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Landscape MANAGEMENT

MARCH 2003 / #3 / VOLUME 42

features

cover story

24. Make subcontracting pay

Profit using subs while keeping quality high and customers satisfied

BY DON DALE

28. Win with property managers

Veteran landscape professionals reveal how to build (and retain) this valuable book of business

BY DAVID WALKER

41. Outsourcing — why and how

Stretch your budget and manpower by getting the outside help you need

BY MILTON L. "DUSTY" HALLMAN, CGM

53. Sing your positive song

Tired of playing the low-bid game? Here's how to build your company's name and reputation

BY M.J. GILHOOLEY & CHRIS RICE

62. Seed trade keeps innovating

Check out this list of many of the newer varieties available in 2003

BY RON HALL & CINDY GRAHL

athletic turf

48. Wrigley's green tradition

Traditionalist Roger Baird and his crew give one of baseball's most cherished fields a fresh look

BY JIM BRUNO

68. When synthetic makes sense

Too many events, too few fields: Clark University picks a new "infilled" sports surface

BY PATRICK MAGUIRE

grounds management center

70. Award-winning landscape management

Look for the world's biggest basket at The Longaberger Company, Newark, OH

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departments

columns, news & more

5. On the Record

So this is southern hospitality

BY JASON STAHL

6. Business Ideas

What, you never read a book?

BY ED LAFLAMME



10. Industry Almanac

Home Depot targets Texas, Canada's lawn care in crosshairs, John Deere Landscapes expands

20. Statistics

98. Events

Who, what and when

tech center

74. Maximize pre-emergence success

Squeeze the most out of your weed controls by tracking their performance from season to season

BY DR. ROCH GAUSSOIN

84. Solutions Center

American Civil Constructors multi-tasks at Tunica's casino properties with versatile equipment

BY RON HALL

86. LM Reports: Walk-behind mowers

BY CURT HARLER



90. Products

irrigation center

81. Pre-season irrigation checkup

This step-by-step program will get clients' systems up and ready to water

BY KATHERINE WOODFORD

ending notes

106. Best Practices

Find the right subcontractor to help you compete

BY BRUCE WILSON

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Dr. R. Chris Williamson tells you what to do about the bad bugs

■ Handoffs from installation

Strategies to get the maintenance contract after a landscape install

■ Truck guide

A comprehensive look at new models for the Green Industry

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If there's a zero-turn mower out there, we've got it in this report

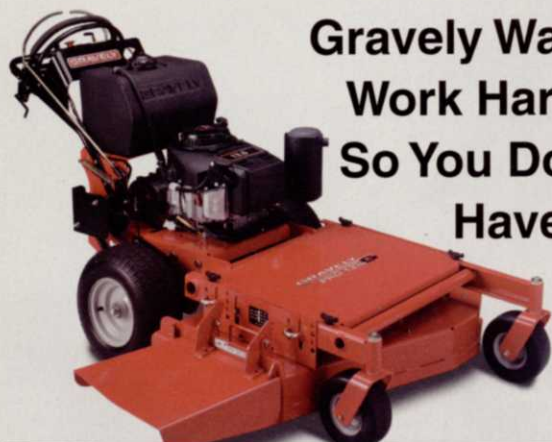
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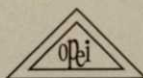
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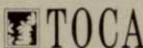
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So this is southern hospitality

If you ever get down to Jacksonville, FL, look up Mark Perschel of Perschel Brothers Lawn Service.

I promise that you won't just get valuable business advice from the man, whose company grosses about \$800,000 a year doing mostly residential landscape maintenance. Anyone who visits Mark will get the red carpet treatment because that's just how he operates.

He greeted me like a long-lost friend when I visited him in January. Then, he refused my offer of lunch and offered me some of his wife's wonderful egg salad.

After lunch, he suggested we go fishing, which was fine with me. With Mark, it was pleasure first, business second. And everything that was his was mine. He lent me a coat (because I hadn't expected a deep-freeze in Florida), a rod, sunglasses, whatever I needed. He and his son, Mark Jr., packed up the car and we were off.

Perschel pointed out several of his commercial accounts as we drove through town. He talked about how proud he was to keep 30% of his earnings as net profit. Also, that he was comfortable with his company's current size. The way he said it, I knew he meant it.

Nothing fancy

Before heading to the marina, we stopped at company headquarters. It was exactly how I'd envisioned it — nothing fancy. I could see more clearly why Mark's net profits were so high.

At the marina, Mark insisted on baiting the lines. And when my line got snagged on some rocks, Mark handed me his rod while he cut the line. After one uneventful hour, we decided to head somewhere else. "Water's probably too cold," Mark said.

We must have drove 40 minutes before we reached the dunelands. Mark thought we might have better luck there, but as the sun set lower and the temperatures dropped, I had my doubts. After another hour or so, the only thing we'd caught was a cold. I suspected that Mark had known all along we wouldn't catch anything, but took me out anyway because I was his guest.

I offered to take he and his family out to dinner on the drive home, but once again Mark refused. Instead, he pulled into a grocery store to buy supper for the night.

After dinner, we finished off the evening with a card game called "Phase 10" and some cookie dough ice cream. Mark Jr. was off at church for the night, playing games with friends. The Perschels are involved heavily with their church. The Bible is what he and his family live by, and Mark had been doing what the Bible says all day — treating others as he would like to be treated, giving but not asking for anything in return.

Now, giving and not asking for anything in return might be a recipe for disaster for business owners. But I think they might do well to copy Mark's faith, hard work, and passion for life and business.

Contact Jason at 440/891-2623
or e-mail at jstahl@advanstar.com



Baiting a line was one of many things Perschel insisted on doing for me on my visit.



Anyone who visits Mark will get the red carpet treatment because that's just how he operates.

business ideas

BY ED LAFLAMME / GUEST COLUMNIST

All of the successful business people that I know read and consider it essential to their ongoing self-education.



What, you never read a book?!

When I began my landscaping career, I attended a number of networking opportunities. On one such occasion, I sat next to a man at dinner who owned 12 stores and helped found a local bank.

I asked what his favorite business book was, and he proudly told me he didn't finish high school and had never read a book. I was shocked.

Why am I telling you this? As time passed, I learned that he was forced to close one store after another. I suspect it was a result of his lack of knowledge, management and business skills. Eventually, he sold all his remaining stores to a competitor.

Increase your knowledge

All of us must strive to increase our knowledge throughout our lives, especially in the professions we've chosen. All of the successful business people that I know read and consider reading essential to their ongoing self-education. Think about it: How can we create a "learning organization" if we, the leaders of the organization, aren't learning?

Not having time to read is no excuse; get audio books on tape. I subscribe to Audio-Tech Business Book Summaries (www.audiotech.com). They e-mail me the entire summary each month, so I have a hard copy or can keep them in my "outlook folder." I listen to the books driving to clients' offices, airports, or just doing

errands. They're available on CD, too. The cost for one year is \$145, and that gives me two books a month.

Whether you read them or listen to them, books increase your knowledge of business topics such as ethics, customer service, quality control, and negotiating and sales.

Improve your life

The information within books can improve not only businesses but lives as well. The best example of this is

the Bible. Millions of people have been, are now and will be affected by that book.

In the business realm, two of my favorite books are Dale Carnegie's classic, "How to Win Friends and Influence People," and Dr. Steven Covey's "The 7 Habits of Highly Successful People." They should be required reading for all business owners.

But there are dozens of other fine business books as well. E-mail me at the address below and I'll e-mail you a list of favorite books I've gathered from some of the best landscape and lawn care business owners in the country.

Make it a goal to read one book a month. Don't allow yourself to get too busy to read, listen and learn. To grow and to continue growing, we all need a steady diet of new concepts and ideas. As a business owner or manager, set the example, because if you're going to lead — you better read.

— The author built and operated the largest landscape company in Connecticut before selling it in 1999.

He now operates Grass Roots Consulting, Inc. He can be reached at ed@grassrootsconsulting.com.



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NEWS YOU CAN USE

Deere pursues lawsuit with Toro

WASHINGTON — Deere & Co. can pursue its lawsuit against rival Toro Co. over a patent for a machine that aerates soil on golf courses and other playing fields, a U.S. appeals court said.

Deere accused Toro of using its patent for a wheeled machine that makes orderly holes in the soil. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit said a federal judge in Peoria, IL, improperly defined the swinging motion covered by the patent in an earlier ruling in favor of Toro.

Textron changes name to Jacobsen

ATLANTA — Textron Golf, Turf & Specialty Products recently announced that it has changed its name to Jacobsen, a Textron company. The new name better reflects the position of the company as a leading supplier of quality turf care equipment and services worldwide.

LawnCareSuccess.com expands

PITTSBURGH — LawnCareSuccess.com, a Web site that offers helpful information to landscape and lawn care business owners, acquired LawnSite.com and PlowSite.com, two popular industry specific forum Web sites. Both sites have grown to be two of the largest community forums in the industry with over 15,000 members.

CLIPPINGS

Home Depot targets Texas

Arlington first of five landscape store locations in rollout

ARLINGTON, TX — Giant home improvement retailer The Home Depot is wooing Texas landscapers with new Home Depot Landscape Supply stores.

The company is opening several concept stores this winter and spring, beginning in Arlington. There will also be landscape stores in Plano, Grapevine, Lewisville and Dallas. Each store will have approximately 50 associates. The company launched three pilot stores in the Atlanta area last summer.

"The vitality and sophistication of the Dallas-Fort Worth market is what first brought Home Depot to Texas in 1984," says Todd Williams, President, Home Depot Landscape Supply. "It would be

hard to find a better place to showcase our new landscaping business. Texans take great pride in their homes and their property. We can offer them the next generation in landscaping products, supplies and service."

Each store stocks a wide selection of products ranging from live goods to chemicals and tools to landscaping materials. Each has a heated/cooled space of about 12,000 square feet, complete with a tool rental department, in front of a covered greenhouse. Each site also features a five- to seven-acre fenced-in "Pro-Yard."

The stores are set up with separate entrances for the professional landscaper and the do-it-yourself enthusiast. The pro-side

of the store features job-lot quantities with bulk items stacked nearby. The other side of the store resembles a greenhouse, complete with exotic plants and flowers.

"We will have certified nursery experts at every store, along with a full line of top-quality live goods, including trees, shrubs and plants," said Williams. "Tool rental centers and complete irrigation systems will also be available at each store."



STM becomes ValleyCrest

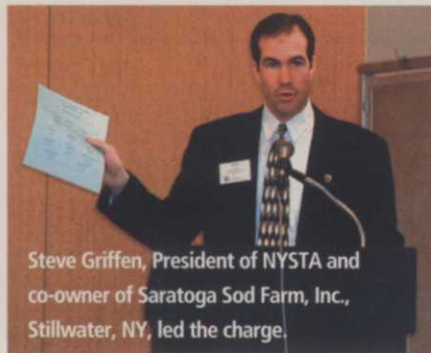
OAKTON, VA — STM Landscape Services is now ValleyCrest Landscape Maintenance. ValleyCrest Companies, headquartered in Calabasas, CA, acquired STM in 2000.

Gary G. Blosser founded STM, then known as Shenandoah Turf Management, in 1977. It has offices in Richmond, Oakton and Newport News, VA, and Gaithersburg, MD. ValleyCrest Companies, based in Calabasas, CA, has more than 7,500 employees in nearly 90 locations across the United States.

Turf pros bend lawmakers' ears on pesticide regulation

BY RON HALL

ALBANY, NY — Landscape and lawn care company owners and other turfgrass professionals presented their case to state lawmakers here this past February. The New York State Turfgrass Association (NYSTA) sponsored the event, Turfgrass Advocacy 2003.



Steve Griffen, President of NYSTA and co-owner of Saratoga Sod Farm, Inc., Stillwater, NY, led the charge.

State officials in New York have been under increasing pressure from activist groups to severely restrict pesticide use for home lawns, public areas, golf courses and other professionally maintained landscapes.

The turfgrass professionals:

- ▶ Requested that legislators resist efforts to allow localities to regulate pesticides. NYSTA members pointed out that professional applicators accurately identify pests before making applications, apply products safely and responsibly, select the correct products to use and keep strict records of pesticides used.

- ▶ Recommended that legislators allocate \$350,000 for continued funding of the Community IPM Program. During the last five years, the program has helped residents find low-risk ways to manage lawn grubs, turf diseases and pests that pose health risks.

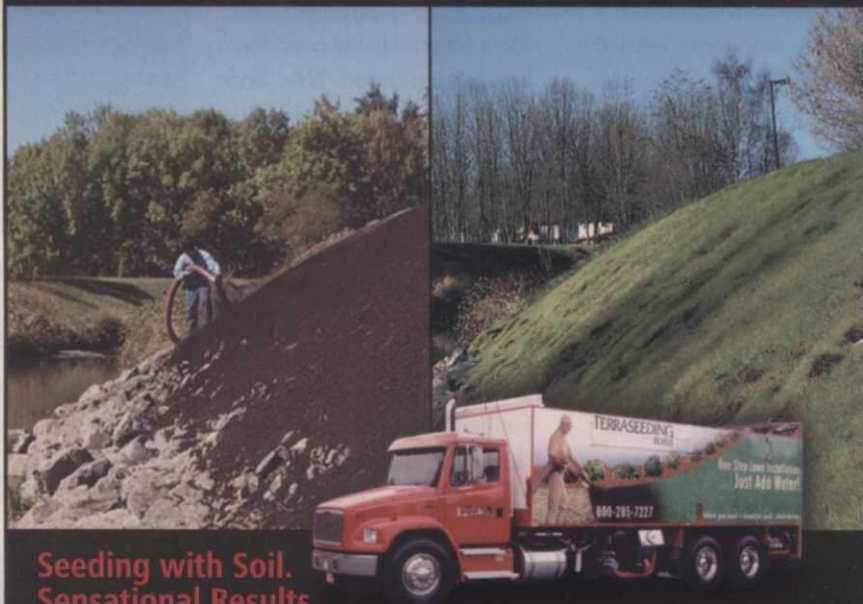
- ▶ Supported a \$1.3 million appropriation for the creation of a New York Farm Viability Institute. They also sought continued support and funding for regional cooperative specialists that provide essential services to farmers/horticulturists.

"Sound science, not simplified

alarmism, should be the basis for environmental legislation and regulation," said the NYSTA's policy statement. "The supposed reason for the current pesticide reporting

bill was to provide data that could be used to identify links between pesticide exposure and disease occurrences. No credible links have been identified."

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Circle 107

PLCAA to ARAS: let's develop a closer relationship

BY RON HALL

TAMPA, FL—The Professional Lawn Care Association (PLCAA) seeks closer ties with its Allied Regional Associations (ARAs), particularly in monitoring and responding to state and regional legislative/regulatory issues.

Tom Delaney, PLCAA's legislative point man, sent questionnaires to state and regional lawn care groups loosely allied to the national group. Delaney says that he wants to find out who within these groups is monitoring legislative activity affecting professional landscape/lawn applicators. Delaney says the industry needs to track the issues more closely, particularly at the state level where most regulation is taking place.

A sharper focus

PLCAA has sharpened its focus on legislative matters since hiring Gary Clayton as its Executive Vice President

(the fourth in the association's 24-year history) and reassigning Delaney to be its legislative watchdog. Also, Norman Goldenberg of ServiceMaster, also knowledgeable about legislative and regulatory matters, has rejoined as a director on the PLCAA board.

On Feb. 4, Delaney and John Buechner, Chairman of PLCAA's Government Affairs Committee, joined 50 other industry members (mostly lawn care operators and golf course superintendents) in Albany, NY, to lobby legislators there for reasonable pesticide laws for applicators. New York State is a hotbed of anti-pesticide activism.

Buechner, with Lawn Doctor, Inc., says that lawn care legislation in New York is a political issue, not a science issue. He says that a state lawmaker admitted to him that applicators have science on their side but that he (the assemblyman) "also understands who puts him in office" — his anti-pesti-

cide constituents.

The best weapon the industry possesses to discourage restrictive and poorly conceived legislative may not be science; it's states' budgets. Delaney says that although legislators

may be eager to pass laws to restrict chemical lawn care, they can't afford to administer or enforce them. Pointing this out can be the best defense against passing the regulations in the first place, he says.

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Montreal moves toward pesticide ban

BY RON HALL

MONTREAL, QUEBEC — The city of Montreal (which now includes its former suburbs) is considering a bylaw severely restricting lawn care. The bylaw, basically a ban on pesticides, could go into effect yet this spring if Montreal Mayor Gerald Tremblay has his way.

"This will definitely make it more difficult to service properties there," says Chris Lemcke of Weed Man, the giant Canada-based lawn care franchisor. Lemcke says that his firm is now offering an "organic" program to serve clients in the city and its boroughs. So far, renewal rates within the

city have been acceptable, he tells *Landscape Management*.

The bylaws would allow the use of pesticides only in certain situations, including heavy infestations on clients' properties. For instance, pesticides could still be used:

- ▶ in swimming pools and decorative ponds,
- ▶ to manage golf courses, bowling greens and on property used for agricultural or horticultural purposes,
- ▶ at the Insectarium, Biodome and Botanical Garden,
- ▶ within five meters of food storage depots to control vermin,
- ▶ to control spiders and ants in doorways and around the base of buildings, and

▶ to control infestations.

Lemcke says that lawn care companies would only be allowed to use pesticides for severe infestations of destructive insects or when weeds overrun a property. They would have to get approval from an inspector before making the emergency application.

The proposed bylaw would also forbid homeowners from using pesticides on their properties but not forbid them from being sold in retail establishments. Fines for disobeying the bylaws would be up to \$4,000 (Canadian dollars) for companies and \$2,000 for homeowners.

"I don't know of an instance where a homeowner has ever

been charged for applying a pesticide, even when they're not supposed to," adds Lemcke.

Several of the communities contained within the greater Montreal area have banned all uses of pesticides. Those measures will remain in effect even if Montreal's bylaws are approved.

Meanwhile, the community of Calendon, just north of Toronto, will have a hearing March 24 to consider pesticide regulations. Calendon is in Ontario Province. Lemcke says that the professional lawn care industry in Canada is devoting tremendous energy and time to defending itself against the claims of activist organizations.

People & companies



Profile
Products LLC named **John A. Schoch** President and Chief

Executive Officer.

John Deere Landscapes appointed **Brian Day**, formerly of Century Rain Aid and Bamboo Pipeline, as its Southwest Regional Vice President.

The **Scotts Company's Board of Directors** appointed **James Hagedorn** Chairman of the Board.

Hagedorn is also President and Chief Executive Officer of **Scotts**.

Echo, Inc. hired **Steve Herbst** as Product Manager for trimmers, power blowers and shredders.



Peterson Pacific Corp. hired **Larry Cummings** as its new General Manager.

Husqvarna inducted several sales leaders into its President's Club for achieving



overall excellence in five key categories. They are: **Harry Combs**, Billings, MT, **Jeff Lees**, Candia, NH, **Paul Mancuso**, Pittsford, NY, **Pat Quillen**, Riverton, UT, **Mike Thrower**, Greenville, AL, **Jim Tsorvas**, Gibsonsia, PA, and **Eric Weber**, Lawrence, KS. In addition, **Mancuso** was named Salesman of the Year.

North American Green hired **Lynne Knauff** as Marketing Manager.

Cebeco International Seeds named **Bob Maycock** as its "Man of the Year."

BASF Corp. named **Stephen Briggs** Director, Specialty Products Department.

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Motivational ideas spring from ALCA Executive Forum

BY RON HALL

SANIBEL ISLAND, FL — You don't need cash to incentivize employees to work more productively or safer — but it helps.

Check out these ideas that landscape company owners and managers shared at the Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA) Executive Forum here Feb. 13-16.

Dollar bills, snapshots

Michael Byrne, CLP, ELM Landscape & Golf, Danvers, MA, occasionally shows up on a job site with cool soft drinks and a handful of \$1 bills. As he passes out the drinks to crew members, he hands the stack of bills to the foreman on the site. Byrne then walks the site with employees. If he sees evidence of sloppy work, unsafe conditions, etc., he can ask for dollars back. Byrne says that the exercise keeps crews on their feet. They hate to give back the money once they have it in their possession.

Brian Daly, Providence Lawn & Landscape, Catharpin, VA, uses photos of his crews in action and the landscapes they service. In fact, all of his supervisors have both digital and disposable cameras in their trucks. The resulting photos (sometimes blown up to poster size) point out both good work and work that need improvement. He shares some of



these images with workers when they meet for their Fridau training sessions.

"We use it in more of a positive direction," says Daly. "We use it more for team building than anything else."

Prizes and relaxation

Michael Bellantoni, CLT, Michael Bellantoni, Inc., White Plains, NY, offers incentives



Mike Bellantoni's crew eats for free.

such as free dinners, sometimes a cash payment and, in one case, an automotive tool set, when he gets exceptionally positive customer feedback from a particular account. "The employee has to do something beyond their normal job," says Bellantoni.

Terry Anderson, The Brickman Group, LTD, Chicago office, says that if his operation meets its goals, it provides employees with a two-day retreat at a lake resort away from the

city. The first day is devoted to motivating and energizing the employees; the second day is for recreation.

"It's amazing how much our people look forward to that, but to do it they realize the company has to do well," says Anderson.

Jeff Joutras, The Bruce Company of Wisconsin, Inc., Racine, WI, suggests a regular "Employee of the Month." His company honors exceptional employees by putting their

photographs and writeups in the company newsletter. Another good incentive is providing a free day of paid vacation. "Nobody in this business gets enough leisure time," says Joutras.

When the landscapers concluded their discussion, however, it was generally agreed that cash is still probably the most powerful workplace incentive. But it must be tied to meeting company sales and profit goals, they agreed.

Cagwin & Dorward chosen as Bradshaw's Pick of The Week

Cagwin & Dorward Landscape Contractors of Novato, CA was recently chosen as Broadcast News Channel's "Pick of the Week" hosted by prominent NFL personality Terry Bradshaw. The Pick of the Week is a series of broadcast television segments that air on MSNBC.

The series highlights companies that represent the backbone of America's economy, are based on unique business models and reflect the best of corporate America. Cagwin & Dorward's spot aired nationally on MSNBC on Feb. 17.

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Those studies have consistently shown a positive effect on early plant growth and development and with mature plants under stress. Sod farms results show that turf can be harvested earlier due to increased root mass and quicker establishment from seed or sprigs. Mature turf has greater root mass with a noted "tighter" visual appearance and less susceptibility to stress.

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Effect of Fertilizer with Prospect Plus on Creeping Bentgrass Density

Ohio Turfgrass Foundation Research and Educational Center – 2000

Treatment	Rate	% Turf Density
Check		60.00
Fertilizer (46-0-0)	0.014 lb. N/1000 sq. ft.	72.00
Fertilizer (46-0-0) + Prospect Plus	0.014 lb. N/1000 sq. ft. + 48 oz./acre	77.00

Seeded on August 4, 2000 with G-2 creeping bentgrass at a rate of 2 lbs. per 1000 sq. ft. Density measurements were based on % cover taken visually on 10/4 (8 weeks after treatment)

Study Results: "... a significant increase in creeping bentgrass establishment two months after seeding with the application of fertilizer and Prospect Plus compared to the untreated control." **A 22% improvement over check and more than a 12% increase over fertilizer alone!**

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JD Landscapes readies big Detroit-area store

ROMEIO, MI — John Deere Landscapes is opening of a major new 12-acre facility in Romeo, MI, approximately 40 miles north of Detroit. The branch is scheduled to open yet this spring.

John Deere Landscapes, with 250 locations across the United States and Canada, primarily serves landscape and irrigation contractors, landscape designers and architects. The new Romeo facility will feature landscape and irrigation supplies, nursery stock, landscape lighting and water gardening equipment, in addition to seed,

fertilizer and other Green Industry products.

"The Romeo branch is strategically situated to serve the expanding population of greater Macomb County," says David P. Werning, President of John Deere Landscapes. "Landscape construction and renovation are among the fastest-growing segments of the home building and home improvement industries."

"This new location will provide greater convenience for landscape and irrigation professionals, a wider range of premium products and ex-



panded selections of top quality nursery stock," Werning points out.

(L-R): Dave Werning, Richard Commyn, John Jenkins, Mark Nattinger.

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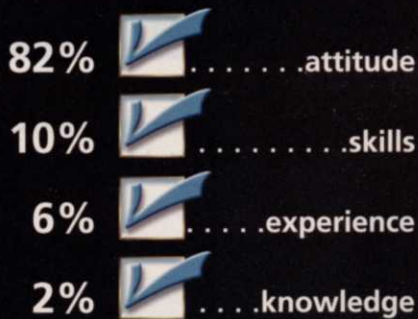
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Percentages based on 93 responses

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ANNUAL HOUSING STARTS (1993-2002)

Year	Single-family	Multi-family	Total
2002	1,358,900	346,900	1,705,800
2001	1,273,300	329,400	1,602,700
2000	1,230,900	337,800	1,568,700
1999	1,302,500	338,700	1,568,700
1998	1,271,400	345,600	1,617,000
1997	1,133,600	340,400	1,474,000
1996	1,161,000	315,900	1,476,900
1995	1,076,300	277,900	1,354,200
1994	1,198,400	258,600	1,457,000
1993	1,125,600	162,100	1,287,700

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

GASOLINE-POWERED HANDHELD UNITS SHIPPED IN 2002*

Trimmer/brushcutters	5,097,294
Chain saws	2,427,166
Handheld blowers	1,568,535
Backpack blowers	300,785
Hedge trimmers	342,099
Cut off saws	114,724

*Model year Sept. 1, 2001 thru Aug. 31, 2002

SOURCE: OUTDOOR POWER EQUIPMENT INSTITUTE



HOUSING AND INTEREST RATE FORECAST

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Total starts	1,573,000	1,603,000	1,709,000	1,650,000	1,635,000
Single-family	1,232,000	1,273,000	1,364,000	1,318,000	1,293,000
Multifamily	341,000	330,000	345,000	332,000	342,000
New single-family home sales	880,000	908,000	981,000	948,000	930,000
Existing home sales	5,159,000	5,291,000	5,605,000	5,468,000	5,377,000

Interest rates (Freddie Mac commitment)

Fixed rate	8.1%	7.0%	6.6%	6.3%	6.9%
ARMs	7.0%	5.8%	4.6%	4.3%	5.8%
Prime rate	9.2%	6.9%	4.7%	4.5%	6.2%

Annual data are averages of seasonally adjusted quarterly data and may not match annual data published elsewhere.

SOURCE: NAHB'S HOME BUILDERS FORECAST PERIODICAL

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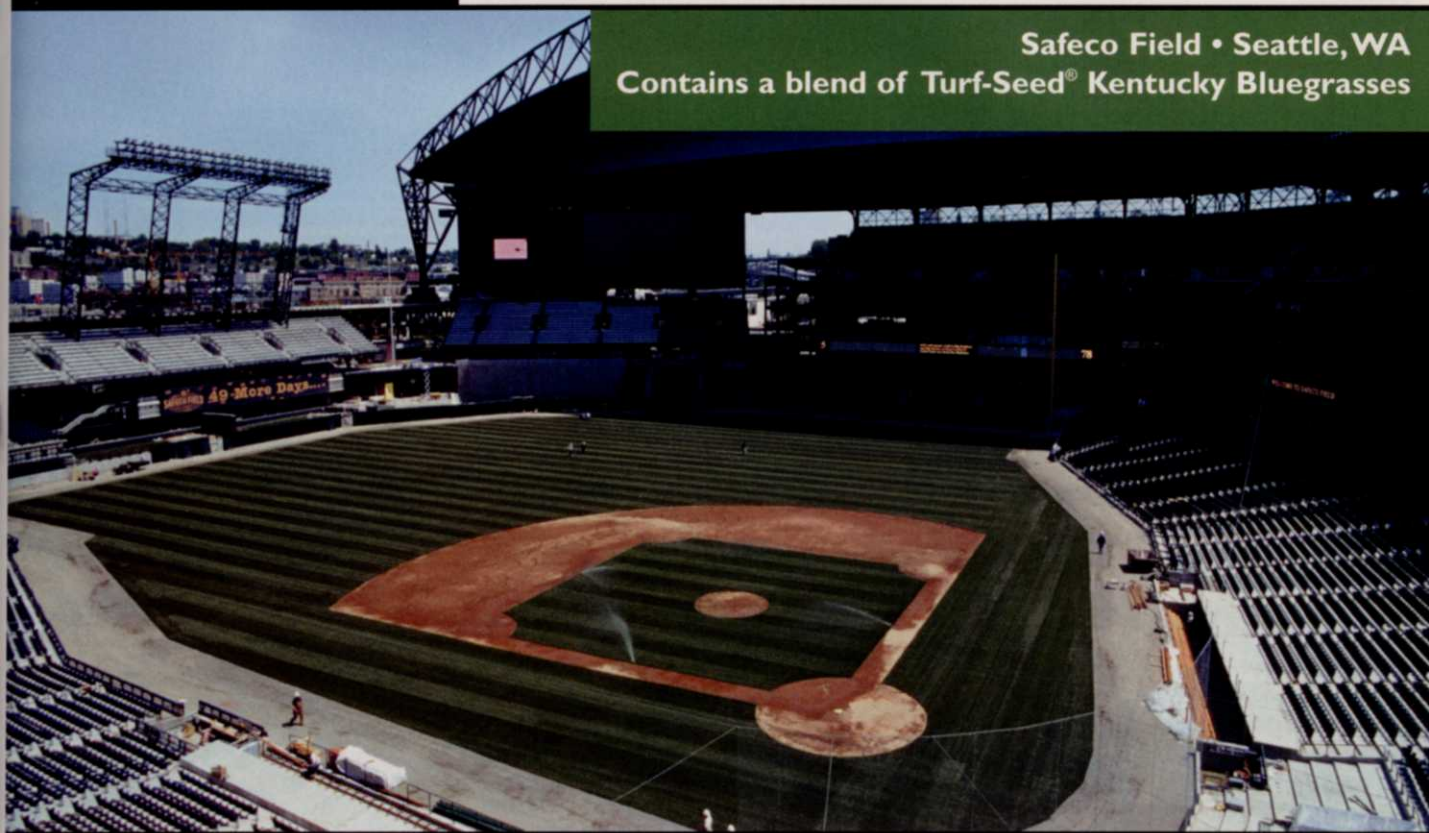
NORTH STAR
MOONLIGHT
BRILLIANT

Midnight and Look-alikes

Mildew Resistant Salt Resistant Rust Resistant Dark Color

Mildew Resistant	Salt Resistant	Rust Resistant	Dark Color
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Yes	No	Yes	Yes
No	No	No	Yes

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A man in a dark suit, white shirt, and patterned tie is leaning over a buffet table. He is wearing glasses and a name tag that says "KORAS". He is holding a small plate with a fork and is reaching for a piece of food from a large platter of appetizers. The buffet table is covered with a gold-colored cloth and has several platters of food, including a large platter of appetizers, a platter of carrots and other vegetables, and a platter of appetizers on sticks. The background features a wall with a decorative chandelier and a patterned carpet.

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and still deliver your high
level of service by enlisting
the help of other firms**

BY DON DALE



Human beings by nature want to have as much control over as many aspects of their lives as possible. This holds true in the landscaping profession as well, where contractors find it extremely difficult to give up part of a hard-earned contract to a subcontractor. But thinking about the numerous potential benefits of subcontracting, including finishing a job more quickly, may make letting go easier.

"I think it's a great way to grow your business," says Kurt Kluznik, President of Yardmaster, Inc. of Painesville, OH.

Expand your opportunities

Yardmaster has partnered with subcontractors to venture into new areas of landscape design/build without all of the normal expenses of expansion. By hiring competent subs in areas such as carpentry, concrete work and outdoor water features, the company has not only expanded its clientele but learned valuable new skills.

His firm has since hired employees skilled in those areas — some trained by subcontracted tradesmen working with company crews — so he now hires subs less frequently.

When doing pools, fencing, excavation and



Yardmaster's projects are often completed with help from subs.

jobs requiring a crane, Kluznik isn't reluctant to hire subs. "We don't have the ability to do that kind of work," he says.

In addition, though his company grows to about 250 employees in the summer, he often contracts subs to do some "core work" as well as to expand his geographic reach. For example, he has a Sears maintenance account, and he has been able to expand that into other cities by subbing it out.

"They get one bill without having to deal with different vendors," Kluznik says of Sears. He compares it to hiring a consultant, and says it helps him avoid the gearing up and gearing down necessary to expand the company for new jobs and laying people off afterward. "You pay a premium for something like that," Kluznik remarks.

Kluznik says he makes less profit on subcontracted work, but also doesn't have the overhead that would be required to do it in-house.

He estimates that from year to year, about 20% of his work is subbed out, though some of that is for snow removal. He can't afford enough trucks to do all the snow work in the winter.

Keeping it under control

Mike Wheat, owner of Wheat's Lawn & Custom Landscape, Inc., Vienna, VA, only lets out about 10% of his work to subs, and is reluctant to do that because of fears of being unable to control quality. His company is not strong on electrical or concrete foundation work, however.

"We find it's more cost-effective to subcontract that out," says Wheat, who has 110 employees and focuses on residential work. Quality control is important in the custom home business, and Wheat makes sure the sub is doing it right. That means sending a field manager to the job to make sure everything from proper parking to the cleanup afterward is done to company standards.

Yardmaster insures quality control in various ways, but the primary one is to create long-term relationships with good subcontractors. "Hire good ones (using ALCA members has

proven helpful) and build a history of trust," Kluznik says.

Communication is another huge necessity. "The communication between the sub, our crew and the client is crucial," Kluznik points out, be-



Kurt Kluznik (top) and Mike Wheat both see the need for subs.

cause the subcontractor may be on the job with or without a Yardmaster crew. In these instances, quality control is built upon a foundation of proper planning and day-to-day coordination. Every Yardmaster project manager, designer and supervisor communicates directly and often with subs.

Even so, Kluznik notes, don't be overbearing with subs. Treat them the same as you would your own crews, and they'll respect you for it. That respect will be reflected in their work. Still, he makes sure they are aware of company standards and on-the-job etiquette.

"The biggest thing is that satisfaction is tied to payment," Kluznik emphasizes. That will be written in the contract for the sub. Wheat agrees.

"Pay the sub on time," Wheat says. In fact, his policy is to pay the sub even before his company is paid. That keeps them happy. That's vital to establishing a mutually profitable relationship, but no less so than making sure that work orders are clear and understandable. That keeps subs focused on their responsibilities.

It's all in the contract

Contracts are the primary means of keeping a subcontractor in line. "Everything is contracted," Wheat emphasizes. He doesn't want any hidden surprises, and uses contracts written by an attorney.

Joe Soccodato, owner of JVS Landscaping, Inc. of Westwood, NJ, is a big believer in contracts. He not only signs a contract with the sub (though he usually has the sub write it in order to save his small company time), he also has a detailed clause in the client contract dealing with subs.

"We like to let our clients know we will be here for them," even if a sub is doing the work, Soccodato says. Thus a clause in his weekly lawn maintenance service contract with the client lets the client know that a subcontractor will be

doing the work and it will be billed "as subcontractor charge."

Soccodato says it's important for a client to find no surprises and total clarity in the contract, especially when using subs. He uses the same care in locating subcontractors.

"I really screen people who will be walking on our clients' property," he says. How does he sort out the ones he will use long-term? "Attrition," he says. There's no deficit worse than a non-performing sub. Sometimes he will stroke the client by adding extra time onto any warranty that the sub has, assuring him that any problems will be taken care of.

JVS Landscaping tries "to give clients many reasons to buy from us," Soccodato says, and he will use subcontractors for any job his 10-man staff can't handle. This enables him to take most any job, using subs to do all the work his crew can't. The primary work he subs out is irrigation, repairs and "any work over 10 feet in height."

Soccodato insists on making a profit on any work the sub does, however. He will write in a minimum profit of 15%.

Live and die by margins

Perhaps because they're a larger company, American Civil Constructors, which does about \$70 million in landscape billing annually, is less reluctant to sub out specialty work. Even so, they do recognize the risks, says regional manager Todd Williams of Littleton, CO.

"Larger companies live and die by margins," Williams says, adding that subs cost more to the client and make it more difficult to successfully bid a job. Then, there are risks associated with performance, accidents and liability.

Williams says those risks are lessened when the subcontractor is bonded, properly insured and carries workman's compensation. If the sub doesn't, then any cat-



Supervision of subs ensures the quality projects, like this one by Wheats.

astrophe could fall on the shoulders of the general contractor. Subs are such an integral part of ACC's

business that the decision to use them is made early in the bidding and decision-making process, Williams says. Problems on the job can be avoided by involving subs in pre-construction meetings, with the client also in attendance.

Two other layers of oversight are emphasized once the job begins. First, the project superintendent carries on a "daily, multiple times per day working relationship with the sub." The project manager who administers and coordinates the job will also visit the job once a week.

"We have a weekly meeting between our project manager, the subs, the owner's representative and the architect," Williams says.

Whether a company is large or small, it can use subcontractors to great advantage. The above contractors agree that their businesses wouldn't be as large, well-rounded and successful if they couldn't call on subs to help them out.

— *The author is a freelance writer based in Hollywood, CA. He can be reached at donnied@ix.netcom.com.*

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Savvy landscape professionals reveal how to build (and retain) this valuable book of business

BY DAVID WALKER, JR.

Not only did they discover it, they used it to assemble and maintain successful relationships with many of our country's top property management companies.

Communication is key

"You have to communicate with the property manager and explain what you're doing," says Chris Halgas, President of Proscape Landscaping, Cinnaminson, NJ. "When you have a new relationship with a property manager, you have to really feel them out. Write down every aspect of the property, including the dates of when you're going to be there. Be open and clear about everything."

When Halgas talks about communicating, he means at every level.

"Your planning has to be a well-lubricated machine," Halgas says. "You've got to communicate with your foreman. He has to understand what the property manager wants."

Halgas knows firsthand about the often fragile relationship between property manager and contractor. When it comes down to a lack of knowledge about landscaping, frustrations can run high.

"We lost a property this year because a manager didn't like the height of our blades," Halgas says. "We raised the blades

continued on page 30

Win with property managers

Editors' note: This is the first article in a two-part series. Next month we focus on what property managers expect from you.

Building long-term relationships with property management firms is one of the most lucrative moves a landscape company can make. It means maintaining multiple

properties that often require a multitude of year-round services. And, when these services are performed satisfactorily, property managers often take you along with them when they move to new organizations.

But like any business relationship, finding that special "glue" to hold the relationship together can be difficult and time consuming. *Landscape Management* talked with landscape professionals whose companies have discovered that magic elixir.

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Circle No. 114

continued from page 28

because we were in a drought and we didn't want to stress the turf. A lot of these property managers aren't very educated in landscape and they don't understand what we're doing. They want their grass a perfect crew cut. Sometimes the temperature and weather don't allow for that.

"If you're not on top of your property manager and they don't see you driving to the property and checking up on it," he adds, "they'll have somebody else in there in a heartbeat. Screw up one week to the next and you're going to see other landscapers bidding the property six months later."

Gotta be professional

Professionalism might even be more important than communication in the early going. It gets your foot in the door, and projects the type of image that you want, but also must maintain throughout the length of the contract.

"Property managers like a company that shows up and conducts itself like a professionally from the beginning," says Vince Cottrell, Proscap's Sales Supervisor/Marketing. "A lot of guys out there with pickup trucks don't know what they're doing."

He says his company projects the image of a quality operation through its professionally produced full-color brochures, its Web site, the signage and cleanliness of its trucks and, especially, the appearance of its employees.

"When a customer sees us walk in the door, they see people that they would like taking care of their property," says Cottrell. "Our guys are all in uniform when they go on the job. We make sure our guys are all in the same shirts. We also make sure there's always an English-speaking person on the job."

The secret to keeping property managers is really no secret at all, he adds. In

Property management deal killers

What does it take to destroy a profitable contractor-property management relationship? Here are some deal killers:

- ▶ Putting a property manager in the position of being uninformed, allowing him or her to be caught unawares of a particular property management issue. "It makes them look like they aren't doing their job," says Jack Long.
- ▶ Hitting a property manager with high, unexpected monthly charges. Property managers would rather break payments down to eight or 12 equal payments. They don't want to hear that mulch is going to cost them \$10,000 payable within 30 days, says Long. They don't want to hear, "We're going to fertilize the property and it's going to an additional \$5,000 this month."
- ▶ Talking about business or soliciting

in a social situation, a big no-no. Property managers avoid vendors like the plague in situations like that. Other deal killers include dropping in without an appointment, not producing a proposal on time and not responding immediately when they call, says Chris Halgas.

▶ Not producing the service that was contracted or not getting it done on time. "What ticks off a property owner is when they go out to a job site and expect something and it's not done. That's why follow-up and communication are so very important," says Debby Cole.

▶ Not being the property manager's third eye, and not protecting the assets under their care, adds Thomas Oyler.

— DW

fact, it's simple — do the job the way you say you're going to do it, and do it when it's supposed to be done.

"You can get anybody with a pickup truck and a couple of guys to just show up every day, cut your grass and do a couple of things for you," he says.

Even so, getting repeat business from property managers can be difficult, especially considering how competitively priced the industry has become. In the end, you have to rely on your company's history and ability to perform services efficiently and satisfactorily.

Through the back door

"You can go out and get all kinds of rotgut stuff all day, but the higher end, class-A type account, it's all based on relationships," says Debby Cole, President, Greater Texas Landscapes, Austin, TX.

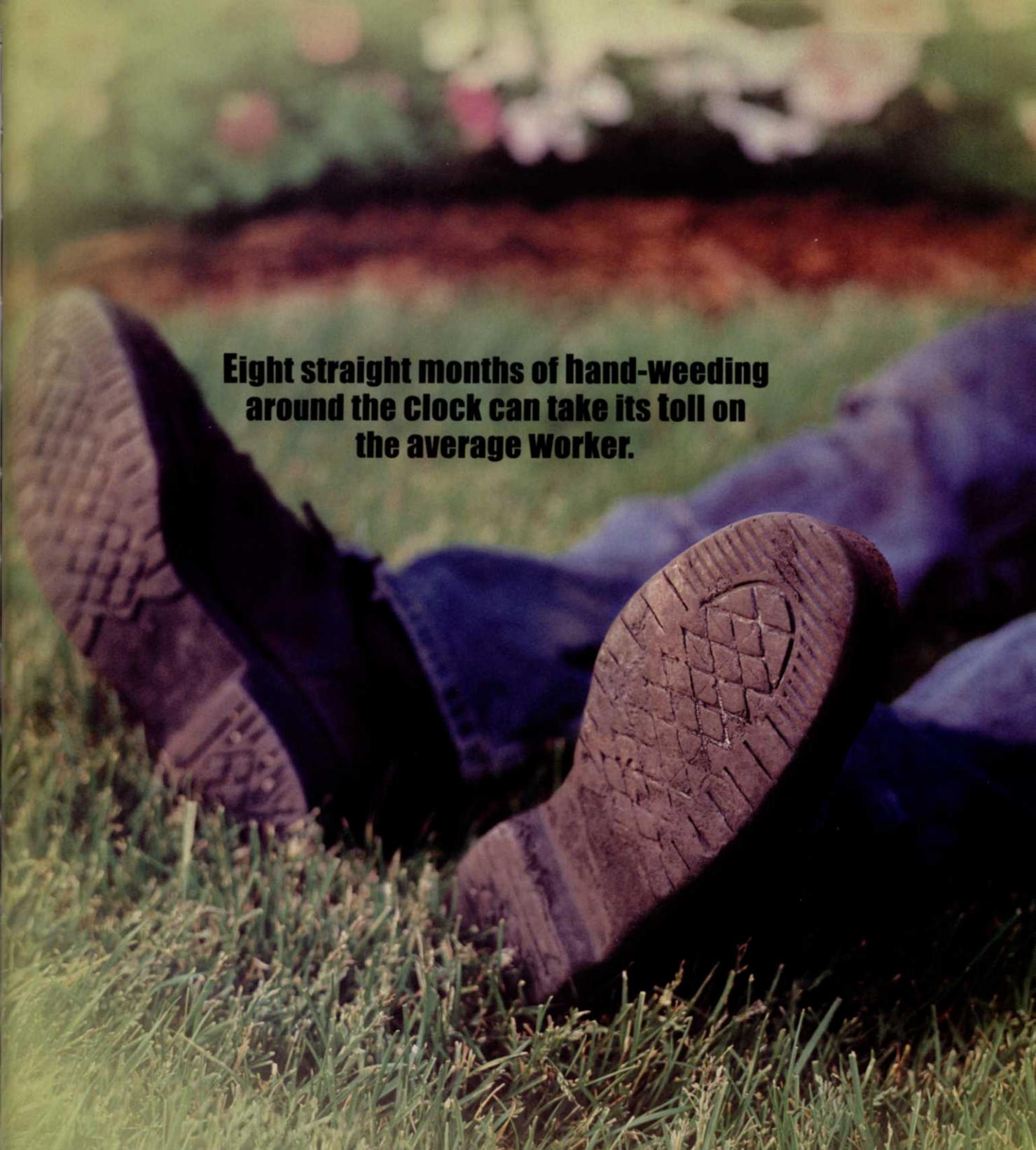
And you can ruin any chance of creating a solid relationship with property managers by approaching them the wrong way. Cole says that in her company's particular market, property management companies aren't receptive to sales pitches, whether they come by phone or by personal visit.

"You build relationships by joining associations, working with property managers on committees, never socializing with them, and never talking business," Cole says. "The minute you talk about business, you get the cold shoulder. Here in Austin, you don't even get through the front door."

These picky customers aren't apartment complexes or residences, Cole points out. She's talking about property management and real estate companies, who seem to desire less in-your-face business dealings.

"They want to be kept informed of new

continued on page 32



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Circle 130

CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS



Proscapè Landscaping's employees are all in uniform on the job.

continued from page 30

information and changes in issues within industries, but they want to receive this information by newsletters, e-mails, memos and faxes," Cole says. "That's about as sales-oriented as you can get. No pitch. Zero. None. You're waiting in the wings until they call you."

Cole's company belongs to several real estate, facility management and Green Industry-related associations, including the Austin Association of Facilities & Maintenance Engineers and the Real Estate Council of Austin.

Patience is a virtue

Cole cautions that relationships with property managers don't happen overnight. Be patient and wait for the right moment for things to happen. They will, she promises.

"It takes three to five years to develop a relationship," Cole says. "Companies will come in that may have a presence in town because a client has brought them in to service a property. Or they may just decide

to open up a branch and go to some of the bigger companies and say let us bid. When it comes to the mammoth bidding time in the second or third quarter of the year, they'll be allowed to bid on things. But does it mean they'll get anywhere? No. It's not just bidding projects; it's actually getting work. So you have to bide your time and put in your dues."

Cole emphasizes that a landscaper spends more time than money in building relationships. "Stay involved. It's not enough to just sponsor things," she explains. "It's actually being there, having your face in front of everybody."

"We spent \$148 this year on advertising the whole year, and I can't even imagine what that was for," Cole adds. "We don't need to spend more on advertising. We've been mixing and mingling for 20 years. To me, it's not even sales anymore."

"They're (clients) not close personal friends but we've become good professional acquaintances. Creating a conscious

continued on page 34

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continued from page 32

effort of understanding, communication, and trust and insisting on it builds trust-based relationships with property managers. You both win."

Trust is your rock

Don't try to be all things to all property managers, advises Tom Oyler of the Wilson-Oyler Group, Maitland, FL.



Tom Oyler

Oyler, who built and sold several successful landscape companies during the 1980s and 1990s, says that property management relationships are built on trust, of which there are:

- ▶ communication trust
- ▶ competency trust
- ▶ organizational trust

"Communication trust is a real biggie for me," Oyler says. "When I was in the business, I ran large numbers of crews, and property managers would call with a crisis of some sort. You'd get out there and find the crisis wasn't as big as you thought, so you'd feel a little jilted. This person really called me for a non-event. I'd have to do a service recovery call on something I could have gotten done next week."

Oyler learned his lesson, and from that point on trained his employees on being up-front with property managers. "The social architecture for our organization defines how you communicate internally and externally, how you resolve disputes, how you integrate new employees and how you integrate new customers," Oyler says.

Parties on both sides of the relationship are always going to use half-truths to try to motivate a behavior, Oyler says, so it's best to be up-front about those, too.

"To build that long-term trust relationship, I've had to go to customers and say, 'You know what, I'm not feeling really good about this, because I don't think

you've exactly told me the truth, the whole truth, and therefore I had to do this.' Or conversely, 'My guys didn't tell you the whole truth. They told you they were going to be out there Thursday and they knew they weren't going to be out there until Friday and we should have told you that,'" he says. Create a conscious effort of understanding communication trust and insisting on it, he says, because you're not going to have a lasting relationship with someone you don't really trust.

"That competency trust is critical, also," says Oyler. "If that property manager doesn't trust your competency, it's not going to be a sustainable relationship. And you've got to trust their competency as well. If they're terrible property managers, you might get some business out of them, but they aren't going to be a sustainable customer."

Ultimately, all lasting business relationships are built upon trust.

Oyler describes a third kind of trust: organizational. "While you may be a trusting person, if you're working for a company that's not a good organization, and your employees and key people aren't trusting, that organizational trust will break down and you won't be able to create long-term sustainable relationships.

"What we try to do in our platform is focus on the social architecture of the business," he says. "We try to build long-term, sustainable relationships."

Be crazy on customer service

"Management companies need you to anticipate their needs," says Jack Long, President of Central Coast Landscape & Maintenance, Inc., Capitola, CA. "Also,



Jack Long

customer service is key. Continuously remind employees that the customer is number one. And everybody they meet on these properties — for instance, 185 different

property owners on one condominium project — is important. Never take anything for granted. Everything eventually finds its way back to the management company, and when everybody on the property is happy, then the management company is happy."

Long's firm takes a proactive approach to property management — handling problems before they become a problem. When the management company calls to bring something to his attention, his employees are already working on it.

Central Coast takes care of about 79 properties throughout Santa Cruz County. It sticks close to its core competency, quality landscape maintenance. "We haven't branched out to parking lot sweeping and some of these other things like a lot of companies have," says Long. "For awhile, there seemed to be some evidence that people wanted to go that direction with one-stop shopping. What we've seen over the years is that sometimes homeowners start to feel like maybe there is a conflict of interest."

Beyond that, Long makes himself and his key people available to key clients, including homeowners' associations. In fact, he encourages them to have a landscape committee, because you can't deal with every homeowner on the property. Be proactive with that landscape committee. "That way, he says, "the landscape committee is taking information back to the association and keeping the association informed."

— The author is a freelance writer who lives in Cleveland.

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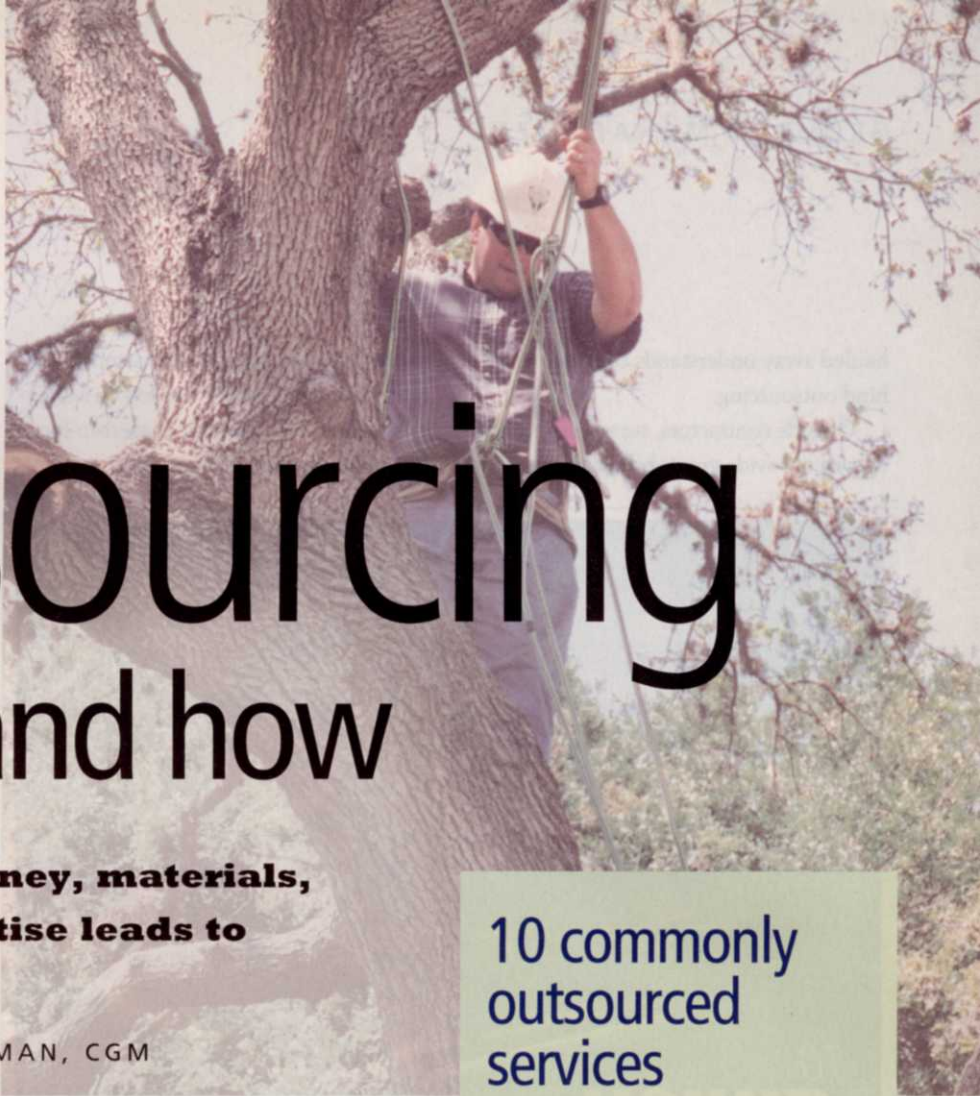
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Outsourcing

— why and how

A blend of budget money, materials, manpower and expertise leads to outsourcing success

BY MILTON L. "DUSTY" HALLMAN, CGM

A world-class winemaker, a champion NASCAR owner and an award-winning grounds manager wouldn't seem to have much in common. Each works in a different universe, faces different challenges and measures success by different standards. However, each of these professionals must find the proper "blend" of components to be successful.

For the vintner, it's the proper mixture of grapes, weather conditions, soils and aging. For the NASCAR owner, it's the right combination of driver, pit crew, manufacturer and mechanical ingenuity. For the grounds manager, it's a blend of budget money, materials, manpower and expertise.

Successful grounds managers have knowledgeable, dedicated personnel, but each individual crew has unique strengths and weaknesses. Key to

grounds management success is the ability to research, realize and anticipate the areas in which individual operations may need additional materials, manpower and expertise. The next step is to budget for those items effectively.

Enhance your effectiveness

Outsourcing can enhance the effectiveness of your grounds operation by providing the product or service needed while still allowing your staff to focus on day-to-day tasks. Most progressive grounds managers — even some who shunned it before — now embrace outsourcing. They see that their success is tied to how well they can blend the talents of their staff with the materials, manpower and expertise of outside vendors and contractors.

Any manager who has ever had an elevator in need of repair, a vandalized annual bed in need of immediate replacement, or a dumpster of debris to be

10 commonly outsourced services

The projects, services and products that you outsource will vary by the size and type of your site, the capabilities of your crew, and the size of your budget. Some of the services most commonly outsourced by grounds managers include:

1. Athletic field construction and/or renovation
2. Hardscape installation
3. Large-scale irrigation installation
4. Tree work/arbor care
5. Turf and ornamental pesticide and fertilization
6. Aquatic pond management
7. Pool maintenance
8. Fleet maintenance
9. Bed installation/mulching
10. Tree and woody ornamental installation

hauled away understands the reasons behind outsourcing.

Outside contractors, suppliers and vendors can provide grounds managers with

the technical expertise, raw materials and critical services that are needed on a situational basis. This allows managers to focus on landscape management.



▲ Fertilization is outsourced at Sylvan Abbey Memorial Park. Here, a good working relationship is established with the contractor.

► The in-house crew blows the fertilizer off the bronze memorial markers at Sylvan Abbey as the contractor continues to spread fertilizer.

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Circle 116

Technical trouble

Large capital projects aren't the only reason to outsource. Technical expertise (remember that elevator?), staff, site size and capabilities (do you have an in-house nursery to supply those needed annuals or will you have to call a local grower?), and specialized equipment and/or services (is that dumpster full already?) are valid reasons.



For example, Duke University outsources preventive maintenance on its vehicles, which run on compressed natural gas, says Assistant Director of Grounds Joseph Jackson. Fleet warranty issues demand that a mechanic certified in natural gas engine maintenance service the vehicles. Outsourcing was the answer.

Also, Duke's Grounds Department is responsible for the landscape maintenance of 40 off-campus properties, including a marine laboratory more than 150 miles from the main campus. These properties, because of costly logistical reasons, are good candidates for outsourcing.

"We outsource very large hazard tree removal," says Ellen Newell, Grounds Director at Utah State University. "We do this because we don't have the right equipment or the number of really skilled arborists to do it. We also outsource specialty spraying of trees. We don't have the equipment needed to spray really tall trees and it doesn't make sense to buy and maintain it for use once a year."

Countless reasons

The reasons behind outsourcing are as varied as the many types of sites found in our industry.

For example, at Sylvan Abbey Memorial Park, Clearwater, FL, turf fertilization and weed control is outsourced. An arrangement is also made with a local nurs-



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Circle 117

ery to contract grow all of the large woody ornamentals for special projects.

The most unusual services outsourced at Sylvan Abbey are the maintenance of the elevator in the largest mausoleum and the services of a talented woodcarver who sculpts lightning-struck trees into works of art (bears, eagles, owls, dolphins and turtles). The artist creates the sculptures, but the grounds crew seals and maintains them. Again, it's all about finding the right blend of outsourcing and in-house capabilities.

Develop a network

To create this blend, you have to develop a network of professionals that can help you. Build a relationship with your county's agricultural extension agent, as well as with several of your local nurserymen. They know the professionals in their industry, and should be the first people you contact when assuming a new job in a new locale.

Your next step is networking through your local branch of the Professional Ground Management Society (www.pgms.org), your local nurserymen's association or other Green Industry trade associations.

Ask your local colleagues who they use for materials and services. Ask them about specific projects that you may have noticed taking place on their sites. Find out who they trust with their site's appearance. Seek out, join and become active in these local trade groups because they can be invaluable in providing you with the contacts you'll need in order to succeed.

Clear, concise, comprehensive

Once you've established a core group of professionals you can count on for specialized expertise, you'll need a contract. It should include the exact specifications of any materials and/or work to be performed as well as targeted start/finish dates for specific projects. This legal document is the



Artistic projects call for outside expertise. Here, a chainsaw artist sculpts a heron from the remains of a tree hit by lightning.

basis for the agreement between you and your vendor/contractor.

"We have a formal inspection on a monthly basis with the chosen contractor on each site or project to determine if the standards are being met," says Duke University's Joseph Jackson. "If problems arise, we have an escape clause in our contracts whereby we can quickly sever relationships if need be.

"One important thing that I've learned is that for outsourcing to work effectively, you must have a contractual agreement in place that is clear, concise and as comprehensive as possible."

If you and your contractor have agreed upon the detailed specifications and the scope of work of the contract, then you can budget for the work. In the case of capital improvement projects, these numbers can be "factored-in" to your capital budget for the coming year.

If the project isn't a capital item, outsourcing still remains attractive because the

Do a cost-vs.-benefit analysis



Donald Bottger

Outsourcing needs to be looked at with a cost-versus-benefit analysis, says Donald Bottger of the San Diego Convention Center. The analysis needs

to include the following criteria:

- ▶ Does your team have the appropriate skills to accomplish the task?
- ▶ Does the team have the required equipment?
- ▶ Can your team be pulled off its normal tasks without a measurable effect on your site?
- ▶ Are proper procedures and specifications in place to ensure quality control with contracted work?

"Usually, the main factor in outsourcing tends to be fiscal, relating to whether the work can be outsourced and completed competently at an acceptable cost," says Bottger.

costs of the project are now fixed and can be budgeted as needed. These costs can then be included in your annual budget as line items in the areas of "Independent Contract Labor" or "Additional Labor Costs" or even "Landscape — fertilizer." Thus, outsourcing is budget-friendly. Just remember, like the world-class winemaker, it's all about finding the blend that's right for you and your site. **LM**

— The author is the head of the Sylvan Abbey Memorial Park grounds department, and President of PGMS. He can be reached at 727/796-1992 ext. 232 or dhallman@stei.com.

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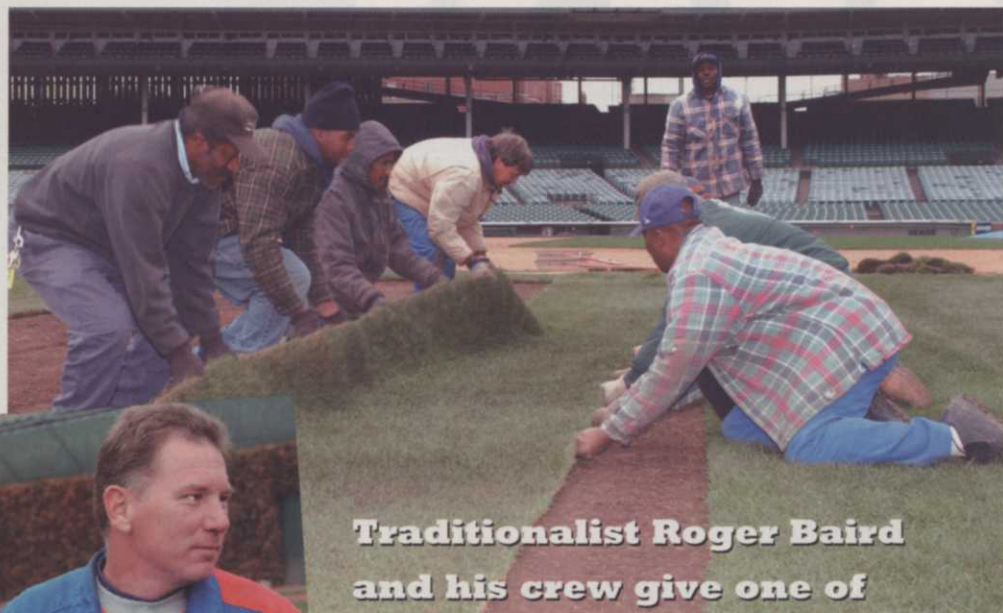
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athletic turf

GRUB CONTROL SUCCESS

Wrigley's green tradition



**Traditionalist Roger Baird
and his crew give one of
baseball's most cherished
fields a fresh look**

BY JIM BRUNO

Experiencing the look of awe on a young child's face as he or she lays eyes on a Major League grass ballfield is enough to melt any adult's heart. For

Roger Baird, veteran head groundskeeper at "the friendly confines" of Wrigley Field, home to the Chicago Cubs baseball team, it's also what keeps him loving his job, even after 21 years on the grounds crew.

Keeping the field looking good, though, is only half the battle. Creating a high degree

of satisfaction for fans and ballplayers alike requires special efforts because historic Wrigley Field is not your typical professional ballpark. Unlike many newer fields that use an amended sand base, this is a native-soil field requiring special care in watering and drainage.

That's why Baird and his

crew of six dedicated groundskeepers are so particular about how they care for the field, even to the point of re-sodding the field in October 2002. Because the field is used exclusively for 81 home baseball games a year they're able to go five to seven years without regrassing.

Baird is especially conscientious about field management to ensure that the 2.5-acre playing surface remains healthy, provides firm footing and is free of seams that can cause bad bounces in the course of a ballgame. He attends annual seminars provided by the Sports Turf Management Association and accesses research provided on its Web site. He also consults with James Fizzell, an agronomist with James Fizzell and Associates

Make it bluegrass

Of course, a pristine ballfield starts with great turf. Baird choose turf from Evergreen Sod Farm, a 1,300-acre operation in Peotone, IL, about 40 miles south of Chicago. Over the past 15 years, Evergreen Sod has provided turf for Comiskey Park (Chicago White Sox), Lambeau Field (Green Bay Packers), Tiger Stadium (Detroit Tigers), Miller Park (Milwaukee Brewers) and Soldier Field (Chicago Bears).

To produce top-quality turf, the company uses a blend of five different elite bluegrasses — Absolute, Blue Moon,

continued on page 50



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continued from page 48

Odyssey, Liberator and Midnight — 20% of each variety. "They have a darker green color and are very hardy," says Baird.

The turf for the Wrigley Field project was started in April 2001. "We probably spend more labor per acre (compared to the average farm) tilling the soil and making sure it's level so that the sod is as perfect as possible," explains Evergreen company president Roger Hupe.

Grubs come to bat

Evergreen can't afford anything that might compromise its product, including an outbreak of grubs in the spring of 2002.

"We have heavy soil in our area," says Evergreen's production manager Bruce Wolf. "Historically, there hasn't been major grub problems." But a string of warm winters contributed to the spring '02 grub outbreak, he believes.

Wolf consulted with Scott Jacobs, his rep from United Horticultural Supply, about the grubs. Jacobs recommended MACH 2 specialty insecticide because it works as a preventative and while grubs are still small.

The folks at Evergreen particularly liked the fact that the formulation fit in well with their goals to use chemical treatments sparingly. (MACH 2 mimics the action of a natural insect hormone that induces molting. After ingesting the product, the grub begins a

Wrigley Field

▶ AT A GLANCE

Year built: 1914

First Cubs game: 1916

Ivy planted: 1937 by Bill Veeck

First night game:

Aug. 8, 1988

Head groundskeeper:
Roger Baird

Grounds crew: Six full-time

Field: Kentucky bluegrass blend over native soil

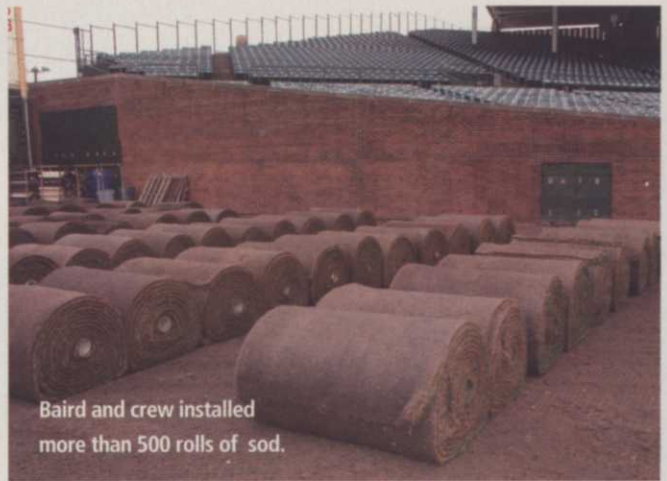
Last Cubs World Series Championship: 1908

premature molt and stops feeding on the grass roots.)

Wolf treated the Wrigley Field turf in May, at the first sign of grubs. "We wanted to stop them immediately," he emphasizes. He reports that the product worked "extremely well," so they applied it again in early August for the fall season, and we'll use it again this year if the grubs reappear."

In Chicago, Baird also conducted his own grub inspections as the old turf was being ripped up and noticed only one grub. "In most cases, homeowners who see squirrels, raccoons or skunks know they have grubs," he says. "We don't have that indicator, so we have to check by lifting and visually inspecting the sod."

Baird plans to continue the same treatment program that



Baird and crew installed more than 500 rolls of sod.

protected his turf as it was being grown in.

In October 2002, after nearly two years of planning, the Wrigley Field grounds crew completed the sod changeover during a tightly controlled nine-day schedule. They laid the sod so it could take hold before winter set in.

When the baseball season ended, they sprayed Round-Up. After stripping out the old turf, they softened the soil with core cultivation, added four new quick-disconnect sprinkler heads and carefully leveled the field with a golf course bunker rake.

It's all in the prep

Prior to laying 540 rolls of sod, they put down a 23-10-16 nitrogen-blend fertilizer in a 30-ft. swath. This approach of targeted application was used to minimize disruption and tracking of the fertilizer by trucks and heavy equipment when driving over bare soil. Once the sod was in place, it was rolled and watered, then rolled again a few days later. "The field will be rolled one final time after the spring thaw to make sure it's level," Baird adds.

Once the sod started to take root, Baird's crew treated the field once again in the fall with

a slow-release top-dressing fertilizer to stimulate root growth. After the final mowing of the season, the entire field — especially the right field corner that stays in shadows much of the winter — was treated and monitored for snow mold.

Roger Baird likes the control he gets from doing his own resodding. He constantly checked the contouring of the subsurface to make sure the heavy equipment didn't disrupt it. And he liked having control over how tightly the seams between the rolls of sod were laid down, because his clientele (the ballplayers) can't afford injuries or bad bounces caused by an uneven playing surface.

Of course, not every facility has the luxury of its own dedicated staff that can handle such a resodding effort.

Is all the painstaking effort of resodding and maintaining your own field worth the worry? It is to Roger Baird on game day. "I like to look at the kids as they are coming into Wrigley Field, just to see their reactions," he says with a friendly smile. **LM**

— The author is a freelance writer who lives in Yardley, PA.

He can be contacted at jnba@voicenet.com



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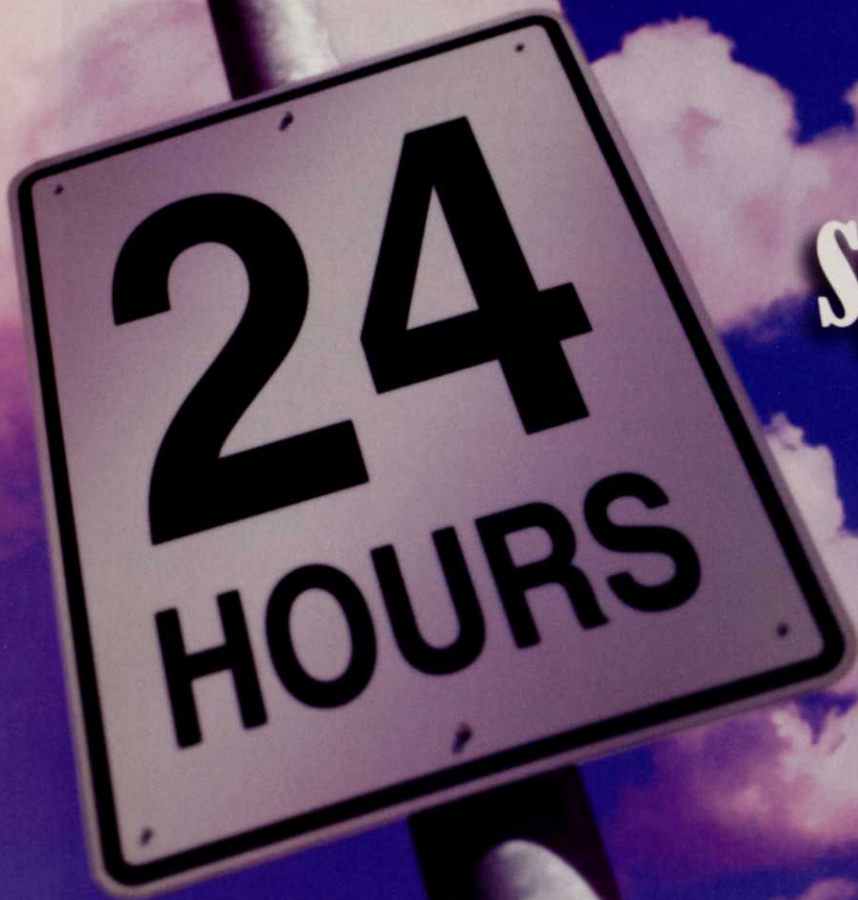
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Circle No. 128

**Tired of playing
the low-bid game?
Here's how to build
your company's
name and reputation
in your marketplace**

BY M.J. GILHOOLEY
AND CHRIS RICE

Sing your positive song



There is a solution, and the high-profit lawn service and landscape companies know what it is.

Sustainable margin advantage is no longer just a function of cost, but of the price premiums gained through knowing and selling your unique "song" or brand strength. The best thing your company can do is build a brand-based competitive

advantage that is sustainable over time. Your brand should communicate the difference between you and your competitors.

Your current customers are a great source for discovering and defining your brand. What is the number one reason your customers select your services? If you don't know — find out. Use customer research to build upon your brand strength. Find out what your customers perceive as the differentiating quality of your products or services. Determine exactly what they experience as "the value" in choosing your particular company.

Many landscaping companies are being forced to bid so low on projects that they're virtually working for free. Price cutting often has a ripple effect, with too many companies low-balling themselves out of business. What can you do when players in your market are making cuts in costs and/or bids, and any potential new margin is being erased by still further rounds of price cutting?

advantage that is sustainable over time.

Brand strength (or brand "equity" as some prefer to call it) is the added value given to a company by its brand name. Your brand is as much about perceptions of your company as the actual product you produce. It's also your company's most valuable asset.

Think of your brand in terms of every prospect or customer interaction that creates an impression of your company. It's the personality and soul of your company, as perceived by the customer. It's what

Blow your horn

Once you have a clear fix on your brand identity, it's time to shout it from the rooftops. Eventually, you'll want to infuse your market with your brand identity through a strategically sound marketing plan that takes into account all aspects of upcoming opportunities such as:

- ▶ publicity and public relations (news coverage, community involvement),
- ▶ marketing materials (promotions, direct mail, brochures, newsletters),

- ▶ print, broadcast and online ads, and
- ▶ trade shows.

Though all of these opportunities should be used to promote your brand, we'll focus on the first item in the list for the purposes of this article.

PR's awesome power

High media visibility will position your company as a leader in your industry and your community while strengthening your brand recognition and increasing your profits.

Let's say you've just placed a company news item in a local paper with a circulation of 100,000 readers. If just 1% of them read your article, 1,000 potential customers have been exposed to your brand identity. If only 1% of those 1,000 end up purchasing your service or product after reading the article, you'll have 10 new clients. Multiply your average "client value" by 10 to see how much just one press release could be worth to your company.

And consider this: a 3-column by 12-in. ad in an average metro newspaper will cost approximately \$1,500 to run one time. But with a free editorial placement, you can save the \$1,500 while gaining credibility that money just can't buy.

Get off your duff

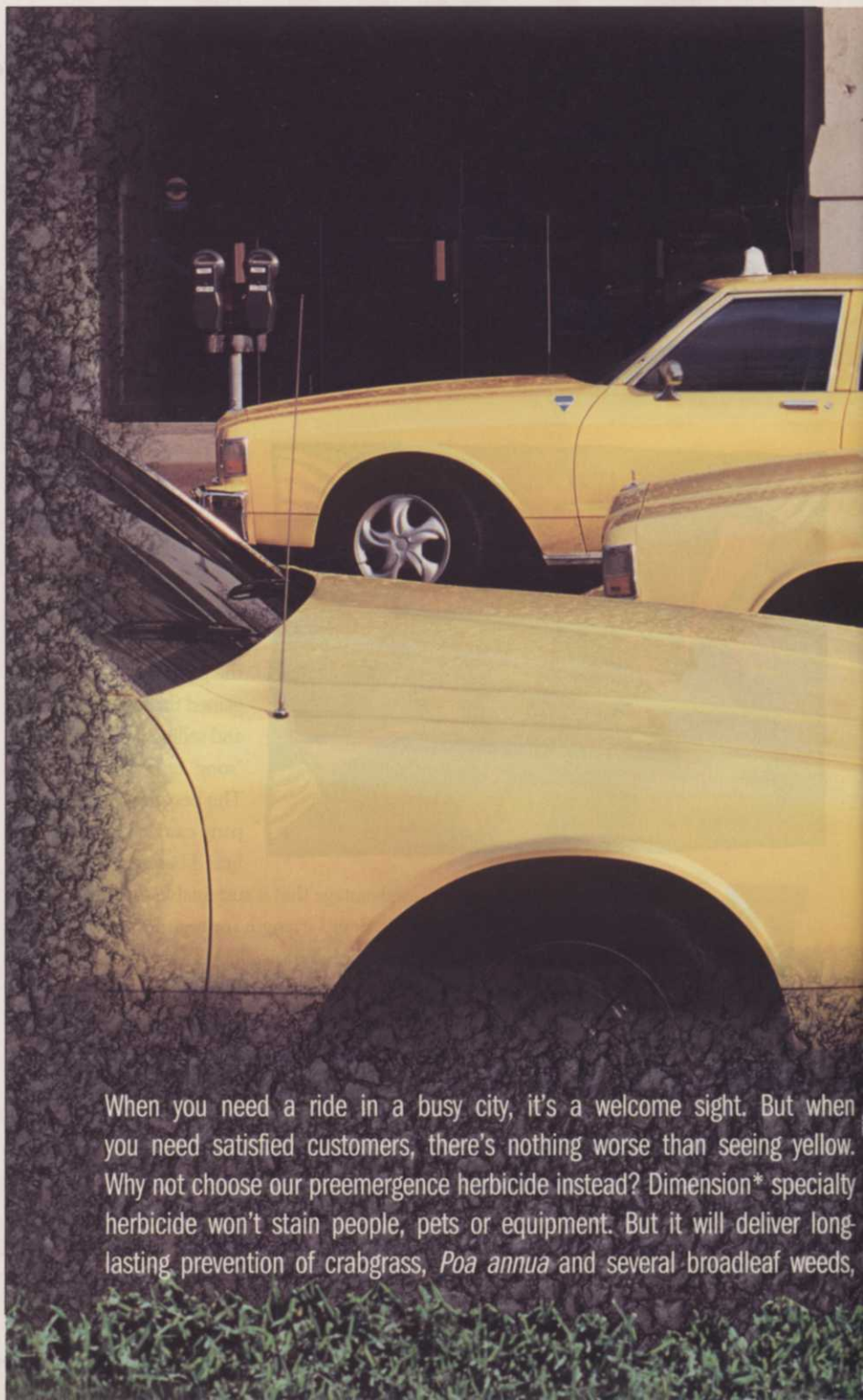
Once you actually begin the PR process, you'll soon be inspired by the return on your investment. The following suggestions can help you get your company, and your brand, into the news and into the view of the public eye.

- ▶ **Build your media list.** Compile a list of all your local media outlets. These should include broadcast television, cable and radio stations, metro newspapers and business magazines, and community newspapers. Call each of the media outlets on your list, and ask which reporters cover such topics as business, new products and services, landscaping or gardening. Then, compile a

spreadsheet of contact names, titles, mailing addresses, phone and fax numbers, and e-mail addresses (be sure to get the correct spelling for each contact name).

Next, ask your current customers what

local newspapers or magazines they read, what news programs they watch and what radio programs they listen to. This will help you to get an idea of which media outlets to target (if your current clients



When you need a ride in a busy city, it's a welcome sight. But when you need satisfied customers, there's nothing worse than seeing yellow. Why not choose our preemergence herbicide instead? Dimension* specialty herbicide won't stain people, pets or equipment. But it will deliver long-lasting prevention of crabgrass, *Poa annua* and several broadleaf weeds,

pay attention to specific media outlets, you can reach others like them through those same outlets).

► **Write a news release or feature story for your target publications.** One of the easiest

ways to generate positive press about your company (and your brand) is to submit a news release or feature story to your print media outlets. Remember that your local reporters are always looking for new ma-

terial; they appreciate and need interesting story ideas.

Feature stories are obviously longer pieces, and are best suited for magazines. It's always a good idea to find out if an editor will be interested in publishing your story before investing your time in writing one. By obtaining editorial calendars from your target publications, you can determine which issue's content will work best with your story (and the editor will be



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How to write a news release

News releases are usually 400 words or less, and are used to pitch a reporter or editor on a story idea about your company or brand (your contact may expand on your release and write a full story on their own, or they may use your exact wording). Some basic news release topics to consider include:

- Awards your company or an employee may have won
- New hires within your company
- New services offered by your company
- Innovative or timely projects your company may be working on

If you aren't sure how to go about writing a release or feature, you can download samples of some of the pieces Focal Point has written at the following Web site: <http://www.plantsatwork.org/news.htm>. You'll find news release samples under "Press Releases," and feature story samples under "Trade Publications."

sure to appreciate that you've done your homework).

Spread the message

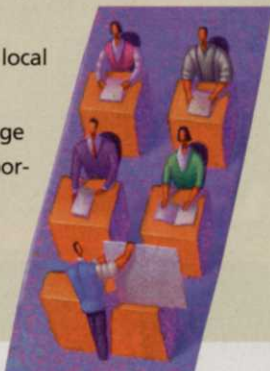
With feature stories, you can position yourself as an industry expert with informative articles on topics such as lawn care, efficient ways to renovate a landscape, or incorporating water features into a property.

You can also call an editor and ask if there are any topics within your field of expertise that they'd like you to write about. Though the story probably won't be about your company specifically, you'll still gain valuable media exposure for your company and your brand (be sure to include a brief "bio" about yourself, and include a sen-

continued on page 61

10 image-building ideas

1. Get involved in your community.
2. Join your local Chamber of Commerce.
3. Join local chapters of your target trade associations. Don't forget realtors, builders and property managers.
3. Sponsor a local youth sports team.
4. Participate in local "Career Days."
5. Take advantage of speaking opportunities at the learning institutions in your community. ▶
6. Networking on the local front is an excellent way to drum up word-of-mouth advertising for your company and your brand.
7. Consider cross-promotions and related-industry tie-ins.
8. Organize high-visibility, high-interest promotions with other local vendors who share your target market.
9. When properly publicized, an impressive joint giveaway package (such as a free landscape renovation) is an easy way to generate a local "buzz" about your company.
10. Participate in or sponsor a community project.



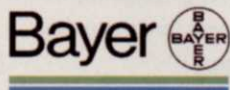
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continued from page 56

tence or two about the products or services your company offers). Remember to supplement your story with photos, diagrams or other visual aids. These will make for a more interesting read while strengthening your story's impact.

Don't forget to follow up by calling your media contacts a few days after you send them your release or feature story. Let each contact know you want to make sure they get your piece, and that you'll be happy to answer any questions they may have.

Beyond print media

In addition to printed publications, local television and radio shows provide a great opportunity to spread the word about your

company and your brand. Use your customer survey to determine which shows your target audience watches or listens to, then contact and pitch the producers. Your pitch should include a succinct and effective description of what your company does, and what your "hook" for a particular show segment or topic will be. For example, you could offer to host a question and answer show about landscaping or gardening.

Measure and maximize the results. To capitalize on the success of your PR efforts, be sure to quantify the value of your exposures. Ask any inquiries or leads where they heard about your company or brand. If they mention one of your PR sources, make a note of it. Over time, you'll be able to see which avenues of your PR campaign

are yielding the best results. These avenues should then become the main focus of your PR endeavors.

As you track your exposures, you can build a "clip library" as well. Reprints of your published articles or audio/video copies of your television/radio exposures make great sales tools (these can be posted on your Web site or distributed by your sales staff to current and potential customers).

— Mary Jane Gilhooley is the Director of Public Relations for Focal Point Communications, and Chris Rice is the Content Manager. Focal Point is a full-service marketing, advertising and public relations firm serving the Green Industry. For more information call 800/347-9014, or write mj@growpro.com.

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—Phil Fogarty, Coordinator of PLCAA's Renewal and Remembrance Program at Arlington National Cemetery

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Seed trade keeps innovating

Check out this list of many of the newer varieties available in 2003

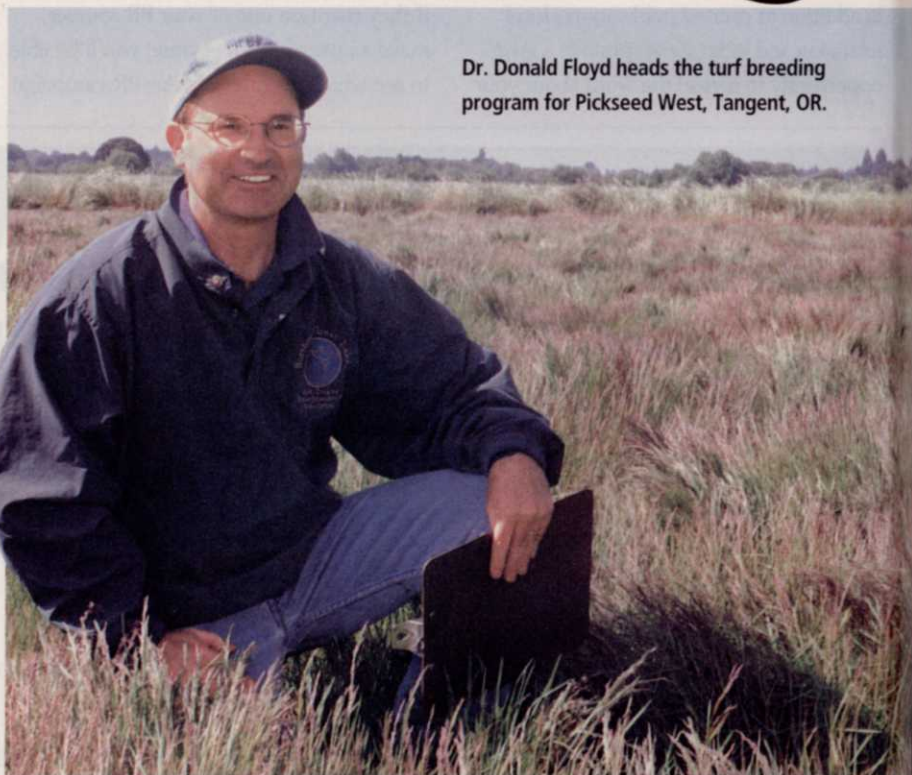
BY RON HALL/
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF &
CINDY GRAHL

Growers and marketers of turf seed are predicting a modest rebound in prices and keeping their fingers crossed for a jump in demand. For the first spring in about three years there likely will be tight supplies — perhaps even shortages — of some of the most popular varieties of perennial ryegrass, sources in Oregon's Willamette Valley say.

While this is good news for growers and marketers of turf seed, landscapers, lawn care service providers and grounds managers are advised to check with their suppliers early to secure the seed that they will need for the 2003 season.

Growers, reacting to over-supply, have cut back ryegrass production acreage the past two seasons, some planting other crops, such as wheat, instead. Also, there is expected to be significantly less rye seed entering the U.S. market from overseas.

While it is too early to predict the size and quality of the 2003 crop, unusually dry



Dr. Donald Floyd heads the turf breeding program for Pickseed West, Tangent, OR.

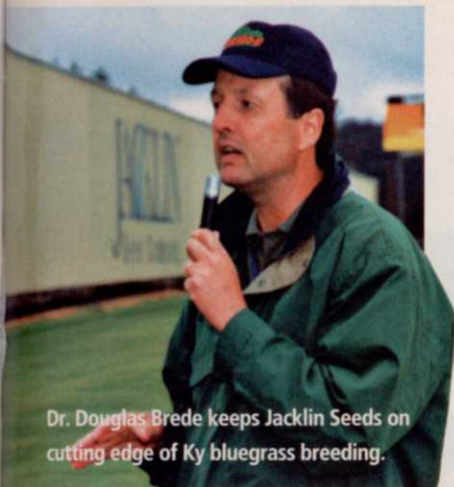
conditions lasting late into the fall of 2003 had Oregon growers concerned since most of their production fields aren't irrigated.

It's also too early in the season to gauge demand from the landscape, lawn care and grounds segments of the Green Industry. Scattered areas of drought in the Midwest and a severe drought in much of the

Northeast suggest a need for increased seed purchases.

Even as the seed industry (like the rest of us) works its way through the worst economic slowdown since the early 1990s, it has continued to innovate and bring new varieties to the market.

Check out these newer varieties:



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- ▶ **Esquire** perennial ryegrass, early and thick

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- ▶ **Blue Knight** Kentucky bluegrass, dark, self-repairing, fine leaves, disease resistance

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Circle 122

Grower discovers more Ky bluegrass potential

Turfgrass breeding is so new (compared to field crops, anyway) that consumers are still testing the adaptability and suitability of even well-known species and cultivars.

For example, when Fred W. Pittillo saw how well Kentucky bluegrass test plots recovered from last summer's severe drought in North Carolina he planted 150 acres of bluegrass at his Turf Mountain Sod farm in Hendersonville. It is the first Kentucky bluegrass he had planted on his 900-acre farm.

"The grass of the future for this area is Kentucky bluegrass," he told about 100 landscape and grounds professionals at the Mountain Empire Landscape Professional Association in Kingsport, TN, this winter.

Pittillo planted a blend of Kentucky bluegrass cultivars, which is typical in cool-season sod production. The genetic strengths in one cultivar mask the shortcomings of another.

"The differences in bluegrass varieties are as wide as this room," Pittillo said, adding that he became a believer in the utility of Kentucky bluegrass in the mid-South after walking the turf plots at Pure Seed Testing's Rolesville, NC, facility in mid summer. That area suffered a severe early-summer drought in '02 and Research Director Dr. Melodee Fraser was forced to turn off the water at most of the farm in June. No rain and no irrigation caused the turf plots to go into dormancy, but the Kentucky bluegrass recovered nicely once moisture returned, impressing Pittillo.

"People aren't sure it (Kentucky bluegrass) can make it through the summer here," said Fraser, "but it can." Even so, she said landscapers and homeowners have a better chance of establishing Kentucky bluegrass in her region of the mid-Atlantic by sodding because it takes the bluegrass seed longer to become established than, say, tall fescue, the areas predominant turf.



Dr. Melodee Fraser of Pure-Seed Testing develops grass varieties that do well in the Southeast.

Georgia Seed Development Com.

Athens, GA
404/542-5640
www.seaisle1.com
www.tifsport.com

- ▶ **Seaisle1** seashore paspalum, developed by Dr. R.R. Duncan, thrives on salt water and/or recycled or effluent water
- ▶ **TifSport** bermudagrass developed by Dr. Wayne Hanna, dark green, superior density, traffic tolerance, cold tolerance

Jacklin Seeds, a Division of JR Simplot

Post Falls, ID
800/688-7333
www.jacklin.com

- ▶ **Tsunami** Kentucky bluegrass, peak performance and color during the high-use summer months
- ▶ **Nu*Destiny** Kentucky bluegrass, high scores in the Midwest with close-cut tolerance, dark green, density, fine leaf blades

Johnston Seed Company

Enid, OK 73701
580/233-5800
www.johnstonseed.com

- ▶ **Yukon** turf-type bermudagrass, seeded, excellent cold hardiness
- ▶ **Riviera** bermudagrass, seeded, also from the Oklahoma State University turf team, excellent NTEP scores
- ▶ **Bowie** buffalograss, finer leaf texture, performs well in dry conditions

Lebanon Seaboard Corp.

Lebanon, PA
800/233-0628
www.lebturf.com

- ▶ **Charismatic** perennial ryegrass, low growth habit, fine leaves, excellent disease resistance, dark green, improved drought, heat tolerance

LESCO, Inc.

Strongsville, OH
888/730-0234
www.lesco.com

- ▶ **Sunstar and Sundance II** bermudagrasses, quick establishment, improved quality, good cold tolerance, dark green
- ▶ **Greenville** perennial ryegrass, dark green, fine leaf texture, traffic tolerance
- ▶ **Harbour** intermediate ryegrass, quick germination, improved density

Patten Seed Co.

Lakeland, GA
800/634-1672

- ▶ **Zenith** zoysiagrass adapted for transition zone, low input requirement
- ▶ **Showcase** Kentucky bluegrass, compact growth habit, strong shade performer
- ▶ **Providence**. SR 9554 turf-type seeded bermuda, multipurpose variety

Pennington Seed Inc.

Madison, GA
800/285-7333
www.penningtonseed.com

- ▶ **Princess-77** seeded hybrid bermuda, dark green, fine leaf texture



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Pickseed West

Tangent, OR
541/926-8886

www.pickseedwest.com

- ▶ **Mercury** Kentucky bluegrass, joint release from Rutgers, dark green hybrid, exceptional uniformity
- ▶ **Moon Shadow** lower-growing elite Kentucky bluegrass, great summer performance and persistence
- ▶ **Transist 2200** "transitional ryegrass," excellent "nurse" grass for lawns

The Scotts Co./Landmark

Marysville, OH
937/644-7270

www.scottscsco.com

- ▶ **Inspire, Splendid and Gallery** perennial ryegrasses, speedy establishment, dark green, dense & low growing
- ▶ **HB 129** hybrid Kentucky bluegrass, excellent quality under low maintenance

Seed Research of Oregon

Corvallis, OR
800/253-5766

www.sroseed.com

- ▶ **SR 8600**, turf-type tall fescue, dwarf, dark-green, adapted to all areas that tall fescue is grown for turf
- ▶ **Showcase** Kentucky bluegrass, compact growth, strong shade performer
- ▶ **Providence**. SR 9554 turf-type seeded bermuda, multipurpose, good stolon length for rapid cover, fill-in

Turf Merchants

Tangent, OR
800/421-1735

www.turfmerchants.com

- ▶ **Transcontinental** bermuda-

grass, developed by Pure Seed Testing in North Carolina, better cold tolerance

- ▶ **Bedazzled** Kentucky bluegrass, hybrid, improved color, texture and disease resistance
- ▶ **Manhattan 4** perennial ryegrass, performs well in heat and droughty conditions, improved disease resistance
- ▶ **2nd Millennium** tall fescue, deeper color, better resistance to brown patch and conditions of heat and drought

Turf-Seed Inc.

Hubbard, OR
800/247-6910

www.turfseed.com

- ▶ **Salinas** perennial ryegrass, improved salt tolerance, excellent turf quality
- ▶ **Tomahawk RT** turf-type tall fescue, Roundup-tolerant
- ▶ **Brilliant, Unique and Moonlight**, drought-resistant Kentucky bluegrasses; Moonlight and North Star tolerate salt

TurfOne

Tangent, OR
800/258-4657

www.turfone.com

- ▶ **Mach 1** perennial ryegrass, quick recuperation from traffic and summer stress, gray leaf spot resistance
- ▶ **Transeze** transitional ryegrass, excellent cool-season nurse crop for lawns, commercial grounds, etc.

— *Cindy Grahl is a writer who frequently covers the Green Industry. She lives in Cleveland.*

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Commercial Mower Specialist

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Botanical garden turf gets quality cuts from Ferris



Matt Schmitt on a Ferris IS 3000Z rider with 61-in. deck

One of the most beautiful botanical gardens in the world, the Missouri Botanical Garden includes Japanese, Chinese, English, German and Victorian gardens, as well as a tropical rain forest. Recently, this National Historic Landmark was also recognized for its 33 acres of finely manicured lawn.

"The turfgrass really acts as a framework for drawing you into the ornamental displays we have here," says Scott Stelling, turf manager for the Missouri Botanical Garden.

Stelling and his crew of three — Pat Daniel, Matt Schmitt and Todd Simms — established and maintain this beautiful lawn, providing every phase of turf care.

"Our biggest challenge is simply working around the thousands of people who tour the Garden every day," Stelling says. That means keeping to a tight schedule and using efficient equipment and tools.

When it comes to cutting the grass, it means using mowers from Ferris Industries. Stelling and his crew use two Ferris IS 3000Z mid-mount zero-turn riders featuring "IS" Independent Suspension (23-hp

and 25-hp units with 61-in. mowing decks); and two 23-hp Ferris dual-drive HydroWalk commercial walk-behinds (48-in. and 52-in. decks).

"The independent suspension on the IS 3000Zs assures the mower deck will follow the movement of the wheels and the flow of the terrain to assure a superior quality of cut," Stelling comments. "If the deck is bouncing up and down, the grass will be cut that way and will look rough and uneven."

"The HydroWalks give us the traction we need for mowing steep slopes in the garden," Stelling says. "Being able to control each drive wheel and turn around easily on the hillsides is crucial for not only a great cut, but for safer operation, also."

The enhanced maneuverability of dual hydrostatic drives allows mowing under and around trees and other ornamentals.

Stelling and his team perform routine maintenance on the Ferris equipment. But they rely on their dealer, Scott's Power Equipment, Inc., Olivette, MO, a Ferris Platinum Dealer, for any service work. Scott's work has been timely and flawless, Stelling adds.

BUYING THE BEST COMMERCIAL MOWER.

Investing in a new commercial mower for your business is an important step; and it's a decision that takes some thought. If you're thinking about a zero-turn rider, there are a number of features you should look for:

- **The latest technology.** Today's most advanced zero-turns feature independent suspension (either 2 or 4-wheel) for increased comfort, speed, traction, stability and a more consistent cut.
- **Rugged deck construction.** Choose a hand-welded deck with overlap-welded corners, a double top deck and reinforced side skirts to make sure it stands up to years of tough, commercial mowing abuse.
- **Serviceability.** A simpler design means fewer parts and easier access to the engine compartment and hydraulics for routine maintenance and service. You should also look for 2-year warranties on parts and labor.
- **Important features.** A low center of gravity; foot-operated deck lift; 360-degree pivoting, anti-scalp rollers; twin A-section hydro drive belts; and radius-cut, 1/4" thick hardened steel blades... they're all important to your comfort and productivity.

To make your choice of a new mower even easier, be sure to see the new 2003 line of Ferris mid-mount, zero-turn riders at www.ferrisindustries.com. Ferris is the innovation leader in commercial mower design. Don't make a decision to buy a new mower for your business without visiting your nearest Ferris dealer.

Sponsored by **Ferris Industries**
The Commercial Mower Specialist™

athletic turf

TECHNOLOGY

When synthetic makes sense



Too many events, too few fields: Clark University picks a new "infilled" sports surface

BY PATRICK MAGUIRE

Athletics are a major part of campus life at Clark University, Worcester, MA. Over 65% of students participate in the school's intercollegiate and intramural athletic programs.

They're entitled to safe, quality, playable athletic fields.

Everybody plays

With the exception of softball, all of Clark's outdoor athletic activity takes place at Granger Field. Soccer, lacrosse, field hockey, baseball and tennis all call Granger home. The two

fields there host intercollegiate games and practices as well as intramurals, summer camps and community events.

Despite the remarkable efforts of Facilities Director Paul Bottis's staff, the turf had become badly compacted. This caused drainage and weed problems, and resulted in poor playing conditions. And Clark's location made it impossible to expand its real estate for athletic programs and activity.

Same fields, more play

Working with Athletic Director Linda Moulton, Geller Sport, a qualified sports and recreation design firm based in Boston, reorganized the site by reorienting the fields to create larger playing surfaces. It also proposed a new synthetic playing surface for the multi-purpose baseball and field hockey field to give the school greater flexibility and take stress off of the new turfgrass soccer and lacrosse field.

Clark accepted the recommendation for a new infilled synthetic turf system consist-

ing of a carpet of slit film polyethylene fibers needle punched into a polyurethane backing. The carpet is top-dressed, or "infilled," with layers of round silica sand and recycled rubber granules, which provides a firm, fast and stable playing surface. A resilient underpad provides for added player safety. The system has many of the benefits of natural grass without the drawbacks and cost of conventional nylon turf.

Fields for all seasons

Infilled turf does not require fertilizers, water, mowing or other cultural turf management practices like aerification, top-dressing and thatch removal.

Infilled turf is consistent and playable in all types of weather. With a specially designed underdrain system, an infilled turf field can handle 12 to 20 inches of rain per hour. Ball bounce and reaction is natural and more predictable.

The initial capital cost of infilled turf is approximately 50% greater than a well-built natural grass field, but the reduced maintenance costs will help the field pay for itself in six to seven years. Most infilled turf companies warranty their product for eight years and expect a lifespan of 12 to 15 years.

— The author is President of Geller Sport, Inc., Boston, MA.

He can be reached at pmaguire@gellersport.com.

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**NOT
 ACCOUNTANTS.**



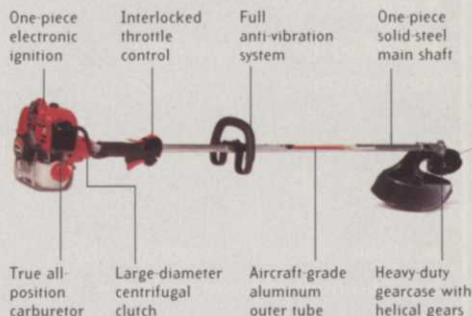
With all due respect to our bean-counting friends, Shindaiwa builds trimmers with one purpose in mind: to cut the toughest grass and weeds. Cut corners? We leave that to everybody else.

Sure, we could skimp on materials and sell our trimmers for less. But that's not how a Shindaiwa gets to be, well, a Shindaiwa.

For example, our cylinders are plated with chrome, not soft nickel like some of our competitors. We use a solid steel main shaft instead of a flexible cable. And when we say our carburetor is all-position, we mean all position. Better yet, all this engineering comes with the best power-to-

weight ratio in its class.

It all adds up to power, durability and performance you can take to the bank. To find out more, contact your nearest Shindaiwa dealer, visit www.shindaiwa.com or call us at 800-521-7733.



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 FIRST TO START. LAST TO QUIT.

Property at a glance

- Location: Newark, OH
- Staff: Longaberger Landscaping Department
- Category: Industrial or Office Park
- Total budget: \$200,512
- Year site built: 1998
- Acres of turf: 9
- Acres of woody ornamentals: 3
- Acres of display beds: .08
- Total paved area: 147,305 sq. ft.
- Total man-hours/week: 1,760

Maintenance challenges

- ▶ Compacted soils and drainage
- ▶ Pond algae
- ▶ Mowing along a busy state highway
- ▶ Applying chemicals in congested areas

Project checklist

Completed in last two years:

- ▶ Irrigation well
- ▶ Sodding due to street/utility construction

On the job

- ▶ 11 full-time staff, 5 seasonal employees, 1 licensed pesticide applicator

The Longaberger Company

2002 PGMS Grand Award Winner for Industrial or Office Park

It must be interesting working around a large basket every day. But Jason Jordan is probably used to it by now. In 10 years, he's worked his way from laborer to head of the Longaberger Landscaping Department. The Longaberger Company is known for its handcrafted baskets, so it's no wonder Jordan and his crews are operating in the shadow of an office building which is a 160 times scale replica of the company's Medium Market Basket.

Even though he graduated from The Ohio State University Newark with a business degree, Jordan says he's more of a "hands-on guy" than a "numbers guy." The certified nursery technician aims to lead by example, "treat the company's money as if it's my own, and not waste a second in the day."

There really isn't a second to waste. In winter, Jordan and his crews are busy



(Left) Jason Jordan heads the staff. Above, some daylilies are deadheaded.



putting up Christmas lights and clearing snow from over 147,000 sq. ft. of paved area. Nine acres of bluegrass is mowed 40 to 45 times per year, and five fertilizer applications, integrated pest management and a comprehensive irrigation system keep it green spring through fall.

PGMS
Landscape
MANAGEMENT

Editors' note: *Landscape Management* is the exclusive sponsor of the Green Star Professional Grounds Management Awards for outstanding management of residential, commercial and institutional landscapes. The 2003 winners will be named at the annual meeting of the Professional Grounds Management Society in November. For more information on the 2002 Awards, contact PGMS at:

720 Light St. • Baltimore, MD 21230 • Phone: 410/223-2861. Web-site: www.pgms.org



The retention pond (right) provides irrigation water when needed. Below, tree rings and plant beds contain "black satin" mulch.



Tulips (left) and over 400 annabelle (above) around the corporate office offer dramatic spring color to the Longaberger grounds.



Green Star Professional Grounds Management Awards 2003

**We're searching for the country's
best-maintained landscapes —
31st Annual Green Star Professional
Grounds Management Awards**

You're invited to enter the Green Star Professional Grounds Management Awards, co-sponsored by *Landscape Management* magazine and the Professional Grounds Management Society.

This annual program recognizes excellence in landscape management and complements other national programs for landscape design and construction. Grand and Honor Awards are offered in 13 categories of private, public, commercial and industrial landscapes. To qualify, a landscape must be at least four years old and under continuous maintenance for at least two years. See page 73 for details.

The awards will be presented during the Professional Grounds Management Society Annual Meeting, Nov. 5-8 in St. Louis, MO. Several winners will be featured in *Landscape Management* and PGMS Forum.

Entry Categories

1. Small Site (budget under \$80,000)
2. Residential Landscape

3. Public Works Sites (includes parkways & intersections)
4. Shopping Area
5. Hospital or Institution
6. Government Building or Complex
7. Cemetery or Memorial Park
8. Industrial or Office Park
9. Park, Recreation Area or Athletic Field OR — multiple sites under same management
10. School or University Grounds OR Urban Universities
11. Condominium, Apartment Complex or Planned Community
12. Hotel, Motel or Resort
13. Amusement/Theme Park.

Judging

A distinguished panel of judges selected by PGMS and *Landscape Management* determines the winners.

This program aims to:

- Bring national recognition to grounds care.
- Recognize individual efforts leading to high landscape maintenance standards.
- Challenge landscapers to achieve a level of excellence.

Eligibility

An entrant must be professionally engaged in, and responsible for, the maintenance of grounds described in ENTRY CATEGORIES. Projects for which an entry was submitted in a design or con-

struction award competition are eligible in the Green Star program, even if the project won an award, because maintenance is the criterion upon which an entry is judged.

Grand Award winning projects cannot re-enter this program for two years (2002 Grand Award winning projects are ineligible until 2005).

Any landscape for which the entrant has the main responsibility for maintenance and beautification may be entered. The size of the landscape operating budget is not a criterion for judging. Rather, the judges will consider the quality, challenge and performance in maintenance of the grounds for a period of at least two years.

How to enter

All entries must include:

1. Fifteen (15) color 35mm slides — ten (10) showing the beauty of the total landscape project and five (5) showing the crew at work. **DO NOT USE 'POSED' SHOTS.** Put a descriptive caption on each slide.
2. Ten (10) 5- by 7-in. color prints — five (5) showing the beauty of the landscape and five (5) showing crew members working in areas that are difficult to maintain. **DO NOT USE 'POSED' SHOTS.** Label each with a descriptive caption.

Note: Put your best scenes on

the slides, which are critical to judging and awards display.

3. One recent photograph of yourself, as the person in charge, working in the landscape.

4. **INDIVIDUALLY LABEL** all slides and photographs with the name of the entrant and the site. **DO NOT USE TAPE** to mount — put in plastic or metal mounts.

5. Include a brief description of the site.

6. All entries must contain a **COVER LETTER** releasing the material for publication at the discretion of *Landscape Management* magazine. All entries become the property of the sponsors and may be published in *Landscape Management* magazine or used for other purposes the magazine deems appropriate. **NO MATERIALS WILL BE RETURNED.**

7. Enclose a check for the **ENTRY FEE:** \$150 for members of PGMS or \$225 for nonmembers. To qualify, all elements of the entry must be **COMPLETE** in one mailing envelope, including entry fee.

Deadline

The deadline for entries is Aug. 1, 2003. All entries must be submitted to the Green Star Professional Grounds Management Awards, c/o Professional Grounds Management Society, 720 Light St., Baltimore, MD 21230.

Green Star Professional Grounds Management Awards 2003 Official Entry Form and Fact Sheet



Please **PRINT CLEARLY** or type the information requested below. Check for accuracy. This information will be used for publicity purposes and awards.

Each entry must include this completed form and entry fee:

- * PGMS members — \$150
- * Combination PGMS membership and entry fee — \$275
- * Non-members — \$225

Make checks payable to the Professional Grounds Management Society.

SEND COMPLETE ENTRY AND FEE TO:

Professional Grounds Management Awards
c/o Professional Grounds Management Society
720 Light St.
Baltimore, MD 21230
Call 410/752-3318 with any questions.

NAME OF SITE: _____

State: _____ Entry Category #: _____

Name of company or agency owning this landscape: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

**SIGNATURE OF THE COMPANY OR AGENCY OFFICIAL
CONSENTING TO THIS ENTRY AND A RELEASE FOR PUBLICITY:**

Signature: _____

Title: _____

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MAINTAINING THIS LANDSCAPE?

- In-house staff Outside contractor

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone (____) _____

(IMPORTANT) Year site was built: _____

Years I have maintained this site: _____

Total acres maintained: _____

Acres of turf: _____

Acres of woody ornamentals: _____

Acres (or sq. ft.) of display beds: _____

Total paved area: _____

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: _____

Full time (year round): _____ Seasonal: _____

Other (please specify): _____

Licensed pesticide applicators: _____

Total man-hours per week: _____

ANNUAL EXPENDITURES:

Total budget for this site: (Including salaries) _____ \$

Equipment: _____ \$

Chemicals and fertilizers: _____ \$

Seed and plant material: _____ \$

SPECIAL MAINTENANCE CHALLENGES:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

SPECIAL PROJECTS COMPLETED IN THE LAST 2 YEARS:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

**If selected a winner, I request the name on the award to be
(check one or both):**

Name of entrant (name which will appear on plaque):
(please print) _____

Name of organization or agency:
(please print) _____

IMPORTANT: Please provide the name of the person who will accept the award at the banquet:

(please print) _____

I certify that all information provided on this form and in the accompanying entry is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that no materials will be returned and that all material may be used for publication in *Landscape Management* magazine or for other purposes deemed appropriate.

Signature of entrant _____
Date _____

ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY AUGUST 1, 2003

Maximize pre-emergence SUCCESS

**Squeeze the most out
of your weed controls
by tracking their
performance from
season to season**

BY DR. ROCH GAUSSOIN

Your choice for pre-emergence weed control depends on factors such as efficacy, cost, availability and application equipment. You should also select a pre-emergence herbicide for its performance based

on the environmental effects of the previous season, particularly weather conditions. Also, it's vital to understand proper application and how this will benefit you throughout the season.

Kill them as they germinate

The application of a pre-emergence herbicide is the most desirable method of weed control for several reasons. First, homeowners or sports spectators will never see weeds emerge. Also, a pre-emergence treatment keeps weeds from becoming established and robbing the turf of water and nutrients.

During drought conditions, using pre-emergence products becomes even more relevant. Procedures for applying pre-emergence herbicides are fairly simple and are explicitly described on the pesticide label. Always check the label for recommended rates, sensitive turf species and other considerations, which may alter herbicide performance. You must understand how pre-emergence herbicides work to apply them for maximum success.

When a pre-emergence herbicide is applied to the turf and properly watered in, the chemical moves down through the turf where it comes in

continued on page 76



For best control, product must move through the turf and bind to the top layer of the soil.



ABSOLUTELY HAMMERS MITES.



Pampers Everything Else.

No miticide performs as well as Floramite® against key mite pests in all life stages. It pounds tough pests like two-spotted and spruce spider mites with hard-hitting contact action. Then, it gives long residual control, up to 28 days, to get those late hatches.

Floramite features a unique mode of action and highly selective activity so it's easy on predacious mites and beneficial insects. And its low toxicity means it's easy to work with and safe for the environment.

If you want to drop the hammer on mites, while you pamper everything else, get the economical, user-friendly control of Floramite.

Crompton
Uniroyal Chemical

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Always read and follow label directions.



continued from page 74

contact with the soil. The herbicide is tightly bound to the soil particles in the upper soil surface where the weed seeds germinate. As they germinate, they contact the herbicide-treated soil and the chemical inhibits the growth of the shoots or roots, eventually killing the susceptible weed. The success of the application depends on applying the chemical prior to germination. Also, conditions must favor weed seed germination.

The soil herbicide concentration is the critical factor in the amount and length of control possible from pre-emergence herbicides. Once the herbicide has been applied, a variety of processes take place that eventually reduce the herbicide concentration. When herbicide concentrations drop below a critical level, you must reapply the herbicide above the threshold level to maintain control.

This is why some pre-emergence herbicides require a second application. Information about residual activity can be found on the label, which will also indicate how soon after application re-seeding can occur.

For example, depending on application rate,

some products such as Team have relatively short post-application reseeding restrictions, (6-8 weeks), others (i.e., Pendulum, Dimension) are intermediate (9-12 weeks), and Barricade (16 weeks) has the longest post-application restrictions for reseeding.

Apply water soon

Depending on product and formulation, irrigation or rainfall after application may be necessary. For some products, if the herbicide isn't watered within 72 hours, the chemical is exposed to light, which can increase degradation. The longer the delay in applying water, the greater the potential loss of herbicide.

Drought conditions can affect residual activity. An interesting observation in 2002 was seen in irrigated vs. non-irrigated turf areas in eastern Nebraska. In September, soil chemical analyses of five pre-emergence-treated areas from the previous spring indicated that non-irrigated areas had substantially higher levels of the applied herbicide than irrigated areas. In two instances, the herbicide levels were high enough to slow estab-

continued on page 80

SELECTED HERBICIDES AND THEIR EFFICACY IN NEBRASKA TESTING

Common name	Trade name ^a	Activity	Annual grass control ^b				Annual broadleaf control			
			Crabgrass	Goosegrass	Foxtail	P. annua	Oxalis	Spurge	Henbit	Chickweed
Benefin	Balan	Pre	G-E	F	G	G	UK	F	UK	UK
Bensulide	Betasan	Pre	G-E	P	P	E	UK	UK	G	UK
Siduron ^c	Tupersan	Pre	G	UK	P	UK	UK	UK	UK	UK
Oxadiazon	Ronstar	Pre	G-E	E	F	G	G	UK	UK	UK
Oryzalin	Surflan	Pre	E	E	E	G	UK	G	E	E
Pendimethalin	numerous	Pre	E	E	E	G	UK	G	E	E
Dithiopyr	Dimension	Pre/Post	E	G	G	G	G	G	G	
Arsenicals	numerous	Post	G	UK	G	UK	UK	UK	UK	UK
Fenoxaprop	Acclaim	Post	E	E	E	UK	UK	UK	UK	UK
Quinclorac	Drive	Post	E	G	G	UK	E	UK	E	E

^aTrade names are mentioned to provide specific information. Mention of a product does not constitute a guarantee or warranty by the Nebraska Agricultural Experiment Station or *Landscape Management* magazine or an endorsement.

^bE=Excellent, G=Good, F=Fair, P=Poor, UK=Unknown or not tested in University of Nebraska trials

^cOnly pre-emergence herbicide registered for newly seeded cool-season turf

- Identification
- Characteristics
- Controls

Management
Strategies for



Weed Control

Sponsored by BASF Corporation

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PROFESSIONAL
TURE™**



360 YARDS to BACKYARDS

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DRIVE[®]
75 DF HERBICIDE

The shortest distance between broadleaf and grassy weed control.

Drive[®] 75 DF herbicide effectively raises the bar for postemergent weed control. A single, convenient application of **Drive** quickly eliminates a broad spectrum of both broadleaf and grassy weeds—from crabgrass and foxtail to clover and dandelion—in a wide variety of turf species. Then **Drive** keeps weeds under control for 30 to 45 days—in some cases for more than 3 months. **Drive** also offers exceptional seeding and overseeding flexibility—allowing you to seed many varieties of turf immediately before or after application. To learn more about how **Drive**[®] 75 DF can help you in your drive for turf protection, visit www.turffacts.com. Always read and follow label directions.



**We don't make the turf.
We make it better.**

BASF

Introduction

BASF Professional Products is pleased to provide you with this new guide designed to help turf professionals better manage problem weeds. Our goal is to give you and your crew an easy-to-use tool that allows you to quickly identify and control unwanted vegetation. For more detailed information, visit www.turffacts.com, contact your local BASF representative (see our map on pages 10-11), or call 800-545-9525.

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**BASF
PROFESSIONAL
TURF™**



Know These Key Chemicals

- **Pendimethalin** = **Pendulum®** preemergent herbicide (preemergent)
- **Quinclorac** = **Drive® 75 DF** herbicide (postemergent)
- **Imazaquin** = **Image® 70 DG** herbicide (postemergent)
- **Imazapyr** = **Sahara® DG** herbicide (nonselective bareground)
- **Imazapic** = **Plateau® DG** herbicide (postemergent)
- **Bentazon** = **Basagran® T/O** herbicide (postemergent)

Product Descriptions

Pendulum® preemergent herbicide—ensures crabgrass never comes up, and so much more. Pendulum is the proven performer for preventing more than 40 troublesome grassy and broadleaf weeds. It combines unbeatable performance with unmatched value to earn top grades for user satisfaction.

Drive®75 DF herbicide—closes the distance between broadleaf and grassy weed control. No other postemergent herbicide controls a broader combination of broadleaf and grassy weeds or offers such remarkable overseeding flexibility.

Image® 70 DG herbicide—kills "uncontrollable" weeds that can kill your image, such as purple nutsedge, green kyllinga, dollarweed, wild onion and many more in warm-season turfgrasses. Image 70 DG comes in a dispersible granule formulation for ultimate performance and convenience.

Sahara® DG herbicide—turns your jungle into desert with dependable bareground weed control. Sahara controls more than 150 weeds, as well as most common turfgrasses, with a single application. It offers effective preemergent and postemergent control and a wide application window to meet your schedule.

Plateau® DG herbicide—for use in commercial turfgrass management, provides convenient, effective preemergent and postemergent weed control in fine turf. In addition, Plateau can also be used to control vertical growth and provide seedhead suppression in labeled turfgrass species.

Basagran® T/O herbicide—offers reliable, cost-effective postemergent control of tough broadleaf weeds, yellow nutsedge, annual sedges and more. For use in cool- and warm-season turfgrass and ornamentals, and along roadsides.

► For complete product information and specific application recommendations, check out www.turffacts.com, and always read and follow label directions.

GRASSY WEEDS

Annual Bluegrass	W2
Barnyardgrass	W2
Broomsedge	W2
Cheatgrass	W3
Dallisgrass	W3
Downy Brome	W3
Fall Panicum	W4
Foxtail	W4
Foxtail Barley	W4
Goosegrass	W5
Green Foxtail	W5
Johnsongrass	W5
Kikuyugrass	W6
Large Crabgrass	W6
Nimblewill	W6
Quackgrass	W7
Sandbur	W7
Smooth Crabgrass	W7
Southern Crabgrass	W8
Torpedograss	W8
Wild Oat	W8
Witchgrass	W9

SEDGES

Annual Sedge	W12
Globe Sedge	W12
Green Kyllinga	W12
Purple Nutsedge	W13
Yellow Nutsedge	W13

BROADLEAF WEEDS

Beggarweed	W14
Black Medic	W14
Broadleaf Plantain	W14
Buckhorn Plantain	W15
Carpetweed	W15
Common Chickweed	W15
Cudweed	W16
Dandelion	W16
Dollarweed	W16
English Daisy	W17
Henbit	W17
Hop Clover	W17
Knotweed	W18
Lawn Burweed	W18
Morning Glory	W18
Oxalis	W19
Purslane	W19
Speedwell	W19
Spurge	W20
White Clover	W20
Wild Onion, Wild Garlic	W20

Grassy Weeds



ANNUAL BLUEGRASS

(*Poa annua*, poa)

Poa annua

Self-seeding winter annual or biennial.
Short, narrow leaf blades with parallel edges, boat-shaped tip.
Germinates late summer to early fall.
Shallow-rooted.
Will die under heat or moisture stress.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Pendulum (preemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)



BARNYARDGRASS

(billiondollar grass, watergrass, wild millet)

Echinochloa crusgalli

Very wide-bladed, semi-prostrate summer annual.
Stems branched at nodes, frequently bent upright.
Seeds are coarse with short burs.
Seedhead a terminal panicle, with multiple short, perpendicular branches, 4-16 inches long.
Panicles green to purple.
Reaches 5 feet tall.
One of few grass weeds in which ligules are absent.
Leaves hairless, but sheaths often tinted deep red at base.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Plateau (postemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)

Pendulum (preemergent)



BROOMSEGE

(broomsage)

Carex scoparia

Very narrow-leaved, erect perennial.
Can grow 2-4 feet high.
Collar area has hairs on upper leaf surface and on leaf edge.
Seedhead is upright with white, feather-like tufts.



CHEATGRASS

(chess, cheat, bromegrass, rye bromegrass)

Bromus secalinus

Narrow-leaved, mostly erect.
Winter annual has about 100 species.
Underside of leaf is typically hairy.
Seedhead is open with multiple semi-erect branches, each with 1-4 seed clusters.
Seeds look like wheat or rye.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Sahara (nonselective bareground)



DALLISGRASS

(paspalum)

Paspalum dilatatum

Perennial warm-season plant.
Erect, wide-bladed annual with stiff stems.
Seeds are flat on one side, rounded on the other.
Seedhead is open with multiple branches carrying many single, drooping seeds.
Plant often browns in summer as seed matures.
Collar area has sparse, short hairs.
Originally from South America.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Plateau (postemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)



DOWNY BROME

(drooping bromegrass)

Bromus tectorum

Erect, narrow-bladed winter annual.
Leaves have dense, soft hairs on both surfaces.
Seedhead is open with drooping branches.
Seed clusters are tufted.
Seed looks like wheat or rye.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Sahara (nonselective bareground)

Plateau (postemergent)

Grassy Weeds



FALL PANICUM

(smooth witchgrass, witchgrass)

Panicum capillare

Wide-bladed summer annual.

Leaves may be hairy on upper surface, but glossy beneath and sharply pointed.

Seeds borne on panicles. Seedhead branched at nodes and bent upright.

Stems branched at nodes and bent upright.

One of 160 identified species of *Panicum* in the U.S.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Pendulum (preemergent)

Plateau (postemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)



FOXTAIL

Setaria spp.

spp.

Seedhead looks just like a fox's tail.

Leaves often slightly twisted in an open spiral.

Erect, wide-bladed summer annual, leaves often reaching 12 inches long.

Upper leaf surface has long hairs in collar area.

Stems to 3 feet high, often appearing reddish toward the base.

Distinguishable from green foxtail which has no hairs on the leaf blades or at the leaf bases.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Drive (postemergent)

Pendulum (preemergent)

Plateau (postemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)



FOXTAIL BARLEY

(squirreltail barley)

Hordeum jubatum, *H. murinum*, *H. pusillum*

Leaf blades are coarse, often with sparse, stiff hairs.

Seedhead is a single, tufted spike.

Seed has 2-3 inch long hair at pointed end.

Barbed beards stick to clothes.

Grows 1-2 feet tall.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Sahara (nonselective bareground)



GOOSEGRASS

(silver crabgrass, crowfoot grass)

Eleusine indica

Narrow-leaved, dense, prostrate summer annual.
Leaf is darker green than most annual monocots.
Likes richer soils.
Seeds are marked with diagonal grooves.
Collar area has sparse, long hairs.
Seedhead has 2-13 branches, white to silver in color.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Pendulum (preemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)



GREEN FOXTAIL

(green bristlegrass)

Setaria viridis

Wide-leaved, mounded summer annual.
Leaf blades are limp, bright green, sharply pointed.
Stems bend upright at nodes.
Seedhead is cylindrical with tufted, pale-green seeds.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Drive (postemergent)

Plateau (postemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)

Pendulum (preemergent)



JOHNSONGRASS

Sorghum halepense

Very wide-bladed, aggressively spreading perennial.
Collar area has short hairs on upper surface near ligule.
Spread by multiple, quarter-inch thick rhizomes.
May resemble corn from a distance.
Grows 2-5 feet.
Named for William Johnson who brought it to the USA from the Mediterranean in the 1840s.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Pendulum (preemergent)

Plateau (postemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)

Grassy Weeds



KIKUYUGRASS

Pennisetum clandestinum

Prostrate growth habit, creeps with both stolons and rhizomes. Flat leaf blades, light green leaves. Seedhead has 2-4 spikelets in upper sheath. Spreads by producing a network of thick, fleshy stems (stolons). Often confused with St. Augustinegrass. Native to Africa, especially problematic in California. Able to maintain its steady growth rate at lower temperatures.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Drive (postemergent)



LARGE CRABGRASS

(hairy fingergrass, cropgrass)

Digitaria sanguinalis

Wide-bladed, prostrate summer annual. Leaves hairy on both surfaces with prominent midrib. Grows 1-3 feet tall. Seedhead open with 4-6 slender branches. Older nodes typically branched and rooted where contacting soil.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Drive (postemergent)

Pendulum (preemergent)

Plateau (postemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)



NIMBLEWILL

Muhlenbergia schreberi

Short-leaved, stemmy spreading perennial herb. Leaves are short. Spreads by slender stolons. Turns off-white during winter. Collar area has long hairs at leaf edges. Seedhead has single, slender spike. Common east of the Rockies.



QUACKGRASS

(quack)

Agropyron repens

Erect, narrow-leafed, aggressive perennial.

Leaf is rough on upper surface.

Grows 1-2 feet tall.

Seedhead is a single, slender spike, resembling a slender wheat.

Develops multiple rhizomes from base of plant.

Collar area has claw-like fleshy appendages (auricles) that clasp stem.

Hairs may appear on upper leaf surface but none on lower surface.

Stems often bend out and up from the base of the plant.

Auricles clasp stem, distinguishing it from most other grass weeds.

Problem weed since 1837.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Sahara (nonselective bareground)



SANDBUR

(sandspur, field sandbur)

Cenchrus tribuloides on the coast

C. incertus in sandy areas of Southeast

C. longispinus inland

Prostrate growth habit, growing only a few inches high.

Narrow-leafed summer annual.

Prefers sandy soils.

Yellow seedhead has 6-20 large, sharply burred seeds.

Causes painful injury to unprotected feet or ankles.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Image (postemergent)

Plateau (postemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)



SMOOTH CRABGRASS

(fingergrass)

Digitaria ischaemum

Narrow-leafed, prostrate summer annual.

Leaves not hairy (except sparsely haired in collar area).

Stems branch at nodes, but do not root.

Seedhead has 2-6 slender, upright branches.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Drive (postemergent)

Pendulum (preemergent)

Plateau (postemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)

Grassy Weeds



SOUTHERN CRABGRASS

(summergrass)

Digitaria ciliaris

Wide-bladed, prostrate summer annual. Leaves often hairy on upper surface. Stems will root at the node. Collar area has sparse, long hairs. Seedhead has 2-9 slender branches.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Drive (postemergent)

Pendulum (preemergent)

Plateau (postemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)



TORPEDOGRASS

Panicum repens

Aquatic, perennial grass with tiny leaves (1/16-1/4 inch wide). Leaves have hairs on top and often roll inward. Stems are 1-3 feet tall, stiff. Grows from underground rhizomes with hard, pointed tips. Found across the Gulf states.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Drive (postemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)



WILD OAT

(wild oats)

Avena fatua

Erect, stiff-stemmed, wide-bladed annual. Generally 2-3 feet tall, can grow to 6 feet. Inconspicuous yellow flower. Plant browns in summer as seed matures. Collar area has sparse, short hairs. Seedhead is open. Multiple branches carry many single drooping seeds.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Plateau (postemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)



WITCHGRASS

(witch grass, old witchgrass, old witch grass, tumble grass)

Panicum capillare

Erect, wide-bladed summer annual.

Leaves quite hairy on both surfaces.

May reach 32 inches in height.

Fibrous root system.

Emerging seedhead looks like a spraying fountain.

Mature seedhead is very large and quite open with slender branches carrying single seeds.

Slender, brushy panicles.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Pendulum (preemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)

Word of Advice

When applying these or any other herbicides, always follow label directions. Consult your state's turfgrass or agronomy guide for the latest local recommendations on rates or times of applications, or for special local considerations.

Always read and follow label directions.

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Useful Conversions

1 gallon/acre = 2.93 oz./1,000 sq. ft.

1 acre = 43,560 sq. ft.

100 gal./acre = 2.3 gal./1,000 sq. ft. = 1 qt./100 sq. ft.

1 liter = 1,000 milliliters (ml) = 1.058 qts.

100 lbs./acre = 2.3 lbs./1,000 sq. ft.

1 lb. = 453.6 grams = 16 oz.

1 oz. = 28.35 grams

1 tablespoon = 3 teaspoons = 15 grams

1 teaspoon = 5 grams

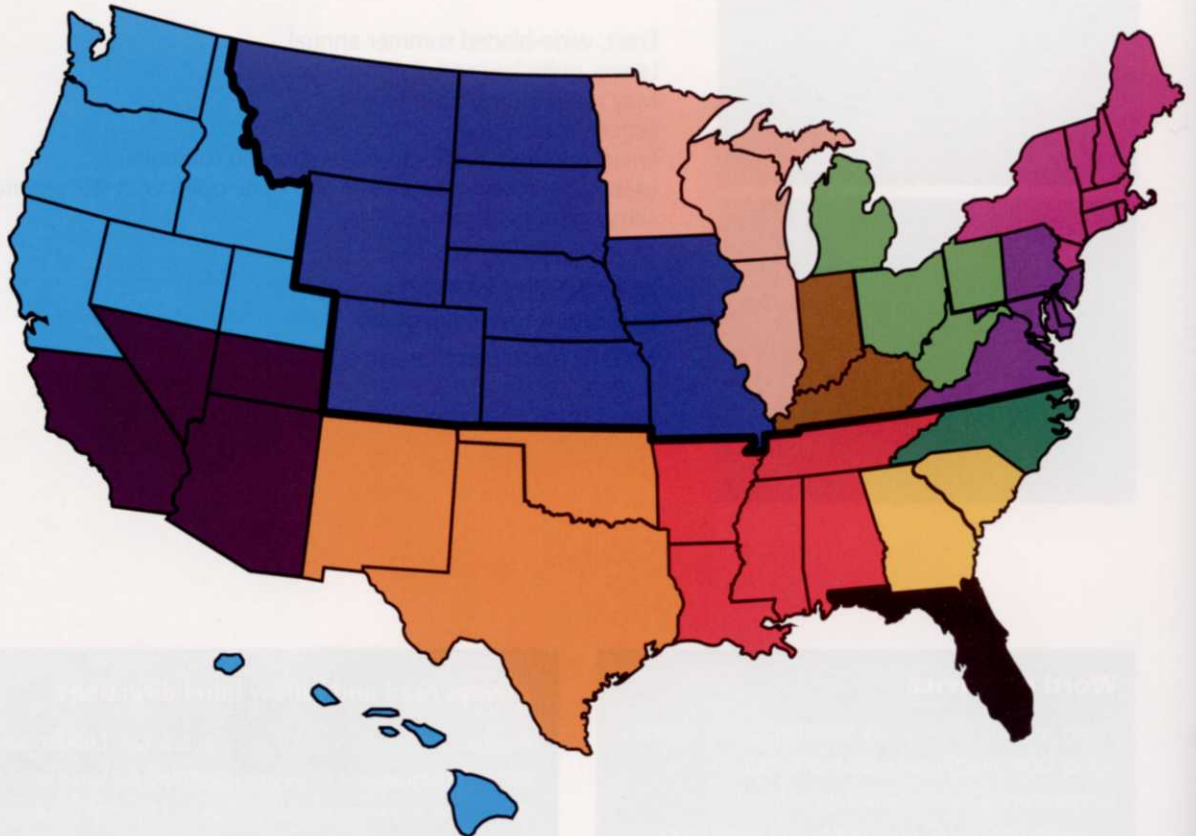
1 mile per hour = 88 linear feet per minute

Handy Contacts

- <http://www.turffacts.com/turf/home.asp>
- <http://plants.usda.gov/>
- <http://www.ppws.vt.edu/weedindex.htm>
- <http://www.golfdom.com>
- <http://www.landscapemanagement.net>
- <http://www.turfgrasstrends.com>
- <http://www.agry.purdue.edu/turf/index.html>
- <http://www.weeds.cas.psu.edu/>
- <http://cufan.clemson.edu/pestmgmtguide/>
- <http://texaserc.tamu.edu/catalog/index.html>



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BASF

Sedges



ANNUAL SEDGE

Carex compressus

Leafy shoots are triangular in cross section.
Leaves 3-ranked, dark green, linear-lanceolate.
Seeds 3-angled, dark brown, shiny.
Red, fibrous roots.
Seedhead is unique.
Lighter green foliage.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Basagran (postemergent)

Image (postemergent)

Plateau (postemergent)



GLOBE SEDGE

Carex perglobosa

Native perennial.
Leafy shoots are triangular in cross section.
Leaf blades flat, smooth, bright green.
Densely tufted stems.
Seedhead branches at top of stem.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Image (postemergent)

Plateau (postemergent)



GREEN KYLLINGA

(perennial kyllinga)

Kyllinga brevifolia

Perennial sedge from rhizomes forms dense infestations.
Three distinctive leaves below the seedhead.
Leaves lack hairs, ligules or auricles, have distinct ridge along midvein.
Rhizomes are red to purple.
Young plants look like nutsedge, but green kyllinga lacks tubers.
More difficult to control than either yellow or purple nutsedge.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Image (postemergent)

Plateau (postemergent)



PURPLE NUTSEDEGE

(purple nutgrass)

Cyperus rotundus

Leaves V-shaped, tapering to sharp point.

Stems are triangular (can be felt when rolled between fingers).

Seedhead is open with purple seeds.

Problem across southern states into Arizona and California.

Spreads by rhizomes with underground tubers.

Likes better soils.

Purple nutsedge is deep-green colored; yellow nutsedge is light-green to yellow-green.

Taste tubers: If very bitter, it is purple nutsedge; if sweet, it is yellow nutsedge.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Image (postemergent)

Plateau (postemergent)



YELLOW NUTSEDEGE

(yellow nutgrass, chufa, cocograss)

Cyperus esculentus

Very fast growing, erect perennial herb.

Spreads by rhizomes with underground tubers.

Leaves V-shaped, with prominent midrib, tapering to sharp point.

Stems are triangular (can be felt when rolled between fingers).

Seedhead is semi-open with yellow seeds.

Problem across northern states, into Arkansas, North Carolina.

Likes better soils.

Yellow nutsedge leaf tips have long, tapered point; purple nutsedge leaf tips are bluntly pointed.

Yellow nutsedge forms tubers at the tips of the rhizomes; purple nutsedge tubers formed in chains on rhizomes.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Basagran (postemergent)

Image (postemergent)

Plateau (postemergent)

Broadleaf Weeds



BEGGARWEED

(Florida beggarweed, beggartick)

Desmodium tortuosum

Summer annual grows 3-9 feet.

Leaves, stems covered with short, stiff hairs that stick to clothes.

Alternate, 3-4 inch leaves with 3 elliptic to oblong leaflets in upper leaves, often only 1 leaflet in the lower area.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Plateau (postemergent)



BLACK MEDIC

Medicago lupulina

Low-trailing summer annual with yellow flowers.

4-angled, hairy stems radiate from the taproot.

Compound leaves are alternate.

Wedge- to oval-shaped leaflets with toothed margins.

Small projecting tip at the leaflet apex, toothed margins distinguish black medic from hop clover.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Image (postemergent)



BROADLEAF PLANTAIN

Plantago major

Leaves are smooth or slightly hairy, oval to elliptic.

Leaf surface waxy, veins parallel to the margins.

Margins untoothed and sometimes wavy.

Flowering stems are 5-15 inches long, clustered with small flowers that have whitish petals and bracts.

Red or purple coloration at the base of the petioles.

Seed capsules egg-shaped, open by splitting around the middle.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Basagran (postemergent)

Plateau (postemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)



BUCKHORN PLANTAIN

Plantago lanceolata

All leaves form a basal rosette.
Leaves are linear to lanceolate with veins running the length of the leaf.
Can be sparsely hairy or hairless.
Flower is unbranched, leafless spike 4 inches long.
Contains many inconspicuous flowers.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Basagran (postemergent)

Plateau (postemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)



CARPETWEED

Mollugo verticillata

Late-germinating, light-green, multibranched summer annual.
Forms circular patches several feet in diameter.
Leaves smooth in whorls of 3-8 at each node.
2 to 5 flower clusters on slender stalks.
Flowers are small, white.
Whorls of leaves at stem nodes.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Pendulum (preemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)



COMMON CHICKWEED

(starwort, winterweed)

Stellaria media

Low-growing winter annual.
Prefers shaded, moist locations.
Opposite, small leaves carried on tender stems.
Stems can root at leaf nodes.
Small, compound flower composed of 5 pairs of 2 pale-purple petals.
Plants die back with summer heat, but will survive year-round at cool sites.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Basagran (postemergent)

Image (postemergent)

Pendulum (preemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)

Broadleaf Weeds



CUDWEED

(Purple cudweed)

Gnaphalium purpureum

Low-growing summer or winter annual or biennial. Forms rosette of grayish-green woolly foliage. Rosette leaves 4 inches long, 3/4 inch wide. Elongating stems from rosette do not branch. Small, tannish-white flowers have light brown, pink or purple bracts.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Image (postemergent)

Pendulum (preemergent)



DANDELION

Taraxacum officinale

Large, rosette-type perennial herb found nationwide. Long, narrow, deeply notched leaves grow from plant base. Points of leaf nodes point backward toward base of plant. Has large, slightly mounded yellow flowers on hollow stems. Mature seedhead is round puffball with seeds that are easily scattered.

Milky juice said to have medicinal value.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Basagran (postemergent)

Drive (postemergent)

Pendulum (preemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)



DOLLARWEED

(pennywort, water pennywort)

Hydrocotyle umbellata

Roundish leaves are scalloped and shallowly lobed but notched at the base.

Creeping habit.

Runners often found in leaf axils.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Drive (postemergent)

Image (postemergent)



ENGLISH DAISY

Bellis perenne

Low-growing perennial can grow to 6 inches if not mowed. Oval leaves form around basal rosette. Flower heads measure an inch across and are borne on stiff stalks.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Drive (postemergent)



HENBIT

(dead nettle)

Lamium amplexicaule

Mostly erect winter annual or biennial. 4-angled stems like other mints. Leaves are heart-shaped to oval, heavily veined with soft hairs on top. Growth is opposite on square stems. Single pale-purple flowers are trumpet-shaped, project from ends of stems. A spring problem nationwide, dying with heat.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Image (postemergent)

Pendulum (preemergent)



HOP CLOVER

(Lesser trefoil, least hop-clover, suckling clover, shamrock)

Trifolium campestre

Germinates early in spring, dies in heat of summer. Prostrate growth habit, favors thin turf. Bears numerous little yellow flowers resembling stobiles of a hop. Leaves are shiny green in groups of 3. Spreads from branches at base, forms patch 6-18 inches wide. Sometimes confused with yellow-flowered oxalis, but latter is purplish with sour taste.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Drive (postemergent)

Pendulum (preemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)

Broadleaf Weeds



KNOTWEED

(doorweed, birdgrass, knotgrass, wireweed)
Polygonum arenastrum

Perennial, stays prostrate to ground, but may get to 4-8 inches. Typical near paths or other packed soil. Collar area has short hairs at leaf edges and near ligule. Small (1/4-inch wide by 1-inch long), blue-green, oval leaves make dense mats. Seedhead has two slender, upright branches.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Pendulum (preemergent)



LAWN BURWEED

Soliva pterosperma

Winter annual. Reproduces by seed. Opposite leaves (member of the Aster family). Leaves are sparsely hairy, twice divided into narrow segments or lobes. Flowers small and inconspicuous. Fruits have sharp spines.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Image (postemergent)
Pendulum (preemergent)
Basagran (postemergent)



MORNING GLORY

(bindweed, wandering jew)
Ipomoea purpurea

Heart-shaped leaves alternate, entire or with indented sides, 4 inches long, 3.5 inches wide, and on long petioles. May or may not have hairs. Large, tuber-like root. White flowers, 2-3 inches long, with lavender to purple center.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Basagran (postemergent)
Drive (postemergent)
Plateau (postemergent)
Sahara (nonselective bareground)



OXALIS

(wood sorrel, wood shamrock, sourgrass)

Oxalis corniculata

Erect, stoloniferous perennial.

May mimic a summer annual in cooler climates.

Stems green to pink, weak, branched at base, vary from smooth to pubescent.

Typically more prostrate than erect.

Spreads by aboveground stolons.

Trifoliate, reddish-purple leaves have pleasant, acidic taste.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Basagran (postemergent)

Pendulum (preemergent)

Plateau (postemergent)



PURSLANE

(common purslane, pursley)

Portulaca oleracea

Prostrate, succulent summer annual found nationwide.

Thick, fleshy purple-to-brown stems can take root when broken.

Small, yellow flowers appear in leaf clusters at end of stems.

Inch-long, wedge-shaped leaves are rounded at the tip.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Basagran (postemergent)

Pendulum (preemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)



SPEEDWELL

(persian speedwell, veronica, corn speedwell)

Veronica persica

Winter annual.

Small, light-blue and white flowers with darker blue lines and pale blue to white center.

Leaves oval to round with round teeth and hairy.

Lower leaves arranged oppositely on petioles; upper leaves on erect flowering stems are alternate, do not occur on petioles.

Differs from ground ivy, which lacks hairy leaves; from henbit and purple deadnettle, which have opposite leaves on flowering stem.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Drive (postemergent)

Pendulum (preemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)

Broadleaf Weeds



SPURGE

(prostrate spurge)

Euphorbia spp.

Prostrate, fleshy, summer annual herb.

Forms dense mats that may reach 16 inch diameter.

Stems branch out from central point, dense hairy, and pink to red in color.

Stems do not root at nodes, emit milky sap when broken.

Egg-shaped leaves usually lack hairs.

Leaves opposite, oblong, up to 1/4 inch long; margins very finely toothed (often indistinguishable) near leaf apex.

Upper leaf surface has purple-to-brown blotch along center vein.

Milky juice from hairy stems can irritate skin.

Tiny flowers lack both sepals and petals.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Pendulum (preemergent)

Plateau (postemergent)



WHITE CLOVER

Trifolium repens

Perennial with trifoliate leaves, stems that root at the nodes, white flowers.

Low-growing, prostrate.

Leaflets with white or light-green V-marking near base.

Slightly toothed leaf margin.

Usually without hairs but not always.

4-16 inches in height.

Stems root at nodes.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Drive (postemergent)

Pendulum (preemergent)

Sahara (nonselective bareground)



WILD ONION/WILD GARLIC

(Wild garlic, Canada garlic, crow garlic)

Allium vineale, *A. canadense*, *A. stellatum*

Members of lily family, identified by underground bulb.

Has typical onion or garlic smell.

Wild garlic leaves are not hollow (field garlic are hollow).

Grows 12-30 inches tall.

Flowers range from white to pink to violet.

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS:

Basagran (postemergent)

Image (postemergent)

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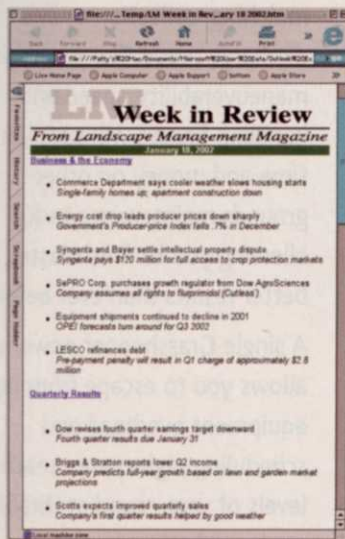
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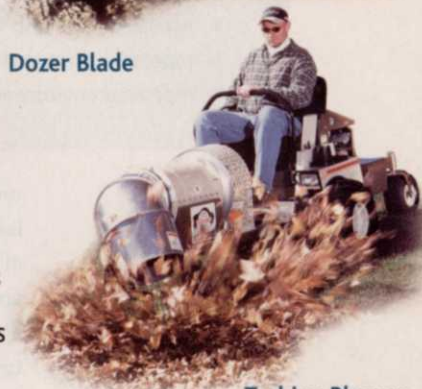
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Microencapsulated product enters marketplace

BASF recently introduced a new Pendulum formulation, Pendulum AquaCap, which uses a patented technology. AquaCap's microencapsulation surrounds pendimethalin with an ultra-thin capsule that is suspended in the AquaCap solution but invisible to the naked eye. BASF says the new formulation offers the following benefits:

- ▶ Water-based formulation
- ▶ Virtually no odor
- ▶ Reduced staining potential
- ▶ Increased ease and flexibility of handling, mixing and cleanup
- ▶ Improved storage stability
- ▶ Improved environmental profile

continued from page 76

lishment in the reseeded areas. The application of pre-emergence herbicides on non-irrigated areas may possibly require a change in "normal" application procedures. In non-irrigated areas, a turf manager might consider the use of lower use rates, shorter residual products and/or not applying a second application if the drought would persist into the summer months.

Another example of weather effects includes the occurrence of an unusually dry and hot spring, which could delay weed seed germination. If mid- to late-summer rain occurs, a flush of grass weed seed germination may be seen after the herbicide has degraded below control levels. Be aware of the weather and understand what effect it can have on pre-emergence performance. It can help you time reapplications or an unseasonably late application.

Watch the temperature

Some weeds are more easily controlled if the pre-emergence is applied at the appropriate soil temperature. For example, crabgrass is best controlled when soil temperatures are sustained above 50° F, while goosegrass and foxtail require 60° F or greater for germination.

In 2002, much of the United States suffered from lack of rain. Some areas will continue to be dry in 2003. Be ready to modify herbicide strategies to optimize successful weed control.

Drought-stressed turf normally loses density

and is less competitive against opportunistic weeds. In subsequent years (such as this spring), the turf could have more weeds because of the increased weed seed production from the previous year. Once again, pre-emergence products are the logical choice.

Also, decreased turf density may cause the soil temperature to rise faster this spring, and you may need to apply pre-emergence products earlier. Greater weed pressure may also require higher use rates, split applications or post-emergence applications.

With the predictions for the upcoming season, does one pre-emergence product have a benefit over another? Base your choice of what pre-emergence herbicide to use on sound, unbiased data. Many universities conduct research on herbicide efficacy. This is a reliable source of side-by-side product comparisons. Check the research of the nearest university that provides this. Base your decision on:

- 1 consistent performance** from year to year; for example, in testing over the last 10 years in Nebraska, Pendulum, Dimension and Barricade have given consistent and reliable performance, and
- 2 performance under weather** and/or management conditions anticipated at your location. Also, consult with distributors, manufacturers and local turf managers.

When pre-emergence applications are less than desired, an application of a post-emergence herbicide may be necessary. Selective post-emergence products that target the same species as most pre-emergence products include the arsenicals, such as MSMA, Acclaim Extra (fenoxa-prop-ethyl) and Drive (quinclorac). Drive is a relatively new addition to post-emergence products.

Use this data in the table accompanying this article or, more appropriately, data from at or near your location as a generalized guide for product choices. Consult and follow the product label for additional important information.

— *The author is a professor of agronomy and horticulture and Extension Turfgrass Specialist at the University of Nebraska. He can be contacted at rgaussoin@unl.edu.*

Preseason irrigation checkup

This step-by-step program will get clients' systems up and ready to water

BY KATHERINE WOODFORD

Preseason maintenance for irrigation systems ensures a smooth operating season for the client. However, because the procedures are relatively simple and vary little from site to site, it's easy to overlook a problem in a customer's system.

Review these preseason maintenance procedures before the crew does the first job.

Get on schedule

Connecting contractors' and clients' schedules is always a challenge, making it a struggle to schedule an entire neighborhood in one block of time. Take the extra time to create an efficient schedule to increase the number of startups per day, saving gasoline and time. But even the best

plans run into scheduling snags.

"We put a notice in the monthly bills, and we also have everyone's e-mail address," says John Barringer, partner, Barringer & Barringer Inc., Charlotte, NC. Some startups are part of maintenance contracts, but even with these clients we still get firm appointments before going to their house."

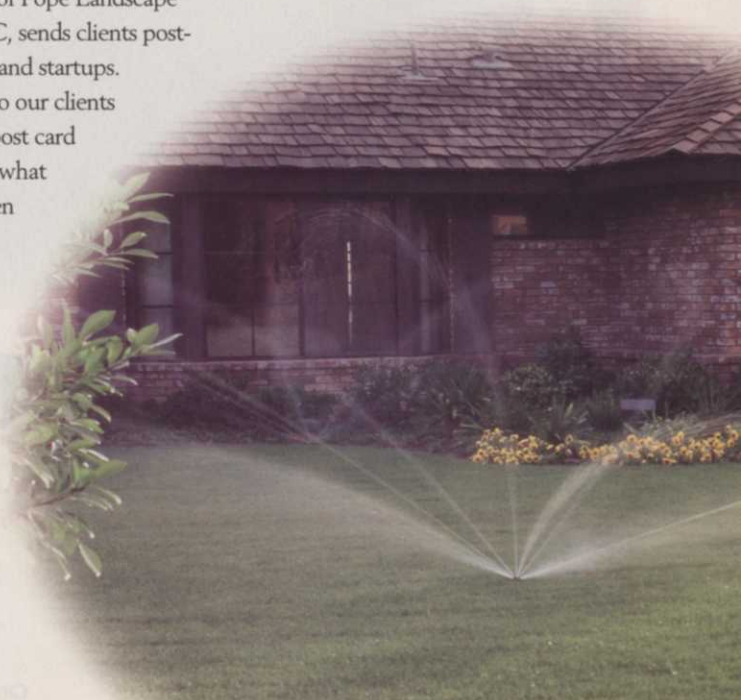
Jim Pope, president of Pope Landscape & Irrigation, Garner, NC, sends clients postcards for winterizations and startups. "Then we send a letter to our clients with a stamped return post card so they can let us know what they want done. We then call and schedule an appointment," he says.

One option to solve the scheduling problem is to encourage the client to install the controller outside the garage in a weatherproof cabinet. Another is to install a remote control and transmitter for remote access to the controller.

Startup basics

"We have a class on spring startup procedures to make sure everyone understands what needs to be done," adds Barringer. "Our maintenance crews perform spring startups. If there is a major repair required, they report it and we send a repair crew."

Spring startup training programs are particularly effective for businesses that hire



For leak-free connections

Hurrying, particularly when gluing PVC pipe, can result in being called back to repair a leak in the pipe. Another mistake is to apply too little solvent cement, which consists of volatiles that evaporate during curing. If not applied quickly, the cement will dry before the connections are secure and the connection will leak.

Follow this plan to make sure your joints stay glued and leak-free:

- ▶ Start with clean connections, with the pipe square cut. Remove dirt, oil and shavings with a clean rag and pipe cleaner.
- ▶ Prime both the pipe and fitting socket to be joined.
- ▶ Immediately apply a coat of cement to the pipe end.
- ▶ Apply a light coat of cement to the fitting socket.
- ▶ Add a second coat of cement to the pipe.
- ▶ Push the parts together, rotating one-eighth to one-quarter turn. Hold for 30 seconds. When the weather is cold, hold the connection longer. Leaky joints will show shiny spots. A properly made joint will always be dull in color and have a satin-like texture. Removing the shine shows that active solvents have attacked the joint, allowing chemical fusion to take place.

—KW

seasonal workers. The following are procedures you can use to build your plan:

1 Inventory equipment and parts the night before service or before the truck leaves the shop. Replace anything used the previous day. Even if you've had a delay and are behind schedule, don't rush. Making sure you have everything you need will prevent a return trip to the shop.

2 Once on site, turn the water on gradually at the main water source. Turning the water on full blast causes immediate pressure or water hammer, which can damage a main line or master valve, as well as result in the loosening or blowing off of fittings and connections.

3 Begin cycling through each zone of the system. Watch for cracks in the pipe



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and leaks in all the valve boxes. Occasionally, water becomes trapped in the pipe and freezes, causing pipes to burst.

4 Check each sprinkler head's connection and spray direction. Look for clogged nozzles, broken or worn sprinklers and sprinklers in need of adjustment. Pay particular attention to high traffic areas and the outer edge of the system. Sometimes vehicles run over sprinklers along a driveway or passersby bump them.

5 Note if additional sprinkler heads or new zones are required because of plant material growth or additional flowerbeds. If this is the case, have a designer contact the homeowner to set up an appointment to go over the additional needs.

"When there's no head-to-head coverage or bushes have grown and the sprinklers need to be changed out, we suggest an irrigation audit. It would cost extra, but it's very thorough," says Barringer.

6 Check the controller's settings — the clock for the correct time, the amount of time each zone is set to run, and start and stop times. Newer controllers have nonvolatile memory and don't require a battery. If the controller requires an alkaline battery, replace it during the startup.

To avoid overlooking a problem in the spring, put a note of any potential trouble in the client's file after fall winterization. At the same time, jot down any client comments about changes they might make or a concern they voiced.

Some contractors build a standard checklist to document each step. At the end of each day, they put it in the client's file.

Other contractors keep detailed notes on each system and require that the crews review each file before going to the site. Some also provide their crews with detailed drawings of each site so that zones and heads are easily located.

The initial setting for the output of water per zone is sufficient for the spring

season. However, the run times will need adjusting as the weather gets hotter and drier. Savvy contractors offer ongoing maintenance contracts.

— The author is a freelance writer in Moneta, VA who specializes in the Green Industry. She can be contacted at Kwoodford@katherinesbylines.com.



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MULTI-TASKING TO MAINTAIN COSTS

BY RON HALL /
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Tunica County hugs the east bank of the Mississippi River about 20 miles south of Memphis, TN, and is the South's version of Atlantic City and Las Vegas.

This region of Mississippi is awash in casinos, a remarkable change from just 10 years ago when it was a rural backwash with just 9,000 people. Today, Tunica sees 10 million visitors annually, and more than 16,000 people are employed there, including Scott Brewer and his landscape crew. Brewer is the branch manager for American Civil Constructors (ACC), one of the country's largest landscape companies. Brewer's branch maintains almost all of the casino properties in Tunica.

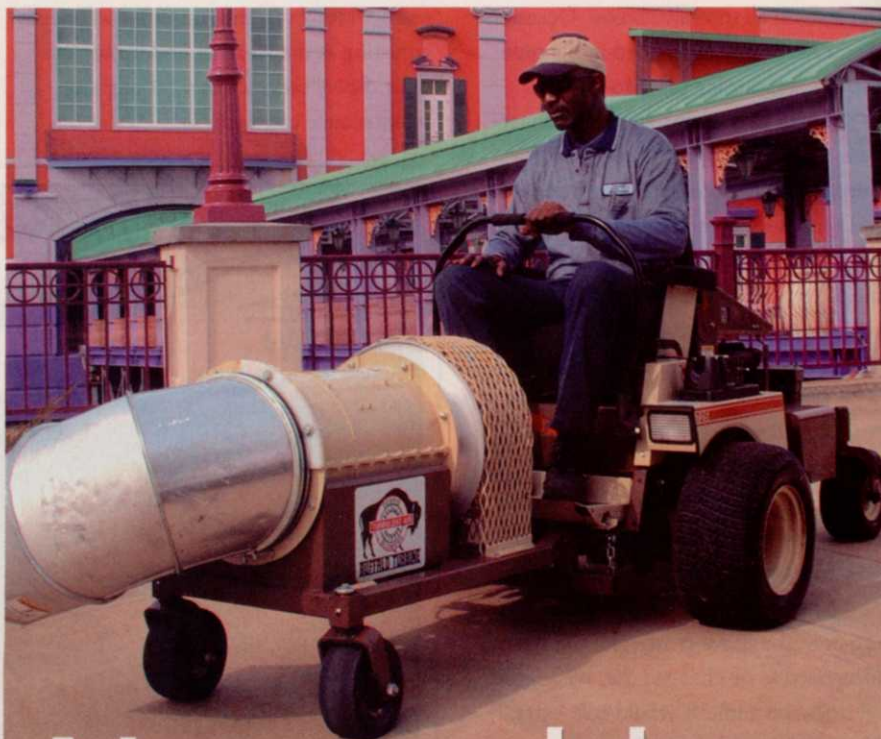
These are unique properties, each containing a channel cut to the Mississippi River, which flows several miles to the west. Mississippi law dictates that the casinos be located on the waters of the Mississippi, and technically they are. They're situated upon huge floating platforms.

The problem: many tasks

"We do almost everything on the properties that lead up to and surround the buildings with the exception of electrical work," says Brewer.

His short list of responsibilities includes mowing, fertilizing the turfgrass, maintaining the irrigation, pruning ornamentals, and planting and mulching the beds. Then, of course, there are snow/ice management and various cleanup chores.

Brewer can count on the support of his Colorado-based parent company, which has about 1,500 employees working out of 16 locations across the United States. ACC divides its projects into two divi-



No gamble here

American Civil Constructors performs the many tasks at Tunica's casino properties with versatile equipment

sions, Heavy Civil and Light Civil. Heavy Civil undertakes big construction projects like bridges and roads. Landscape construction and maintenance are included in Light Civil.

Even with the backing of an organization of this size, Brewer must be creative to provide the high level of service the casinos demand and still make his numbers. This includes his choice of equipment.

The solution: versatile units

Several years ago, because of the incredible variety of maintenance chores that his

branch offers, he chose to equip his staff with front-mount Grasshopper riding mowers that can accept a variety of attachments. "They give us a lot of versatility," Brewer says of his crew's six units (three with 60-in. decks, three with 72-in. decks).

"The thing we like most about these mowers is their versatility. The PTO shaft in front gives us the opportunity to do a lot of

Vitals

Company: American Civil Constructors

Executive Vice President: Chris Graeber

2002 gross revenue: \$70 million

Employees: 1,500

Services: Heavy construction, landscape maintenance/construction

Customer mix: 100% commercial



Scott Brewer's ACC branch keeps the Southland's casino properties great.

jobs with a single unit." Brewer singled out the sweeper, debris vacuum and blower attachments as great time- and labor-saving tools, particularly the blower in light of the many miles of edging that his crews perform each week during the growing season.

"Because of these attachments, we don't have to have so many different pieces of equipment to do everything we need to do," he adds.

The biggest challenge in taking care of these properties, says Brewer, is that they're never closed. There is no off-season in the casino business.

"Casinos are open 24 hours a day, every day, even holidays. You're always on call," says Brewer. "They know they can call me at 10 p.m. and say, 'Hey Scott, we've got an irrigation problem, or 'Someone has run over a tree and we need it removed imme-

diately,' and we'll get it done by morning."

What's next for ACC in Tunica, a market that it entered two years ago after buying Louisiana-based Jack's Nursery, Inc.?

Landscape construction, says Brewer. ACC's plan was to gain the upper hand in landscape maintenance first, and then bring on construction. The plan is right on track, and ACC will expand its presence there, explains Brewer. **LM**

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The costs of mowing



BY CURT HARLER

What does it cost a typical residential landscape professional to mow a lawn? Here are some

guidelines from Texas A&M. They take into account the different kinds of mowers used and the typical size of a lawn in both a residential setting and at a commercial site.

Your local labor costs will vary. However, the general ratios should be the same.

Compare the cost of mowing a 8,000 sq. ft. residential lawn to a 60,000 sq. ft. commercial lawn (refer to the charts below left):

Exmark's Metro HP walk-behind has a 15-hp Kawasaki V-Twin engine.

MOWING COST Residential lawn (8,000 sq. ft.)

Mowing	Operating interval ¹	Time (hrs)	Labor cost ²	Equipment cost ³	Overhead cost ⁴	Total cost ⁵
21-in. push mower	per mowing	0.8	6.00	2.40	2.00	10.40
	per week	0.8	6.00	2.40	2.00	10.40
	per month	3.5	26.25	10.50	8.75	45.50
	per year	25.6	192.00	76.80	64.00	332.80

MOWING COST Commercial lawn (60,000 sq. ft.)

Mowing	Operating interval ¹	Time (hrs)	Labor cost ²	Equipment cost ³	Overhead cost ⁴	Total cost ⁵
36-in. walk behind	per mowing	2.2	16.50	11.00	3.30	30.80
	per week	2.2	16.50	11.00	3.30	30.80
	per month	9.0	67.50	45.00	13.50	126.00
	per year	80	600.00	400.00	120.00	1120.00

¹ Centipedegrass lawn mowed weekly from mid-march thru October with grass clippings removed

² Labor costs include wages, benefits, and adjustments for travel and setup time (\$7.50/hr.)

³ Equipment costs include operating costs, repair and maintenance, and depreciation (\$3.00/hr.)

⁴ Overhead costs include supervisory costs, administrative costs, support costs such as vehicle and trailer expenses, and other fixed costs (\$2.50/hr.)

⁵ Additional costs would include edging, sweeping, etc.

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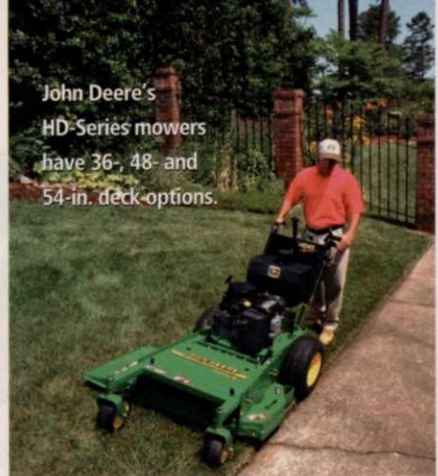
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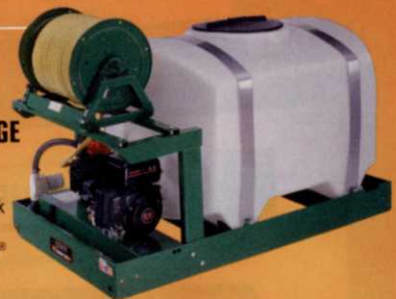
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Top performance for professionals!

- rugged 200-gal poly tank
- triple-jet agitation
- includes quality Hannay® hose reel



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Sets the standard for the industry!

- dependable Kawasaki® engine
- efficient 48" cutting width
- better lift and discharge of cuttings



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NATIONAL MOWER

888/907-3463

ST. PAUL, MN

www.nationalmower.com

- 22-in. infield rotary striping mower
 - Self-propelled rear roller drive
 - B&S overhead valve Intek engine
 - Cutting heights from 0.5 to 2.5 in.
- Circle #275

JACOBSEN

866-522-6273

CHARLOTTE, NC

www.jacobsen.com

- Hydrostatic professional

Jacobsen's hydrostatic walk-behind has Z-control loop handles.

- walk-behind mower
 - New Z-control loop handles with positive zero-turn control
 - Choice of 15-, 17- or 21-hp Kawasaki Twin gas engines
 - Fixed or floating anti-scalp decks up to 61 in.
- Circle #276

SWISHER

800/222-8183

WARRENSBURG, MO

www.swisherinc.com

- 42-in. Finish Touch walk-behind works fast
 - 36- and 50-in. to be available in 2003
 - 8.5-hp Briggs & Stratton engine
 - Four-speed transmission with reverse
 - Storage friendly — takes up less space than a rider
- Circle #277

HOWARD PRICE TURF EQUIPMENT

636/532-7000

CHESTERFIELD, MO

- Full line of walk-behinds has gear and hydrostatic drive

- 36-in. model features 14-hp engine
 - 60-in. model powered by 20-hp engine
 - All feature Kawasaki power
- Circle #278

WALKER MFG.

970/221-5614

FORT COLLINS, CO

- The Walker by Walker is a compact, mid-size mower
 - 15-hp Kawasaki engine has full-pressure lubrication
 - Handles side-discharge and mulching decks up to 56 in.
- Circle #279

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WH4817 walk-
behind



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800/487-5962

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- Gear or hydro models
- Deck sizes from 32- to 48-in.
- Kohler or Kawasaki engines
- Welded, 10-gauge steel decks
- 5.3-gal. fuel tank
- Pistol grip controls
- Easy Touch operator control system

Circle #280

SCAG

920/387-0100

MAYVILLE, WI

www.scag.com

- SW model is belt-drive walk-behind mower
- Five-speed Peerless transmission
- Nine spline coupler shaft for dependability
- Ground speeds from 2 to 6 mph
- Cutter decks from 32 to 52 in.

Circle #281

SNAPPER

888/SNAPPER

MCDONOUGH, GA

www.snapper.com



- Pro-Hydro commercial walk-behinds made of seven-gauge steel
 - 36-, 48-, 52- and 61-in. widths
 - 14- or 17-hp Kawasaki OHV, or 15- and 23-hp Kohler
- Circle #282

THE TORO COMPANY

612/888-8801

BLOOMINGTON, MN

www.toro.com

- Get zero-turn performance from mid-size mowers
- Tru Trak Sulky has independent foot

platform arms to adjust to terrain

- Caster wheels "Trak" in-line with unit's drive tires, eliminating double wheel lines

Circle #283

The Recycling Company

If you're in the business of **recycling**, you need to know about **Peterson Pacific**. We make the **machines** that make your job possible. **Wood waste, C&D, land clearing, asphalt roofing...** we build **horizontal grinders** that can take it. And our **Blower Trucks** make quick work of **delivery and application** of your end product.



▲ BT 40
Pneumatic Delivery System



HC 1410
Track Mounted Recycler

HC 2400-B
Asphalt Roofing Recycler ▼



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there's really only one choice...*



Peterson Pacific Corp.

800/269-6520

• Fax 541/689-0804

• www.petersonpacific.com

Circle 136

products

TECH CENTER

Spring cleaning

Polaris Professional Series power brooms (for use with UTVs) are ideal for cleaning up sand, gravel, leaves, even snow. They feature a 10-hp Briggs and Stratton Intek engine with electric start. The commercial grade poly broom is five ft. wide and 24 in. in diameter. Other features include an electric actuator lift mechanism, cab-mounted remote control and four-ply tires.

For more information contact Polaris at 800/330-9407 or www.polarisindustries.com / circle no. 250

No infection here

Griffin LLC's Vital 4L is a systemic liquid fungicide that controls pythium, phytophthora and downy mildew pathogens in turf and ornamentals. Being a liquid, pH-neutral formulation,



Boost your power

Echo's PB-460LN Quiet 1 backpack blower features Echo's Power Boost engine, providing 44cc of commercial power and delivering improved combustion efficiency. Using sound attenuation technology, it operates at 65 dB(A) at wide-open throttle. A 64 fl. oz. see-through fuel tank ensures longer, uninterrupted run times. A flexible, side-mounted hip throttle with cruise control offers ease of operation.

For more information contact Echo at 800/237-1854 or www.echo-usa.com / circle no. 251

it has excellent mixing flexibility. And it's rapidly absorbed and translocated throughout the entire plant through the xylem and phloem,

which means disease infection is reduced because the level of phytoalexins in the plant's tissue are elevated.

For more information contact Griffin at 800/237-1854 or www.griffinllc.com / circle no. 252

Sweep it away



The PTO-driven rotary brooms available for all Front-Mount Grasshopper True Zero Turn power units handle dirt, debris, slush and up to eight in. of snow. Also, sweep sidewalks and parking lots. Fixed angle 48- and 60-in. models are available, as well as a 60-in. bidirectional model which uses a hydraulic lift. A QuikConverter implement system lets you remove decks and add attachments in minutes.

For more information contact Grasshopper at 620/345-8621 or www.grasshoppermower.com / circle no. 253

A hydrostatic drive & 100 ft. per minute... it's like a walk in the park.

Bed Shaper™

WALK - BEHIND DISTRIBUTORS

NAME	PHONE	STATES
G.O. Distributors, Inc.	800-525-8148	ME, VT, NH
Pro Industries, Inc.	866-233-7427	MA, CT, RI, Upstate NY, NC, SC, VA (ex Wash DC) TX, MS, FL, GA, MS, LA, AR, OK, AZ, NM
A & D Distributors	800-794-4647	TN, AL
CADCo Distributing	800-942-2326	NYC/LI, NJ, MD, Northern VA (incl Wash, DC), PA (ex Pittsburgh), DE
Keen Edge Co.-Central	800-589-4145	WI, IL (ex Chicago) IA, NE, MO, KS, ND, SD, MN
Keen Edge Company-West	800-929-1948	OR, WA, CA, NV
Mainline of America	800-837-2097	OH, IN, KY, MI, WV, Chicago, Pittsburgh
Coates Landscape Supply	208-656-0600	MT, ID, UT, Western WY
Secrist Distributing	800-834-0572	CO, East WY

Circle 133

continued on page 92

WARNING

Don't Bust Your Tail

Get a John Deere ZTS Excavator instead. Their zero-tail-swing design lets these nimble compacts rotate fully without banging their tails into something. So you can work with ease around obstacles. Add any of the many Worksite Pro™ attachments (also compatible with John Deere skid steers), and the possibilities are almost endless. For more info or a demo, see your John Deere dealer.



JOHN DEERE

www.JohnDeere.com

NOTHING RUNS LIKE A DEERE®

Circle No. 138

products

continued from page 90

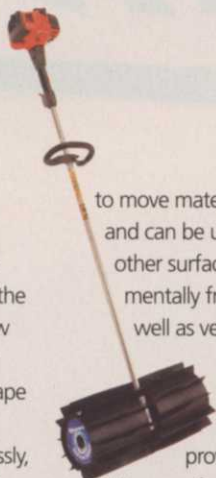
Visualize it

3D Nature LLC's new landscape visualization technology, Visual Nature Studio 2, extends the realism features of VNS 1 and WCS with new capabilities and workflow improvements for GIS professionals. VNS 2 enables users to drape large numbers of high resolution images, merge DEMS of different resolutions seamlessly, improve realism with Transparent Water and Volumetric Atmospheres, and expedite animation rendering with an included Network Render Controller.

For more information contact 3D Nature at 303/659-4028 or www.3dnature.com / circle no. 254

Make your move

Husqvarna's 3265x Clean Sweep has the power



to move materials too heavy for a blower and can be used on turf, concrete and other surfaces. It features the environmentally friendly E-TECH II engine as well as versatile, flexible fins that reduce the likelihood of damage to surfaces being cleaned. A soft handle is designed to provide optimum comfort.

For more information contact Husqvarna at 800/237-1854 or www.husqvarna.com / circle no. 255

A walk in the park

Wright Mfg.'s new Velke Mower can be operated as a walk-behind for tight spaces, or it can be paired with Wright's Velke Pro-1 or X-2 sulkies. Control handles are easy to use and self neutralizing. It's offered with a 36- and 48-in.



Remove with authority

STIHL's PowerSweep KW 85 attachment transforms FS 83R and FS 85R grass trimmers into gas-powered sweepers. Remove debris on wet and dry ground services, or clean off caked dirt on sidewalks and roadways. The belts and fins are made of Dupont Alcryn to minimize damage to grass or sod. Also, a protective rubber strip connected to the gearbox ensures that the drive tube doesn't wear down during use.

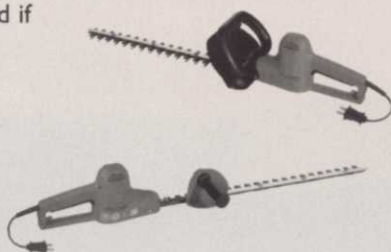
For more information contact STIHL at 800/467-8445 or www.stihlusa.com / circle no. 256

STRONGER, QUIETER, BETTER

Don't be fooled by the light weight and comfortable design. When you choose a Little Wonder® Electric Hedge Trimmer, you're plugged into a lifetime of rugged, dependable, on-the-job performance.

Our **double reciprocating blades** glide back and forth for flawless, fatigue-free trimming. Even tough-to-cut shrubs and hedges up to 1/2" thick are no problem for a Little Wonder Electric Hedge Trimmer.

- ✓ Blades stop in less than 1/2 second if either switch is released
- ✓ Double reciprocating blades
- ✓ Reinforced gears
- ✓ Cord retention system
- ✓ Removable maintenance covers
- ✓ Available in 19", 24", and 30" models



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wide deck, and deck height is adjustable from 1.75 to 4.5 in. Power is provided by choice of 15-hp recoil, 17-hp recoil or 17-hp recoil/electric start. Fuel tank capacity is 6.4 gal.

For more information contact Wright at 301/360-9810 or www.wrightmfg.com / circle no. 257

Get connected



CLIP Software's new CLIP Connect service offers real-time information exchange between the office and the job site. Using a Web-enabled cellular phone, field personnel can

update the CLIP Connect Web portal with particular job information, such as start and finish times. Once entered, this information is immediately available to office personnel with Internet access.

For more information contact CLIP at 800/635-8485 or www.clip.com / circle no. 258

continued on page 95

Receive FREE information on products and services advertised in this issue.

Landscape MANAGEMENT

March 2003

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1. My primary business at this location is: (fill in ONE only)

CONTRACTORS/SERVICE COMPANIES

- 02 255 Landscape Contractors (Installation & Maintenance)
- 03 260 Lawn Care Service Companies & Custom Chemical Applicators (ground & air)
- 04 285 Irrigation Contractors & Consultants
 - Other Contractors/Service Companies (please specify) _____

LANDSCAPING/GROUNDS CARE FACILITIES

- 05 290 Sports Complexes
- 06 295 Parks
- 07 305 Schools, Colleges & Universities
 - Other Grounds Care Facilities (specify) _____

SUPPLIERS AND CONSULTANTS

- 08 355 Extension Agents/Consultants for Horticulture
- 09 360 Sod Growers, Turf Seed Growers & Nurseries
- 10 365 Dealers, Distributors, Formulators & Brokers
- 11 370 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)

- 17 A Mowing
- 18 B Turf Insect Control
- 19 C Tree Care
- 20 D Turf Aeration
- 21 E Irrigation Services
- 22 F Turf Fertilization
- 23 G Turf Disease Control
- 24 H Ornamental Care
- 25 I Landscape Design
- 26 J Turf Weed Control
- 27 K Paving, Deck & Patio Installation
- 28 L Pond/Lake Care
- 29 M Landscape Installation
- 30 N Snow Removal
- 31 O Other (please specify) _____

4a. Do you specify, purchase or influence the selection of landscape products?

- 58 Yes 59 No

4b. If yes, indicate which products you buy or specify: (fill in ALL that apply)

- 32 A Aerators
- 33 B Blowers
- 34 C Chain Saws
- 35 D Chipper-Shredders
- 36 E De-icers
- 37 F Fertilizers
- 38 G Fungicides
- 39 H Herbicides
- 40 I Insecticides
- 41 J Line Trimmers
- 42 K Mowers
- 43 L Snow Removal Equipment
- 44 M Sprayers
- 45 N Spreaders
- 46 O D Sweepers
- 47 P Tractors
- 48 Q Truck Trailers/Attachments
- 49 R Trucks
- 50 S Turfseed
- 51 T Utility Vehicles

5. Do you have Internet access? 52 A Yes 53 B No

5a. If so, how often do you use it?

- 54 A Daily 55 B Weekly 56 C Monthly 57 D Occasionally

LMINET

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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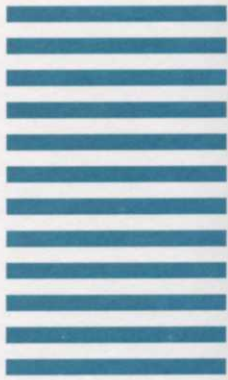


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March 2003

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 FIRM _____
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106	118	130	142	154	166	178	190	202	214	226	238	250	262	274	286	298	310
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108	120	132	144	156	168	180	192	204	216	228	240	252	264	276	288	300	312
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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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continued from page 92



Handle the pressure

Pressure-Pro introduces an electric-powered, cold water pressure washer that makes minimal noise outside and gives off no gas fumes. The series is available in pressures from 1,200 to 4,000 psi at 2 to 3.5 gpm. Other features include a high pressure hose with quick connect and three color-coded spray nozzles.

For more information contact Pressure-Pro at 772/461-4486 / circle no. 259

Bye bye birdie

Bird-B-Gone, Inc. introduces Goose-B-Gone, a repellent that makes grass areas unpalatable to geese and ducks. Apply Goose-B-Gone by spraying it directly on to grass areas such as golf courses, parks, fields or anywhere that geese or ducks are causing a problem. Goose-B-Gone contains a biodegradable, food-grade repellent called methyl anthranilate which is safe to use. One gallon of Goose-B-Gone

covers one acre. Cost is \$85/gal.

For more information contact Bird-B-Gone at 800/392-6915 or www.birdbgone.com / circle no. 260

Clean sweep

The new Z-Broom from ETEC easily mounts to most mid-mount zero-turn mowers to give you a powerful broom that moves snow, dirt and other debris. It also handles dethatching and turf cleanup. Both 4- and 5-ft. models use a commercial grade 24-in. diameter brush which can be angled to either side. The broom is self-powered and has a unique mounting system that allows one person to install or remove it in two minutes without tools. A 4- and 5-ft. blade that interchange with the broom are also available.

For more information contact ETEC at 800/434-5309 or www.etecbrooms.com / circle no. 261

Feed me manganese

A manganese tree spike from Lutz Corp. is designed to help grow maples, river birches, and other manganese deficient trees and shrubs. Each spike contains 16% elemental sulfur which lowers the pH in the feeding area, creating an environment that assists the plants' uptake of the manganese and iron.

For more information contact Lutz at 800/203-7740 or www.lutzcorp.com / circle no. 262

Chipper for rent

National rental chain HSS RentX has a gas-powered Green Mac towable chipper for rent



that shreds trunks and limbs up to 9 in. in diameter and handles palm fronds with ease. It also features a hydrostatic feed, 360-degree rotating discharge chute and 18-gal. fuel tank. Rent by the 1/2-day, week or month.

For more information contact HSS RentX at 877/711-7368 or www.hssrentx.com / circle no. 263

Get hitched

Valley Industries' new under-bed gooseneck hitch, which uses a custom mounting bracket attached under the bed, allows for full use of the truck bed when not towing. Rated at 6,250 lbs. trailer tongue weight and 25,000 lbs. gross trailer weight, the hitch's trailer ball removes in seconds, requiring no tools to restore the bed to normal, cargo-carrying use.

For more information contact Valley Industries at 800/344-3112 or www.valley-industries.com / circle no. 264

Groom your bed

Turf Teq's self-propelled Sidewinder 1300 edger/trencher has variable-angle cut and reversible drive. Other features include a 13-hp Honda engine, hydrostatic drive, and bed-grooming disc blade to manicure existing beds with minimal disturbance to mulch.

For more information contact Turf Teq at 866/503-8873 or www.turfteq.com / circle no. 265

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SELECT

Simply, the best retaining wall system.

ICD Corporation
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Look at the proportion which works well at any scale of installation. Look at the natural stone, hand-wrought, random pattern. Look at the split texture. Look at the ease of installation. Look at the economic savings over tumbled units. Look at the design flexibility. The Look of StoneWall SELECT is so unique it is a Trademark. You'll see if you Look.

Editorial Index

Company	Page #	PGMS	44
ALCA	16, 25	Pickseed West	62, 65
American Civil Constructors	26, 84, 85	PlowSite.com	10
Ampac Seed Company	63	Pope Landscape & Irrigation	81
BASF	80	PLCAA	12
Barenbrug USA	63	Proscapce Landscaping	28, 31, 32
Barringer & Barringer, Inc.	81	Providence Lawn & Landscape	16
Bayer	12	Pure-Seed Testing	64
The Brickman Group	16	STM Landscape Services	10
The Bruce Company of Wisconsin	16	San Diego Convention Center	44
Burlingham Seeds	63	Saratoga Sod Farm	11
Cagwin & Dorward	16	The Scotts Co.	65
Central Coast Landscape & Maint.	34	Seed Research of Oregon	65
Clark University	68	Sports Turf Managers Association	48
DLF Jenks	63	Sylvan Abbey Memorial Park	42
Duke University	43	Toro	10
Dwight-Englewood School	42	Turf Merchants	65
ELM Landscape & Golf	16	Turf Mountain Sod Farm	64
Evergreen Sod Farm	48	TurfOne	65
Focal Point Communications	61	Turf-Seed, Inc.	65
Geller Sport	68	United Horticultural Supply	50
Georgia Seed Development Co.	64	Utah State University	43
Grass Roots Consulting	6	ValleyCrest Companies	10
The Grasshopper Co.	84	Weed Man	14
Greater Texas Landscapes	30	Wheat's Lawn and Custom Ldscp.	25
Home Depot	10	Wilson-Oyler Group	34, 106
JVS Landscaping	26	Wrigley Field	48
Jack's Nursery	85	Yardmaster	24, 25
Jacklin Seeds	64		
James Fizzell & Associates	48		
John Deere	10		
John Deere Landscapes	19		
Johnston Seed Company	64		
LESCO, Inc.	64		
Lawn Doctor	12		
LawnCareSuccess.com	10		
LawnSite.com	10		
Lebanon Seaboard Corp.	64		
The Longaberger Co.	70		
Michael Bellantoni, Inc.	16		
New York State Turfgrass Assoc.	11		
Patten Seed Co.	64		
Pennington Seed Inc.	64		
Perschel Brothers Lawn Service	5		

This index is provided as an additional service. The publisher does not assume any liability for errors or omissions.

Ad Index

Circle #	Company	Page #	135	Lesco Inc	87
	A S I C	19	134	Masco Sweepers	85
118	Andersons The	45		Monsanto	57-60
105	Ariens	4	144	Obsidian Ent Inc	100
	B A S F Corp	3	122	Outdoor Lighting Perspect	63
	B A S F Corp	1-24		P L C A A	61
	Bayer Corp	22-23	136	Peterson Pacific	89
106	Bobcat Co	7	133	Pro Ind	90
141	Dig Corp	99	146	Quality Diamond Tools	101
	Dow Agrosience	31	114	Rain Bird Sales Inc	29
	Dow Agrosience	54-55	116	Reading body Works Inc	42
	Dow Agrosience	(req)78-79	117	Redexim Charterhouse	43
143	Drafix	100	131	Rich Mfg	82
115	Excel Ind Inc	33	125	Schiller Pfeifer Inc/Little Wonder	92
113	Exmark Mfg Co	27	137	Shindaiwai Inc	69
107	Express Blower Inc	11	121	Simplicity	51
128	F M C Corp	52	147	Simplicity	66-67
145	Forestry Suppliers Inc	100	142	Sisis	100
	G M C Truck	CV2	120	Syngenta	49
	G M C Truck	8-9	126	Syngenta	12
	G M C Truck	35-39	112	Turf Seed Inc	21
	Green Ind Yellow Pages	88	103	Turfco Mfg Inc	CV4
132	Helena Chemical Co	83	130	U S Lawns	32
148	Hunter Ind	99	129	Uniroyal Chemical Co	75
119	Husqvarna	46-47	110/111	United Horticultural Supply	17-18
127	Innovative Concrete Design	95	123	Valvette Systems Co	65
139	ITV Inc	99	140	Walker Mfg Co	99
	J P Horizons	98			
138	John Deere and Co Const	91			
108	King Innovation	13			
109	King Innovation	15			
102	Kubota Tractor Corp	CV3			

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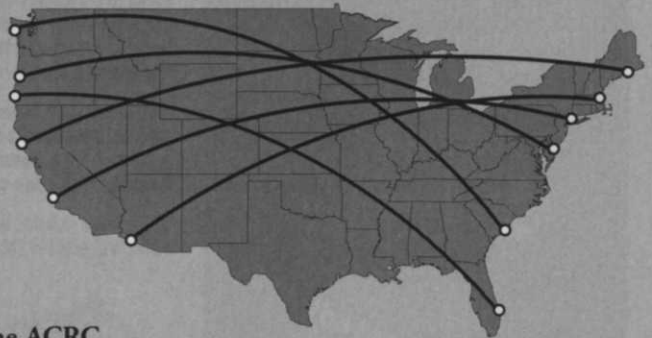
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27 Southeastern North Carolina Turfgrass

Conference / Wilmington, NC; 888/695-1333

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6-8 Equipment & Engine

Training Council Conference / Appleton, WI; 920/733-8000

8 Eastern Parks & Recreation/Sports Turf Field

Day / Greenville, NC; 888/695-1333; www.ncturfgrass.org

10-12 Large Parks: New Perspectives / Cambridge, MA;

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24 Managing Low-Budget Sports Fields / Davis, CA;

800/752-0881; www.extension.ucdavis.edu/agriculture

26-28 TOCA Annual

Meeting / Charleston, SC; 952/758-6340

27-30 North American

Snow Conference / Quebec, Canada; 816/472-6100

May

2-6 Western Chapter Int'l Society of Arboriculture

Conference & Trade Show / Las Vegas, NV; 530/892-1118; www.wcisa.net

3-6 ASIC Annual Conference /

Asheville, NC; Sponsored by the American Society of Irrigation Consultants; 312/372-7090

15-17 LICH Annual

Convention and Trade Show / Honolulu, HI; Sponsored by the Landscape Industry Council of Hawaii; 808/956-2150

21 NC Turf & Landscape Field Day / Raleigh, NC;

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17 Cornell University Field

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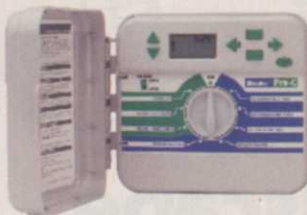
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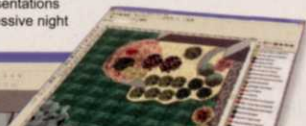
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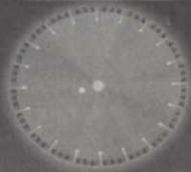
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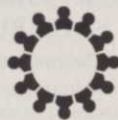
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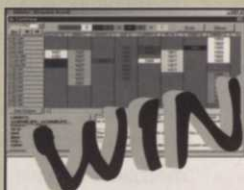
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GUIDELINES TO HELP AN INDUSTRY GROW

subcontractors

Find the right one to help you compete

BY BRUCE WILSON

Outsourcing or subcontracting may be a good business decision in the day-to-day running of a landscape business. But there's a hitch. Many property managers prefer dealing with fewer suppliers when hiring services. They see this as a great convenience to themselves.

As a basic landscape maintenance company, you may find yourself at a disadvantage to your multi-service competitor unless you can also be that one-stop shopping answer. That may not be practicable, however. The process of starting new service lines such as tree care, chemical application or irrigation can be a big distraction as well as a drain on profits.

Most customers probably don't care if you actually per-

form these additional services yourself; they just want you to make them happen. And, depending upon your marketplace, you may be able to make as much marking up a subcontractor as you would doing the task yourself. And with less risk.

The key factor in making this work for your firm is finding the right subcontractor.

What about outsourcing? We're in a business that relies on our customers outsourcing their maintenance rather than doing it themselves, yet we fail to look for the same opportunities to make our own operations more streamlined.

In our consulting business, we see many companies performing tasks in their business that are a huge distraction to



Bruce Wilson

them and could be outsourced for less money. Some outsourcing opportunities:

Payroll. Payroll can be outsourced to a payroll company or to an employee leasing company. For small companies in this industry, employee leasing is one of the most cost efficient ways to handle payroll. It also saves you a lot on workers' compensation insurance and allows you to offer benefits you couldn't afford otherwise.

Fleet maintenance. There are many mobile services available today that service your vehicles, do brake work, tire maintenance and related tasks. Having your own mechanic is a big commitment. Outsourcing is the right solution when you're too small for a full-time mechanic or have too much work for one mechanic but not enough for two.

Spray technicians. Many companies struggle to keep good spray technicians. And what do they do in the winter? A good lawn care subcontractor may be

the most cost effective way to do this work. Many companies hate the thought of it, but it makes good business sense.

A good company doesn't lock itself into one way of doing business. Take advantage of all the options available to help you compete and serve your customer better.

Sound off

Have a subcontracting or outsourcing story to share with our readers? Contact Managing Editor Jason Stahl at jstahl@advanstar.com. We'll consider it for a future issue of LM.

To comment on this month's "Best Management" column by Bruce Wilson, contact him at bwilson@wilson-oyler.com. Bruce spent 30 years with Environmental Care, Inc., before partnering with Thomas L. Oyler to form the Wilson-Oyler Group, which offers consulting services (www.wilson-oyler.com).

Subcontractor check list

- ✓ Is the sub responsive?
- ✓ Does the sub provide the level of quality that our operation requires?
- ✓ Is the sub's price competitive even with our markup?
- ✓ As a bonus, is the sub able to lead us into some jobs via his contacts?

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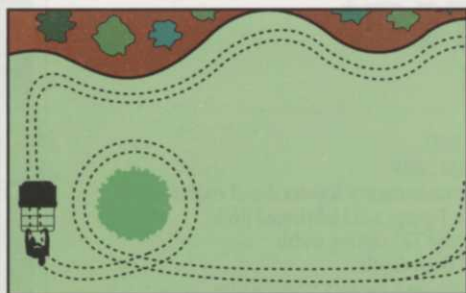
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