temporary wiring situations, excessive use of extension cords (including those made of “Romex” wiring) and improper splicing. To prevent the possibility of an electrical fire, heed the following advice:

- ▶ Have your electrical system inspected by a professional electrician
- ▶ Join wires by standard twist connectors. Wires that are twisted together can loosen and arc, which generates heat and more arcing, potentially causing a fire
- ▶ Check extension cords to make sure they are of an adequate capacity for the load they are carrying
- ▶ Do not place extension cords under carpets: Cords can break down from constant foot traffic and can smolder undetected, potentially causing a large fire
- ▶ Never plug one extension cord into another extension cord
- ▶ Be certain that all joints are inside a junction or receptacle box
- ▶ Keep breaker and service boxes away from wet walls and protect them from leaks



Additional eye protection would increase the safety of this task.

is properly guarded. Make training for safe and proper equipment use a priority. If employees think you're just giving it lip service, they might cut corners and alter equipment safety guards.

If a guard is removed from a piece of machinery to change a belt or make an adjustment, replace it immediately. Do not allow employees to bypass or remove machine guards when using equipment. Conduct regular equipment evaluations to see that all guards are present and damage-free.

Equipment danger zones

While the equipment used by landscape installation, lawn care and maintenance operations varies, many types have similar danger points such as those that follow. Specific practices for landscape equipment also follow.

Fans — Ventilation and engine fans can be some of the most common safety hazards if not properly guarded. The fan blades, fly wheel and pulley system must be protected to prevent accidental contact. Do this with a protective screen with openings no larger than 1/2 in. All circulating fans should have guards installed that prevent fingers from contacting the fan blades and/or motor. Older fans with guards that have openings larger than 1/2 in. should be retrofitted with smaller guards or replaced.

Machine parts — Air compressors, sprayers and similar machines also require protective guards. All V-belts on air compressors and sprayers, whether fixed or portable, should be enclosed. Watch especially for blades and protective guards on any chipper/shredder. Specialty equipment like log splitters have parts that must be guarded or kept free for safe operation.

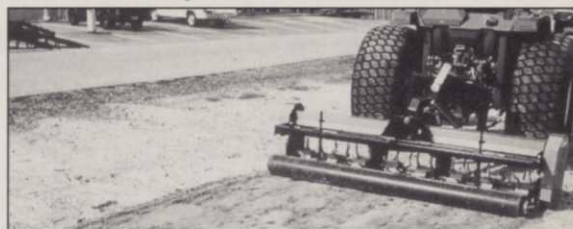
Trucks and other vehicles — Proper training is vital in the operation of on-road equipment such as trucks, vans, tractors, forklifts, tree spades and bobcats. OSHA requires that only trained and authorized personnel operate this type of machinery. Most landscape managers do not permit an employee without a driver's license to

continued on page 50



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3

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F 7 2 5

20 hp
48-, 54-, 60-inch decks
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With an industry-best 5.75-inch depth, maximum blade overlap of over 1.5 inches, and full-length front baffle, the 60-inch 7-Iron™ deck available for the F735 produces a flawless cut, even in the lushest conditions.

s a force of nature.

2

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5

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continued from page 47

operate any mobile equipment. Many states do not allow anyone under age 18 to operate power equipment. Follow your state's regulations.

Mowers — Mowers are so common that they are often overlooked as a safety haz-



Safe employees are more productive employees.

ard. Most new mowers have the required guards, but many older ones do not. All mowers should have a self-closing guard for the emptying chute. Side chute mowers should have a guard at the rear to prevent the mower from rolling back over the operator's feet. All new mowers have a lever as part of the handle that will automatically stop the blade and/or motor when released. Older mowers without this feature should be replaced.

Tractors — The power take-off must be properly guarded. Establish and enforce a

Safe operation's big seven

The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute recommends several key steps to operate any piece of outdoor power equipment at any location. Make sure your employees run through this checklist with every use:

1. Keep children and pets away from operating equipment.
2. Handle gas and fuel/oil mixtures carefully.
3. Never operate equipment unattended; turn off engine and disconnect spark plug before attempting to unclog or repair equipment
4. Clear work areas from rocks, toys, large debris, etc. before using
5. Dress properly for the job (long pants, close-fitting clothes, safety glasses, safety boots, tucked-in hair and no loose jewelry).
6. Keep hands and feet away from moving parts. This sounds elementary but people forget to turn off equipment before working on it.
7. Understand how to operate the equipment. Follow manufacturers' directions, get training on proper operation and follow safety instructions.

For more information on safe operation of outdoor power equipment, contact OPEI at 703/549-7600.

company policy that prohibits employees from riding mobile equipment unless they are sitting on the seat provided by the manufacturer. Prohibit additional riders on equipment.

Skid steers — Crews working rapidly may forget that a skid steer should never exceed the rated capacity — this is 1/2 of the listed tipping load.

Aerial lifts — Check all controls each time

before using, and never use the lift if the basket controls are not operational. Don't forget to attach the safety harness.

Chain saws — Never operate a chain saw with a damaged hand guard. Check that the chain is sharp and chain tension is neither too tight nor too loose. Wear eye protection and safety clothing.

Edgers & line trimmers — Wear eye protection with these products and do not operate if they are missing guards. When operating, be careful of bystanders.

Ensuring that workers' compensation insurance is in force at all times can go a long way to protect your business.

If you're not sure as to whether your business is properly protected, ask your insurance company to conduct a loss control survey

— *Bob Decker is assistant vice president of loss control and Andrew J. Mauschbaugh is loss control engineering manager for Florists' Mutual Insurance Co., which has been serving the floral/horticultural industry for over 110 years. They can be contacted at 800/851-7740 or www.floristsmutual.com.*

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RIGHT TOOLS. RIGHT PLACE. RIGHT NOW.

Get out of your employees' way

Turn your training over to your troops and watch them teach you a thing or two about learning together

BY PHIL FOGARTY

Does the conversation in your shop go like this: "I know we should be doing more training, but I just don't have the time to do it on a regular basis." Is this an impossible problem? No. Maybe you shouldn't do it.

Why is it that we as owners and general managers think that everything must be done our way for our companies to succeed? Of course, we might not have gotten where we are today if we didn't have a pretty healthy sense of self and a good shot of ego. But let's face it — we didn't invent this industry.

With all the training resources out there, all you may need to do is give good employees some of your time, encouragement and make them aware of your goals. The goals must be clear cut and attainable. Then, let your employees design and execute an effective training program. Based on my experience, I can say that what your better employees devise will be at least as good as what you would come up with — if you give them the right guidelines.

Get out of their way!

If there's anything that the Skills Development Series has taught us, it's to turn training over to the troops — today. It's a liberating moment for everyone in your organization. Your employees already know what they need to know and the last thing they need is for you to tell them what they don't know (and that some day

you will tell them — but now, just get out there and work until further notice).

Get out of the way and watch those people teach you a thing or two about learning together.

Cover the bases

Here are a few steps to make sure the program succeeds when you delegate it:



An in-house facilitator like this one is just the right person to delegate training responsibility among fellow employees.



One of the facilitator's key jobs is to get everyone involved by coaching and encouraging everyone to own the program.

► Assign an in-house facilitator to take on this cause. Pick someone who can get enthusiastic about training. It could be a key manager or an employee with potential who needs to be demonstrated. It's even a

great slot for a part-timer who can focus on teaching, teaching, teaching.

► Make sure the facilitator understands the value of getting others involved. He or she shouldn't be doing all training, or even half of it. The facilitator's job is to coach and encourage everyone to own the program.

► Make it flexible like Gerry Grossi's fine group did at Arborlawn in Lansing,

MI. Grossi's Spartan Irrigation runs its program simultaneously with Arborlawn's sessions. They customize and adapt but use the same format and information, and they do it at different locations.

► Mold it around schedules, if at all possible. Mountaineer Lawncare in Morgantown, WV, has sessions in the field (at lunch) for crews who must contend with long drives at rush hour.

► Become a spectator and cheerleader. Cullen Walker of WLM Work-A-Holics Landscape Management in Naples, FL, built bleachers for training and sits in a different spot each week so he can learn along with everyone. He may be doing the wave, as well!

► Promote the cause when it's your turn to teach. When you get to be the one up front, spend some of your "mike" time acknowledging the progress and reminding your team how important this program is to you and to the future of the company. **LM**

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Try looking at the world according to your employees. It could save your future

BY BILL HOOPES

When it comes to keeping good people, there's almost nothing you won't do to keep them on your team, right?

You're typical if you answered, "I'd do anything, within reason, to keep the really loyal and productive employees I have."

But when it comes to changing your workplace to encourage employee retention, what meaningful actions have you taken? If you'd like to change things but don't know how to start, you're fairly typical. Most of us dream about a better world but don't follow the dream with action. But if you don't do more than think a lot about revising the way you do things, there will be no improvement.

So let's set some realistic goals. You're a goal-oriented, entrepreneurial thinker, right? Let's set an objective: lower turnover by 50%.

How much would it be worth to your operation to reduce turnover by 50%? Most managers I work with would like to make it happen but aren't sure how to get it done.

It can be done. I've just completed a 15-year search for realistic solutions to the turnover problem, which I've identified and included below.

Why they leave

Solving a tough problem requires looking at it from a different or unfamiliar angle. For a change, look at motivation from a contrary view. Instead of jumping head-first into the turnover pool and confronting the issues from your point of view, look at it from the employees' view. Think about why they leave.

The short answer is because they're not motivated. We all become motivated when we desire something. Before we go for it, we must want it.

Here are two reasons why you must understand how to use motivation:

- ▶ You cannot achieve anything beyond your own capacity without other people.
- ▶ If your staff resents, distrusts or dislikes you, they will leave the minute they get the opportunity. Today, that opportunity is everywhere. So understand how motivation works and how to use it. You'll see your business environment from a whole new perspective, because you will understand why people do the things they do.

What's their motivation?

What controls our wants? At work or at home, we do things that make sense to us. We evaluate our options, decide and then act.

How does this apply in your workplace? If you want your employees to perform satisfactorily for extended periods of time and respond to your leadership, you must get into their heads.

If you want your employees to think positive thoughts that lead to positive behavior (like hitting goals or staying through a tough spring), you must provide a positive workplace environment. If you think they'll stay for dollars, you are mistaken. Employees must like their work to stay there.

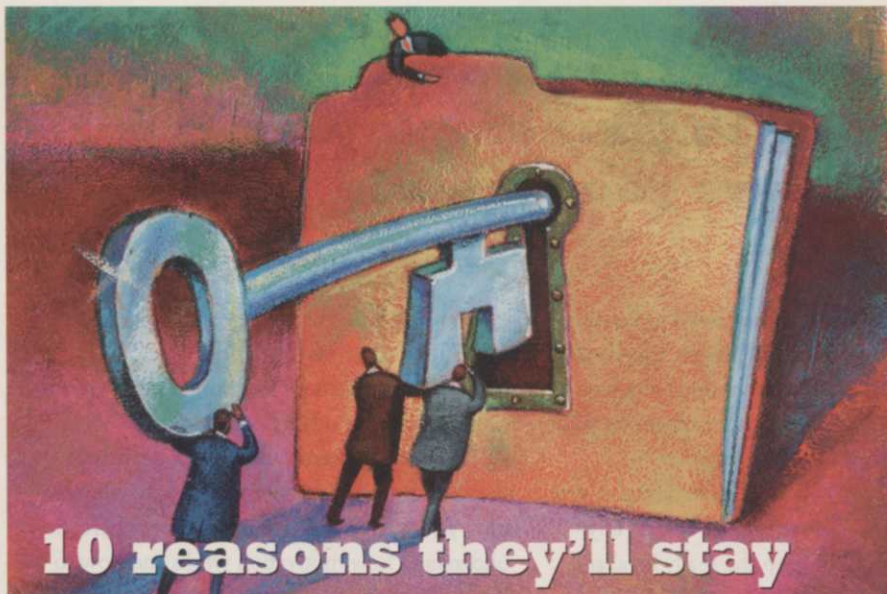
Notice I said that you have to "provide" a positive workplace environment. It doesn't happen automatically. You must create an environment that positively impacts employee motivation, and that comes down to building relationships that are mutually beneficial.

Take off those blinders and look around

The workplace has to "work" for both you and your employees, and that's not always easy.

Some managers still don't recognize the difference between situations that favor employers and

continued on page 56



10 reasons they'll stay

Follow this plan to cut employee turnover at your operation:

- 1 Improve the candidate-to-job match as you build your team — no square pegs in round holes.
- 2 Place a higher priority on training. Use the start-up program to “set the hook” and start building positive thoughts and feelings.
- 3 Build in some “people magnets.” Let employees do what they do well. Communicate often. Give the staff credit consistently. Share the results of success. Get out of the office and be around your people. Put some contests and fun into the job.
- 4 Give people a reason to believe. Stop flying by the seat of your pants. If you're organized and set an example, people will want to follow you because they see strong management. Talk constantly about company values and beliefs to build a sense of pride. Brag about your staff in public and in your advertisements.
- 5 Recognize and treat people as individuals. Identify individual talents and potential while you respond to their individual needs.
- 6 React to each employee's performance every day. Look for something to reward and don't send mixed signals.
- 7 Be fair to everyone. Don't play favorites. Tell your people why you want them to do it your way.
- 8 Be honest 100% of the time. Remember: If you lie, you die.
- 9 Set a positive leadership example. Put a smile on your face before you go through the door each morning. Never let the staff see you down. Positives create positives; negatives create negatives.
- 10 Balance your concern for tasks and people evenly. Try to be someone your staff just likes to be around.

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those that favor or motivate employees. At times, it's as if they're wearing blinders.

Are you certain that when you make a decision or establish plans, you are creating a situation where both you and your employees benefit?

Consider this example: A new hire arrives at work. At the moment, you are unavoidably involved with a customer. To handle the customer issue and avoid a delay in the start-up of the new person's training, you have a veteran handle the orientation.

Sounds simple. After all, you can't avoid the customer issue . . . it's all part of business, right? And since the training oc-



If weed-whacking is all this guy ever does, he's bound to leave his job.

curred and the customer was served, both you and your employee win, right?

Wrong.

You handled your problem but the employee got whatever the veteran felt like giving. As the manager in charge, you just committed the common mistake of seeing the world from a management perspective. We do it all the time. It's natural. Our needs must be filled, too.

When we consider the employee's need to understand the new job, company and expectations, we begin to rationalize. We pretend that no matter how the orientation is handled, the job will be done exactly as we would do it. This is wrong. No veteran

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continued from page 56

will deliver the message as you would, at least not most veterans. Why? They don't have the ownership concern you do. So the orientation happens but the message is diluted or changed altogether. And who pays the price? You do.

It's all in the perception

Managers typically see their needs before the needs of the staff. When there is an exception to that rule, employees are more satisfied and turnover drops. I've seen turnover drop drastically when the manager in charge learns to see the workplace from the employees' viewpoint.



If this guy's boss is goofing off while he's working, he's likely to look for another place to work.

But the problem is that when workers quit, they never say, "I'm leaving because you get what you need (an easy life, lots of profit, a great future) and I don't get what I need." You won't hear that, but you may hear any of the 10 reasons below.

"Why I'm leaving"

In the last 15 years, I have tracked and explored the reasons employees have left. They are:

1 "This job isn't what you said it would be." Translation: You either failed to explain the job requirements, or you've had smoke blown in your face during a hiring interview. Under pressure to "fill the chairs," we try to see the best in people. If you hear this phrase, you've misread the job candidate or mislead yourself.

2 "I just can't do this job." Translation: More than likely, there has been a failure to provide adequate start-up training or the employee is simply bored by the work.

3 "All we do here is work." Translation: Typically, the manager has been unable or unwilling to control work hours.

This happens during a bad weather spring, when we fail to eliminate long days and/or Saturday work after promising we would.

4 "Nobody here knows what the heck is going on." Translation: From the employee's view, your operation is disorganized and inconsistent.

5 "All we ever hear is what's wrong." Translation: When I hear this, I usually find a manager who is totally task-oriented. When the task goals aren't met, there can be only one reason for him or her — lazy workers. This may not be true, but that's the employee's view . . . and that's the point.

6 "You never say thank you." Translation: Employees in this operation probably get little recognition and few rewards. Managers who don't give credit to the team and don't share rewards will lose 100% of the time.

7 "I don't fit in here." Translation: The workplace climate isn't people friendly. It may work for you, but what is it like for your employees?

8 "You always promise but never deliver." Translation: Many managers promise an employee whatever they have just to boost productivity, then fail to deliver. They are so stressed and beaten down they see no other way to get people to work hard than to "promise the world."

9 "You expect us to work while you 'goof off.'" Translation: Tired managers can develop a habit of showing up for the start of the day, then disappearing (at least they believe they've disappeared) to the golf course or other activity while the staff "delivers the goods." Whether you own the business or not, employees won't tolerate what they consider lazy leadership while being pushed to the limit themselves.

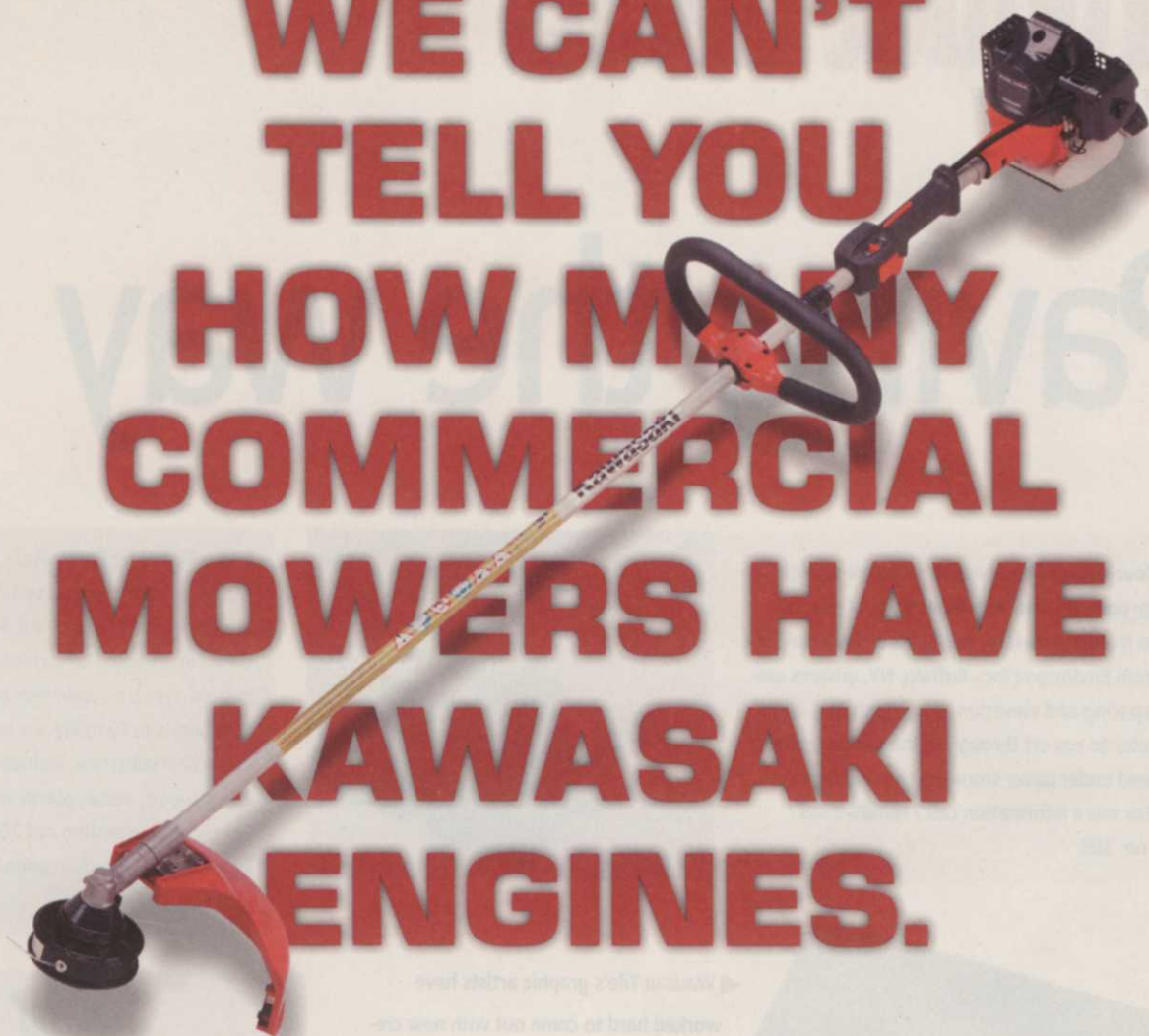
10 "It's just no fun working here." Translation: This is a typical "exit interview" comment from employees of "task-oriented" managers. To keep people, there must be a perceived balance between the manager's concern for people and tasks. When the employee doesn't sense the balance and feels that work is the only thing management thinks about, turnover rises.

Your employees may see situations you see as beneficial from a different perspective. When you understand motivation and its impact on employee actions, it's easy to see how negative feelings build. To reduce turnover, every manager must do all he or she can to see that the "world according to the employee" is filled with recognition, rewards and a sense of fairness.

If you show employees a nurturing environment with a bright, positive future full of new assignments, opportunities and fun, you'll discover the power of human motivation.

— The author is director of training and development at Scotts Lawn Service in Marysville, OH. This article is adapted from a presentation to be made at EXPO 2000 in Louisville, KY, this month. For more information about the workshop, contact PLCAA at 800/458-3466.

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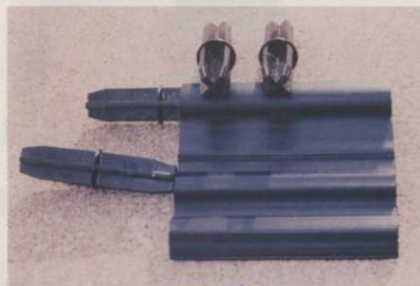
▶ A four-squared honeycomb structure of high density polyethylene with eight vertical spacing ribs on its upper surface, the PAVE-EL Pedestal System from EnviroSpec Inc., Buffalo, NY, ensures uniform spacing and elevation of paver stones, allowing water to run off through to the drainage plane level and under paver stones to the drainage system. For more information call 716/689-8548 / circle no. 305



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▲ The CrossLock Plug from Oly-Ola Sales Inc. is a new landscape edging connection piece designed to tightly connect edging pieces together. It features easy-to-use cross (x) and plus (+) indicators located on the end of the plug and a center disc that keeps edging from slipping sideways. The CrossLock Plug is inserted into the round top of the landscape edging and the cross (x) and plus (+) indicators are turned in either direction to tighten. For more information call 800/334-4647 or visit www.olyola.com / circle no. 308

Grace forms new paver unit

CAMBRIDGE, MA — Grace Construction Products has formed a new organization within its masonry products group to support the interlocking concrete paver segment of the construction industry, one of the fastest growing areas in concrete masonry according to industry sources such as the Interlocking Concrete Pavement Institute (ICPI) and the National Concrete Masonry Association (NCMA).

The new unit will be staffed by three paver sales specialists, one technical service field specialist and a technical services lab specialist based in Grace's Cambridge, MA cement, concrete and masonry research and development lab.

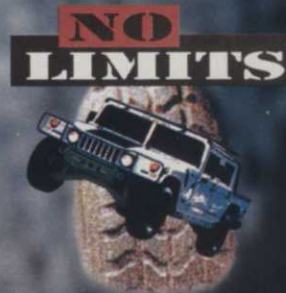
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DATE _____

Property at a glance

Westmoor Farm, Nantucket, MA

Staff: In-house crew**Category:** Residential**Total budget:** \$156,400**Year site built:** 1991**Acres of turf:** 9**Acres of woody ornamentals:** 8**Acres of display beds:** 2**Total paved area:** 8 acres**Total man-hours/week:** 268

Maintenance challenges

- ▶ Maintaining and programming 103 irrigation zones
- ▶ Integrated pest management of apple trees and vegetable garden
- ▶ Pruning and training of roses, vines and espaliers

Project checklist

(Completed in last two years):

- ▶ Permaturf installation in driveway
- ▶ Tree wells for hundreds of trees planted too deep
- ▶ Shredding 20 yds. of compost and topdressing beds

On the job

- ▶ 2 full-time staff, 4 seasonal employees, 1 part-time seasonal, 1 licensed pesticide operator

Westmoor Farm

The 1999 Grand Award Winner of the Professional Grounds Management Society for Residential Site

The Westmoor Farm is a private estate and summer home covering 64 acres with 18 houses, five barns and a greenhouse. A regulation-sized baseball field, 18,000-sq.-ft. ornamental vegetable garden, miniature apple orchard and an acre of manmade ponds and water features give the in-house grounds maintenance crew a variety of challenges.

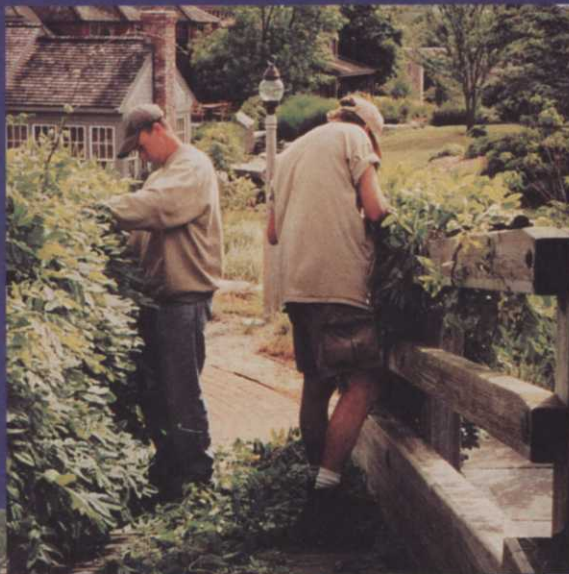
A monster irrigation system that consists of 103 zones and nine water sources has to be frequently reprogrammed and checked for malfunction. Last year's drought brought out design flaws and forced grounds crew members to relocate or add sprinkler heads to zones wherever possible.

Trained vines can be found everywhere, so the grounds crew spends a good deal of its time training fledgling growth while maintaining the already established clematis, espaliered laburnum, hardy kiwi, honeysuckle and grape vines. New to the property are container displays, which, head gardener Candace Clough says, have allowed her crew members to be more creative in layout and planting. In one area, the color of both flower and foliage might be monochromatic, where another area might feature chartreuse and red leaf specimens.

- ▶ Looking out the front door of the "Red Barn," Westmoor Farm's dining hall, one sees a monochromatic container display.



► Grounds crew members Wayne and Damian prune and train the wisteria vine on the bridge at the big pond.



Editors' note: *Landscape Management* is the exclusive sponsor of the Green Star Professional

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Grounds Management Awards for outstanding management of residential, commercial and institutional landscapes. The 2000 winners will be

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PGMS

on the 2000 Awards, contact PGMS at 720 Light St., Baltimore, MD 21230; 410-752-3318 (tel). Website: www.pgms.org. Email: PGMS@assnhqtrs.com



Better safe than sued

BY CURT HARLER/
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Nobody wants to see a fellow worker or an employee get hurt on the job. But let's face it: safety is given lip service more often than real action during the busy season (and during slack times, too).

As an employer, it's your responsibility to provide proper safety equipment and see that it's used all the time. Lawsuits come from the strangest places — injured workers, endangered passers-by, state or federal agencies, property owners and motorists on the highway. Any of them could be after your hide on an assortment of counts: personal injury, a record-keeping violation, an accident involving a landscaping trailer parked by the side of the road or a stone thrown by a mower.

Stack the deck in your own favor. Look for proper safety equipment and reward workers who get caught "doing something right." You don't have to reward them with a lot — free coffee and doughnuts the next day or lunch at the local dive would be sufficient recognition. Others on your crews will catch on fast after one or two "attaboys" are given.

Best of all, you'll have established a proven track record for emphasizing and rewarding

safety — something that will go a long way toward reducing punitive damages should a disaster hit or a government inspector notice something else you've overlooked.

While you're at it, check the first aid kit in the pickup. Be sure the Band-Aids are new, look for a good antiseptic cream and check that other components are still sterile.

AEARO CO.
800/444-4774

www.aosafety.com

The full line of safety equipment from Aearo Co., Indianapolis, IN, includes eyeglass protectors which fit over prescription glasses, professional impact goggles and tinted or clear safety glasses. Check out the firm's high-visibility safety vests for workers near roadways. Company also offers hearing protection, either as industrial ear plugs or headset style with a band over the head.

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BLOUNT, INC.
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www.oregonchain.com

Check out the line of vision protection from Blount, Inc.'s Oregon Cutting Systems Division, Portland, OR. Replaceable polycarbonate lenses in their safety glasses give impact protection whether using a chain saw or other equipment

continued on page 66



Superior Signals' new
safety back-up alarm

safety tips

- ▶ **Provide all of the proper safety equipment needed for the job.**
- ▶ **Reward workers for using safety gear, as well as sanctioning failure to use it.**
- ▶ **Have both female and male members of the crew wear protective clothing.**
- ▶ **Make sure your first aid kit is stocked with all of the essentials.**

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Im reports

continued from page 64

which may throw chips or dirt. Soft, flexible frame fits over personal glasses. Product is both ANSI and OSHA compliant. Perforations in the frame reduce lens fogging.

Circle #286

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800/537-8233

www.deere.com

Dress for success with safety accessories from John Deere's Commercial Division, Raleigh, NC. Full line of footwear includes PVC or latex boot covers and rubber slush



John Deere safety goggles

boots. For the body, check out the basic Tyvic coveralls which provide protection for Class II and IV pesticides; PVC bib apron for Class I-IV pesticides; and Saranex-coated Tyvek-sleeved apron for full-body protection; and rugged rain suits made from 35-mil PVC over polyester for full protection. Firm also has several styles of goggles, including indirect vented for splash and spray to non-vented for anhydrous or other vapors. If trouble hits, pull out the PMKT1540EA decontamination kit.

Circle #287

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800/432-ECHO

www.echoincorporated.com

Whether it's reusable vinyl earplugs (with belt-mountable

carrying case), lightweight independent earmuffs or a complete protective helmet system with 6-pt. suspension, ear muffs and face mask, Echo has OSHA and ANSI-approved safety equipment. The Lake Zurich, IL firm also offers a brush-cutter system with visor and earmuffs but no helmet. Chain saw chaps are made of nylon chain-stopping material designed for bi-directional release. They are washable and Teflon-coated to repel oil, water or dirt.

Circle #288

ELVEX CORP.
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www.elvex.com

ProChaps chain saw chaps from Elvex, Bethel, CT, have Polar protective pads that are designed to



ProChaps' lightweight chaps

jam the chain saw when it contacts the chaps. The chaps are lightweight and flexible in order to allow unobstructed movement. With the ProGuard, a chain-saw operator is protected three ways: with an ANSI approved safety cap, face protection and hearing protection in one integrated design.

Circle #289

DIRECT SAFETY CO.
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Code 4 glasses from Direct Safety Co., Tempe, AZ, provide excellent



Direct Safety Co.'s hip glasses offer peripheral protection

peripheral protection. Wrap-around design and non-slip rubber nose piece provide a secure fit, even during physical activities. Glasses give maximum UV protection. Shatter-resistant polycarbonate lens exceeds ANSI Z87.1 standards.

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FERRIS INDUSTRIES
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www.ferrisindustries.com

The new 4-pt. roll-over protection system (ROPS) for the Pro-Cut Z from Ferris Industries, Munsville, NY, offers better



Ferris Industries' roll-over protection system

weight distribution and helps spread out stress on the machine's main frame. Front mounting also deflects branches that might otherwise catch under a rear-mount system.

Circle #291

C.C. FILSON CO.
800/624-0201

www.filson.com

The new Foul Weather Coat from Filson's, Seattle, WA, will keep workers dry and protected. Its cloth is 100% tightly woven cot-



Filson's coat is saturated in paraffin to resist wind and rain

ton fabric saturated with paraffin wax to beat off wind and rain. Full-body cotton lining adds protection and an optional virgin wool removable zip-in liner forms an inner layer. There are six snaps with storm flap in the front and adjustable cuffs. Comes with buttons to add optional hood and make it snug in any weather.

Circle #292

FLA ORTHOPEDICS, INC.
800/327-4110

flaortho@worldnet.att.net

There are a lot of heavy bags and buckets to be moved in a day's work. Help the crew avoid back problems with the DynaBack braces from FLA Orthopedics, Miami Lakes, FL. Universal size model fits 24-46" waist. All units come with elastic side pulls, Velcro closure, and adjustable shoulder straps. The rear Safe-T-Straps have breakaway buckles to prevent the strap from getting caught by disconnecting at 10 lbs. pressure. Company also makes the Pro Series Back Ice Pack for days when lifting was too much.

Circle #293

Im reports

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Full 13-in., 15-mil Nitrile gloves allow excellent dexterity yet provide good chemical resistance. They are great for safe handling of chemicals, solvents, acids or caustics. Nitrile resists abrasion, punctures and cuts, so these gloves are replaced less frequently. For use with pesticides whose labels refer to categories A, C, E or F. They come in a variety of sizes, from XS to XL, and are available from Gemplers, Belleville, WI. The company's full catalog contains over 10,000 items from gloves to coveralls for any kind of daily or specialized use.

Circle #294

GENERAL MACHINE PRODUCTS 215/357-5500

www.gmptools.com

The Pole Trailer Light Kit from General Machine, Trevese, PA is a D.O.T.-approved system for improving visibility of trailers and



General Machine's high visibility Pole Trailer Light Kit

other service vehicles. Kits sturdy aluminum weldment is finished

with bright yellow polyester-powder coating. Comes in 24 or 46-in. models. "Swings on Turns" legend is included with larger model. Safety lights are installed with shock mounts to increase bulb life and make it easy to replace burned out bulbs. Also available are heavy duty 4-way and 6-way plugs suited to most trailers.

Circle #295

MTD PRO 330/225-2600

www.mtdpro.com

Whether the crew is working with a blower, using a hedge trimmer, spraying chemicals or tilling up a seedbed, equip them with safety goggles. Both clear and tinted goggles are available as part of the parts and accessories packages

available from MTD Pro, Cleveland, OH. These goggles are comfortable and protect the eyes from flying objects or spray.

Circle #296

PROTECTOSEAL CO. 800/323-2268

www.protectoseal.com

Value-priced line of safety cabinets constructed of 18-gauge steel and compliant with NFPA and OSHA for storing flammable or hazardous materials is available from Protectoseal, Bensenville, IL. Cabinets are designed with leak-proof 2-in. bottom well in the event of a container leak. Come with either manual or self-closing doors. Order yellow for storing two 55-gal. drums of flammables; blue for

continued on page 68

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continued from page 67



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acid-resistant cabinets that hold acids or corrosives from 15-60 gal.; red for Class III combustibles; green for pesticide cabinets that hold 12-45 gal.

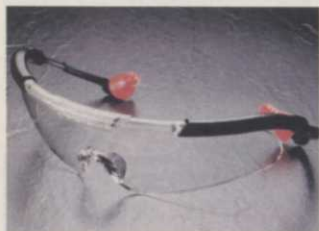
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RADIANS

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www.radians.com

New safety eyewear from Radians, Memphis, TN, offers a sleek, fashionable style and comfortable, non-invasive Jelli™ earplugs that attach directly to the temple post of the glasses. Available in six different colors — clear, mirror, grey, amber and two shades of green — the 100% polycarbonate lens blocks out over 99% of UVB and



Radians' sleek and comfortable safety eyewear

UVA rays. The distortion-free lens is also scratch resistant, anti-static and anti-fog. A black breakaway neck cord is included with each and every pair of Radians A.V.

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Circle #300

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Uvex Bandit eye wear from chain saw manufacturer Stihl, Virginia



Stihl's stylish safety eyewear

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Circle #301

SUPERIOR SIGNALS, INC.

800/447-3693

New safety back-up alarm line from Superior Signals, Olathe, KS, the Safe-T-Alert 2500 series comes in six models. Units have decibel ratings from 87 dB to 107 dB. Self-adjusting models available. Voltage ratings vary from 12 to 80 VDC. Units come with a range of mounting options and can be steam cleaned after use in rugged environments. All alarms are UL listed and conform to SAE specifications.

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Since introducing its Ultimate Gardening Glove in 1992, this Rollingbay, WA, firm has kept improving them year after year. The Hot Tamale is very durable and quite comfortable with its waterproof PVC outer shell, seamless acrylic fleece lining and textured grip for slippery, oily or wet objects. Keep this handy for cold weather uses



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An up and down situation

Elevation changes and water-specific plantings made for one tough irrigation project

BY JASON STAHL /
MANAGING EDITOR

Blaschka and Heidvogel, along with the engineers at Watertronics pumping systems, based in nearby Hartland, WI, designed a 7.5-hp pump station using what's known as programmable logic control. The station can sense and adjust flow and pressure to meet the requirements of different turf and landscape areas on the estate. Some plants need more water than others, and at different times of the day.

"The potted plants around the pool needed water multiple times per day because the pots are clay and black and get very hot from the sun. We needed to water them not only to keep them

continued on page 72

Rick Heidvogel and Brian Blaschka regularly install irrigation systems at estates with homes valued from \$800,000 to \$3 million. The two are partners in The Lakeland Group of Nashotah, WI, specializing in irrigation, lighting and landscape management.

Nevertheless, a \$1.8 million estate in nearby Oconomowoc, in the "Lake Country" area in southeastern Wisconsin, challenged their ingenuity. The 6-acre estate had elevation changes of up to 65 ft. It also contained large turf areas, annual beds, perennial beds and hanging potted plants.

Rather than irrigating the grounds from a well, the property uses the adjacent lake for its source of water, something that Heidvogel began perfecting in 1990 when he started the company.

To a higher level

"This required obtaining a pump station to distinguish between high-flow pressure demands and low-flow pressure demands," explains Heidvogel. "But pump stations don't like to see such a wide range of performance, so we had to figure out how to take technology to a higher level."



This 7.5-hp pump station distinguishes between high-flow and low-flow pressure demands.

continued from page 71

alive but keep them cool," Blaschka explains.

"The small grass areas around the steppers also needed to be put on a daily watering schedule. We ended up putting all the small demand beds and little turf areas on separate zones based on plant life, shade and other factors. It was costly, but it worked perfectly," he says.

The owner of the estate didn't want any water to get on the steppers, so Blaschka and Heidvogel turned to Netafim drip irrigation for precise watering. "We chose this product because it has worked well for us, and we knew we could bury it under the turf around the steppers," Blaschka says. "Also, we had the ability to

"Pump stations don't like to see such a wide range of performance."
— Rick Heidvogel

punch into the drip with emitters that allowed us to run tiny tubes up into each individual potted plant around the pool area."

Blaschka and Heidvogel ended up installing a sophisticated, \$30,000 irrigation system with a pump station that could handle both high pressure/flow needs and low pressure/flow needs. Also, drip irriga-

tion and line emitter tubing helped the pair get water to where it was needed with no waste. **LM**

Company profile

Total revenue:

\$1.1 million

Staff:

6 full-time, 15 seasonal

Business breakdown:

62% — irrigation construction and business

20% — landscape lighting

18% — landscape management

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BY BALAKRISHNA RAO

Transplant shock

I planted 10 five- to eight-ft. white pines last spring, and all summer I watered them with a drip hose and saw some new growth. By October some of the needles on all of the trees were turning yellow. What should I do?

— VIRGINIA

The yellowing and dropping of some of the needles in all plants appears to be related to transplant shock. Most transplanted plants, because their absorbing roots have been cut off and lost in the original growing area, experience transplant shock. They need to reproduce new absorbing roots and readjust to new sites. They also need to be watered well during this period. Too little watering can cause drought effects and too much watering can cause needles to turn yellow. The key is to keep the area moist all through the planting and establishment period. The recovery may take four to five years for a 1- to 3-in. trunk caliper size plant, and a 4-in. and above plant may recover in five to ten years.

Some fertilizers such as a quick release source of nitrogen can burn the absorbing roots if overused.

Other causes of yellowing and defoliation include root rot diseases, drought or natural causes. Normally, three-year-old needles do become yellow and drop. Study the plants and see if any of the one- to two-year-old needles are showing symptoms.

Since these plants are under stress, it is a good idea to protect them with borer treatments using insecticides such as Dursban or Astro. Also, reduce stress by improving plant health through mulching, watering and fertilizing as needed.

Unwanted vegetation

Which is the best herbicide to control/eliminate unwanted vegetation like banyan trees and allied plants, which sprout beside buildings and even occur in cracks near buildings which damage the masonry, structure and brick work?

— INDIA

Glyphosate 41% SL (Roundup) is one of the best ways to manage these undesirable sprouts. Another option is to use Picloram (sold as Tordon in the United States), Trichlopyr (known as Garlon) or clopyralid from Dow AgroSciences. These products may be sold under different names in India. Make sure they are labeled for this specific use. If not, test these products on a small area with proper permission. Treat plants when they are actively growing.

Another possibility is to use Arsenal herbicide from American Cyanamid Co., which can be sprayed over the sprouts or applied by hand with the cut-stem method. Again, make sure that the product is legal to use.

For small plants (sprouts), one application may be sufficient. However, for large plants, multiple treatments may be needed.

If the problem in and around the building is not too severe, mechanically removing the young seedlings as they sprout can reduce future problems.

Injured buds

We have a large, mature sycamore on a client's property that has been slow to foliate this year. We noticed that the leaf buds formed, but never sprouted

into full grown leaves and appeared dead. What can we do to help this beautiful tree?

— OHIO

The "slow to foliage" problem is probably because the buds are damaged. The buds were formed last year and were injured some time before bud break.

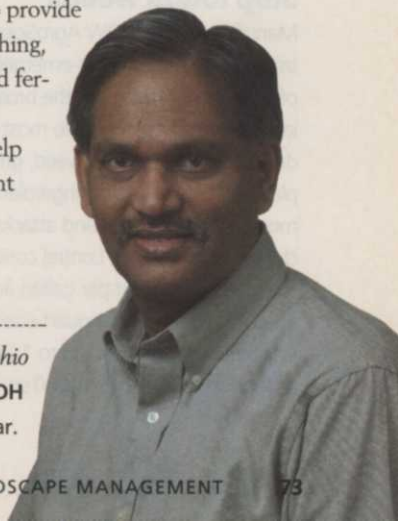
The damage could be from frost. If the buds broke dormancy before the last frost, the exposed plant parts could have been injured. However, the trees will refoliate by using the stored energy. If it happens year after year, this process can weaken the plant by depleting reserve energy of the plants.

The damage could also be from an early season leaf disease like sycamore anthracnose. This disease can be active under cool moist periods during spring. The fungus produces spores in previous years' cankers, infects the buds and causes bud blight. From there it infects leaves and causes leaf blight. Next, it causes twig blight and produces cankers.

Provide selective pruning as needed. When dry, disinfect the pruning tools between cuts. For anthracnose disease management, provide fungicide treatments such as Cleary's 3336 or trunk inject with Arbotech fungicides. Follow good injection guidelines to obtain good results. Also provide proper mulching, watering, and fertilizing as needed to help improve plant health.

Manager of Research and Technical Development for the Davey Tree Expert Co., Kent, Ohio

SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO: "Ask the Expert" Landscape Management; 7500 Old Oak Blvd.; Cleveland, OH 44130, or email: sgibson@advanstar.com. Please allow two to three months for an answer to appear.



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For more information call (316) 345-8621 / circle no. 250

A real gas

The W.E. gas cap guard, which fits both walk-behind and ZTR/riding mower gas tanks, prevents tampering with or theft of gas. It's also easy to install with ready access for the operator.

For more information call 904/761-2427 or visit www.wechapps.com / circle no. 251

Stop tough weeds

Manufactured by DOW AgroSciences LLC, Lontrel T&O, a selective post-emergence herbicide, offers superior control of the broadleaf weeds landscape professionals see most — clover, dandelion, thistle, dollarweed, groundsel and plantain. Lontrel's active ingredient, clopyralid, moves through plants and attacks all parts, including root systems. Lontrel contains 3 lbs. of the active ingredient per gallon and is packaged in a tip-and-pour quart-sized container. Applications vary from .25 to 1.33 pints per acre or up to .5 oz. per 1,000 sq. ft.

For more information contact Dow at info@dowagro.com or 1-800-263-1196 / circle no. 252

Hedge and prune

Shark Corp.'s YardShark telescopic hedger/pruner combines precision-ground cutting blades with a lightweight handle that changes its length for cutting high tree



canopies or reaching into thorny vegetation. With a single-handed flip of a lever, it grows from 31 to 46 in. so the user never has to change tools.

For more information call 800/777-5538 or visit www.sharksaw.com / circle no. 253

Speedy aeration

The Ryan Lawnaire is perfect for lawn care professionals and rental equipment operators who require core-type aeration at a high rate of speed. The self-propelled aerator features a 19-in. aerating width and covers up to 21,000 sq. ft. per hour. It can penetrate up to a depth of 2.75 in. with the added weight bar and full

Portable spreader

SOLO's new portable spreader can spread ice melters, oil absorbers, sand, fertilizers, and seed and cleaning agents over irregular terrain more conveniently than a wheeled spreader. A built-in agitator and propeller operation eliminates blockages and improves uniformity of spread. It offers up to 20 lbs. of capacity and weighs only 5.5 lbs.

For more information call 757/245-4228 or visit www.solo.usa.com / circle no. 256



roller drum. It comes equipped with 0.75-in. diameter tines.

For more information call 888/922-TURF / circle no. 254

Along the curb

Borderline Stamp USA's curb machine can extrude low or line voltage lighting directly into



the concrete curbing to enhance landscapes at night. Borderline also offers many types of landscape curbs that can be textured in a wide variety of patterns.

For more information call 888/999-6641 or visit www.borderlinestamp.com / circle no. 255

Pneumatic seeder

RotaDairon's pneumatically powered, multi-purpose combination soil renovator and seeder uses an air-assisted seed delivery system to save labor and enhance the performance of the unit. Models come in 10- and 13-ft. wide versions.

For more information visit www.mge-da-iron.com / circle no. 257

Flower/foilage food

Simplot Turf and Horticulture's APEX Flower and Foliage controlled-release fertilizers come in four different formulations — 19-5-12, 19-6-12, 18-6-12, and 17-5-11. Featuring Polyon controlled-release coating technology, they provide nutrient longevity from three months up to 16 months. Additionally, all of the nutrients in the new APEX Flower and Foliage line, including magnesium and micronutrients, are uniformly combined in homogeneous granules to ensure each one contains the same elements. **For more information on APEX Flower and Foliage call 800/992-6066 or visit www.sim-plot.com / circle no. 258**

Spray it

Otterbine's Concept2 line of aerators handle surface spray aeration needs for ponds and lakes: the High Volume2 unit has the highest pumping rate per horsepower of any aerator on the market and provides maximum work with minimum appearance. The Sunburst2 offers both aesthetic enhancement and aeration. The Phoenix2 offers a dual spray pattern. All Otterbine aerators come with 50 ft. of cable, a power control center and a warranty. **Contact Otterbine at 800/237-8837 or www.otterbine.com / circle no. 259**

Shoot for the sky

AquaMaster's Celestial Fountains can produce spray patterns up to 100 ft. in horsepowers from 10 to 25. They feature oversized flotation tires for easy launching, polyethylene, in-water adjustable floats, stainless steel frame with 16-gauge stainless steel intake screen, electrical control panel, 100 ft. of underwater cable, cable disconnect and interchangeable nozzle. An optional 500-watt stainless steel halogen lighting



system is also available.

Contact Aquamaster at 920/693-3121 or www.aquamasterfountains.com or circle no. 260

Low pressure rotor



Hunter Industries' I-60 is a low precipitation turf rotor that provides 50 to 66 ft. of irrigation coverage for parks, sports fields and other areas where low water pressure is a concern. It's designed to operate at 40 to 60 psi, doesn't require a booster pump, has a 3-in. pop-up height and is available as a full circle or adjustable arc (40° to 360°) model.

Hunter Industries can be reached at 800/733-2823 or www.hunterindustries.com / circle no. 261

Trimming flexibility

Echo Inc.'s curved shaft hedge clipper has a 7° bend in the shaft at the gearcase end which allows operators to trim complex shapes while standing comfortably at the base of a tall hedge. A 51-in. shaft allows operators to trim tall hedges without using chairs or ladders. Other features include a 23.6cc commercial-duty, dual-ring piston engine and 20-in. double-sided, double reciprocating blades with a 10% increase in speed.

For more information call 847/540-8400 or visit www.echoincorporated.com / circle no. 262

Pelletized compost

Now it's a breeze to apply compost with Planet Green's concentrated pelletized compost. These light, clean pellets can be applied with conventional drop or broadcast spreaders. Planet Green's compost offers a consistent 2-2-3 analysis with 6% calcium and 1% iron. **For more information contact Planet Green at 888/425-2827 or www.planetgreen.com / circle no. 263**

Calibration made easy

The PrizeLawn AccuRate Calibrator is designed to make rotary spreader calibration easy, practical and accurate. A materials collection box with an easily removable receptacle pan, it prevents granules from escaping and falling to the ground during the calibration process.

For more information contact the PSB Co. at 614/228-5781 or www.psbcompany.com / circle no. 264

Sharp tools

Lowell Corp.'s pruners and brush cutters come in three models, two heavy duty brush cutters and one point cut pruner. The Forester models come in two sizes, 27-in. long, 4 5/8 lbs., cutting capacity of 1 1/2-in.; and 34-in., 7 3/4 lbs., designed to cut 2-in. material. Composite grips provide cushioning for the hands while minimizing slippage. The point cut pruner can cut right down to its tips with minimal handle spread, reducing worker fatigue. The handles open wide for capacity cuts of material up to 1 1/4-in. thick.



Contact Lowell at 800/456-9355 / circle no. 265

Weed control

Compared to plastic film and laminated landscape fabric, GCI Professional Landscape Fabrics allow air and water to pass through to plant roots, ensuring healthy growth. They're perfect for weed control in container fields and greenhouse floors, landscape bed designs/tree planting, and as a filter fabric for trench drains. Use them to not only control weeds but stabilize soil under paving stones and prevent soil loss and erosion behind retaining walls.

For more information contact GCI Industries at 800/560-4GCI / circle no. 266

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products

continued from page 75

Rugged trailer

ShoreLand's trailer boasts a 1,400-lb. capacity. The deck measures 52 in. x 100 in. and is made of 5/8-in. premium grade plywood. Stake pockets along the frame accept 2 in. x 4 in. uprights



for side rails or provide convenient tie down points. A full axle and leafspring suspension make for smoother towing, molded fenders protect cargo from road debris, and built-in, anti-skid step pads in front and back allow convenient entry. Another feature is the rear gate/ramp that allows workers to drive an ATV, golf cart or riding lawnmower right onto the bed.

Visit ShoreLand's Web site at www.shorelandr.com / circle no. 267

In the clutch

DewEze Mfg. has come out with a clutch pump mounting kit for the 1999-2000 model Ford Super Duty with the 5.4L and 6.8L Triton engines. This new kit incorporates the Ford approval "Spider Mount" in its design, which meets Ford's requirements to maintain engine warranty in the mounting of accessories. Like all DewEze kits, this is serpentine drive with an automatic belt tensioner. The bracket is a one-piece hardened aluminum casting that is CNC machined for exact fit.

For more information contact DewEze at 800/835-1042 or www.deweze.com / circle no. 268

No more weeding

Fabriscap's 2 oz. spunbond commercial weed stopper fabric stops 95% of weed growth, lets

air, water and fertilizer pass through to plant roots, and is permanent when covered from sunlight. As a filter fabric, it protects native soil and silt from clogging drainage septic systems, offers drainage protection to maintain flow and percolation, and prolongs the life of septic drain fields and drainage pipes.

For more information contact Fabriscap at 800/992-0550 or www.fabriscap.com / circle no. 269

Bye bye nutgrass

Lawn and Garden Products says that the Nutgrass Nihilator controls yellow nutgrass by killing nutlets instead of burning down just the top of the plant. Apply it with an oil concentrate like Herbicide Helper, which assists in the herbicide getting into the inner tissue of the weed.

Contact Lawn and Garden Products at 559/499-2100 or www.montereylawngarden.com / circle no. 270

Sweepin' it all away

A broom? Attached to a truck? Believe it, because TrynEx now has the Pro-Broom Truck Mount. Attachable to most brand name snowplows, the broom is built with a 90-in. mainframe constructed of 10-gauge hot-rolled pickled steel. Eight poly brush rows and a dual-angle hood helps tackle tough material or push heavy objects. No moving parts eliminates the need for cleaning and lubrication of sprockets and bearings. The Pro-Broom Truck Mount also comes in a 48-, 60- and 72-in. mainframe sizes.

Contact TrynEx International at 800/725-8377 / circle no. 271

Herbicide enhancer

Precision Laboratories says its new product, Delux, will enhance the performance of generic glyphosphate and certain postemergence herbicides on hard-to-control weed species. It's a biodegradable activator surfactant and ammonium sulfate premix that ties up antagonistic hard water ions and providing ammonium ions for improved herbicide uptake. Delux comes in 2.5-gal. containers.

Call Precision Control at 847/498-0800 x33 / circle no. 272



Easy mower blade removal

Aggravating mower blade removal is history thanks to the Blade Buster, which clamps onto the mower deck and locks the blade in a stationary position for safe and easy removal. It works on both push and riding mowers and is made of heavy duty steel.

Call DesignLife Products at 847/266-7783 / circle no. 273

Spread the news

Gandy Company says that its spreader models 36H13FR and 42T16FR are approved for use with PennMulch seed establishment mulch. Independent university tests showed that the spreaders can evenly spread PennMulch, making it even more useful to turf professionals, says Gandy.

For more information call 800/443-2476 / circle no. 274

Aquatic herbicide

Avast! from Griffin L.L.C. is a slow-acting aquatic herbicide selectively effective on target species, allowing desirable vegetation to be reestablished without oxygen deprivation or fish kill. Avast! continues to control problem weeds for up to 12 months with minimal risk to the aquatic environment. It is available for sale as a flowable liquid formu-

continued on page 79

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Landscape MANAGEMENT

July 2000

This card is void after September 15, 2000

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 E-MAIL ADDRESS _____
 Signature: _____ Date: _____

1. My primary business at this location is: (fill in ONE only)
CONTRACTORS/SERVICE COMPANIES
 255 Landscape Contractors (Installation & Maintenance)
 260 Lawn Care Service Companies & Custom Chemical Applicators (ground & air)
 285 Irrigation Contractors & Consultants
 Other Contractors/Service Companies (please specify) _____

LANDSCAPING/GROUNDS CARE FACILITIES
 290 Sports Complexes
 295 Parks
 305 Schools, Colleges & Universities
 Other Grounds Care Facilities (specify) _____

SUPPLIERS AND CONSULTANTS
 355 Extension Agents/Consultants for Horticulture
 360 Sod Growers, Turf Seed Growers & Nurseries
 365 Dealers, Distributors, Formulators & Brokers
 370 Manufacturers
 Other (please specify) _____

2. Which of the following best describes your title? (fill in ONE only)
 10 **Executive/Administrator** - President, Owner, Partner, Director, General Manager, Chairman of the Board, Purchasing Agent, Director of Physical Plant
 20 **Manager/Superintendent** - Arborist, Architect, Landscape/Grounds Manager, Superintendent, Foreman, Supervisor
 30 **Government Official** - Government Commissioner, Agent, Other Government Official
 40 **Specialist** - Forester, Consultant, Agronomist, Pilot, Instructor, Researcher, Horticulturist, Certified Specialist
 50 **Other Titled and Non-Titled Personnel** (please specify) _____

3. SERVICES PERFORMED (fill in ALL that apply)
 A Mowing F Turf Fertilization K Paving, Deck & Patio Installation
 B Turf Insect Control G Turf Disease Control L Pond/Lake Care
 C Tree Care H Ornamental Care M Landscape Installation
 D Turf Aeration I Landscape Design N Snow Removal
 E Irrigation Services J Turf Weed Control O Other (please specify) _____

4a. Do you specify, purchase or influence the selection of landscape products?
 Yes No

4b. If yes, indicate which products you buy or specify: (fill in ALL that apply)
 1 Aerators 8 Herbicides 15 Sweepers
 2 Blowers 9 Insecticides 16 Tractors
 3 Chain Saws 10 Line Trimmers 17 Truck Trailers/Attachments
 4 Chipper-Shredders 11 Mowers 18 Trucks
 5 De-icers 12 Snow Removal Equipment 19 Turfseed
 6 Fertilizers 13 Sprayers 20 Utility Vehicles
 7 Fungicides 14 Spreaders

5. Do you have Internet access? A Yes B No
5A. If so, how often do you use it?
 A Daily B Weekly C Monthly D Occasionally

101	113	125	137	149	161	173	185	197	209	221	233	245	257	269	281	293	305
102	114	126	138	150	162	174	186	198	210	222	234	246	258	270	282	294	306
103	115	127	139	151	163	175	187	199	211	223	235	247	259	271	283	295	307
104	116	128	140	152	164	176	188	200	212	224	236	248	260	272	284	296	308
105	117	129	141	153	165	177	189	201	213	225	237	249	261	273	285	297	309
106	118	130	142	154	166	178	190	202	214	226	238	250	262	274	286	298	310
107	119	131	143	155	167	179	191	203	215	227	239	251	263	275	287	299	311
108	120	132	144	156	168	180	192	204	216	228	240	252	264	276	288	300	312
109	121	133	145	157	169	181	193	205	217	229	241	253	265	277	289	301	313
110	122	134	146	158	170	182	194	206	218	230	242	254	266	278	290	302	314
111	123	135	147	159	171	183	195	207	219	231	243	255	267	279	291	303	315
112	124	136	148	160	172	184	196	208	220	232	244	256	268	280	292	304	316

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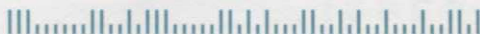
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 - 12 Snow Removal Equipment
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 - 14 Spreaders
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products

continued from page 76

lated with four pounds active fluridone per gallon.

Call Griffin L.L.C. at 336/378-0571 / circle no. 275

Take a seat

Calhoun Mfg.'s Trak replacement vinyl seat covers and cushions for riding mowers, lawn and garden tractors, and farm equipment come in six different sizes and are easy to install.

Contact Calhoun at 616/962-0948 / circle no. 276

All-purpose utility vehicle

Howard Price Turf Equipment says its new Maverick 6x4 truckster with six-wheel independent suspension and 20 hp Honda OHV engine is "tough in backcountry and tender to the turf."



The vehicle also features variable speed transmission with rubber mounted engine and transmission, inboard wet brakes, differential lock and top speed of 19 mph. Load capacity is 1,400 lbs.

Call Howard Price Turf at 636/532-7000 / circle no. 277

A chip off the old block

Bandit's 1890 Drum Bandit chipper features increased throwing velocity while eliminating all blow-back from the infeed spout. The new easy climb spring tension system that is now standard on the 12-in. and 18-in. units provides little down pressure until a load presents itself. The new feed system has twice the pulling power and climbs material more easily while

adding greater crushing capacity. The 1890 also has thicker 5/8-in. knives that are 5 1/3-in. wide. The chipper also has two new 250 hp options: the Cummins 6CTA diesel and the John Deere Model 6081A diesel.

Reach Bandit at 800/952-0178 or www.banditchippers.com / circle no. 278

Hang tight

Cooper Tools says its Gripple Rope Grip and Gripple Hang-Fast is perfect for bracing shrubs and trees or suspending lighting, sprinklers and heater/blower units. It is available in sizes rang-



ing from 1/16 in. to 1/2 in., and the reusable Rope-Grip offers a strong, fast, easy and safe method for joining, tensioning and terminating wire rope. The Hang-Fast comes in a range of sizes and load range limits.

For more information contact Cooper Tools at www.coopertools.com / circle no. 279

In control

Dig Corp.'s battery controller offers waterproof operation, versatile programming, and a digital LCD display. Powered by two nine-volt batteries, it can be mounted to the top of a valve or on the inside wall of a valve box and can be programmed for four start times, from one minute to 12 hours. Options include 3/4-in. - 20 threaded solenoid or 3/4-, 1-, 1 1/2- and 2-in. flow control in-line valves. Also available is 3/4-in. and 1-in. actuators to convert most manual antisiphon valves.

Contact Dig at 800/322-9146 or www.dig-corp/asdig / circle no. 280

Send a signal

Superior Signals' Meteorlite 2000 series potted strobe is no disco light, but it is designed for

heavy vibration with the electronics epoxy coated to protect against moisture. One model is a 10-joule strobe with 85 quad flashes per minute, while the other is 15 joules. High profile is 6 1/4 in. while short is 4 1/2 in. Colors include amber, clear, blue, green and red. Each strobe consists of a polycarbonate base and features a combination flat and 1-in. pipe mount standard.

Call Superior Signals at 800/447-3693 / circle no. 281

Titillating tillers

New Holland Construction's new tillers, manufactured by Alitec, are ideal for breaking up clumps, preparing seedbeds, mixing compost into existing soil and tilling home sites prior to landscaping. Bi-directional tine rotation allows the unit to operate effectively with the skid steer moving forward or backward. Offset mounting permits tilling next to curbs, sidewalks, and buildings. Replaceable, hardened tines are made for extended life and easy replacement. The tillers have a working depth of 6 in. and are available in 52-, 73-, and 84-in. cutting widths.

For more information log on to www.newholland.com/construction / circle no. 282

Fertilization efficiency

Emerald Isle Nutri•Rational Foliars bypass the roots and provide efficient intake of plant nutrients through the leaf tissue by using proprietary chelation methods and advanced technology. Each product provides the most desirable forms of turf nutrients in an ideal ratio and has the Emerald Isle "Multiple Release Formats" technology.

For more information contact Emerald Isle, Ltd. at 800/628-GROW / circle no. 283

Blast those bugs

The Rohm and Haas Co. introduces Address T & O insecticide that controls mole crickets, fire ants, cutworms, army worms and other pests. It's water-soluble and absorbed by turf, tree and shrub roots and foliage. Spot applications also can be used to control wasps, ants, crickets, cockroaches, earwigs and pill bugs. Available in 1 lb. canisters, 10-lb. bags and 1/3-lb. water-soluble pouches.

Contact the Rohm and Haas Company at 800/987-0467 / circle no. 284

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- The PV-II loads and unloads from YOUR truck in just minutes, allowing YOUR truck to perform other tasks, like pushing snow, etc.
- Due to the Poly design of the PV-II, there's no need to replace expensive replacement parts due to rust and abrasion.
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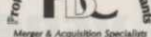
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TOWN OF BROOKLINE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS- Director of Parks and Open Space. The Director of Parks and Open Space manages the operation, improvement, protection and maintenance of the Town's system of public parks and open spaces. The Director provides effective leadership and has vision for long range planning and policy development. The Director is responsible for the management of Division personnel, administration, labor relations, training, staffing and evaluation of employees. The Director plans the Division's seasonal and long-range work program in the parks, playgrounds, cemeteries, conservation areas, public ways, historic landscapes and school grounds. The Director manages Town landscapes, oversees and maintains heavily used athletic fields, supervises operations teams, advocates for necessary resources, facilitates extensive public review processes, trains department personnel, oversees the development of stewardship and maintenance plans for the care of open space, and acts as technical advisor and liaison to several Town agencies and boards. The successful candidate must have exceptional management abilities, good oral and written communication skills, a strong proficiency with computers, excellent organizational skills and flexibility to perform a wide variety of tasks. The Director must be available for frequent evening meetings, and in the event of emergencies. Candidates must have an appropriate degree and at least seven years of directly related professional experience. Salary range is \$70,658 to \$80,790 with excellent benefits. AA/EOE **Interested candidates should send a resume and cover letter to: Personnel Director, Town of Brookline, 333 Washington Street, Brookline, MA, 02445.** 7/00

Supervisor of Landscape Construction: The University of Missouri-Columbia department of Landscape Services is seeking candidates for the position of Supervisor of Landscape Construction. Responsible for the operation, management and fiscal oversight of the landscape construction unit, this position directs a staff of 7-10 in performing all landscape construction and repair projects on the 700 acre University campus. Additional responsibilities include project management; coordination with landscape architects and building construction managers; plant procurement; nursery management and snow removal. Minimum qualifications include a bachelors degree in Horticulture or closely related field and four to five years experience in grounds maintenance or landscape construction, including supervisory experience or an equivalent combination of education and experience. The successful candidate will be self-motivated, innovative, organized and skilled in personnel management. Landscape Services provides professional landscape architecture, construction and maintenance services to the MU campus, designated as the **University of Missouri Botanic Garden.** We offer an excellent benefits package and a salary range of \$25,601 to \$47,305. **Please call Leanne Lake for additional information at 573-882-4240. Send resume to University of Missouri-Columbia, Human Resource Services, 130 Heinkel Building, Columbia, MO, 65211. AA/EOE** 7/00

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cleanup crew

THIS AND THAT

One of the ten best

Ever hear of a lawn so well-maintained you could eat off it? Well, grab your knife and fork for Georgia International Plaza since it was recently named one of the ten best lawns in America in the Briggs & Stratton 2000 Top Ten Lawns contest. Who keeps it looking so spectacular? Steve Heard and SKB Industries, that's who. The plaza is so highly regarded that it was chosen as the home of the Summer Olympic Games in 1996. It consists of five lush acres of emerald green zoysia situated on top of a seven-story parking deck in downtown Atlanta. It hosted over one million visitors within two weeks of its opening and continues to serve as a welcome mat for visitors to three of Atlanta's busiest destination spots — the Georgia World Congress Center, the Georgia Dome and Philips Arena. Congratulations, SKB, and keep Georgia International Plaza a place for fine dining!

LM 2000 State of the Industry survey's top three concerns by size of operation

Less than \$100K revenues

- ▶ Growth management (66.7%)
- ▶ Labor availability (54.8%)
- ▶ Financing availability (42.9%)

Over \$500K revenues

- ▶ Labor availability (84.8%)
- ▶ Developing supervisors (78.8%)
- ▶ Growth management (51.5%)

Way to go, UMass!

It always feels good to be first in anything, as the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts can attest after becoming the first academic institution ever to receive the Award of Merit from the National Arborists Association (NAA). The award is the highest honor awarded by the NAA to an individual or organization that has "positively influenced the practice of arboriculture." Stockbridge School was originally part of the Massachusetts Agricultural College, where the first shade tree care course offered in North America was taught in 1894. It was not until 1946 that "Mass Aggie" launched the Stockbridge tree care program.



BOB LYNCH

Numerous respondents to LM's 2000 **STATE OF THE INDUSTRY SURVEY** indicated they would like to provide more training for their employees on a number of topics. Their preferences for training follow:

	Average	Revenue less than \$100K	\$100K to \$500K	More than \$500K
Landscape operations	42.7%	50.0%	37.5%	32.0%
Time management	15.6%	14.7%	21.9%	12.0%
Customer service	12.5%	11.8%	9.4%	20.0%
Horticultural/ Agronomic	11.5%	8.8%	12.5%	12.0%
Safety	8.3%	8.8%	6.3%	12.0%
Business management	5.2%	2.9%	6.3%	8.0%

FISH WHERE THEY'RE BITIN'

According to The Wall Street Journal, areas with colleges seem to be the easiest places to find work and the hardest areas to recruit. March figures from the Department of Labor list areas with extremely low unemployment: *Columbia, MO (1%), Charlottesville, VA (1.3%), College Station, TX (1.6%), Ann Arbor, MI (1.9%).*

Conversely, recruiters might aim at high unemployment centers (often agricultural areas plagued by bad weather or low commodity prices), which the Labor Department pinpoints as: *Visalia and Tulare, CA (18.8%), Merced, CA (16.8%), Yuma, AZ (16.2%).*

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