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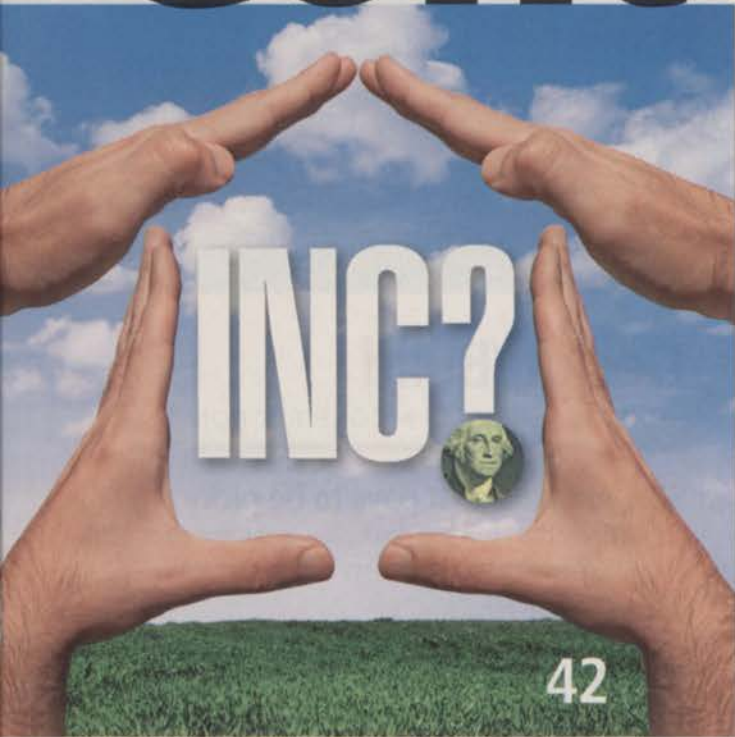


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Contents



APRIL 2007 / ISSUE #4 / VOLUME 46



Business

OPERATIONS ► MANAGEMENT ► MARKETING

11 On the Record

In this age of misinformation, those of us in the Green Industry must be the source of information for the consumers of our products and services.

BY RON HALL

14 Best Practices

A good first impression is key to starting a long-term relationship with your customers and often leads to a more profitable relationship.

BY BRUCE WILSON

16 Training Room

Coaching does work, but only if the "coachee" is will go be coached.

BY BILL HOOPES

14



18 In the Know

H-2B extension; ServiceMaster buyout; Legally Speaking; ValleyCrest builds a park; commercial power equipment sales; Problem Solver; Canadian pesticides; National Lawn Care Month

26 Ad-on Biz: Mole control

They may drive homeowners crazy, but moles can provide landscapers added income.

BY DON DALE

42 Foundation for success

The proper corporate structure can position and protect your business. Find out which form will lay the groundwork for all your future needs.

BY MIKE SEUFFERT

Technology

RESEARCH ► EQUIPMENT ► CHEMICALS

52 Innovations

Wright Manufacturing's Velke walk-behind commercial mower, Toro's ProCore Processor aerator, DuPont Professional Products' Provaunt insecticide, John Deere's Worksite Pro line of skid steers and compact track loaders attachments and enhancements

54 Transplants need nutritional boost

Special care is needed to enable transplanted ornamentals to flourish in oftentimes hostile environments.



COVER PHOTO: ISTOCK INTERNATIONAL, INC.

Contents



92

Technology *(continued)*

56 InfoTech

Until we stop supplying the economic motivation to the spammers, we need to take extra steps to protect ourselves.

BY TYLER WHITAKER

59 LM Reports: Skid-steers

68 Front runners

Out-front riding mowers are rugged, detail-oriented and attachment friendly.

BY KAY OHLY

74 De-bugging your turfgrass

Build cool-season turf insect pest control on good culture practices, knowing pests and making the right application choices.

BY RAYMOND A. CLOYD



86 Get a Grip

While all stabilizers are generally beneficial, you need to pick the right one.

BY ALLEN SPENCE

90 Death by fungi

When disease turns a healthy lawn into a blotchy brown mess, one part of the solution may include a fungicide.

BY BRUCE MARTIN

Design/Build

PROJECTS ▶ PROCESS ▶ CONSTRUCTION

92 Annuals — it pays to be picky

Every bad plant you don't plant in the first place is one you won't have to replace later.

BY JEFF GIBSON

98 Project Portfolio

Faced with physical limitations, Scapes LLC designed an environment in character with the architecture of the formal house, but with a "looser" feel.

101 Landscape of the Month

Chapel of St. Basil: Thompson's Landscape Services overcame many challenges to build a labyrinth at Houston's University of St. Thomas Church.

BY AGATHA GILMORE

Resources

PRODUCTS ▶ EVENTS ▶ FYI

112 Products

121 FYI: Ad & Editorial Index

124 Winners: Ecology Landscapes

Deep environmental roots guide this business owner's approach.

BY JANET AIRD

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Douglas Fender, former executive director of Turfgrass Producers International, gives readers of *LandscapeManagement.net* the news from the recent TPI Study Tour through New Zealand and Australia.

» Readers respond

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12% Barack Obama (D) **11%** Other
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The misinformation age

BY RON HALL / Editor in Chief

We live and work in what's often described as the "Information Age."

It can as easily be labeled, the "Misinformation Age."

Maybe you feel like I do sometimes — that we're the targets of a perpetual rainstorm of messages, claims and counterclaims. Which do we process? Which do we believe? Regardless of what we do, where we go, we're pelted with news, sales pitches (some ingenious, some clumsy), spins (corporate and political), opinions, requests, solicitations and rants.

These days most of us don't rely exclusively on the local newspaper or the 6 p.m. television newscast for our daily information. More likely most of it comes from CNN, a podcast from the Internet, an Internet search engine, emails or a favorite radio commentator.

Not a bad thing

I hope I'm not coming across as a snarling curmudgeon because I welcome and am convinced this incredible flood of information is a good thing. After all, each of us gets to choose or reject the message. *We* can believe or not believe. *We* choose.

Even so, I have reservations. The technology that allows anyone to post practically anything online (Web sites, blogs, YouTube, etc.), and make it instantly available, also brings with it the need for caution and, more importantly, critical thinking.

There's a saying that "Everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but not his own fact." That may be,

but today's consumers of landscape and lawn services, like us, are bombarded by all kinds of information, and the lines between opinion and fact are often blurred, sometimes intentionally.

Emotion vs. reason

An obvious example is the issue of the use of chemical products on our lawns and landscapes, which often generates more emotion and heated rhetoric than reason. And it will continue to do so and, probably, intensify thanks, in large part, to technology that gives voice to any organization or person who cares to have one.

But, although the pesticide issue is the easiest to identify, there is plenty of other misinformation in the Green Industry, including the most common — exaggerated product or service performance claims.

As consumers, we must remain critical thinkers and ask questions such as — "Who says?" "Where did they get their information?" "Are they a reliable source for this information?" "What are they not telling me?"

Beyond that — and this is the take-home message — we have to be the source of "information" for the consumers of *our* products and services. We must adequately answer all of the same questions for them.

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Haven't we all heard "that this place does not look as good as it used to" even when we know we have greatly improved the property.



Get off to a good start

BY BRUCE WILSON

I have always believed making a good first impression is the key to starting a long-term relationship on the right foot. And, without question, it leads to a more profitable relationship with your customers. When a customer gives you a contract for the first time, they have certain expectations that you have helped create, or they may have created based on your reputation in the market.

These expectations are usually high, so obviously, they watch you more closely at the start. Sometimes, the slightest, seemingly littlest glitch starts to erode their trust in your organization. They may not say anything at first, but the doubt starts to creep into their thinking.

Beginning the process

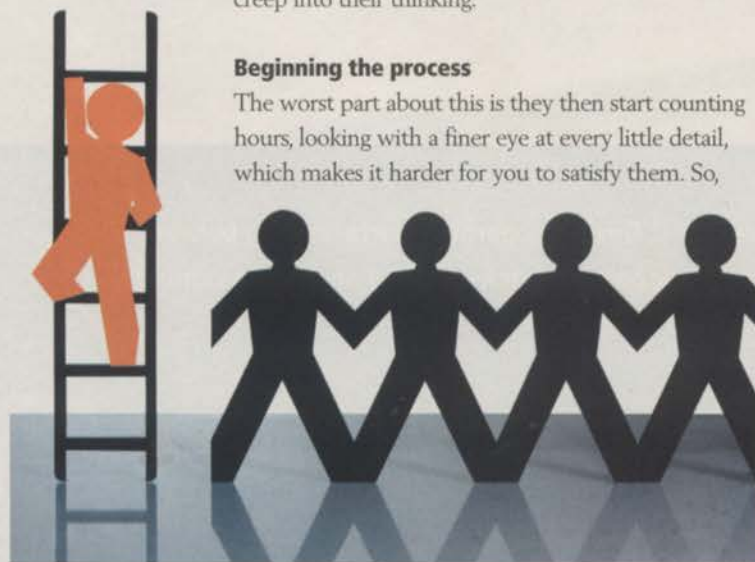
The worst part about this is they then start counting hours, looking with a finer eye at every little detail, which makes it harder for you to satisfy them. So,

here are some suggestions for assuring that you get your customer relationship off to a great start:

1. Take control of setting customer expectations. Communicate what they should expect to see during the first 30 days, preferably in writing, and then stick to it.
2. If possible, sell an extra clean-up to bring the property up to the level that is in the specifications for ongoing maintenance. If you can't, I suggest that you clean it up in the first 30 days anyway. Though the customer at first might agree to the longer timetable to avoid paying for the clean up, they soon forget they agreed to the extended time frame and begin to get dissatisfied. It then becomes your fault.
3. As a manager or sales person, be on the job the first few visits to make sure that job is being done the way that meets your expectations. Make sure the customer knows you are there and that you care.
4. It is a good idea to take pictures before you start to establish the baseline. Haven't we all heard "that this place does not look as good as it used to" even when we know we have greatly improved the property? Pictures can refresh everyone's memories.

It is spring and many of you start many new jobs, as well as, most of your old ones, at the same time. You must place additional emphasis on planning and communication during this very stressful period. If you can get off to a good start, you will be surprised how much easier and more profitable the rest of the season can be.

— The author is a partner with entrepreneur Tom Oyler in the Wilson-Oyler Group, which offers consulting services. Visit www.wilson-oyler.com.





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Coaching does work, but only if the "coachee" is into being coached.



When coaching fails

BY BILL HOOPES

I got a call from a friend of mine, a client. Try as he might, he "just couldn't make the coaching process work." He was seeing to it that his people got the instruction they needed to perform their tasks, and he personally followed up on the job to reinforce the right habits. Still, he was upset because the process only worked with some of his people some of the time.

The call led me to reflect on the recommendations I make and how dependable they really are. The fact is, coaching does work, but only if the "coachee" is into being coached.

When you put a loser on a winning team, it doesn't work. One of two things happens; the loser goes away, or the team is negatively impacted by his or her presence. You must get rid of negative people. And you should do that on *your* schedule. That means you must be proactive and have a process for dealing with those who are not meeting your expectations.

When coaching fails, take corrective action

Because, when most of your team enthusiastically turns right, some people just seem to turn left, every leader needs to understand and become proficient at using corrective action. I'm talking about what you do when coaching fails.

Here is the corrective-action process

► First, don't act without all the facts. It's very easy to assume you know what's up based on history, but

you can be wrong. Verify the facts, and don't rely on word of other employees.

- Once you have details, set up a private meeting.
- In the meeting, document all that you and the employee say and any commitments either of you make. If the situation results in a termination, it can become a legal matter. You need documentation.

Holding a corrective-action conversation

You need a private setting and plenty of time to talk.

1. Confirm that the employee understood and accepted the assignment in question. Be sure there were no roadblocks preventing expected results.
2. Explain the person's performance versus agreed to goals. Point out the failure to meet expectations and the negative impact on the team.
3. Important: Ask and allow the employee to explain why he/she failed to meet expectations.
4. Evaluate the employee's response to identify any legitimate causes of failure to perform and decide on necessary and immediate corrective action behavior you will require.
5. Require the employee to commit to the corrective-action performance plan.
6. Arrange a series of follow up dates/times when you will meet to confirm improvements.

Using this process doesn't guarantee you'll turn the person around, but it ensures that you will have done your best to correct an unacceptable situation.

The author is founder of Grass Roots Training in Delaware, OH. Contact him at hoopes@columbus.rr.com or visit www.grassroots-training.com.

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Senators take another crack at H-2B extension

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Senators Barbara A. Mikulski (D-MD) and John Warner (R-VA) have reintroduced their bill to provide a 5-year extension to a crucial provision from her Save Our Small and Seasonal Businesses Act that many in the Green Industry rely on to bring seasonal guest workers into the country. A last-minute extension was included as part of the 2007 Department of Defense authorization bill in the 109th Congress, but it expires on September 30, 2007.

"Without these seasonal workers, many businesses would not survive — forced to limit services, lay off permanent U.S. workers or, worse yet, close their doors," said Mikulski. "This extension protects workers, and gives us an-

other congressional session to keep up the fight until we make this cap exemption permanent."

Added Warner: "This legislation is absolutely essential to protecting our small businesses and maintaining their positive impact on our economy. I am hopeful that this legislation will help small and seasonal businesses find enough workers to keep their doors open."

The Save Our Small and Seasonal Businesses Act, signed into law by President Bush in May 2005, exempted returning seasonal workers from counting against the national cap of 66,000 people, created new anti-fraud provisions and ensured a fair allocation of H-2B visas among spring and summer employees.

However, the Department of Home-



"I have been fighting for years to help businesses and workers wade through the unfair procedures of the H-2B visa process. They can count on me to keep fighting," said Senator Mikulski.

land Security already announced that the cap has already been reached for the rest of this year. Without the Mikulski-Warner exemption, these businesses would have no way to bring in staff.

ServiceMaster agrees to \$4.5B buyout

DOWNERS GROVE, IL — Lawn care service and pest control provider ServiceMaster Co. bowed to shareholder pressure March 19, and agreed to be bought by an investment group lead by private equity firm Clayton, Dubilier & Rice Inc. in a cash deal valued at \$4.5 billion.

The owner of TruGreen Lawn Care, Terminix pest control and Merry Maids cleaning service, announced the deal nearly five months after the Downers Grove company announced it was exploring strategic alternatives.

Clayton Dubilier officials said there were no immediate plans to split up the company.

The buyout group will also assume about \$1.02 billion in debt, bringing the

total value of the sale up to \$5.5 billion. Under terms of the agreement, ServiceMaster stockholders will receive \$15.625 in cash for each outstanding share.

The deal represents a premium of roughly 31% above ServiceMaster's closing stock price of \$11.90 on Nov. 27, the last trading day before the company said it would explore strategic alternatives.

ServiceMaster's board has approved the acquisition. Its stockholders will vote on the transaction at a special meeting expected to be held in the second quarter. ServiceMaster agreed to pay a \$100 million termination fee if the deal collapses. Three class-action lawsuits were filed against ServiceMaster by stockholders opposed to the acquisition after the

deal was announced, alleging inadequate and unfair pricing of publicly owned shares of ServiceMaster stock.

"The board's support is based on the conviction that this transaction will deliver value to shareholders that is superior to what the company could achieve under its current business plan," J. Patrick Spainhour, ServiceMaster's chairman and chief executive, said in a statement.

Once the deal is complete, Clayton operating partner George W. Tamke will become ServiceMaster's chairman, replacing Spainhour, who will stay on as ServiceMaster's chief executive.

In 2006, ServiceMaster had 32,000 employees and a network of 5,500 company-owned and franchise locations.

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EVERY WORKER. EVERY JOBSITE. EVERY COST CODE. EVERY DAY.

372:16
238:49

Total hours: Irrigation
Total hours: Placing Sod

38:53

Hours Bill Owen worked last week

611:05

Total hours to date:
Crestview

WEEKLY TIMECARD

NAME: Bill Owen DATES: 9-13

	START	LUNCH	END	JOB CODES	JOBSITE/PROJECT	HOURS
Mon.	7:00	1/2	3:30		Brentwood	8
Tues.			3:30			8
Wed.			4:00		▼	8 1/2
Thurs.			4:00		Crestview	8 1/2
Fri.	▼	▼	4:00		▼	8 1/2

SIGNATURE: Bill Owen TOTAL HOURS: 41 1/2

GUESSWORK

Employee Report

Owen, Bill Date Range: 4/9/2007 through 4/13/2007

Day	Date	Jobsite	Start	Stop	Cost Code	Hours	Total
Mon	4/9	Brentwood	7:08 AM	12:05 PM	Irrigation	4:57	
			12:41 PM	3:22 PM	Irrigation	2:41	7:38 hours
Tue	4/10	Brentwood	7:12 AM	12:07 PM	Irrigation	4:55	
			12:43 PM	3:23 PM	Irrigation	2:40	7:35 hours
Wed	4/11	Brentwood	7:12 AM	12:02 PM	Irrigation	4:50	
			12:46 PM	3:49 PM	Irrigation	3:03	7:53 hours
Thu	4/12	Crestview	7:17 AM	12:19 PM	Placing Sod	5:02	
			12:50 PM	3:46 PM	Placing Sod	2:56	7:58 hours
Fri	4/13	Crestview	7:13 AM	12:07 PM	Placing Sod	4:54	
			12:44 PM	3:39 PM	Placing Sod	2:55	7:49 hours

SIGNATURE: Bill Owen Owen, Bill **Total 38:53 hours**

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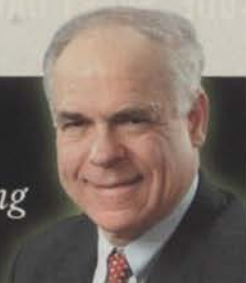
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In the Know

LEGALLY Speaking



BY KENNETH D. MORRIS, ESQ., L.L.C.

Q Should my employees sign a "code of conduct" prior to employment? What should be included in it, and how will it protect me?

A It does not matter what it is called, but it is a good idea to have employees sign at least a confidentiality agreement agreeing to keep company information proprietary both during and after employment. However, covenants not to compete with your company if they leave may be problematic to enforce. Being able to enforce them will depend on their length, their geographic scope, and the industries, or businesses, in which they are precluded from working. No court will enforce an overly restrictive non-compete covenant if it unreasonably prevents an employee from earning a livelihood forever. In the absence of a specific employment contract, the "code of conduct" should also contain a statement requiring an employee to acknowledge that the employment relationship is an employment "at will," is not for any definite period, and may be terminated at any time by the employer or the employee.

Kenneth D. Morris, a Philadelphia-based attorney with more than 30 years corporate and law firm experience, offers information on industry legal issues in each issue of LM. Contact him via www.kennmorrislaw.com.

Note: The above should not be interpreted as offering legal advice in any jurisdiction where such practice is not authorized. Engage competent counsel familiar with your jurisdiction when legal issues arise.



ValleyCrest managers build California park in one day

LOS ANGELES — ValleyCrest Landscape gathered more than 150 managers and executives from across the nation to participate in a corporate philanthropy project — building a new park in Sylmar, CA, in one day and offering much-needed green space to the children and families of this San Fernando Valley community.

Furthering the community of Sylmar's recent revitalization efforts, ValleyCrest donated cutting edge design talent, plants, material and labor to design and build the park.

ValleyCrest managers, who were unaware of the project until they arrived for their annual meeting, built the park in a day. It is estimated that their efforts saved the city and taxpayers more than \$500,000.

"As a business resident of the San Fernando Valley for the past six decades, we thought this was the perfect location to donate our time and resources and build the



The new park, designed by ValleyCrest Design Group, will offer local residents green space for recreation, including a playground, picnic area, soccer field, barbeques and more.

residents of Sylmar their new park," said ValleyCrest President Richard Sperber.

"It is inspiring to see what can be accomplished in one day. This is an incredible example of a company and its employees stepping up, reaching out and making a difference in the lives of local residents," said California State Senator Alex Padilla.

OPEI: Commercial power equipment sales sluggish

OLD TOWN ALEXANDRIA, VA — Shipments of commercial turf care products continued to drop in the first quarter of model year (MY) 2007 (Sept. – Dec. 2006). Intermediate walkers declined 16.5%, compared with the first quarter of MY 2006, and commercial riders, which were flat from MY 2005 to MY 2006, skidded 29.3% for the first quarter. Expansion of only 1.5% is

forecast for intermediate walkers for MY 2008, while riders will experience a double-digit upsurge for MY 2008 of 14.2%, according to mid-

March news release from the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI).

Things weren't much better for consumer sales, said the release.

Shipments of walk behind powered mowers fell 7.2% in the first quarter of MY 2007, compared with the same period a year earlier. This was a sharper reduction than the 6.1% drop for all of MY 2006. Changes in quarterly growth are expected to turn positive at the beginning of the 2008 model year (August 2007).

Consumer rider shipments fared even worse during this first quarter, with front engine lawn tractors falling 17.8% for the first quarter of MY 2007, and riding garden tractors sliding by 38.2%.

Hand-held blower shipments are forecast to increase by 2.2% in 2008, rebounding from a projected decrease in shipments of 2.4% in 2007. Shipments growth of 3.4% for 2007 is expected for backpack blowers with an additional increase of 5.2% for 2008.

However forecasts estimate that a rebound in the housing market will happen

at the end of this year. This rebound is expected to help boost shipments of consumer and commercial turf products.

While these statistics provide

some indication of the state of the turf and landscape power equipment market, not all suppliers are members of OPEI or report sales figures to it.



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Circle 116



BEFORE

Problem The clients are unhappy with the appearance of their wood line area. They think it looks messy and "unsafe." What would you recommend?

The cause The client's perception that the area is messy and "unsafe" is their reality. Some clients want landscapes to have a wild, natural appearance, others, a neat and tidy one. Clients in residential areas are concerned about the safety of children.

Every day you see horticultural problems. Sometimes the solution is obvious, but others are much more difficult to solve. Brickman Group Senior Horticulture Specialist H. Bruce Hellerick tackles these issues each month in Problem Solver. He can be reached at Hellerick@BrickmanGroup.com

Solutions

The only solution that satisfied the clients in this case was the removal and disposal of all low-growing and vining plant materials and selective removal of small trees growing along the wood line. The resulting views into the woods improved the beauty of the site and increased the feeling of safety. Now the client wants to add a path from the road to the woods, install a gazebo and create a shade garden around it for the community to enjoy.



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Kehoe's keys to profits

BOSTON — Green Industry guru Kevin Kehoe offered these "10 Keys to Profit" at the recent New England Grows conference & exposition. Kehoe says that it is absolutely essential business owners:

1. Know their true costs
2. Run their businesses by the numbers
3. Use a flexible pricing model
4. Get out of low profit work
5. Capture all work orders
6. Minimize customer dissatisfaction
7. Measure and hold their people accountable
8. Get rid of waste in processes and people
9. Pay more for "A" managers
10. Pay for results.

"The high growth companies in the industry are not running perfectly efficient operations," Kehoe adds. "They are, however, aggressive in pricing and managing customer expectations. In order to compete with your larger brethren, you may need to price like them on certain segments of your portfolio in order to increase the average job size."



Canadian pesticide opponents ready for spring push

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA — Several environmental, public health and medical organizations are turning up the heat on Ontario provincial lawmakers to ban what they refer to as the aesthetic use of pesticides.

They're redoubling their efforts this spring because it's an election year there. They're aggressively courting candidates to come out against the so-called cosmetic use of pesticides to demonstrate their awareness and support of environmental issues. They claim that, even if pesticide use is suspected of causing health problems (and most of the activist groups go beyond that), why risk it?

Representatives from at least five activist organizations met with provincial ministry officials in February to plead for a province-wide ban similar to the one in place in neighboring Quebec province. They claimed that a recent poll showed that 71% of Ontario residents support a ban.

Industry associations representing lawn care product end users insist the anti-pesticide crusade is misguided and has no basis in fact.


The call for a province-wide Ontario ban on urban pesticides for use on lawns and gardens should be considered in the context of the facts and not misinformation, said Lorne Hepworth, president of CropLife Canada and the Urban Pest Management Council of Canada.

Public policy should be based on sound science. A province-wide pesticide bylaw would remove, without any proper scientific foundation, the benefits provided by the science-based Health Canada regulation of pest control products. "Placing additional burden of regulation on provincial or municipal authorities is unreasonable and unnecessary," said Hepworth. "Local and even provincial governments are not equipped to properly assess complex products on a detailed health or

environmental scientific basis, so a total ban becomes a default position. Banning pesticides is not only unnecessary, but also costly to enforce and provides little additional public health benefits."


The agitation against lawn care products remains high in communities across Canada. To date, more than 120 towns and cities have restricted or banned the use of pesticides for "cosmetic purposes."

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Circle 119

In the Know

PLANET reports continued growth in Green Industry

HERNDON, VA — In honor of National Lawn Care Month in April, the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) celebrates by announcing the Green Industry's growth.

As baby boomers age, and with more than 30 million acres of lawn across the United States, rapidly increasing numbers of homeowners are turning to professionals to care for their lawns and landscapes.

"Americans realize the importance of well-cared for lawns," states PLANET's President Jim Martin. "In addition to being beautiful, lawns have a positive impact on our environment. They trap dust and dirt in the atmosphere and convert large amounts of carbon dioxide to oxygen. Lawns also provide a natural filtering system for rainwater as it soaks into the ground. Additionally, healthy lawns provide a cooling effect in summer months, which saves on energy costs."

In 2004, PLANET conducted a national Harris Survey that reported that homeowners spent \$11.6 billion on their lawns in 2003, up 12% from 2002. These

Realtors report that homes with beautiful lawns and landscape can increase property values 15% to 20%.

same homeowners projected that they'd spend even more on their lawns in 2004. Consumers realize that healthy lawns play an important role in home sales and they have a huge impact on "curb appeal."

Realtors report that homes with beautiful lawns and landscape can increase property values 15% to 20%, and that homeowners can realize returns on their investment of 100% to 200%. Lawn care companies also provide a large number of jobs across the United States.

"Homeowners can be proactive in April by putting together a lawn care program, with their lawn care professional, that ensures their lawns will be healthy and beautiful throughout the year," Martin suggests. "It's important to maintain and even increase property values."



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Circle 120

People & companies



The **Toro Co.** has named **Scott Cornwell** national sales manager for its Toro

Dingo compact utility loader product line.

Hunter Industries added **Rafael Rodriguez** to its growing roster of international sales representatives. Rodriguez will handle distributor, contractor, municipal and specifier duties throughout Mexico.

AquaScape owner and CEO **Greg Wittstock** was inducted

into the Chicago Area Entrepreneurship Hall of Fame.

Jerry Corbett has joined **Quali-Pro** as technical services manager.



Lebanon, OH-based **Fecon** named **Ted Christian** national sales manager.

Cal Poly's College of Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Sciences has named **John Peterson** to head the Horticulture and Crop Science Department.



Steve Newton has been named executive vice president of the **Southern Nursery Association**.



Tremendous Landscape Co. of Plainfield, IL, promoted **Eric Tharp** to vice president of

Operations.

Profile Products announced **Jeff Langner** as its executive marketing assistant.















Ric J. Hendricks and **Dennis R. Anderson** have been promoted to principals of **NUVIS**, a landscape architecture and planning firm headquartered in Costa Mesa, CA. Previously senior associates, Hendricks manages NUVIS, office in San Ramon, CA, and Anderson manages the firm's Las Vegas office.







Venture Products recently appointed **Kevin Holland** Ventrac national sales manager.

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Why Spray Nozzle Selection is Critical to Your Success

The consequences of inadequate spraying can be extremely costly. Under application can result in turf damage and the need to re-spray. Over application results in waste of chemicals. So, be sure you have the best nozzle for your specific application.

Nozzle Type	Herbicides, Fungicides, and Insecticides		Droplet Size	Nozzle Type	Herbicides, Fungicides, and Insecticides		Droplet Size
	Contact	Systemic			Contact	Systemic	
Turbo TeeJet® 	Good	Excellent		DG TwinJet® 	Excellent	Good	
Turbo TeeJet® Induction 	---	Excellent		Turbo TwinJet® 	Excellent	Excellent	
AIC TeeJet® 	Good	Excellent		XP BoomJet® 	---	Very Good	

-  Very Fine
 -  Fine
 -  Medium
 -  Coarse
 -  Very Coarse
 -  Extremely Coarse
- (Droplet-size categories may vary with nozzle capacity, spray angle and spray pressure.)



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Circle 121

Add-On Biz

BUSINESS EXTEND YOUR BUSINESS

Mole control

► They may drive homeowners crazy, but moles can provide landscapers added income.

BY DON DALE

At times Keith Fisher feels that he's over-run by moles. His lawn care business, Growing Green Lawn Care, in Lawrenceville, IL, has seen a 40% increase in mole activity in the last five years, and his clients are clamoring for mole control, he estimates.

But that's good news, because he is making control a larger part of his business. That is a lot easier, nowadays, because instead of the traditional Victor traps, he is using Talpirid, a mole bait manufactured by Bell Laboratories. He has found that what was once an unpleasant sideline now can be an at-

tractive and time-efficient way to increase his revenue.

Fisher found success with the bait-impregnated "worms," which mimic earthworms, moles' traditional food. Unlike most aspects of his business, there are no startup costs other than the material. His four employees simply use a pencil or pen to punch a hole in the mole's active tunnels and drop a worm inside. Gloves are necessary for safety and to keep human scent off the worms.

Timing is everything

Fisher starts treatments in March, as moles begin tunneling near the surface, and it is easy to make an immediate ap-



Keith Fisher (right) and John Armstrong checking out mole runs

plication and do a follow-up if needed as the crew returns to mow the lawn. A crew notes the location of a worm insertion and returns in 10 days to see if it has been consumed.

The company has been using the bait since last summer, and has settled on a flat charge of \$10 per worm, including labor. It's a bargain for homeowners, because the previous cost for mole control was \$20 per trap. Fisher doesn't guarantee the application, however, and tells the client up-front that any follow-ups will cost more. He estimates a 60% success rate.

In Huntingburg, IN, Scott Souders increased his business by about 10% by using the product. He also charges by the worm, although another option is to sell a seasonal treatment program. Moles have become a significant part of Souders Lawn Care's chemical treatment business in the two years he has been using the product.

A simple solution

"It's not rocket science," Souders says of the use of Talpirid. But employees are cautioned to plug the mole hole and not crush the tunnel while working.

"You have to find your feeder tunnels," he notes, and then the grass is lifted with a putty knife so that a worm can be inserted. Mowing crews carry a few worms in their trucks for follow-ups during the season.

Souders now buys bait by the case, and he has used as many as 20 worms on mole-infested lawns. Like Fisher, he markets mostly by word of mouth, emphasizing client education about moles and the efficacy of the product. But he also now mentions mole control in his newspaper ads.

"The homeowner can't tell you were there, and that's a good thing," Souder says of a successful mole-busting visit.

— The author is a freelance writer living in Altadena, CA.

BY THE NUMBERS...



45-50

lbs. amount of worms and insects a 5-ounce mole consumes each year

FIVE

million — number of businesses that maintain turf in mole territory

EIGHTY feet per minute — speed at which a mole can travel through existing tunnels

50

million — number of home lawns in the U.S. and Canada located in mole territory

SOURCE: TALPIRID AND THEMOLEMAN.COM

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 **AN AMERICAN
REVOLUTION**





the grub guide

If Grubs are your problem,
Bayer has a Solution.



Bayer Environmental Science



Grubs

Grubs are the larvae of a group of beetles called scarabs (*Scarabaeidae*). Creamy white in color, they have a dark hind end, brown head, and six well-developed legs. Depending on their age and species, grubs range in length from 1/4 to 2 inches.

The Damage

Grubs feed on and destroy the root systems of grasses and other plants. If they are left untreated, a homeowner will face not only an aesthetically unpleasing lawn, but a problem that can get a lot worse. Each year, homeowners spend hundreds of thousands of dollars replacing grub-damaged lawns.

You can help educate your customers about the damage grubs can cause and help them recognize the first signs of a problem. Their lawns – and your relationship with them – will only prosper.

The damage above-ground...

Look for irregular sections of brown or grey-green drought-like turf that don't appear better after watering or rainfall. Grub-infested turf may also feel spongy underfoot and damaged areas will peel away easily, like rolling up a carpet.

... But the Real Damage is Found Below-Ground

In the past sampling was the best way to assess grub damage and it is easy to do. First, map out the property and take samples from a depth of 4-6 inches in various locations. Remove a sample of soil and grass and determine the number of grubs per square foot from this sample. A square-foot population of 5 or more means you have a problem.

When the damage typically occurs

Grubs thrive in moist soil, so damage may not be noticeable in the wet spring and fall months, when turf grasses grow quickly and their roots can recover quickly from grub attacks. But in drier summer months, root systems are easily compromised by lack of water, increasing stress on the turf. This makes grub damage easy to recognize.



Where Grubs Go, These Other Pests Follow

Skunks, opossums, raccoons, moles and birds find grubs particularly appetizing. The digging they do to reach the grubs may cause additional damage to a lawn, creating more serious problems – and expense – both for homeowners and for you.

The Bayer Solution to Grubs

Lawn care professionals are the first line of defense against grubs. Trust Bayer Environmental Science for the tools that will transform you in your customers' eyes from a lawn care professional into a lawn care hero.

Only Bayer gives you a complete set of options – Merit® insecticide, Allectus® insecticide and Dylox® insecticide – that helps you provide the most effective grub control available today, for all grubs in every stage of their development. These are the standards against which all other grub control products are measured. Bayer invented the total grub solution and it has revolutionized the lawn care industry.

No matter the severity of your customers' problems, the season or even the region of the country you're in, relax. Bayer – and only Bayer – has the products that will let you provide your customers with the complete and cost-effective grub solution.

The Industry's Most Effective Grub Control Products

Merit® – Revolutionizing grub control as the most effective, longest-lasting broad-spectrum grub control product available. Period.

Allectus® – The best broad-spectrum residual insecticide used to control an enormous range of turf pests both above and below the ground.

Dylox® – The #1 curative grub control product offering reliable and consistent control of large grubs – *fast*. Great for early season and late season clean up.



Grubs



MERIT®

The Science of Merit® Insecticide

Merit insecticide interferes with nerve impulses and disrupts insect behavior. They stop feeding, stop reproducing and eventually die.

Why It's Better Than The Competition

- Premium prevention for targeting and controlling 1st and 2nd instar grubs
- 12 years of real world, proven performance
- Usage rates up to 96% lower than many registered soil insecticides
- Greater than 97% efficacy on major grub species

The Grubs That Hate Us

- White grubs, including these larvae: Japanese beetle, black turfgrass atanius, Northern masked chafer, Southern masked chafer, European chafer, Oriental beetle, May and June beetles, billbug larvae

Pick Your Formulation & Pack Size

- Wettable powder (Merit 75 WP, 8 x 2oz. bottles)
- Flowable (Merit 2F, 12 x 240ml. bottles); also available in 4x1 gallon
- Water Soluble Packs (Merit 75 WSP, 4 x 4 x 1.6oz.); also available in 88 x 1.6oz mini drum
- Granular (Merit 0.5 G, 30lb. bags)
- Merit + Fertilizer: Rates and formulations vary

Application Rate Guidelines

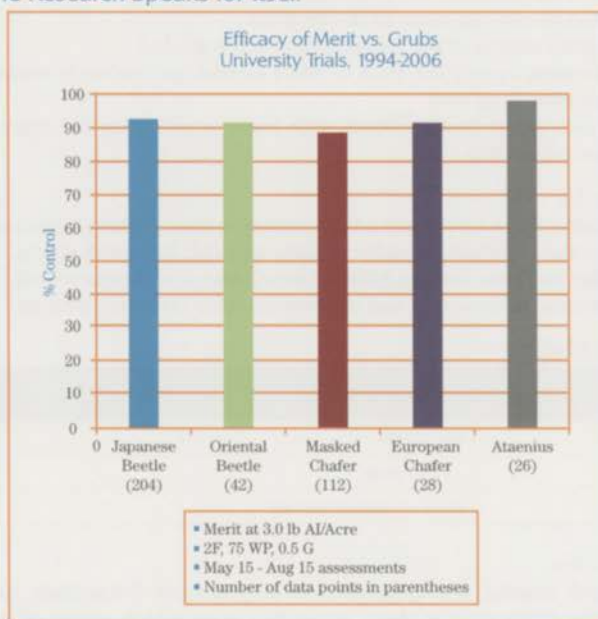
Formulation	Use Rate
Merit 0.5G	60 – 80 lbs. per acre or 1.4 – 1.8 lbs. per 1000 ft ²
Merit 2F	1.25 – 1.6 pints per acre or 0.46 – 0.6 fl. oz (14 – 17 mL) per 1000 ft ²
Merit 75 WSP/WP	6.4 – 8.6 oz per acre or 3 – 4 level teaspoons per 1000 ft ²
Merit 0.2 Fertilizer	Typically applied at 150 lbs. per acre



When to Apply Merit

As adult beetle emergence occurs (followed by mating and egg laying), you should apply Merit from late May through early August, just before or after egg lay and through the presence of early instars. For more information about recommended application times in your region, please review the Merit product labels.

The Research Speaks for Itself



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Allectus insecticide combines the two most powerful insecticides in the turf and ornamental markets. Together, their modes of action provide unprecedented levels of control over damaging turf pests.

Why It's Better Than The Competition

- Premium prevention for targeting and controlling early instar grubs
- Wide treatment window and rate range to choose from
- The broadest-spectrum control of insects above and below ground
- Flexibility in application – apply just once or add a second application to control late season surface feeders as well
- Superior control and widest pest spectrum with fewer applications per season, which means lower labor costs

The Pests That Hate Us

- White grubs, including these larvae and adults: Japanese beetle, black turfgrass ateniensis, Northern masked chafer, Southern masked chafer, European chafer, Oriental beetle, May and June beetles, billbug larvae, annual bluegrass weevil, chinch bugs, cutworms, armyworms, sod webworms, mole crickets, fire ants

Application Rate Guidelines

Formulation	Use Rate (per acre)
Allectus G (granular)	50 – 125 lbs.
Allectus SC (liquid)	1.1 – 4.5 pints
Allectus + fertilizer	Rates and formulations vary.

When to Apply Allectus

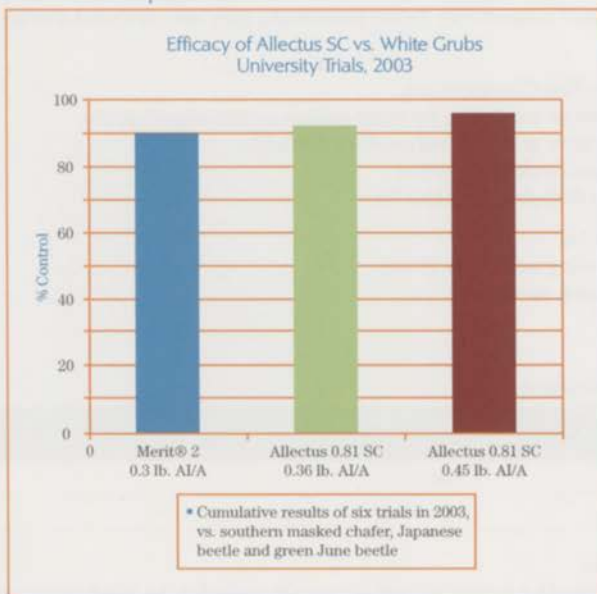
For outstanding grub control, one application is all you need. Sometimes, two applications at lower rates are preferred, depending upon which region of the country you are located. Consider the following as a guide to application:

- In the Northeast and Midwest: One application in June and a second application in August
- In the Southeast and Southcentral: One application in April and a second application in July
- In the West: One application in May and a second application in July

For more information about the recommended application times in your specific region, please review the Allectus product labels.



The Research Speaks for Itself



Allectus®





Dylox[®]

The Science of Dylox[®] Insecticide

When grubs come into contact with Dylox insecticide, they are paralyzed quickly and killed fast.

Why It's Better Than The Competition

- Fast control – a rescue treatment for early-season or late-season grubs
- Most effective curative grub control product available
- Effective on surface-feeding turf pests
- Controls the pests then degrades quickly

The Pests That Hate Us

- White grubs (including sugarcane grub)
- Sod webworms (lawn moths)
- Cutworms
- Chinch bugs

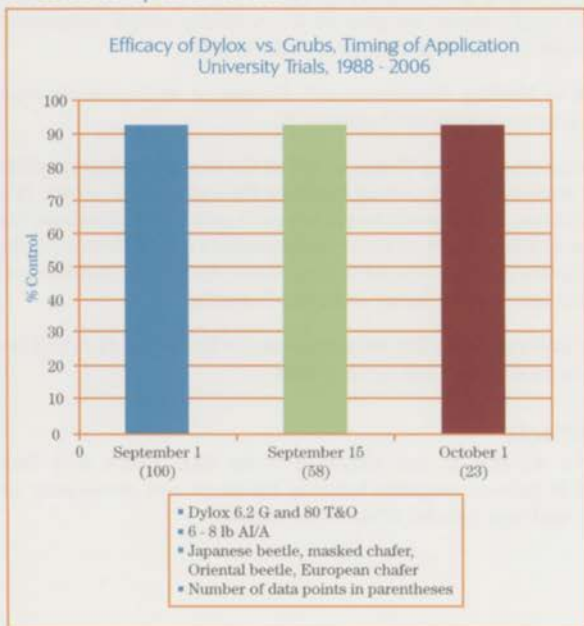
Application Rate Guidelines

Formulation	Use Rate (per 1000 ft ²)
Dylox 6.2 GR	3 lbs.
Dylox 80 T&O	2.25 – 3.5 oz

When to Apply Dylox

Fast-acting Dylox is ideal for a quick kill and is typically applied in the late summer and fall, targeting late instar, large grubs. For more information about the recommended application times in your specific region, please review the Dylox product labels.

The Research Speaks for Itself



Dylox®





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CHOOSING THE PROPER CORPORATE STRUCTURE CAN POSITION AND PROTECT YOUR BUSINESS. FIND OUT WHICH FORM WILL LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR ALL YOUR FUTURE NEEDS.

BY MIKE SEUFFERT / ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Let's just start this off simple: if you're still running your landscape or lawn care business as a sole proprietorship or partnership, call an attorney immediately. Yes, it may cost you some money — up to several thousand dollars in some cases. But with the kind of business risks and legal liabilities business owners face every day, the cost of losing your business, your savings, your home and your livelihood will be much, much more expensive.

"I cannot imagine a scenario where still maintaining a private ownership as a sole proprietorship or partnership would give an advantage to a business owner any longer," says Greg Crosslin, president of the law firm

Crosslin & Associates in Destin, FL. "With lawn care companies working with chemicals and landscapers using heavy equipment on their clients' property, the daily routine involves litigation risk. It's part of doing business, and you have to protect yourself from the risks."

That said, finding the right structure for your business isn't quite so simple. You need to know both your immediate business goals and your long-term strategy. The type of corporate structure you choose affects the way your business deals with taxes, growth, acquisitions, lawsuits and retirement.

"You have to take everything into consideration: how many employees you have, your revenues, how long you've been in business, the assets you have or whether you will be selling

CORPORATE STRUCTURES: IS IT TIME TO MAKE A MOVE?

	SOLE PROPRIETORSHIP	PARTNERSHIP	LLC (Limited Liability Company)	S CORP (Small Business Corporation)	C CORP (C-Corporation)
Formation	Owner's discretion. No state filing required.	By agreement of two or more partners. May require state state filing.	State filing required (articles of organization.)	State filing required (articles of incorporation.) Must elect S Corp status with the IRS.	State filing required (articles of incorporation).
Duration	Terminated if business ceases or upon owner's death.	Dissolves upon partner's death or withdrawal.	Perpetual, unless otherwise stated in articles of organization.	Perpetual.	Perpetual.
Ownership	One owner.	Two or more partners.	Unlimited number; ownership divided as members see fit.	Unlimited number; only one class of stock allowed (no preferred.)	No more than 100 shareholders; no limit on stock classes.
Liability	Owner liable for all debts.	Partners equally liable for all debts.	Generally not liable.	Not liable.	Not liable.
Management	100-percent controlled by owner.	Each partner has equal authority.	Member-managed or manager-managed.	Shareholders elect directors who manage the company's affairs; officers manage day-to-day business activities.	Shareholders elect directors who manage the company's affairs; officers manage day-to-day business activities.
Ease of operation	Easiest; no state requirements.	Easy; few state requirements.	Easy; some states require annual report to be filed.	Formal recordkeeping, annual meetings and annual reports required.	Formal recordkeeping, annual meetings and annual reports required.
Taxes	Pass-through taxation; subject to self-employment tax.	Pass-through taxation; subject to self-employment tax.	Entity is not taxed unless chosen to be; profits and losses are passed to members.	File IRS Form 2553 to be taxed as S Corp; profits and losses passed through to shareholders.	Taxed at corporate income tax rates; profits also taxed when paid as dividends to shareholders.
Fundraising	Owner provides all capital.	Partners provide capital.	Members contribute money or services to the LLC and receive an interest in profits and losses.	Corporate stock may be purchased; some share holder limitations.	Corporate stock may be sold subject to securities laws.

SOURCES: CHART BASED ON RESEARCH FROM THE COMPANY CORP., MYNEWVENTURE.COM AND OTHER BUSINESS SOURCES.

the business in the next five years," says Nancy W. Stabell, a lawyer with Waller, Lansden, Dortch & Davis in Nashville, TN.

What it comes down to is that you need the right business structure to get the most out of your money now, and to prepare for any changes in the future.

Know your options

To choose the right structure for your business, you must know all available options. Under any circumstances, you should consult with both an attorney and a certified public accountant (CPA) before making a decision.

A sole proprietorship is a business owned by one person. It is the easiest and least costly way of starting a business, giving the owner absolute authority over all business decisions.

A partnership is similar to the sole proprietorship,

but with two or more owners. A partnership can be formed by oral agreement, though most companies have official agreements put together by an attorney, Crosslin says. These agreements stipulate the amount invested by each partner, duties, duration and sharing of assets/profits/losses, among other things.

Especially in the landscape market, some small or new companies may choose the sole proprietorship or partnership because of their simplicity and low cost of entry, Stabell explains. The main drawback is that the owner takes on the liability. If the business loses money or is sued, everything the owners possess is at risk.

"A sole proprietorship is a kid by the side of the road selling lemonade; that's all the protection you get," Stabell says. "Everybody needs to have a corporate veil as a liability shield. With today's litigious client, you don't know whose house you are going to."

The two corporate structures that most landscape and lawn care companies are choosing today are corporations or limited liability companies (LLCs), Crosslin says.

Corporations are businesses that exist entirely separate from their owners. This includes the owners filing a separate tax return at the end of the year for their corporations. Corporations must have at least one owner, but there is no upper limit. The ownership interests of a corporation are divided into shares of stock.

The corporate structure usually is the most complex and more costly to organize than the other two. A corporation is controlled by a board of directors, and records must be kept to document decisions made by the board. Small, closely-held corporations can operate more informally, but records cannot be eliminated entirely.

An LLC is a hybrid business entity, designed to combine the liability protection of a corporation with the tax advantages of a partnership, Stabell says. With the LLC, the business's profits and/or losses are added to the owner's personal tax returns. More so, an LLC gives the owner more flexibility in structure and has fewer formalities and stock complications than a corporation.

Benefits of Inc.

"With a corporation, you're not going to be personally disadvantaged if something happens to go wrong," says Ed Wandtke, president of Wandtke and Associates, a business consulting firm in Westerville, OH. "An employee or client gets hurt while you're working on a property. You can damage a clients' property or — you start taking down plant material and later figure out it's the wrong house.

"If these things happen, welcome to the world of litigation," Wandtke adds. "And in the worst case, a sole proprietorship owner could lose his business, his home, his car — everything. In a corporation, it's not ideal, but you can close the

THE COST OF INCORPORATING

There are various costs and fees involved in incorporating or becoming a limited liability company. These include:

Attorney fees — These can typically range from \$500-\$700. The attorney will help you file the correct paperwork and set up your first shareholder meeting. These fees will go higher if there is more than one partner, as a shareholder agreement will be required. There are also businesses that specialize in incorporating that can be found online, though an attorney is still advised.

Filing fees — Secretary of State offices charge fees ranging from \$100 to \$250 for filing your Articles of Incorporation, depending on the state in which you incorporate. You also may have to pay \$50 to \$200 in other government filing fees.

First-year franchise tax payment — Most states impose these taxes for the privilege of doing business in the state as a corporation. Expect to pay anywhere from \$800 to \$1,000.

business and walk away intact."

Incorporating has other benefits.

"When you're a small or new business, banks are going to want you to be in a traditional corporate form of business," says Stabell. "They will be confident in lending money to what they know is a legitimate business.

"Clients will also appreciate and feel safer with the added professionalism that incorporating brings," she adds.

For those interested in selling their business, it's easier to transfer ownership with a corporation, Stabell says. The stock can be sold easily, and the new owners can come in and run the business with the same name, same checking account and same structure. This is also a benefit in the event the corporation's owner dies.

"Even if you're going to keep your business, corporations are the best way to acquire capital from outside investors by selling shares of stock," says Jeff Bergerson, a tax expert with Bergerson Tax Services in St. Paul, MN. "As long as you retain 51% of the stock, you will maintain control over your company."

The downside of the corporation is that there are some additional expenses in setting it up, such as various fees that differ from state to state and the legal costs in setting up the structure. There is also added formality with a corporation, which includes holding board of directors meetings, keeping minutes and resolu-

tions — even if there is only one person (you) on the board, says Crosslin.

There are also tax consequences to incorporating, which used to bring tax savings to business owners, though recent reductions in individual tax rates have made the difference less significant.

Here's how it works: As the owner, president, chairman of the board and any other title you can think of, your corporation pays you an annual salary. Though you pay personal income tax on this salary, your corporation receives a deduction for the salary on its tax return. If your business is highly profitable, this allows you to split business income between yourself and the corporation, keeping both sides out of the higher tax brackets. If the corporation is losing money or breaking even, however, the difference is negligible.

"Because you are paying both personal taxes (on your salary) and a corporate tax that ranges from 15% to 35%, based on your state and income, this 'double taxation' can be a drawback," Bergerson says. "On the plus side, corporations may get certain fringe benefits, like deduction on education costs, vehicle purchases, life and health insurance and more."

If the corporation has a number of stockholders, and chooses to pass along the company's income as dividends, those will also be subject to capital gains taxes, experts say.

continued on page 46



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ASKING AN EXPERT

Landscape Management's Legal Columnist Ken Morris shares his expertise with us, answering a few questions about incorporating.

continued from page 44

S-Corp or C-Corp?

Fortunately, most small business owners can avoid a portion of this double taxation by choosing S-Corp status on their tax returns. S-Corps — or Small Business Corporations — are designed to allow corporate profits and losses to pass through the entity to the shareholder.

"The only difference between a regular corporation (called a C-Corp) and an S-Corp is in how they are taxed," Stabell says. "The structure and everything that goes with the corporation remains the same, but you check a different box on the tax returns. For most small businesses, there will be significant savings for S-Corps."

Though the S-Corp entity does not pay taxes, it must file an informational tax return telling what each shareholder's portion of corporate income is.

"There are a few limits to S-Corps," Bergerson says. "You can't have more than 100 different shareholders of your company's stock. You can only have shareholders that are individuals, which means that you can't get another corporation to invest in you. But these issues only come up if your company grows to a fairly significant size."

S-Corps also cannot deduct some expenses like health insurance, travel and entertainment that C-Corps can.

Inc. or LLC?

Both corporations and LLCs protect business owners from liability for business debts, and both allow the profits and losses to pass through its members for tax purposes. So what's the difference?

"If you are really small and want to keep it really simple, the LLC might be for you," Stabell says. "It's a really popular option right now. You can make your corporate structure look like anything. You don't have to follow all the formalities in

Landscape Management: Is it necessary for every landscape or lawn care company to incorporate?

Ken Morris: Everyone should form some sort of legal entity to protect themselves. It's not just for liability protection but also because of tax implications. There can be substantial tax savings in choosing an S-Corp (Small Business Corporation) or LLC (limited liability company). Let's say Joe Landscaper is not incorporated and makes \$60,000. He takes a personal income of \$40,000 and puts \$20,000 back into business. With a sole proprietorship, he owes self-employment tax of 15.3% on the entire \$60,000. That's \$9,180. But with an LLC, he only pays the self-employment tax on the \$40,000 salary, about \$6,120.

LM: When should a company incorporate?

Morris: When you are operating a business, you have enough on your plate. Growing your market, employees, satisfying customers, fixing equipment. It's best to form that corporation and take care of all those

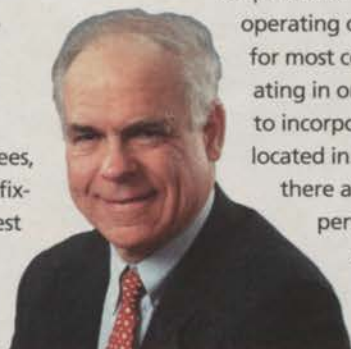
legal things before you get that first customer. If you've already have started your business, don't wait until something goes wrong and it's too late to protect yourself.

LM: Which business structure do most companies lean toward?

Morris: More people tend toward LLCs, but everyone really needs to consult with their attorneys or CPA's to find what works best for them.

LM: Where should you incorporate?

Morris: You hear a lot about companies incorporating in the State of Delaware. That's a good venue for a large, publicly traded company or one that's doing business in more than one state. Delaware is a corporation-friendly jurisdiction. They have low incorporation costs and don't charge corporate income taxes for business operating outside of the state. But for most companies that are operating in one state, it's just easiest to incorporate in the state you're located in. Even in Delaware, there are extra costs and paperwork involved that you probably don't want to deal with if you don't have to.



place for a corporation."

As an example of flexibility, with an LLC, you can divide the company's profits any way you want. With a corporation, the profits must be divided equally, based on the percentage of stock owned. LLCs also do not have the limits on the number and kinds of investors that S-Corps do. On the other hand, S-Corps minimize self-employment and Social Security taxes.

"With LLCs, all of your profits are subject to a self-employment tax of 15.3% which goes toward Social Security and Medicare," Bergerson says. "In an S-Corp, only the salary paid to the em-

ployee-owner is subject to employment tax. You are only required to give yourself what is considered a 'fair and reasonable' pay as an employee. The rest can be withdrawn as a dividend, which is not subject to a self-employment tax. This can save thousands of dollars in taxes each year.

"However, with the S-Corp, you need to do payroll withholdings for yourself because you are an employee," Bergerson adds. "If you are not familiar with the process and the taxes involved, this can be a big issue, and people may choose LLC to avoid it despite the tax savings."

continued on page 48



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continued from page 46

Extra protection?

Setting up an S-Corp or LLC not only allows you to protect yourself from liabilities incurred by the company, but it can also help protect your business as well.

"Ideally, you don't keep a whole lot of assets within the corporate shell," Bergerson says. "If you lease major capital assets that you own personally to the company, like real estate, essentially making monthly payments to yourself, should you have to close up the corporation, you don't lose all that."

As an added bonus, in the case of real estate, you avoid possible double taxation on capital gains if the property's value increases over time when you sell the building.

There are some limits to the protection of a corporation, however. Banks may

THE ULTIMATE PRENUPTIAL AGREEMENT

For limited liability companies (LLCs) and corporations, members and shareholders are required to create a "shareholder's agreement" as part of the articles of incorporation. The shareholder's agreement lays out the ground rules for the company for the owners, including the duration, duties, dispute resolution, sharing of assets/profits/losses and more. This protects against the business being torn apart by a disagreement between two or more joint owners. Though few expect these disagreements to ruin their business, it is a possibility, which is why it is best to use legal representation when creating the shareholder's agreement.

"The best divorce is the one that's put in place before the marriage," says Nancy Stabell, a lawyer with Waller, Lansden, Dortch & Davis in Nashville, TN.

require new businesses seeking funds to personally guarantee loans to their corporations. Also, one-person or family-owned business will be held personally liable for unpaid taxes on the corporation. And if you in any way commit fraud in the corporation's name, you are certainly liable.

Finding the right corporate structure is not an easy choice. Before you incorporate,

start a new company, sell your company or split from the family business, consult a lawyer and CPA to decide the best fit.

"It may be cheaper on the front end to start your business by yourself, or try to incorporate on your own, but it will probably cost you three or four times as much later trying to clean up the mess you've made," Stabell says. **LM**

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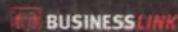
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For more information contact the DuPont Professional Products Web site, www.proproducts.dupont.com / circle no. 252

4 Deere skid steer attachments

John Deere has added a new attachment and made enhancements to several products in its Worksite Pro line for skid steers and compact track loaders. The new and updated attachments include two new dozer blades, five vibratory rollers, four cold planers, two tillers and two hydraulic breakers. Rugged design ensures that each of these attachments delivers maximum uptime and productivity in a wide variety of tasks. Optimized for John Deere equipment, these attachments can function with competitive models.

For more information contact John Deere at 800/503-3373 or www.johndeere.com / circle no. 253

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* Power Reach available on 435, 445 and 465 models only.

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Transplants need nutritional boost



With most ornamental plants transplanted to alien environments, special care is needed to enable them to flourish.

Landscapers today face a formidable challenge: most ornamental plants used in the landscape trade are not indigenous to the habitats in which they're expected to flourish. Moreover, climate extremes and soil depleted of nutrients have made outdoor environments more adverse to plants. So, how do you ensure these transplants thrive?

Transplanting itself is traumatic to plants; uprooting a tree, a bush or even a small flowering plant disturbs its place in the environment. Extra care is needed in order to make the transplanted vegetation take root and subsequently thrive. Access to water is just the beginning. Plants must make or receive many vitamins, hormones and other compounds of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen in order to flourish.

It's quite a shock

"Transplanting a tree is like performing surgery on a person," says Tom Lied, past president of the Associated Landscape Contractors of America (now the Professional Landcare Network). "It's a great shock to its system. You don't expect to feed a steak

dinner to someone right after they've undergone major surgery. You have to stabilize the patient's system first and make sure the healing process is underway. It's the same with a plant. When a plant's in shock, it can't produce the substances that it needs to stabilize and nourish it. It is temporarily unable to produce the organic 'triggers' that enable it to absorb enough water and nutrients out of the soil. Fertilizer alone won't help if the plant isn't producing these organic triggers."

By studying the effects of transplantation on trees and other plants, however, science can now help plants cope with a range of stresses, whether caused by weather extremes, a lack of nutrients or other imbalances in the soil.

John A. A. Thomson, an early student of the massive transplantation of vegetation throughout North America, realized how transplants affected the work of landscapers. He worked on the practical uses of horticultural hormones and vitamins and in 1939 parlayed this interest in plant nutrition into a concentrated formula for plants that contains 50 vitamins and hormones (trade name SUPERthrive).

"Most ornamental plants you now find

in North America are not native to the region," says Thomson. "But other stresses of all sorts have increased as well, from deteriorated soil composition to climate extremes or other factors."

The needed extra boost

Landscapers have found the product helps when they move plants around.

"I've used it for as long as I can remember, and in that time have never lost a tree that we dug up and transplanted by hand," says Ted Burton of J.H. Burton & Sons, Hyattsville, MD. "And one time we dug up a big tree by hand in Richmond (Virginia), and then had to truck it all the way through Washington D. C., to Baltimore. Within a couple days the tree looked as though it had been growing there all its life.

"I also found that it really helps the germination of regular seed. It cuts the germination period from about eight to 10 days down to three to four days. No doubt about its effectiveness."

Thomson says that homeowners' desire for ornamentals will continue. "People will continue to want beautiful, exotic, colorful plants around them," he says.

"These plants are available, and landscapers who are able to see that they thrive are more likely to do well themselves."

For more information, visit the Vitamin Institute Web site at

www.superthrive.com LM



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Purveyors of junk email know... that even though most people hate spam, a small percentage click on the links and buy the products being sold.



Become a spam fighter

BY TYLER WHITAKER

Gone are the days when spam was only known as mystery meat. Unfortunately, most people receive so much unsolicited email — spam — eating mystery meat would be a welcome alternative. Now is the time to put down our forks, get smart and starting fighting this scourge.

Click with care

It's my bet that all of us agree that we hate spam. So, why does it continue? The answer is simple: it works. Purveyors of junk email know that even though most people hate spam, a small percentage actually click on the links and buy the products being sold. That begs the question, if all of us stop clicking the links and buying the products, will the spam go away? Let's hope so.

So, until we stop supplying the economic motivation to the spammers, we need to take extra steps to protect ourselves. That extra protection comes in the form of filters or firewalls. These solutions review each email in an attempt to determine if it is a spam or a legitimate email. In the early days, this was pretty easy to determine by the subject matter of the email. But as the early filters started cutting into the profits of the spammers, they started misspelling words and obscuring the subject matter.

This has resulted in an arms race between the anti-spam companies and the spammers. And every day brings more creative filters to defeat the increas-

ingly imaginative attempts the spammers use to get through. Today's anti-spam technology uses advanced Bayesian statistics to score emails and predict when an email is spam or not. To counter, the spammers are using random text and graphics with heights and widths that change with each email.

Time to get tough

So what can I do? Start by installing and using a firewall and spam filter. Some of the best on the market are from McAfee and Symantec. They both offer very comprehensive solutions and they integrate with most of the popular email programs. Using a solution like this and can guard against both spam and viruses. Once your personal PC is protected, the next level of protection is at your email server. If your email is hosted out in the Internet, chances are you already have some level of protection. The key is to make sure that it is enabled and configured properly to catch the spam. If your company runs its own email server, you have other options. They range from free or open-source solutions like SpamAssassin or more commercial solutions like the Barracuda Networks Spam Firewall. Using anti-spam technology at both the server and the desktop is your best bet when it comes to fighting spam.

Do yourself a favor and put some spam filters in place. And at the very least, let's all stop reading, clicking on and buying from spam. Your new lean and mean inbox will thank you.

— *The author is a freelance technologist focusing in business automation. Contact him at 801/592-2810 or visit his blog at www.tylerwhitaker.com.*

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Skid steers

The beauty of skid-steer loaders is the wealth of attachment options. Landscapers can choose attachments they need to take them from start to finish on a jobsite. Choosing the proper tools saves landscapers valuable time and increases productivity, says Rob Otterson, market segmentation manager for Bobcat Company.

Other than typical buckets and pallet forks, Otterson says the five landscaping attachments that stand out as the most popular are augers, trenchers, landscape rakes, sweepers and soil conditioners.

Augers can efficiently dig holes for planting trees and shrubs and for installing fence posts. To remove small rock or stone for soil preparation, landscape rakes make an ideal solution. And with sweeper attachments, landscapers can clean city streets of jobsite dirt and debris.

Soil conditioners excel at clearing rock, unwanted weeds and existing turf, and can create a final grade in preparation for landscaping, planting seed or laying sod. Trencher attachments

are particularly useful for contractors installing irrigation lines and drain tile.

What many landscapers aren't aware of are all the other available attachments. "Manufacturers are constantly adding new models to fill customer requests. Many can be used on different types and brands of carriers, further increasing their utilization," Otterson says. Stump grinders, rotary cutters, combination buckets, sod layers, snow removal attachments and many others can quickly and easily increase business. "The landscaper who researches and is aware of these additions will be presented with more opportunities to grow their business," he says.



Mustang

Mustang Manufacturing Co.'s skid steer Model 2026 is designed for access to tight areas at 70.3 in. tall and 48.4 in. wide. It features 1,050 lbs. operating load, 35 hp engine, hands-only steering and hydraulic controls and automatic brake and hydraulic lock system. The Model 2041 features a 1,350 lbs. operating load, 46-hp engine, bucket breakout force of 2,800 lbs. for extra power in tough digging conditions and Tilt-up ROPS for easy internal service access.

For more information contact Mustang Manufacturing at 507/451-7112 or www.mustangmfg.com / circle no. 254

◀ Bobcat

With a 3,300-lb. rated operating capacity Bobcat's S330 becomes the company's largest skid-steer loader. With a 10-ft.-10-in. lift height, the vertical-lift-path S330 excels in such applications as nurseries, supply centers, turf and sod contractors, demolition and residential contractors. Its 85-hp liquid-cooled diesel engine means an increase in pushing power and drive torque when digging. The engine also improves performance in high-flow attachment applications by providing more support for the machine's hydraulic horsepower. High-flow attachments that will benefit from this include planers, wheel saws, Brushcat rotary cutters and snowblowers. The S330, as well as the other Bobcat large-frame loaders comes with an improved cooling system that increases the loader's cooling capacity by 30%.

For more information contact Bobcat at 701/241-8700 or www.bobcat.com / circle no. 255



LM Reports



ASV

If you need to grade, level and pulverize the soil in one pass, the ASV S4 Harley Rake is your attachment. Paired with an ASV RC-30 Posi-Track Loader, ASV's technology lets the RC-30 crawl over any surface with minimal ground pressure, yet the machine has the power and traction to work productively in most conditions. The rake features height-

and length-adjustable pneumatic caster wheels, reversible box end plates, electric over hydraulic angle — adjustable left and right, 20 degrees each way — and carbide teeth.

For more information contact ASV, Inc. at 800-346-5954 or www.asvi.com / circle no. 256

Case IH

Case Construction Equipment's 400 Series skid steers come in five radial- and three vertical-lift models that range from 49- to 82-hp, with maximum rated operating loads from 1,500 to 3,000 lbs. In addition to being Tier II certified, the new large-displacement, high-torque, long-life Case Family III engines on the 430, 440, 445, 450 and 465 provide quiet and smooth operation. These same models feature a 95-amp alternator for reliable starts.

For more information contact Case IH Construction at 262/636-6011 or www.casece.com / circle no. 257



New Holland

The new L175 skid steer loader continues New Holland's tradition of producing skid steers with the highest lift capacity to operating unit weight ratios available on the market. With the New Holland's L175 skid steer has a 2,000-lbs. operating capacity, bucket breakout force of 4,300 lbs., operating weight of 6,230 lbs. and 60-hp turbocharged engine. The L175 includes many of the same features available on New Holland's other skid steer models, such as the Super Boom vertical lift linkage for better dump height and reach, a long wheelbase for exceptional stability, fast ground speeds and no rear towers to impair visibility.

For more information contact New Holland at 717/355-1371 or www.newholland.com / circle no. 258

continued on page 62

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Circle 150



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LM Reports

continued from page 60



Volvo

The new B-Series skid steer loaders from Volvo offer operator comfort with a super-comfort, high-back seat and your choice of controls — traditional hand and foot controls or pilot-operated joystick controls. The Volvo B-Series features a wide, tall opening into the operator's area, making it easy for the frequent exits and entries demanded by job conditions. Volvo skid steer loaders also provide outstanding visibility in all directions. For

safety, the B-Series is designed so that the hydraulics will not function and the brake is set until the operator lowers the seat bar and presses the hydraulic release button. The B Series includes five models, ranging from 45.3 hp and 1,500 lbs. operating capacity to 80.5 hp and 2,250 lbs. operating capacity.

For more information contact Volvo at 828/650-2000 or www.volvo.com / circle no. 259

JCB

JCB 1110 Wheeled Robot skid steer loader has a single loader arm mounted in a low level, single tower on the right hand side of the machine. The single loader arm design offers a unhindered view to the rear and sides of the Robot for easier operation and greater on-site safety. JCB 1110 Robot is hydrostatically driven with two chain cases, with a spring-applied, hydraulically released, disc type parking brake mounted to each drive motor. Full servo control joysticks reduce lever efforts to a minimum. JCB 1110 skid steer loader has a rated operating capacity of 2,425 lbs.

For more information contact JCB at 800/Pick-JCB or www.jcb.com / circle no. 260



Ramrod

The 905, 915, 950 and 1150 Ramrod Taskmasters handle the most demanding jobs. The 905 Taskmaster can be as narrow as 32 in. to work in constrained areas and the 915 can wide track to 44 in. There are more than 40 versatile, "quick on, quick off" attachments. From the low-step stand-on platforms, operators get a clear, 360 degree unobstructed view of their work area.

For more information contact Ramrod at 800/667-1581 or visit www.ramrodequip.com / circle no. 261



Anteater (30,000 BC)



Frying pan (1847)



Sodium bicarbonate (1886)



John Deere

John Deere's 300 Series skid steers offer customers a lower daily operating cost than their predecessors. Superior stability results in faster speeds and quicker cycles. This stability is delivered by a low center of gravity due to heavy components being mounted lower in the frame; a long wheelbase that provides smoother ride with less fore-to-aft rocking; optimal balance due to 60/40 weight distribution on the front and rear axles; and larger tires. A patented vertical-lift boom provides a true vertical lift pattern. The 300 Series features the company's patented Quik-Tatch

technology—which provides attachment engagement and disengagement from the operator's seat with a push of a button. Powerful hydraulics delivered to the loader boom, bucket and attachments also enhance productivity.

For more information contact John Deere at 800/503-3373 or www.johndeere.com / circle no. 262

Ditch Witch

Interchangeable attachments increase the versatility and value of Ditch Witch mini skid steer loaders. Attachments are available for trenching, vibratory plowing, pavement and rock sawing and utility backhoe work.

At less than 36 in. wide, the Ditch Witch SK350 Mini Skid Steer can go anywhere you need it. The Ditch Witch SK300 is a 13-hp, track-mounted, platform mini skid steer. The SK500 is a track-mounted, walk along mini skid steer. The SK650's powerful 31.5-hp Kubota diesel engine and hydraulic system give it the muscle to do the jobs of much larger machines.

For more information contact Ditch Witch at 800/654-6481 or www.ditchwitch.com / circle no. 263



Gehl

Gehl Co.'s 7810E skid loader is loaded with power, strength and speed. The 7810E Skid Loader is powered by a Cummins 99-hp turbo-charged diesel engine with high (305 ft.-lbs.) torque. It has an increased SAE rated load capacity of 3,850 lbs. The 7810E has a host of features, including true vertical-lift linkage, which provides consistent forward reach throughout the entire lift cycle, and a lift height of nearly 12 ft. The new 7810E Skid Loader delivers bucket breakout force of 8,340 lbs. A 2-speed drive is available, which offers ground speeds up to 12.5 mph. For more information contact Gehl Co. at 800-628-0491 or www.gehl.com / circle no. 264



Blowtorch (1926)



Shoe (1954)



Newspaper (1962)

LM Reports



Vermeer

Vermeer Manufacturing Co.'s S600tx rubber track mini-skid steer features a spring-cushioned platform and two single-joystick controls with operator-handle grip that allows operators to keep their balance while operating any of the machine functions. A machine width of 35.75 in. allows the S600tx to maneuver through gates and other confined areas. The 7- or 9-in. tracks provide enhanced stability and lower operating ground pressure.

For more information contact Vermeer at 888/VERMEER or www.vermeer.com / circle no. 265



Caterpillar

The Caterpillar 287B Multi Terrain Loader is available with the Cat High Flow XPS hydraulic system for high productivity when using hydraulically demanding work tools. The load-sensing, variable displacement piston pump delivers high pressure and high auxiliary hydraulic flow for maximum hydraulic horsepower and performance. The 287B Multi Terrain Loader is the largest of the five Caterpillar Multi Terrain Loaders, which are compact, rubber-tracked machines designed for exceptional versatility, flotation, traction, stability and ride quality. The 287B has operating capacity of 3,600 lbs., when defined as 50% of tipping load.

For more information contact Caterpillar at 309/675-5175 or www.cat.com / circle no. 266



Compact Power Inc.

With its slim 36-in. footprint, the PowerHouse PH-850 Mini Skid Steer from Compact Power, Inc. will zip through the narrowest work areas, and packs more than enough power to get the job done. The PowerHouse PH-850 offers a full 850 lbs. lifting capacity, combined with two bucket cylinders for maximum front end strength and a breakout force of 2,200 lbs.

For more information contact Compact Power Inc. at 800/476-9673 or www.cpiequipment.com / circle no. 267



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Advion® fire ant bait (2007)

Circle 128

A blue Ford Super Duty truck is shown from a front-quarter view, parked in front of a large stack of cement bags. The truck's grille features the Ford logo and the words "SUPER DUTY". The cement bags are stacked in a grid pattern, with the words "PORTLAND CEMENT" visible on many of them. The scene is set in a warehouse or storage area.

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BOLD MOVES



Front runners

Out-front riding mowers are rugged, detail-oriented and attachment friendly.

BY KAY OHLY

Need a workhorse that can glide over rough patches and mow into ditches? How about a machine configured to handle attachments of all sorts, a go-to for large jobs and detail-oriented properties with trimming requirements?

Look out front for the solution.

Front-cut riding mowers, also called out-front riders, consume a modest percentage of the mower market. But sales in this sector climbed while other categories slipped in the beginning of 2007, according to the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI). Mark Naperala, director of marketing for Ariens Co. in Brillion, WI, says more landscape contractors are warming up to this option. "The market has grown because other manufacturers have entered it," he says, adding that OPEI statistics do not report sales from one major front-cut supplier,

so "the true number of units entering the market is hard to tell."

But industry trends give landscape contractors reason to consider these hearty machines. As municipalities and schools outsource landscape services, contractors who win these jobs need heavier-duty equipment.

"Out-front riders can perform production-type mowing better than a ZTR can," says Gilbert Pena, commercial segment strategy manager, John Deere, Cary, NC. "Say a landscaper gets a three- to five-year contract with a municipality. They would be better off investing in an out-front rider vs. a ZTR."

Besides, front-cut mowers can accommodate a collection of attachments, manage large mowing jobs and handle slopes and rough terrain with ease. "The front-cut deserves a bigger share of the market than it is currently enjoying," remarks Bob Walker, president of Fort Collins, CO-based Walker Mowers. In many respects, education is the missing piece to this configuration's market share.

Technically speaking

The out-front configuration resembles a rearranged zero-turn unit. Rather than stacking the deck and tractor like a mid-mount zero, out-fronts divide the machine into a tractor unit and the deck.

"The cutting part is lightly loaded, so it can float," Walker describes, noting that cutting deck sizes range from 36 to 74 inches.

Operators can enjoy the maneuverability of a zero-turn along with out-front deck advantages, including better traction on slopes, a smoother ride on rough terrain and versatility with an array of attachments. Also, landscape contractors whose jobsites require tedious trimming can knock out this task with one pass of an out-front rider.

"The operator sits at the actual pivot point of the mower, so turning and maneuvering occurs almost as an extension of the operator's body," describes R. A. Stucky, marketing director for The Grasshopper Co., Moundridge, KS.

continued on page 70

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continued from page 68

Cut for quality

Productivity drives the buying decision for most landscapers, but how long does it take to mow and complete finishing work? In other words, if the cut takes 15 minutes, will the contractor spend another half hour going back over the property with a string trimmer to access hard-to-reach areas? Champions of the front-cut configuration rally by its ability to deliver a quality cut in a single pass.

The front-cutting deck sits on a different mounting system than the tractor body of the mower. Therefore, the cutting component can move independently to work into the nooks and crannies of a landscape, such as ditches, slopes, under brush and

continued on page 72

A fit for the job

Not sure whether a front-cut configuration is the right fit for your fleet? First consider your job requirements. Following are scenarios where out-front riders excel in performance:

Trimming work – The front-mounted deck is an ideal trimming platform, and the mower can skim right alongside sidewalks, plant beds and other borders.

Wide, open spaces – Larger deck sizes, ranging from 58 to 72 in. and beyond, are suitable for municipal, school and expansive commercial jobs.

Snow jobs – Attach snow removal equipment to manage winter jobs, parking lot cleanup, etc. Just be sure to purchase enough horsepower. Twenty-five to 31 hp is suitable.

Rough terrain – The longer length of front-cut mowers distributes weight more evenly and helps absorb vibration caused by rugged terrain.

Ditches and slopes – Because the deck conforms to the ground, and can move independently of the power unit, out-front riders can ease into ditches and have a four-wheel drive traction advantage on slopes.

– KO



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continued from page 70

next to fences and other barriers. This translates to less scalping on rough terrain, and cleaner cutting in tight spaces.

"For quality cutting, there is a noticeable improvement in the appearance of the cut you can get with a front-mount mower, and this is because of the way the deck is suspended," Walker says.

Also, 4-wheel drive provides greater traction, and therefore more safety, on slopes. "The longer [mower] length distributes weight more evenly and helps absorb vibration caused by rugged terrain," Stucky says, which means a smoother ride and a lighter footprint on turf.

Multi-task machine

If a job calls for more than just mowing, a front-cut configuration can serve as a single-



Grasshopper's flex-chute allows closer passes by obstacles.

machine solution, Stucky adds. "Managers who are responsible for complete grounds care can optimize their budgets by employing front-cut power units for leaf pickup, sweeping, backfilling, snow removal, edging, aeration and spraying," he says.

Walker Mowers are famous for their grass collection systems. Because the attachment is designed for the front-cut machine, it does not upset the balance of the mower, Walker says. Imagine a banker's scale: one side loaded with the cutting deck, the other side with the attachment. On a mid-mount mower, iron isn't evenly distributed when you add attachments. These machines require counterweights.

"If you have an easy-on, easy-off mower deck, then you can take the deck off in the fall and attach a leaf blower," Pena notes. "Once fall has passed, you take off the blower and attach a snow blower or blade. You can also opt for a rotary broom to sweep parking lots." **LM**

— The author is a Cleveland-based freelance writer.

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proper recommendations to lessen their impact or take appropriate action to control them?

Watch for thatch

Thatch provides an ideal habitat for chinch bugs, billbugs and caterpillars including sod webworm and cutworm. A thatch layer greater than a 1/2-in. can restrict the movement of insecticides and reduce their efficacy. The great majority of insecticide residue can remain in the thatch and prevent the insecticide from reaching the target zone, particularly when the pests are grubs, the larval stage of northern and southern masked chafers, Japanese beetle and black turfgrass ateniinus. A heavy thatch layer can increase the breakdown of an insecticide due to chemical or microbial factors. Verticutting and/or core aeration alleviate thatch problems.

Irrigation and pest control

Proper irrigation is generally needed to maintain high-quality turfgrass. It can also improve turf insect control. For grub control, for example, 1/2- to 3/4-in. of water to a treated area after an insecticide application helps move the insecticide into the target zone. Because grubs move deeper into the soil as the soil dries, irrigating

continued on page 76

BY RAYMOND A. CLOYD

Insects and other arthropods that feed on turfgrass fall into three categories — pests that do their dirty work below ground, those that reside in thatch and damage plant crowns, and the leaf and stem insect pests. Belowground insects, such as grubs, feed on turfgrass roots. Crown and thatch feeders include chinch bug (*Blissus* spp.), sod webworm (many different species), armyworm (*Pseudaletia unipuncta*), cutworm and billbug (*Sphenophorus* spp.). Insects and mites that inhabit leaves and stems include greenbug (*Schizaphis graminum*), clover mite (*Bryobia praetiosa*) and billbug (*Sphenophorus* spp.)

To manage these pests you must be able to identify them and the damage they cause. How else can you make the



Images this page:
A long winged hairy chinch bug sits on a blade of grass (top of page); an adult bluegrass billbug (above); and sod webworm larva and frass nestled in the lawn thatch zone (right).



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continued from page 74

prior to applying an insecticide improves control, as well. Soil moisture also influences the growth, distribution and abundance of grubs, and can result in higher localized grub densities.

Soil moisture is critical during the warmer months (August and September) when grubs are feeding on roots and cool-season turfgrass, such as Kentucky bluegrass, is stressed. Cool-season turfgrass isn't able to increase root mass during summer's dog days to compensate for grub feeding. Proper irrigation reduces stress, allows the turfgrass to tolerate higher densities of grubs before damage is evident, and encourages recuperation of root loss. In addition, watering turfgrass, as needed, encourages the growth and spread of natural fungal populations such as *Beauveria spp.*, which may provide some control of chinch bugs and other insect pests.

It is not advisable to water in chemical products to control crown, thatch, stem and leaf-inhabiting pests such as chinch bugs, green bugs and most caterpillars, however. The insecticide must remain on the foliage so those insects not killed from the initial application will die when they consume residues on treated leaves.

Mow it higher

Mowing turfgrass too closely decreases its ability of produce a sufficient root mass and increases susceptibility to feeding damage caused by grubs, even at low grub densities. Mowing higher can reduce problems with chinch bugs and billbugs, in addition to increasing the humidity at the soil level, which promotes the growth and spread of natural beneficial fungi. Research has demonstrated that mowing may remove the eggs of certain insect pests such as black cutworm (*Agrotis ipsilon*), which is the major caterpillar pest on golf courses, and influence the distribution of black turfgrass ataenius (*Ataenius spretulus*).



Hairy chinch bug damage to Kentucky bluegrass lawn

PHOTO BY: DAVID J. SHETLAR

Why fertility matters

Excessive nitrogen fertility levels promote rapid succulent growth, which is attractive to insects, thus increasing susceptibility and the likelihood of the turfgrass suffering feeding damage. Applications of excessive nitrogen tend to stimulate insects via higher reproductive rates and shorter developmental times due to the enhanced levels of amino acids (precursors of nitrogen) in the plant tissue. In addition, excess applications of nitrogen result in an increase in thatch creating an ideal habitat for certain insects such as chinch bugs, billbugs and sod webworms. The use of slow-release nitrogen fertilizers may reduce the attractiveness of turfgrass to insect pests.

Don't forget pH

The measurement of the concentration of hydrogen ions [H⁺] in a solution is its pH, a logarithmic scale indicating the acidic and basic properties of water. The pH scale ranges from 0 to 14. A pH value below 7.0 is acidic whereas a pH value above 7.0 is basic or alkaline, 7.0 itself being neutral. When the pH is above 7.0, then alkaline hydrolysis may occur, a degradation process that fragments insecticide molecules. Certain insecticides are susceptible to alkaline hydrolysis, particu-

larly those in the organophosphate chemical class. For example, trichlorfon (Dylox) is sensitive to alkaline hydrolysis, which shortens its activity period. If high pH water is a problem, add a buffering agent prior to adding the insecticide in order to reduce the pH to the preferred range (5.0 to 6.0).

Other factors that can affect the effectiveness of an insect control include photodecomposition, heat, water hydrolysis, volatilization and microbes.

Minimize volatilization, the loss of the insecticide from the plant tissues or soil surface through evaporation into the atmosphere, by making insecticide applications in either early morning or late afternoon.

Microbial degradation occurs when microbes such as bacteria in the soil use insecticides as a food source. Certain insecticides appear to be more susceptible to microbial degradation, especially some organophosphates. The use of different insecticides will avoid the potential for microbial degradation.

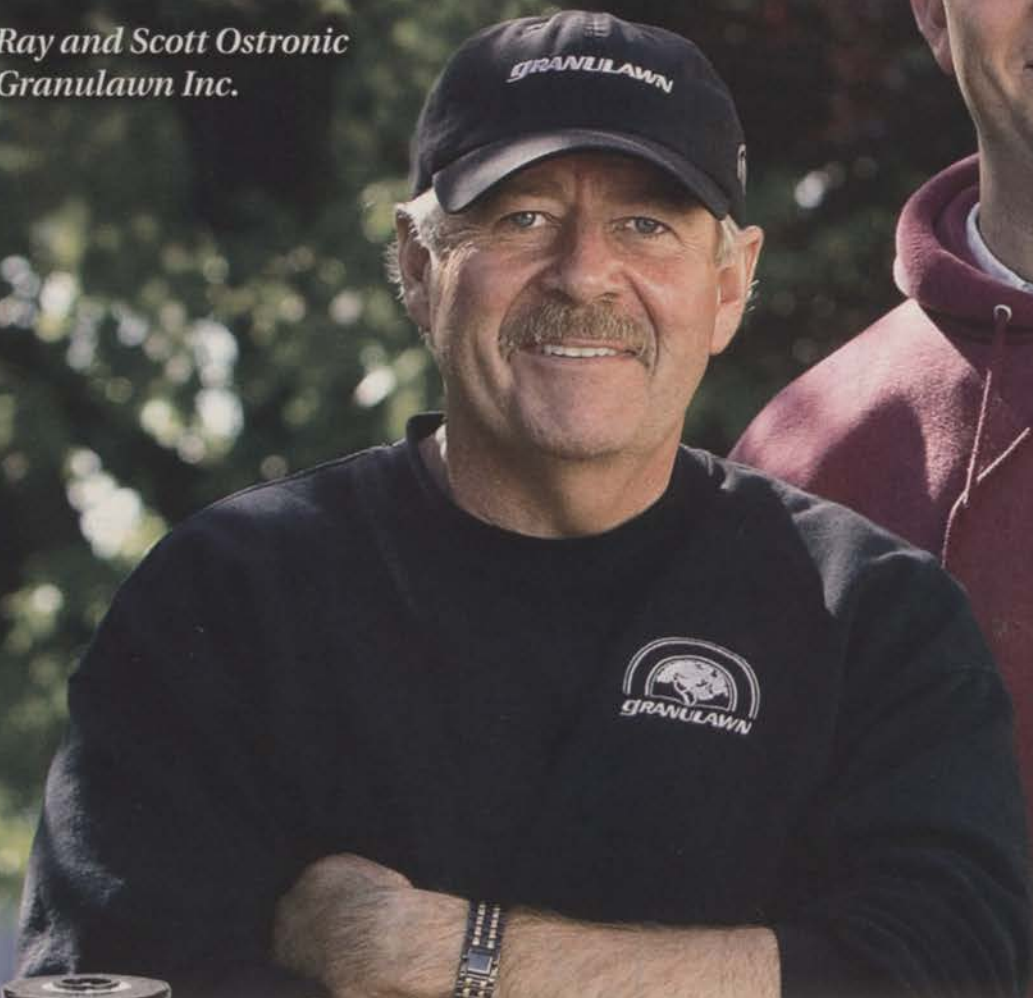
Learn the bug's life

In general, the larvae and adults of most arthropod pests are most susceptible whereas the egg and pupa stages are more

continued on page 78

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continued from page 76

tolerant to most insecticides. For example, grubs are easier to control just after egg hatch, whereas billbugs and black turfgrass ateniens are easily controlled in the adult stage.

Insecticide use is not only dependent on the presence of the susceptible life stage and location of the target insects but also on insecticide formulation, which is generally either granular or liquid. The formulation used depends on the target insect pests.

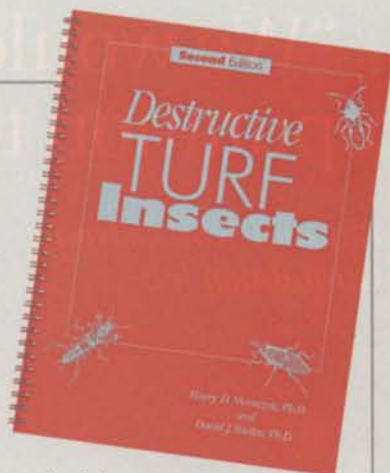
For control of belowground insect pests, irrigate in both formulations after application. Irrigate liquid formulations of highly soluble insecticides within 24 hours to reduce UV light degradation, which can lessen their effectiveness. When applying granular insecticides make sure the

Curative or preventative control?

Insect pests are damaging your clients' lawns, but you're not sure if it's caused by grubs, billbugs, armyworms, chinch bugs or another pest. The Ohio State University entomology professors Harry D. Niemczyk and David J. Shetlar can tell you what it is and what to do about it.

Their book, "Destructive Turf Insects," is an up-to-date, practical guide to the insects that destroy turf. There are plenty of photos and illustrations to help turfgrass owners, sport field managers, lawn service operators and golf course superintendents identify and treat insects.

The book is available from Amazon.com.



grass blades are dry so that the granules will migrate to the soil surface.

To control grubs, insecticides must reach and reside in the target zone, which is generally located one to two inches

below the soil surface. The movement of grubs through the soil profile depends on soil moisture and temperature. The deeper grubs are in the soil profile, due to either

continued on page 80



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continued from page 78

lower moisture levels or warmer temperatures, the more difficult they are to control. This is why pre-treatment irrigation is critical because moist soil attracts grubs closer to the soil surface. The length of time that a lethal concentration of an insecticide remains in the target zone may vary from several days to several months, depending on the insecticide. The time of year insecticides are applied may influence efficacy, as well. Insecticides applied in the fall, or too early in the spring may not be effective if grubs move deeper in the soil. The two insecticides that have been used to control grubs for almost a decade now are imidacloprid (Merit) and halofenozide (Mach 2), but several newer insecticides have been introduced to the market and are providing good control, as well.

Cultural practices

Healthy turfgrass can tolerate more insect feeding than stressed turfgrass. For example, a "healthy" turfgrass, due to the amount of root mass, may be able to tolerate 6-8 grubs sq. ft. without noticeable feeding damage. This same density of grubs may severely damage stressed turfgrass. Poor cultural practices are often the cause of stressed turfgrass. Factors such as thatch, irrigation, mowing and fertility impact the susceptibility of a turfgrass to insects or, in the case of pH, affect insecticide efficacy.



— RC

Imidacloprid is a systemic insecticide effective against most belowground and crown-inhabiting insects such as grubs (many species), black turfgrass atenius, billbugs and weevils. It is not effective against caterpillars including sod webworm, black cutworm and armyworm. Apply imidacloprid four to six weeks prior to egg-hatch for maximum effectiveness. The insecticide kills either by contact

or ingestion. Smaller grubs, especially those that have just hatched from eggs, are easier to control than larger grubs. Studies have also demonstrated that applications of imidacloprid affect the defensive behavior of grubs, which increases their susceptibility to natural enemies such as entomopathogenic nematodes.

Halofenozide (Mach 2) is a systemic

continued on page 82

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continued from page 80

insect growth regulator classified as a molting-accelerating compound that mimics ecdysone, a hormone responsible for initiating growth and molting activities, causing insects to undergo a premature molt. It works by ingestion and is effective on cutworms, sod webworms, armyworms and grubs. Halofenozide is supposed to provide two to three months of residual activity; however, this depends on soil type and moisture. This insecticide is most effective against smaller grubs than larger grubs possibly due to the extended length of time that grubs spend in the third larval stage. Halofenozide tends to kill when larvae molt to the next stage.

The timing of application may influence the level of control obtained with insecticides. Insecticides may be applied either



The holes in this damaged lawn were made by starlings probing for white grubs.

preventatively or curatively, based on the turfgrass insects being targeted for control.

There are a number of management strategies, both cultural and insecticidal, that can be used to "de-bug" your turfgrass; however, it is important to consider that the success of controlling both aboveground and belowground turfgrass



Damage on this bluegrass lawn was caused by a raccoon digging for white grubs.

insect pests involves using these strategies in unison, which will help to retain the quality of the turfgrass. **LM**

— The author is associate professor and extension specialist in ornamental entomology/integrated pest management Kansas State University, Department of Entomology. He can be reached at rcloyd@ksu.edu.

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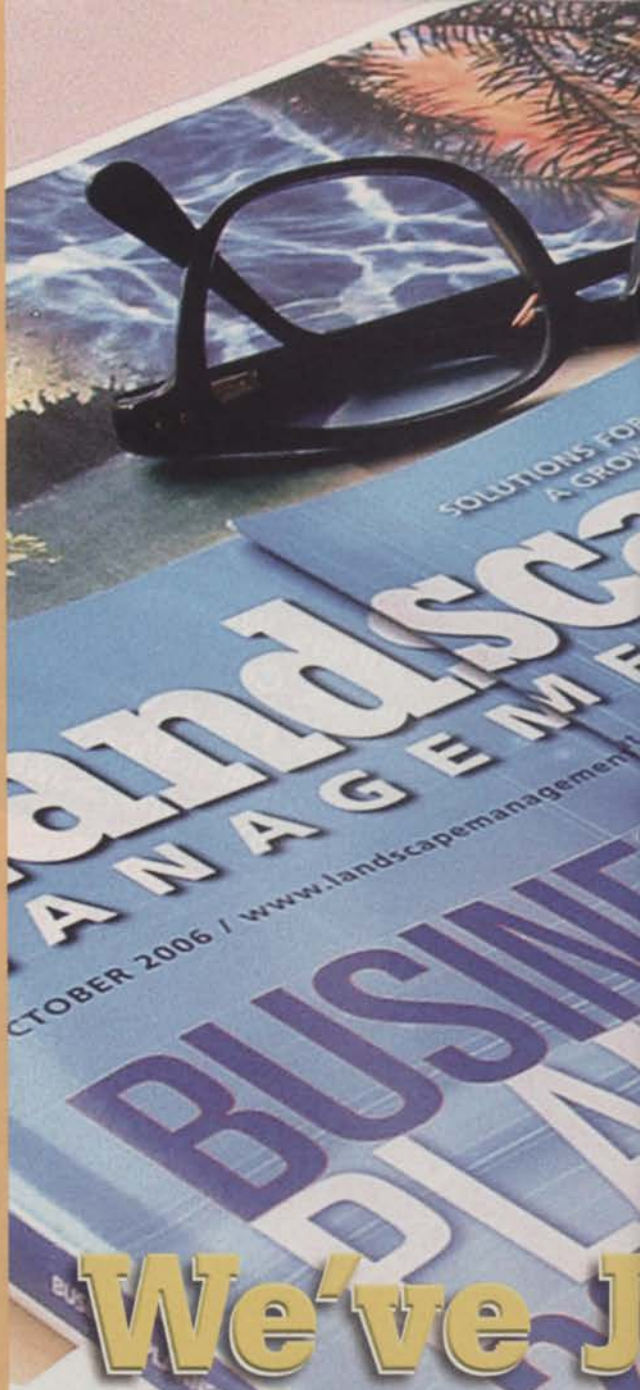
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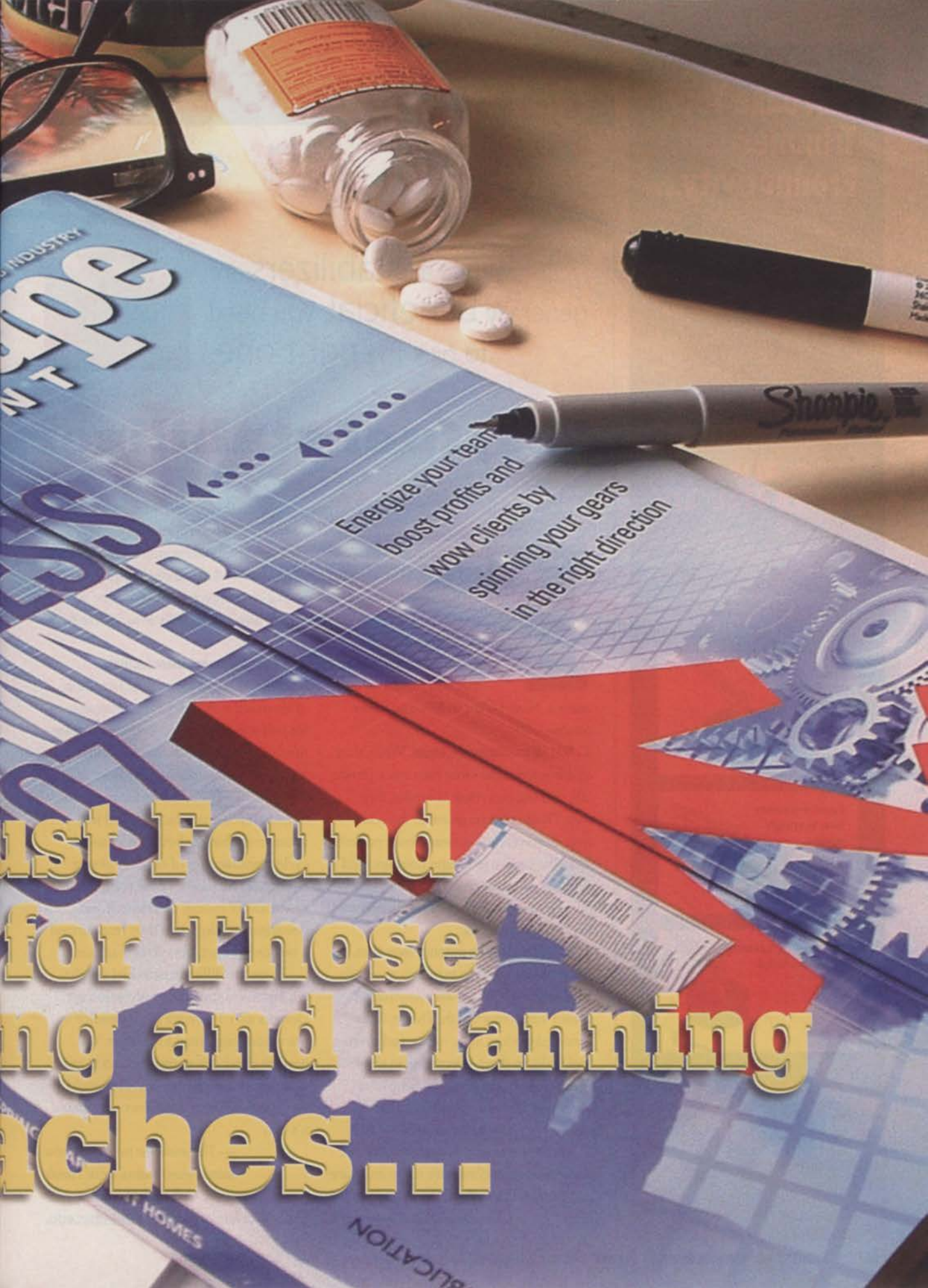
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While all stabilizers are generally beneficial, you need to pick the right one.



Yes, fuel stabilizers

BY ALLEN SPENCE

Fuel stabilizer: What is it and why is it important to me? You have read several articles where I have mentioned fuel stabilizer and told you that you should be

using it. Now I want to give you some reasons why.

1. Not all gasolines are equal. While they all come from the same base stock (crude oil), and the end result is similar, they vary. These differences are in the additives. Some additives clean; some protect; and others serve as octane boosters. And all these additives change to other compounds over time. Fuel stabilizer prevents that from happening.

2. Gasoline loses its potency over time. Old gasoline tends to turn into a varnish-type substance that coats everything it comes into contact with. This leads to gummed-up fuel lines, valves, carburetors, fuel tanks, in short, everything in the fuel system. I have seen equipment where every one of those items had to be cleaned or replaced because of old fuel.

3. Moisture and corrosion are prevented. Some service stations have more moisture in their fuel than others. Some moisture is caused by condensation. This is worse in

some areas than others. Moisture leads to corrosion and improper engine operation. Fuel stabilizer will counteract the effects of moisture. Most handheld equipment with 2-stroke-cycle engines can be adversely affected by as little as 5% contamination.

4. Most equipment manufactures recommend it. As a matter of fact, most of them sell it. A quick Internet search for fuel stabilizer shows every major manufacture recommends the use of fuel stabilizer. Most of them offer it for sale from their Web stores. Marine equipment to motorcycle manufactures and just about everything in between 2- and 4-cycle manufactures of outdoor power equipment included. These companies spend lots of money on research and development. So, when they recommend a certain product, I heed their advice.

There are differences in fuel stabilizers. Some are stabilizers only; some are cleaners also. There is a big difference in price from one brand to another. You need to check the emissions laws in your state before purchasing any. This could prevent purchasing a product you shouldn't use.

— The author is turf equipment management instructor at Hinds Community College in Raymond, MS. Contact him at haspence@hindscc.edu.

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Death by fungi

BY BRUCE MARTIN

The value of healthy lawns goes beyond aesthetics. In addition to pleasing the eye, they provide erosion protection, noise reduction and maintain or increase property values. In stressful environments, diseases can take their toll on lawns. Many companies offer disease control services along with other lawn care activities, such as fertilization, weed control and insect control.

A multi-faceted approach, including the use of fungicides, is often your best disease management strategy.

Fungicides work best when turfgrasses are cultured properly within their limits of adaptation. Turf managers must recognize the limitations of sites for culture of the turfgrasses and modify the sites for optimal growth, including selecting the best-adapted turf for the site, and managing it for optimal health. This could include eliminating trees, selective pruning, proper grading for drainage and/or the installation of supplemental drainage. Even with proper care, disease may occur if weather conditions and other factors are right.

When disease turns a healthy lawn into a blotchy brown mess, one part of the solution may include a fungicide.



Fungicides can help treat southern blight (above), which causes large crescent-shaped bare patches and dollar spot, named for its round coin-sized depressions.



When this occurs it's time to consider the judicious use of proven fungicides.

Lawn care disease control

Both cool-season and warm-season turfgrasses can be plagued with a variety of diseases and disorders. Major cool-season grasses used in lawns include Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass and tall fescue. Warm-season turf-

grasses include St. Augustine, centipede, zoysia and Bermudagrass. All of these are affected by one or more important diseases, and are harmed most by disease when environmental conditions favor the pathogen (usually a fungus) and disfavor the optimal growth of host plant.

The most common damaging diseases include brown patch in cool-season grasses,

large patch in warm-season grasses, dollar spot and leaf spots (caused by *Bipolaris* and *Drechslera* species). Kentucky bluegrass is also prone to summer patch (*Magnaporthe poae*) and can also be damaged by stripe smut, leafspot and melting-out diseases (*Drechslera poae*). St. Augustinegrass, tall fescue and perennial ryegrass can be troubled by gray leaf spot (*Magnaporthe grisea*) in



St. Augustinegrass, tall fescue (left) and perennial ryegrass can be troubled by gray leaf spot

addition to brown patch or large patch (*Rhizoctonia solani*).

What's old is new again

In the 1920s, the first fungicide for turf disease control, Bordeaux mixture, was actually a combination of two products: copper sulfate and lime. Old ideas, it seems, can be good ones and finding the right mixture and adding a bit of modern technology creates some of the best solutions.

Not all fungicides are alike, of course; they each have their strengths and weaknesses that must be recognized if they're to be used to greatest advantage. How-

ever, by putting two or more fungicides together for disease control several advantages occur. This is evident in Armada, a product offered by Bayer Environmental Science. The product provides broad-label control of many of the major lawn diseases, such as brown patch, dollar spot, anthracnose, fusarium patch, gray leaf spot, leaf spots (*Bipolaris* spp.), summer patch, pink patch, red thread, stripe smut, southern blight and rapid blight.

With these types of products (mixtures) you do not have to keep up with two active ingredients, look up rates for each, mix in the proper proportions or

wonder about incompatibility. Also, mixtures can even be more economical than purchasing the separate fungicides.

In the case of Armada, both active ingredients have cases of documented resistance. Therefore, the label indicates that no more than two sequential applications be made to turf when gray leaf spot is the targeted disease, or no more than three sequential applications for any other turf disease. In lawn care, with the restrictions placed on chlorothalonil use, our options for resistance management are limited, so use fungicides prudently in a well-thought-out integrated pest management strategy. **LJM**

— The author is in the department of entomology & plant sciences, plant pathology & physiology at Clemson University. He can be reached at sbmrtn@clemson.edu.

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(see page 93)

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Impatiens, such as this Fanfare Bright Coral Spreading variety, grow in sun or part shade.

Annuals

it pays to be picky

Remember, every bad plant you don't plant in the first place is one you won't have to replace later.

BY JEFF GIBSON

Anuals are go-to plants for providing masses of color in landscape designs. Color in the landscape automatically becomes a focal point drawing the viewer's gaze immediately. So, it's crucial to choose the right plants for the project.

Not all annuals are created equal: even varieties in the same species can differ greatly in terms of landscape performance and maintenance needs. Clients, whether commercial or residential, expect the

landscape professionals they hire to install the best plants for the job. Get it right, and you've got a beautiful landscape that you can use to not only get repeat business, but also to attract new customers. Get it wrong, and you've got a potentially costly, time-consuming problem. Getting it right doesn't have to be difficult.

First, stay on top of what's new and what's best for landscape applications. A little research goes a long way. Start with your grower supplier, who can be an invaluable source of information about what's new in the marketplace. Often, growers have opportunities to trial plants

continued on page 94



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Magilla Vanilla Perilla

continued from page 92

before they're commercially introduced. Your grower may be able to offer great insight on the performance attributes of new annual plants. If you don't already work with a grower, start now.

Check with your local grower or landscape associations, or research online at sites such as BallLandscape.com. Visit university trials, trade shows and even local garden centers to see a wide array of varieties first-hand. Talk with knowledgeable people about what's new. Also, read consumer gardening magazines; writers for these magazines often get advanced looks at new plants and tell their readers

about their favorites. Many of your customers are reading these magazines. Finally, go online and you'll find a huge amount of information about top plants for landscapes, often available specifically by region.

Know your planting sites

Before you order any plants, perform an analysis of the project site. Pay special attention to environmental factors such as sunlight levels, moisture, wind, general temperatures and any existing structures or plants. Measure the planting area, of course, so you'll know how many plants you need to fill the space. Talk with the client about preferred or disliked colors and ongoing maintenance, of course.

Order from your grower as far in advance as possible — four to six months prior to installation if possible. This can vary depending on the type of plant and the grower's own policies. Because most annuals only require a few months for growers to produce, ordering early allows you to have the best chance of getting exactly what you want, when you want it.

When it comes to choosing a good plant, start from the bottom up. Pull a couple of plants out of their pots or trays and look at the roots; if they're healthy and white, and if there are lots of roots,



Petunias, like the Tidal Wave Cherry Spreading, version are fast growing.

chances are the rest of the plant is healthy, too. Examine the leaves, which should exhibit good color no matter what color they are (not all leaves are green, of course). A flowering plant should be installed when about one-quarter of the blooms are open, with a lot of buds to show more flowers are coming soon. At this stage, plants recover well from transplanting stress and get used to their new environment more quickly and easily.

Make sure there are no signs of disease such as wilting, spots, discolored leaves or misshapen flowers, buds or foliage. (Even if you don't know the scientific name for what makes a plant look unhealthy, you can usually tell when one looks "sick.") And just remember that if you wouldn't plant it in your own yard, your client doesn't want it in theirs, either. When in doubt, remember that every bad plant you don't plant is one you won't have to pay to replace later.

— The author is the Business Development Manager for Ball Landscape.

He can be reached at 630/588-3468 or jgibson@ballhort.com.



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February 2007

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By Ron Hall
This year's NFLPA survey reveals players feel grass is similar to them, but does it mean a thing to the rest of us? [More...](#)

Turfgrass Technology

Greene Field at Hobbs named "Durable Field of 2006"
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Builds a new turfgrass field. Build your team first
By Tommy Dumais, Jim McAlister, Ph.D.
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Originally manufactured in the early 1960s, these mats are used to help remove sand and construction debris. How it's being used [More...](#)

Keeping a keen eye on efficient water
By Ron Hall
Irrigation control during establishment of tall fescue seed is difficult for many reasons. First considered safe on fully established stands, detrimental to newly developing seedlings. [More...](#)

Synthetic Turf

The Ohio State breaks turfgrass for its University athletic officials said the decision more time to practice on the field, and to go [More...](#)

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- Add-on Biz: Hydroseeding

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Project of the Month

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On the Record
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FIELD REPORT: Benefits abound from New England Green trade show
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FIELD REPORT: Communicate with clients and break from the pack
By Ron Hall
"It is impossible for your competition to treat your customers the way you do," said Marty Gruber at the Bayer Healthy Lawn/Healthy Business Summit in Cleveland, Feb. 20. [More...](#)

Caution pesticide opponents ready for spring push
A number of environmental, public health and medical organizations are turning up the heat on Ontario provincial lawmakers to ban what they describe as aesthetically use of pesticides. [More...](#)

PLANET prepares for National Lawn Care Month reports growth in Green Industry in 2004
PLANET conducted a national survey that reported that homeowners spent \$11.6 billion on their lawns in 2003, up 12% from 2002. [More...](#)

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Project Portfolio

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The design

An environment in character with the architecture of the formal house, but with a "looser" feel.

The site before construction

The site had a 50 ft. cross slope with which to create a level appearance. Placing the home to minimize the appearance of many large retaining walls was critical.



Project Requirements

- Present the home graciously and provide ample guest parking.
- Maintain a "living in the woods" feel but complement the formal architecture of the home.

Project Specifics

The landscape architect was brought in when the lot was purchased and was able to place the home to achieve the client's goals. Due to physical limitations, all spaces needed to be on the same elevation as the main floor. Another challenge was mitigating drainage on the high side of the property and properly dispersing the water. The pool was built in fill soil, so engineering the walls properly was paramount.



ABOVE The three-tiered fountain is symmetrical to the opposing spa. It can be enjoyed all year.

RIGHT Views from the main rooms to the terrace were important to the client. This view of the bluestone patio can be seen from the main hall down to the front entry doors.



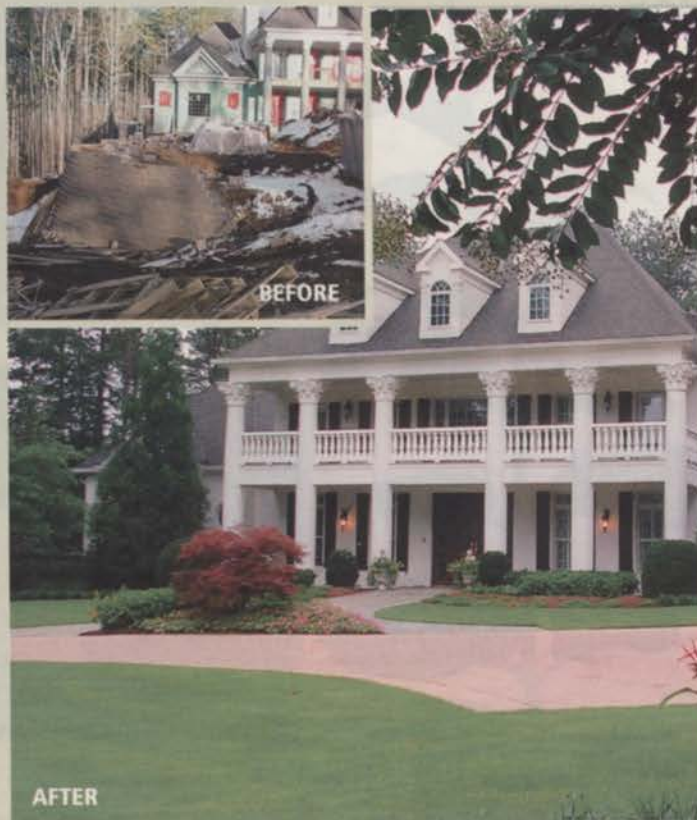


ABOVE The backyard terrace is a colorful, functional, entertaining environment nestled into the wooded setting.

LEFT Elegant and formal, the backyard environment terminates with a curved wooden arbor.

Project Principals

- Scapes, LLC, Atlanta, GA, www.scapessgroup.com
- Pete Wilkerson, landscape architect.
- Dathan Mitchell constructed the home and driveway.



LEFT Before construction, this front view of the site reveals the cross-slope that created a challenge to a level landscape appearance. After, the front of the home is framed by large cryptomeria, boxwoods and features a Japanese maple. The guest parking is incorporated to the side, but is easily accessible from the front door.

This project was a Grand Award winner in PLANET's Environmental Improvement Awards program. For more information on this program, or other services of the Professional Landcare Network, please call 800/395-2522 or visit www.landcarenetwork.org.

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Chapel of St. Basil

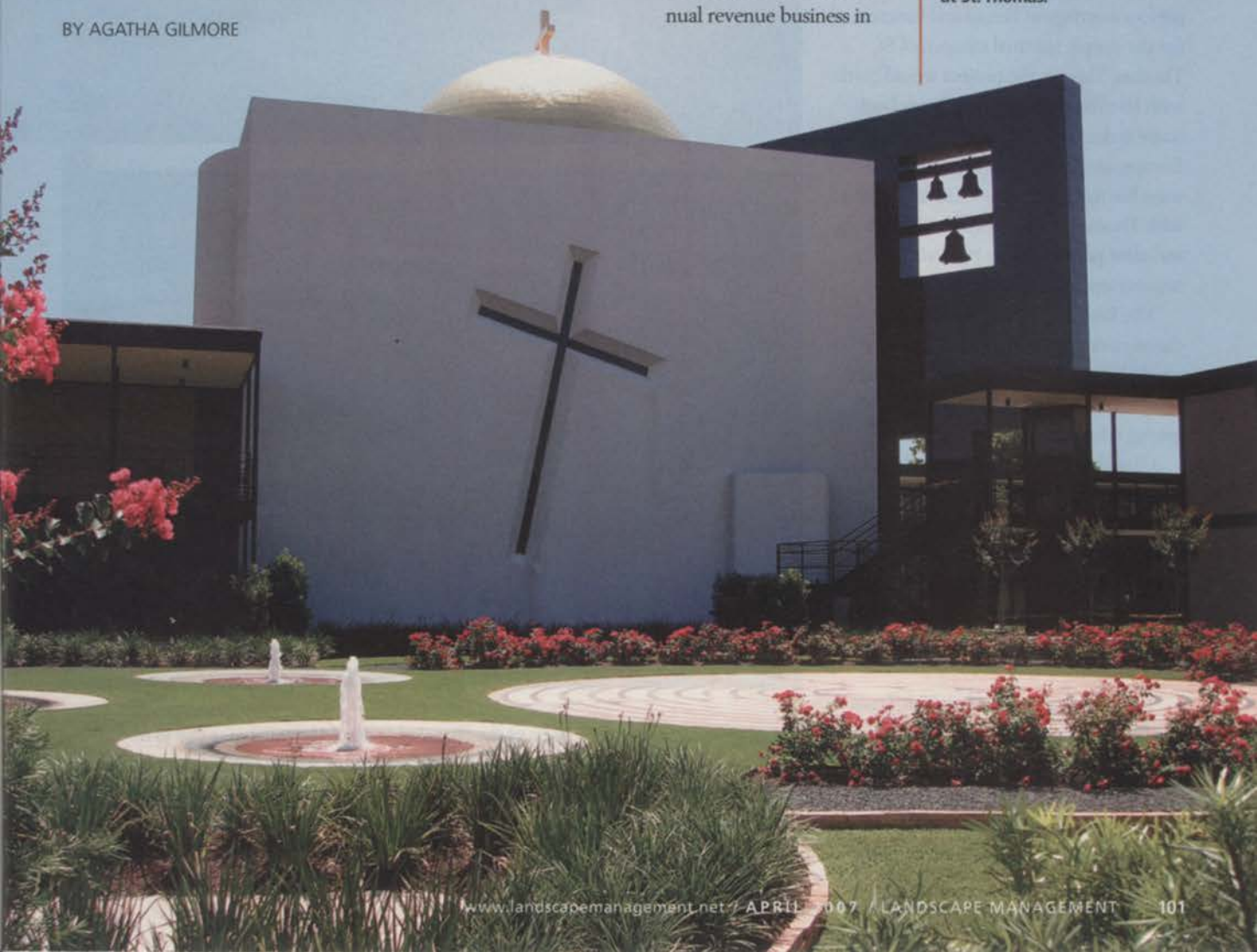
Thompson's Landscape Services overcame many challenges to build a labyrinth at Houston's University of St. Thomas church.

BY AGATHA GILMORE

When she was a young girl, Helen Grivich had a unique pastime. The countryside of her native England was littered with medieval labyrinths — snaking, circular paths that wind into their centers. These ancient motifs were meant to instill peace and promote meditation in those who walked them. And Grivich was no exception: Growing up on a tiny, secluded island off the southwest coast, she would often trace her way along the methodic trails, feeling the world slip away as she gave in to reflection.

It was an experience she carried with her to adulthood, when she became a designer and consultant for Thompson's Landscape Services, a \$2 million annual revenue business in

The labyrinth is a perfect marriage of design and function for the deeply spiritual campus at St. Thomas.



Magnolia, TX. She always wanted to build a labyrinth of her own someday. In late 2005 she got her chance.

The University of St. Thomas, a Catholic institution in Houston, needed a new design for the garden behind its Chapel of St. Basil, a unique building by major modern architect Philip Johnson. Labyrinths have existed for at least 4,000 years, spanning both continental and cultural divides. There are several different types, but regardless of design, their universal trait is that they have one entrance and one exit. They are not mazes: They are not meant to trick or confuse. Historically, people who couldn't afford major pilgrimages to Jerusalem could walk a labyrinth instead. So a labyrinth was the perfect marriage of design and function for the deeply spiritual campus of St. Thomas. Though the project would come with its own hurdles — the Texas landscape is decidedly different from that of Europe, and building at a university always has its challenges — Grivich worked with Thompson's to create a 42-ft. stone-and-slate pattern that is both visually intriguing and emblematically rich.

The first step for Grivich was to choose a design. "I had to find one that would be significant," she says. "It should be steeped with traditional symbols, inspiring refuge from urban turmoil."

Grivich settled on a pattern derived from the 13th-century labyrinth at Chartres Cathedral in central France. "The one that I put in is the kindest one in the world," she says. "You don't have to worry. You take the turns where it tells you. You don't have to think; you can be introspective."

The pathway, made of pinkish Texas crushed granite against a backdrop of grey slate, divides into four quadrants and ends in a central rosette that symbolizes the Virgin Mary. This particular design also

continued on page 104



Before construction could begin at the Chapel of St. Basil, the entire area had to be drained and slate installed because part of the garden sat atop an underground classroom. (Below) The design was taken from the 13th-century labyrinth at Chartres Cathedral in central France.

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continued from page 102

has 13 twists and turns toward the center before reaching the end, which according to Grivich, is meant to allude to Jesus and his apostles. The outer ring of the giant circular design is flanked by 28 three-quarter moons, which Grivich suggests means labyrinths were used as 28-day lunar calendars for Easter feasts. "It was the only way back then that they could [tell time]," she says. "Talk about 'written in stone.'"

Having found a suitably symbolic design, Grivich then had to figure out how to position it in the chapel garden. Since the chapel is such an architecturally interesting building, she chose to have the labyrinth face it. "There's a cross that's slightly off-kilter," she says of the large,

continued on page 106

Is there a labyrinth in your future?

Admittedly, the design and installation of labyrinths is not exactly a growing trend in the landscape business. But, who knows, maybe someday, because they're more common than you'd think. In the Houston region alone there are at least 10 walkable labyrinths. Here's the short list with more information available at www.houstonlabyrinth.org.

The Covenant Church Labyrinth on Caroline Street is a 50-ft. setting made of crushed granite and pavenstone. It is viewable at www.covenanthouston.org.

The First Presbyterian Church in Lufkin, TX, features a 50-ft., 7-circuit labyrinth made of gravel and pavers. It is set in a wooded area near a prayer garden and is open 24 hours.

The Margaret Austin Center in Chappell Hill, TX, offers a 7-circuit, left-handed labyrinth modeled on ancient Crete designs. Visit www.macenter.org or call 800/836-4757 for availability.

One of the most famous labyrinths in the world is the Chartres Cathedral labyrinth, built around 1200 A.D., and made of limestone and blue marble. Measuring 42-ft. in diameter, its pattern is meant to symbolize the course of human life, winding its way through trial and tribulation and leading to God, symbolized by the central rosette. The rosette was once covered in copper, but the metal was taken in 1793 to make guns. Today, although the Chartres labyrinth receives many visitors, it is covered with chairs or additional seating every day but Friday.

—AG



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continued from page 104

white symbol that hangs at an angle on the outer wall of the chapel. Grivich laid out the labyrinth so that "at each turn, you would face the cross, which is the

greatest symbol of the Catholic Church."

The rest of the garden was sprinkled with religious elements. Three granite fountains (meant to recall the Holy Trinity) were designed for the area behind the labyrinth. "They mimicked another



one that was on campus," says J.D. Burney, chief designer for Thompson's Landscape. "Of course, the water represents cleansing," he adds.

The project took about four months to complete and cost between \$350,000 and \$400,000.

Additionally, only the traditionally Catholic colors of green, red, purple and white were to be used. "The roses that we did around the labyrinth were all red roses," Burney says. "They represent the blood of Christ. We used a lot of white irises, butterfly irises [white with a purple center]. Those represent the purity of Christ." Giant liriopse, a grassy plant that blossoms white and purple, as well as purple crate myrtles define the borders.

Before construction could begin, however, Grivich and her Thompson's Landscape team had a special situation to assess. Some of the chapel garden was sitting on an underground university building. Though there was supposed to be about a foot of earth to work with, they discovered they had only two inches. "They had poured a slab pathway that was really thick right on top of that classroom," Grivich says. Rather than rip it out, Grivich opted to cover the pathway with slate. But it was a difficult undertaking because the entire area first had to be drained, and then the team had a hard time adhering the slate to the concrete.

continued on page 108

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Circle 171

continued from page 106

"We had to be very careful not to disturb the classroom," Burney says. "We couldn't ride machinery on top of it." Planting trees was also not an option, so Grivich

substituted potted plants. "Design is always problem-solving," Grivich says with a laugh.

Construction finally began in early 2006. The labyrinth was built first. Thompson's Landscape subcontracted out

the masonry work, which required a special team of labyrinth experts. Grivich says much of the end product came about by trial and error. "We had to take out several pieces," she says, referring to parts of the design, like the lunar cusps, which were installed incorrectly the first time. "It became this really interesting project."

Once the labyrinth was completed, a rotating group of three to six Thompson's employees worked on the garden. The project took about four months to complete, costing between \$350,000 and \$400,000. And several more issues arose.

Labyrinths are not mazes and are not meant to confuse.

St. Thomas was, after all, a Catholic university, so "if there was going to be Mass, we made sure we shut it down," Burney says. Also, the paspalum grass that Thompson's wanted for the garden wasn't available until spring, so they put down St. Augustine in the meantime.

Grivich also made another major decision: She would use only organic materials, partly because the chapel itself "has no artificial light inside it." She aimed to conserve water by creating a permeable granite path around the garden that "absorbs sound" and "connects you with the earth." "It's crazy to be concreting everything," Grivich says. "Especially in a city like Houston, you can't do that. The more water you shoot out to the street, the more you flood the street."


The labyrinth landscape was completed in May and named The Felicie Babin Gueymard Memorial Garden in memory of the donor's mother. It has been well received by students and visitors

continued on page 110

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DESIGN/BUILD LANDSCAPE OF THE MONTH

continued from page 108

alike. Students are fond of the concrete garden benches for sitting, reading or thinking. And the space has proven popular for weddings, even in the Houston heat. "They don't have weddings in the chapel, they have weddings in the labyrinth," Grivich says.

In addition, the labyrinth is "now listed as one of the top 10 things to do when you come to Houston," Grivich says. Perhaps most exciting is the approval of one particularly special guest: Archbishop J. Michael Miller, also a former president of the University of St. Thomas. "He came over and was thrilled," Grivich says. "He loves labyrinths." **LM**

— *The author is a freelance writer from New York City who is completing her work on her Masters Degree in Journalism at the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University. Contact her at a-gilmore@northwestern.edu.*

The labyrinth was named The Felicie Babin Gueymard Memorial Garden in memory of the donor's mother. (Below right) The site before the installation.



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Products

RESOURCES TOOLS OF THE TRADE



Turfco offers front traction drive

Turfco Direct has introduced its new Front Traction drive for its TurnAer 4 and TurnAer 6 aerators. The new Front Traction drive significantly increases traction and control available during machine transport and while loading onto a truck or trailer. Constructed of long-wearing rubber, the Front Traction drive replaces the typical nylon drive drum with three (TurnAer 4) or four (TurnAer 6) high-traction tires. In addition to the traction enhancements, the Front Traction drive also provides smoother, more refined operation on paved or concrete surfaces.

For more information contact Turfco at 800/679-8201 or www.turfco.com / circle no. 268

New Exmark accessories

Exmark has introduced two new accessories: the Lazerlocker and Operator Controlled Discharge. The LazerLocker works with most of Exmark's riding and walk-behind mowers and eliminates the need for chains, straps and tie-downs. A sturdy equipment locker, this feature secures equipment to a trailer and prevents damage. Operator Controlled Discharge (OCD) is foot-operated and deliv-

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The durable Gel-Padded Palm Rough Rider glove from Galeton is made entirely from top-grain cowhide and deep-oil tanned for softness. Without compromising dexterity, the gel padding ensures a comfortable, shock-absorbing grip right where workers need it most. Each Rough Rider Glove is sewn with an inset, keystone thumb and bound with leather at the cuff.

For more information contact Galeton at 800/221-0570 or www.galeton.com / circle no. 269



ers greater productivity than traditional hand-operated designs. The blocker door opens and closes allowing the user to quickly and effectively control discharge when mowing around mulch beds, parked cars, homes and other objects.

For more information please contact Exmark at 402/223-6300 or www.exmark.com / circle no. 270

Optimum range remote

Toro Irrigation's TMR-1 Maintenance Remote is the only irrigation remote operating on unlicensed MURS frequencies, giving it optimum range without the hassles of FCC licensing. It can remotely control up to 500 stations, eliminating the need for walking back and forth from the field to the controller. It also has a

1.5-mile line-of-site range and an intuitive command set, making it a convenient tool for contractors. One exclusive feature of the TMR-1 is the All Stations Cycle function, which tests all stations with a 2-minute run-time per station. It provides 1-start system operation for walkthroughs providing increased productivity.

For more information contact Toro Irrigation at 800/367-8676 or www.toro.com / circle no. 271

Propiconazole 14.3% fungicide

Quali-Pro brand products announced California registration of its post-patent equivalent of Banner Maxx, Propiconazole 14.3% fungicide. Propiconazole 14.3% is a broad-spectrum disease control for cool and warm-season grasses, trees, shrubs and flowers. The micro emulsion formulation provides a less-odor product with better tank stability and excellent plant coverage.

For more information contact Quali-Pro at 800/979-8994 or www.quali-pro.com / circle no. 272



continued on page 117

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CONTRACTORS/SERVICE COMPANIES

- 01 Landscape Contractors (Installation & Maintenance)
 02 Lawn Care Service Companies & Custom Chemical Applicators (ground & air)
 03 Irrigation Contractors & Consultants
 14 Ornamental Shrub & Tree Services
 15 Landscape Architects
 04 Other Contractors/Service Companies (please specify) _____

SUPPLIERS AND CONSULTANTS

- 09 Extension Agents/Consultants for Horticulture
 10 Sod Growers, Turf Seed Growers & Nurseries
 11 Dealers, Distributors, Formulators & Blenders
 12 Manufacturers
 13 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. Which of the following services does your company provide? (Fill in ALL that apply)

MAINTENANCE/PRICES

- 01 Mowing
 02 Turf Fertilization
 03 Turf Insect Control
 04 Turf Disease Control
 05 Turf Aeration
 06 Hydro-seeding
 07 Irrigation Services
 08 Bedding/Perennial Installation
 09 Tree Care
 10 Pond/Lake Care
 11 Snow Removal
 12 Landscape Design
 13 Landscape Installation
 14 Irrigation Installation
 15 Paving/Deck/Patio Installation
 16 Erosion Control
 17 Ornamental Care
 18 Landscape Lighting
 19 Other (please specify) _____

4. Which of the following landscape products do you purchase or specify? (Fill in ALL that apply)

- 27 Mowers
 28 Engines
 29 Blowers
 30 Chain Saws
 31 Leaf Blowers
 32 Fertilizers
 33 Insecticides
 34 Herbicides
 35 Fungicides
 36 Biological/Organics
 37 Turf Seed/Seed
 38 Spreads
 39 Bedding/Perennial Plants
 40 Ornamental/Nursery Products
 41 Irrigation Systems
 42 Ponds/Water Features
 43 Pavers/Masonry/Bricks/Rocks
 44 Hardscape Materials
 45 Skid Steers
 46 Compact Track Loaders
 47 Tractors
 48 Pick-up Trucks
 49 Cab Forward Trucks
 50 Utility Vehicles
 51 Business Management Software
 52 Other (please specify) _____

5. My firm's annual revenue is: (Fill in ONE only)

- 001 More than \$4,000,000
 002 \$2,000,000 - \$4,000,000
 003 \$1,500,000 - \$1,999,999
 004 \$1,000,000 - \$1,499,999
 005 \$500,000 - \$999,999
 006 Less than \$500,000

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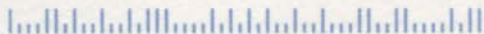
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Products

continued from page 112

Tanaka grass trimmer

Tanaka America added another new grass trimmer / brush cutter to its lineup, the TBC-255PF. Weighing just 11.8 lbs., the TBC-255PF replaces the TBC-245PF and is powered by Tanaka's new 25-cc, 1.3-hp PureFire engine. Other features include: solid steel drive shaft, 5-in. semi-automatic cutting head, 23-fl.-oz., see-through fuel tank, low-profile cutting guard and a 1-year commercial warranty.

For more information contact Tanaka America at 253/333-1200 or www.tanaka-usa.com / circle no. 273

Honda portable generator

Honda Power Equipment's EU6500i portable generator delivers fuel efficiency, clean power output and super quiet operation in a portable package. Producing 6,500 volt amperes (VA) (or watts) of power, the EU6500i provides crucial home back-up power during a blackout or other power emergency. The EU6500i is equally at home on a worksite, campsite or for RV camping and tailgating due to its portability and compact design. Compared to the earlier Honda EX5500 generator, the EU6500i is more than 33% smaller with a dry weight of only 253 lbs.

For more information contact Honda Power Equipment at 800-426-7701 or www.honda.com / circle no. 274



Storm turf & irrigation valves

Storm Manufacturing Group introduced a complete line of specialized brass garden valves and adapter fitting accessories used for a variety of lawn maintenance and irrigation applications. Included in the product line is the Sterling series ET controller, a specialized turf and landscape irrigation system controller that promotes water saving. The controller is able to preserve water by monitoring and adjusting the watering schedule to the weather conditions. This allows the controller to disburse the correct amount of water that is necessary to satisfy the receiving area.

For more information contact Storm Industries at 310/534-5232 or www.stormind.com / circle no. 275

Dismiss label amendments

FMC Professional Solutions' Dismiss turf herbicide received EPA approval for several label amendments. These include: post-emergent control of goosegrass addition; shortened overseeding and reseeding intervals; shortened sod establishment interval; purple nutsedge split application table; St. Augustinegrass addition; and surfactants not recommended. Dismiss will also now be available in a new two ounce container for lawn care operators. Dismiss turf herbicide provides post-emergent control of yellow nutsedge, purple nutsedge and green kyllinga, with visible results in two days. It also offers pre-emergent control of annual broadleaf weeds.

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Company	Page #	
AquaScape	25	NUVIS25
Ariens Co.	68	OPEI21, 68
Ball Horticulture	92	PLANET24, 54
Barracuda Networks	56	Profile Products25
Bayer Environmental Science	91	Quali-Pro25
Bell Laboratories	26	Scapes LLC99
Bergerson Tax Services	46	ServiceMaster18
Brickman Group	22	Souders Lawn Care26
Clemson University	91	Southern Nursery Association25
CropLife Canada	23	Symantec56
Crosslin & Associates	42	Thompson's Landscape Services 101
Ecology Landscape	124	Toro Co.25
Fecon	25	Treemendous Landscape Co.25
Grass Roots Training	16	University of St. Thomas101
Grasshopper Co.	68	ValleyCrest20
Growing Green Lawn Care	26	Venture Products25
Hinds Community College	86	Vitamin Institute54
Hunter Industries	25	Walker Mowers68
J.H. Burton & Sons	54	Waller, Lansden, Dortch & Davis .43
John Deere	68	Wandtke and Associates44
Kansas State University	82	Wilson-Oyler Group14
Kehoe & Co.	22	
McAfee	56	
Northwestern University	110	

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Ecology Landscape

Deep environmental roots guide this business owner's approach.

BY JANET AIRD

George Kerr's work as a landscape designer and contractor comes from his passion: the environment.

"My roots with the environment go back all my life," says Kerr, owner of Ecology Landscape in Simi Valley, CA.

He's worked in landscaping since he was 7 years old, when he began helping in his father's landscape business. Kerr, a commissioner with the Ventura County Fish and Game Commission for more than 12 years, started Ecology Landscape in 1970.

"I specialize in restoration ecology," Kerr says. "I'm very much concerned about the restoration of our wildlife."

Ecology Landscape has won several awards through contractors' associations, Kerr says, and has been voted "Business of the Year" by the Simi Valley Chamber of Commerce.

Kerr's favorite work is custom residential design and installation. This is where his



Environmental focus.
George Kerr specializes in restoration ecology.

love of the environment and for sustainability meet.

"I want to have things organized and balanced, with a reason, flow and rhythm," he says. His designs take into consideration the climate of the area and the microclimate of the property, the architecture of the house and even the way the house sits on the lot. He also makes sure the design suits the lifestyle of the homeowners and their families. If a gardener is going to do all the maintenance, Kerr makes sure the landscape needs minimal attention.

Kerr encourages the homeowners to get at least one specimen tree. He designs the plantings in zones, and sets the irrigation system for each zone. He also takes care in preparing the soil. He uses intensive soil amendments and different kinds of fertilizers, both organic and chemical, depending on the time of year.

Even when an installation is finished, Kerr isn't. "I go by my projects all the time," he says.

He does 'tune-ups' for his customers, to maintain the landscaping at the same level as when it was installed. "I always worry about maintenance," Kerr says. "When a job is done right, it's pretty self-sufficient, but every job does

have to be maintained to a certain extent."

His crew takes the same care in their work. "I'm really

proud of them. They take great pride in presenting themselves well, doing a quality job and keeping the work area cleaned up," Kerr says.

Kerr gets all his work through referrals. One advantage of referrals is that he isn't locked into one given area, he says. Another is that he has a competitive edge when people have heard of him.

He's glad to see homeowners gravitating toward sustainable landscaping, although, he says, too many of them hire 'fly-by-night' landscapers who plant the wrong materials in the wrong spot, or invasive species, which sooner or later have to be taken out. "Landscape malpractice is truly out there," he says.

He sees part of his job as educating homeowners.

"I try to help them make the right decisions," he says. "I do my best for the environment and the homeowner." **LM**

— The author is a freelance writer in Altadena, CA.

Contact her at

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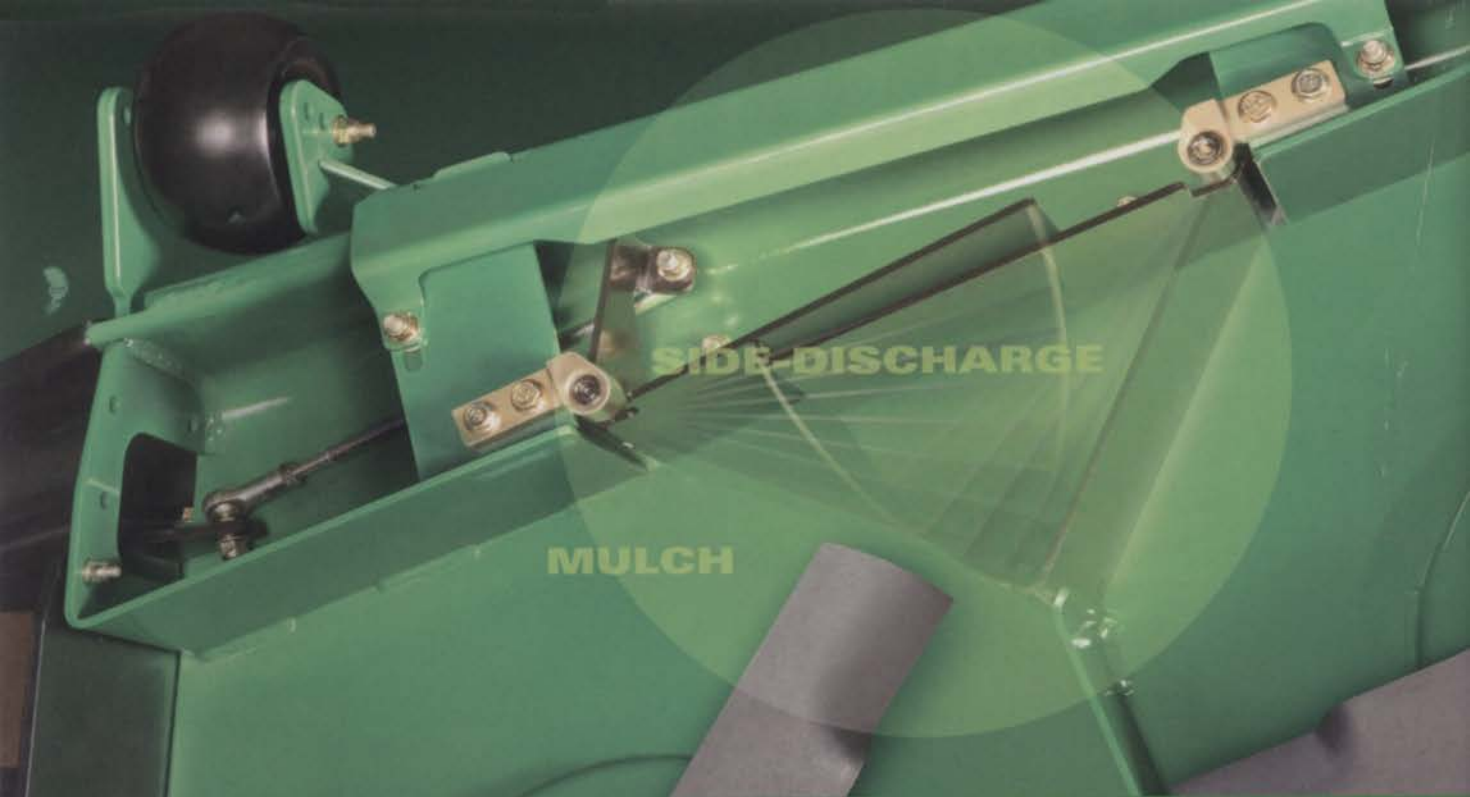


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