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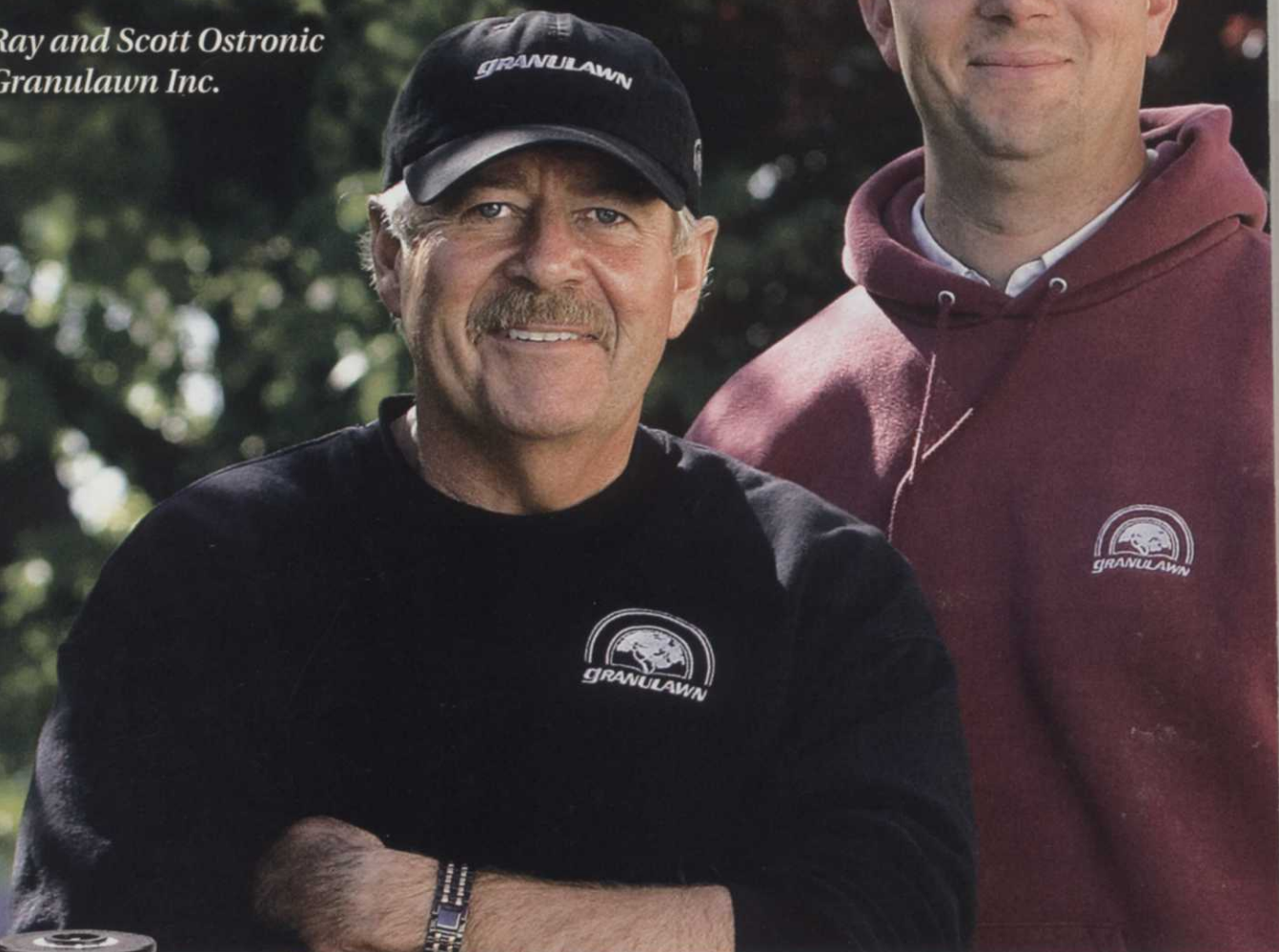
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### San Antonio ice storm couldn't put the freeze on STMA event

Icicles on the Alamo didn't stop broadcast journalist Roy Firestone (seated) from belting out "America the Beautiful," at the Sports Turf Managers Association Conference and Trade Show.

## » Readers respond

For most of the U.S., the weather this winter has been far from frightful.

**How have the above average temperatures affected your business so far this season?**

**34%**

No complaints, I've had good weather to work with

**26%** We're caught in between: it's too warm to plow, too muddy to do landscape work

**20%** I'm getting desperate and may consider hiring a witch doctor to perform a ritualistic snow dance

**19%** I have a fleet of plow trucks sitting in the garage

Want to weigh in? Our survey question changes every month and we publish the results here. Visit [www.landscapemanagement.net](http://www.landscapemanagement.net) to voice your opinion.

## » Overheard

**"I don't think it's global warming; I think it's global repositioning."**

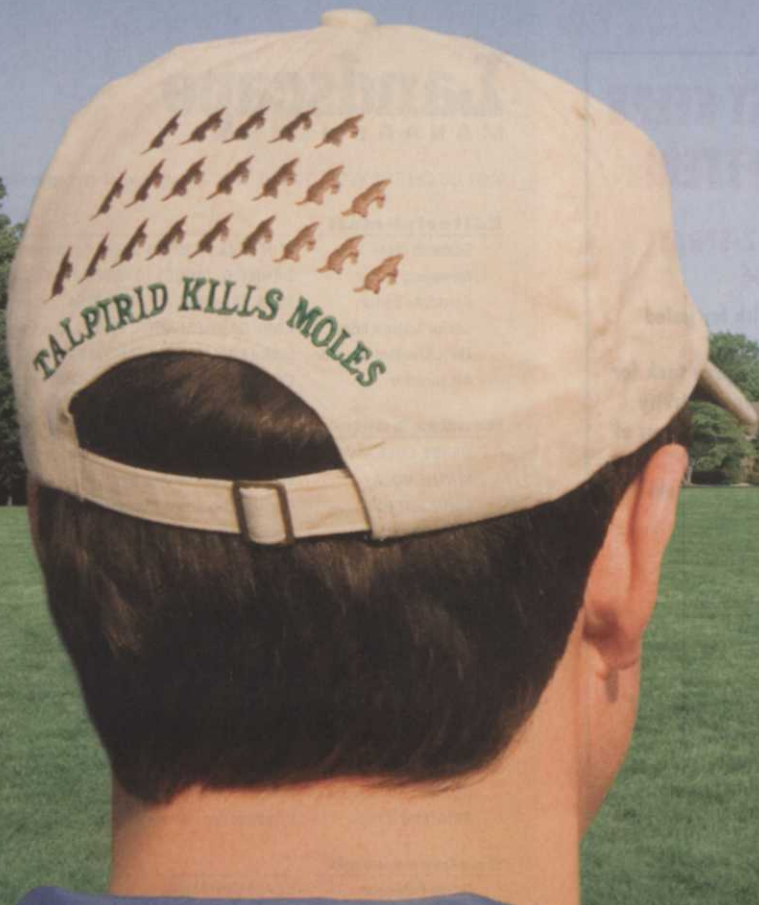
— an attendee at the Isuzu Commercial Truck Dealer Conference discussing the warm weather that hit the Northeast and the cold weather down South

## » Special issue

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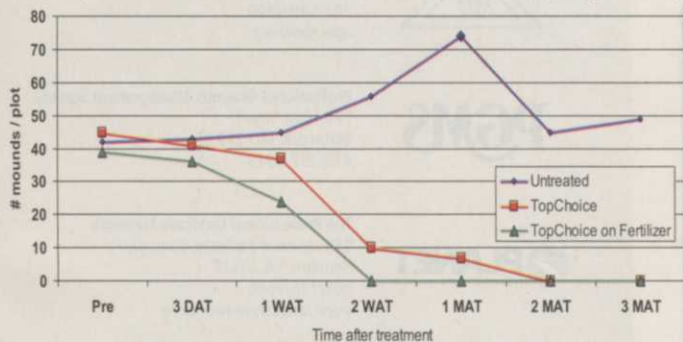
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TopChoice vs Fire Ants Gainsville, FL 2005 (Bayer data)



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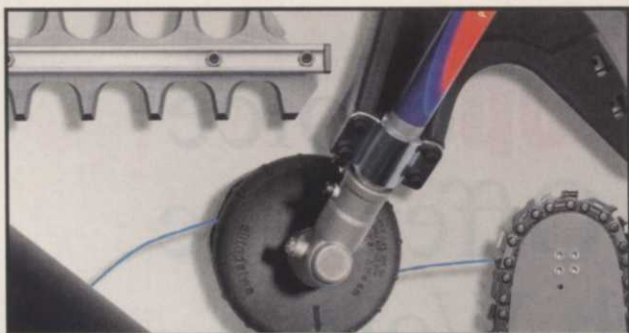
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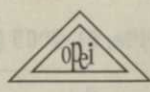
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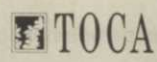
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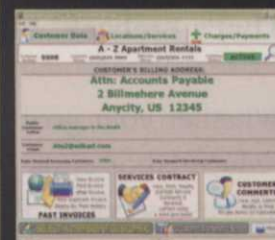
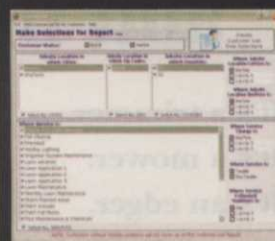
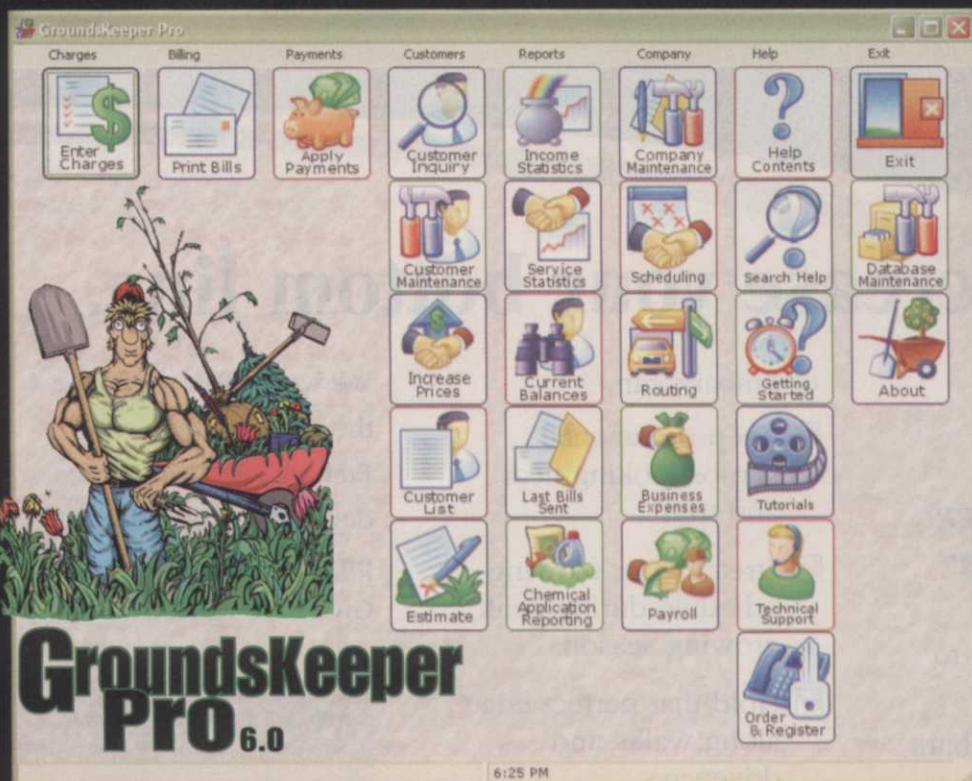
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## Wouldn't it be fantastic if . . .

BY RON HALL / Editor in Chief

- ■ ■ those of us in the snow business got two to three inches of fluff every third day the rest of winter, or at least until spring starts when the landscape/lawn service cash begins rolling in again. (No snow on Sundays, of course.)
- ... all of our workers spoke fluent English and had valid driver's licenses.
- ... pest insects, weeds and diseases never developed resistance to the products we use. (Hhmm, what would this say about evolution?)
- ... every general contractor stayed on schedule and dealt with their subs honorably, including promptly paying them for work performed.
- ... customers recognized the effort and dedication it takes for landscape/lawn company employees to gain industry certification.
- ... our legislators displayed more common sense and less politics on the immigration issue, meaning passing measures to secure our borders and instituting workable temporary guest workers programs.
- ... these same lawmakers put up the necessary, money, manpower and technology in place to make this happen, not only on our borders but at the overburdened administrative centers where guest workers are vetted and their applications processed.
- ... our biggest business competitor was also a good friend.
- ... every employee showed up for work on time every day. And none of them ever showed up hung over.
- ... more of us got involved with programs, such as Project Evergreens GreenCare for Troop, Extreme Makeover and Habitat for Humanity.
- ... we dramatically reduced the number of power equipment operator injuries and fatalities.

- ... contracts were written in plain English and were easier to understand.
- ... we could spend every weekend reuniting, recreating and relaxing with family and friends, even during May and June.
- ... destructive hurricanes avoided Florida, the rest of the East and the Gulf Coast again this season.
- ... there weren't so many different taxes to pay. And they weren't so high.
- ... when disagreements arise, we would arbitrate first and litigate when all else failed.
- ... customers followed our plant care instructions, especially irrigation.
- ... mower blades never needed sharpening and vehicle tires never went flat.
- ... we didn't have to worry so much about somebody trying to rip off our trimmers, skid-steer loaders and service vehicles.
- ... every chemical applicator followed product label instructions and kept their application equipment clean and properly calibrated.
- ... newcomers to this industry participated in industry associations, starting at the local or regional level.
- ... if we had gotten into this business 10 years ago and knew what we know now.

Until next time.

Contact Ron at  
216/706-3739 or e-mail at  
rhall@questex.com

Wouldn't it be great if our biggest competitor was also a good friend?



These reports, if used consistently, can help companies manage the key drivers of their businesses real time.



## Build a dashboard report

BY BRUCE WILSON

**T**oo many companies look at their financials at the end of the month to see how they did. For even the best of companies that is a minimum of two weeks after the month is over and six weeks after it starts. Receiving the financial statement by the 15th of the month is typical.

When you are doing well, it's not a big problem. But when performance is marginal or profits are declining, you want to be able to do something about it. If you get your financial statement midway through the month, half the current month is over, and you may be well on the way to another weak month.

### Adjusting on the fly

Today, companies in all industries are using dashboard reports that highlight key financial indicators. These reports come prepackaged or can be created with basic spreadsheet software. They allow managers to quickly view the critical data, the key drivers most important to their organizations. That gives managers an opportunity to adjust on the fly. If used consistently, they help companies manage their businesses real time. They provide a good idea where the financial statement will come in when it does arrive.

This concept is important to companies that operate in six or seven month markets. Often companies do more than one-third of their season sales in the first eight weeks. If those weeks are weak in terms of profit, and the whole year could be lost.

So, what information should the dashboard for a maintenance company contain? Start with:

- ▶ Weekly labor to budget either in hours, dollars or both
- ▶ Enhancement work billed per week
- ▶ Enhancement backlog
- ▶ Proposals given
- ▶ Proposals closed

Some companies have more indicators on their dashboards. Use information that's easily tracked and is actionable.

For instance, most companies can get labor reports with their payroll. If you are on a two-week pay cycle you may not be able to get dollars every week, but you still can get hours from time cards. If you know how many hours you have budgeted to spend, you can easily tell when you are over and make the necessary adjustment that next week to get back on track.

Tracking enhancement sales is really important to the bottom line. Whatever your enhancement crew size, you need to know how much work you need to produce to pay for that crew. That is why weekly billing is important. If you are not billing enough you know you need to cut people or increase the amount of work over the balance of the month.

So as you can see, this advance information can help you, as a manager, keep financial performance moving in a positive direction. All it takes is a weekly look at your dashboard.

— The author is a partner with entrepreneur Tom Oyler in the Wilson-Oyler Group, which offers consulting services. Visit [www.wilson-oyler.com](http://www.wilson-oyler.com).



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Walk out of your shop and back in again.  
If you were a top candidate, would  
you want to work here?



## A better way to hire

BY BILL HOOPES

**T**o win, you just can't allow yourself to hire losers. Focus hard on how and whom you hire. You simply cannot afford preventable turnover. Most causes of turnover are controllable. It begins with the selection process.

### Recruiting tips

- ▶ **Improve the content of your classified ads.** Don't run ads for "lawn techs" or "landscape crew" unless that is what you want to hire. An ad that attracts a higher-grade candidate gives you something to work with. Start your ad copy with a grabber heading like "Great Green Industry Careers." Emphasize the opportunity to learn, succeed and grow on the job. In the copy, talk about working independently and outdoors. Emphasize your benefits and that you provide a positive, team-oriented work environment.
- ▶ **Use a variety of recruiting sources.** Pay your staff a referral bonus. Employees referred by current staff turnover at a lower rate than all others.
- ▶ **Use the Internet.** Today's workers look for jobs there. There are several good Green Industry sites that are easy to access. Google landscape/lawn care jobs and see the options.

### Interviewing tips

- ▶ **Improve your interviewing environment.** Stop sending all the wrong signals. Walk out of your shop and back in again. This time look around. If you were a

top candidate, would you want to work here? Was the window so dirty you couldn't see inside? Did you step over a pile of cigarette butts to get in the front door? How were you greeted? Was the office clean, how about the staff? All these factors send signals. To hire the best, the signals have to be positive.

People will take a job if it looks good but only keep it if it feels good. We are talking about making the job look good. All a candidate knows is your reputation in town and what they find when they show up. So, clean up, post an interview schedule and have someone greet candidates as they arrive.

- ▶ **Don't "wing it" in interviews.** Plan and rehearse interviews. Provide a private setting. There should be no interruptions. The candidate and the candidate's application should be your only point of focus. The candidate needs to feel he/she is the most important thing on your mind if you want to be the most important thing on his.

- ▶ **Explain what the job is, what the expectations are.** But start with a firm handshake. Plan five open-ended questions that help you learn as much as possible about previous performance. Forget what he/she liked. You want to know what the candidate did, how he/she handled similar situations and what the outcome was. Past performance is the key.

- ▶ **Make a decision.** If the candidate is your piece of cake, second and third interviews almost never change opinions. Get a commitment now.

— The author is founder of Grass Roots Training in Delaware, OH. Contact him at [hoopes@columbus.rr.com](mailto:hoopes@columbus.rr.com) or visit [www.grassroots-training.com](http://www.grassroots-training.com).



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# In the Know

BUSINESS NEWS YOU CAN USE

## Louisville Bats mix baseball with lawn care

BY RON HALL / Editor in Chief

**LOUISVILLE, KY** — Do you think your clients might be impressed if they knew that the guy taking care of their property was a trained professional sports turf groundskeeper?

The owners of the Triple-A Louisville Bats baseball team think they will, and since they brought Aaron Boggs on board in March 2006, they're more convinced than ever that's the case. Boggs, the former head groundskeeper at nearby University of Louisville, brought a ton of enthusiasm and lots of turf knowledge to the organization. Now that he's getting better grounded in the business end of commercial grounds care, the company, 4-year-old Homefield Advantage Turf Care, is starting to become a player here.

"We're unusual as a lawn care company because of the number of people we have who have earned degrees in turfgrass or horticulture," says Boggs, himself a graduate of Eastern Kentucky University.


But what really sets Homefield Advantage apart is its working relationship with Louisville Bats, in particular its award-winning head groundskeeper Tom Nielsen. Indeed, while their responsibilities are different, Boggs and Nielsen, report to the same owners and work in adjacent office spaces in beautiful Slugger Field near downtown Louisville.

That relationship, fostered on a long-time

friendship of the two turf pros, gives Homefield Advantage's four fulltime employees access to Nielsen's knowledge and some specialized (and expensive) turf care equipment. This has allowed Homefield Advantage, which put on six seasonal workers this past season, to offer a range of services — from chemical lawn care to property maintenance and renovation — while keeping capital expenses in line. At least for now. Continued growth is definitely in the books, says Boggs.

Relying, at least in part, of the baseball team's name and marketing clout, Boggs says demand for the company's services are exceeding expectations, and he will add another fulltime employee to start the season.

"Our goal is to provide the best agronomic service that we can, whether it's a home lawn or the sports fields at the local school," he adds. "We're going to bring the same products that we use at Slugger Field to our customers' properties."



General Manager  
Aaron Boggs said  
customers love  
using real turf pros.

### New Komatsu Zenoah HQ

**LAWRENCEVILLE, GA** — RedMax/Komatsu Zenoah America moved its U.S. headquarters to Lawrenceville, GA, from its previous location in Norcross. The Lawrenceville building will provide plenty of office space, nearly double the previous warehouse space, and room to accommodate the company's planned growth.

### Snow pros get CSP study guide

**ERIE, PA** — SIMA is set to unveil a comprehensive study guide for prospective Certified Snow Professionals. "We have worked with volunteer CSPs and an outside consultant to create a complete study guide that will help snow and ice management professionals prepare for the only national certification in the industry," said Julie Seggi, SIMA training coordinator. Visit [www.sima.org](http://www.sima.org).

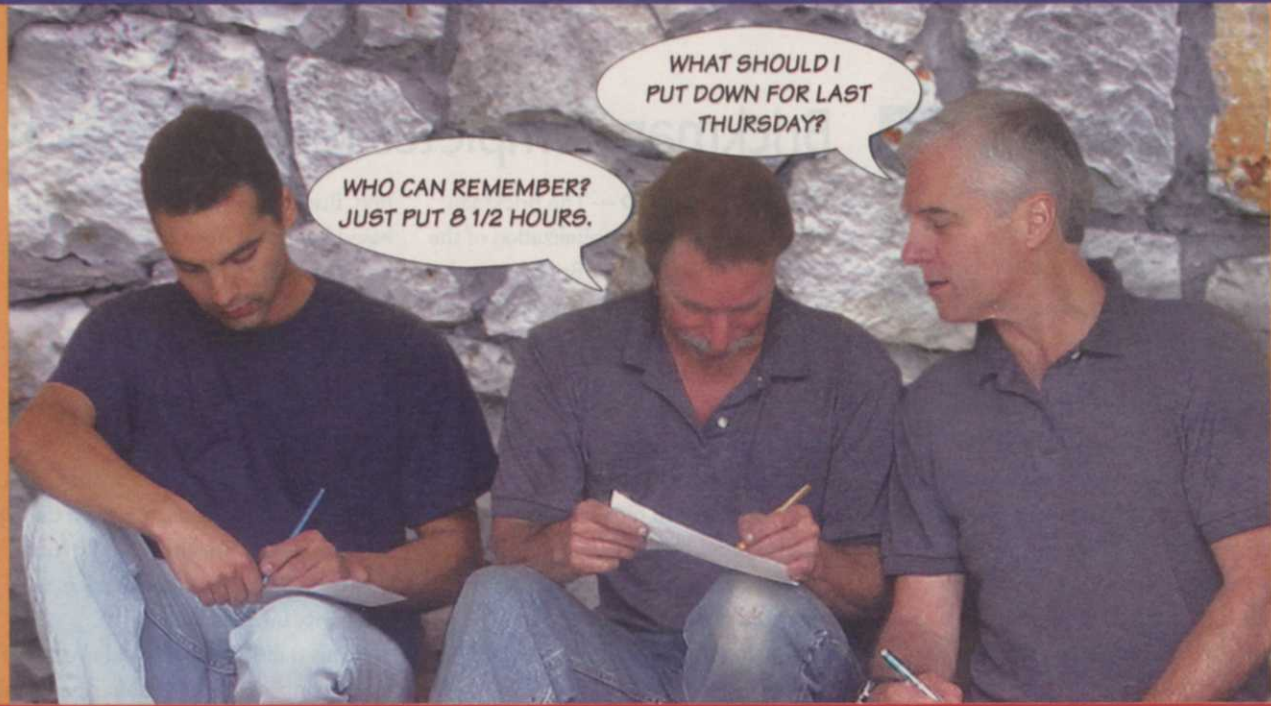
### Pesticide law now in effect

Oregon lawn care companies and others who use herbicides and pesticides to control vegetation and pests, are now required to electronically provide the State Department of Agriculture with information about the type of chemicals used, the quantity and where they are applied. The state's Pesticide Use Reporting System went into effect on Jan. 1. It's expected the legislature will extend its lifespan beyond the original sunset date in '09.

[CLIPPINGS]



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JUST PUT 8 1/2 HOURS.

WHAT SHOULD I  
PUT DOWN FOR LAST  
THURSDAY?

## WHY DEAL WITH THIS?

Employee Time Card

Name: **DAVID B.** Dates: **12-16**

Day	Start	Lunch	End	Jobsite	Activity	Hours
Monday	7	1/2	3:30	Brentwood	Gen	8
Tuesday	7	1/2	3:30	'	'	8
Wednesday	7	1/2	4	'	'	8 1/2
Thursday	7	1/2	4	Crestview	'	8 1/2
Friday	7	1/2	4	'	'	8 1/2

Employee Signature: *David B.* Total Hours: **41 1/2**

## WHEN YOU CAN HAVE THIS.

Employee Report

Burns, David Date Range: 2/12/2007 through 2/16/2007

Day	Date	Jobsite	Start	Stop	Cost Code	Hours	Total
Mon	2/12	Brentwood	7:08 AM	12:05 PM	Irrigation	4:57	
			12:41 PM	3:22 PM	Irrigation	2:41	7:38 hours
Tue	2/13	Brentwood	7:12 AM	12:07 PM	Irrigation	4:55	
			12:43 PM	3:23 PM	Irrigation	2:40	7:35 hours
Wed	2/14	Brentwood	7:12 AM	12:02 PM	Irrigation	4:50	
			12:46 PM	3:49 PM	Irrigation	3:03	7:53 hours
Thu	2/15	Crestview	7:17 AM	12:19 PM	Planting	5:02	
			12:50 PM	3:46 PM	Planting	2:56	7:58 hours
Fri	2/16	Crestview	7:13 AM	12:07 PM	Planting	4:54	
			12:44 PM	3:39 PM	Planting	2:55	7:49 hours
<b>Total</b>						<b>38:53 hours</b>	

Signature: *David B.* Burns, David

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 > Crews on the **MOVE?**

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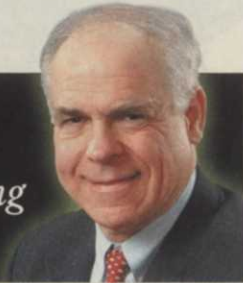
Circle 118





# In the Know

## LEGALLY Speaking



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

**Q** I plan to expand my operations to another state this year. Is the trademark or trade name on my company's name national? Or does it only apply locally?

**A** Your company's name is a trade name. While a trademark is used to identify and distinguish the trademark owner's goods from those of another and to indicate the source of the goods, a trade name means any name used by a person or business to identify his business. Trade names cannot be registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. If you meet the tests to register your company's name as a trademark, i.e. that it is distinctive as established by the evidence, you should register the trademark before expanding its use to another state.

**Q** The trucks we use have a very distinctive logo involving color and design. Can we protect them so no competitor can copy that design on its trucks?

**A** Yes. Assuming there is no prior conflict, you may be able to register the design as a trademark logo.

---

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.kenmorrislaw.com](http://www.kenmorrislaw.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.

## Brickman completes recapitalization

**GAITHERSBURG, MD** — The Brickman Group closed on a recapitalization of the company on January 23. Brickman is the largest landscape maintenance company in the United States, approaching annual revenues of \$500 million.

The transaction was undertaken to provide an exit strategy for CIVC Partners, Brickman's private equity partner since 1998, and to refinance Brickman's public bonds. The recapitalization gives the company more favorable private debt, said the company.

The family will continue to run the business, says Scott Brickman, CEO and president.

"Nine years is a long time to be partners with a private equity group like CIVC," Scott Brickman, CEO and president of the company, told *Landscape Management*. The relationship lasted so long because both partners — Brickman and CIVC, based in Chicago — had established an excellent relationship, he said.

To facilitate the recent recapitaliza-

tion, Brickman brought in Los Angeles-based Leonard Green & Partners, a new private equity partner.

"We went through an exhaustive process to find a new partner like CIVC who shared our values and we are thrilled to have selected Leonard Green," said Brickman.

After the transaction Leonard Green will own slightly less than 50% of the equity leaving the Brickman family, management and existing stockholders with a majority interest.

"This transaction will not have any effect on Brickman's leadership, operations or strategic plans," stressed Brickman.

"Following this transaction, nothing will change with regards to our operations or the direction of our business in any way. I, along with the leadership here at the company, will continue to run the company as we have for many years pursuing our vision of building strong teams, which provide outstanding quality and service to our customers."

---

## EPA revises pesticide applicator rules

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has begun developing revisions to federal pesticide applicator certification and training regulations. First enacted in the mid-1970s, the rules have changed little over the last 30-plus years and now practically every state's pesticide application certification and training requirements exceed the federal standard.

EPA last year issued discussion papers touching on the issues that a proposal updating the federal certification and training regulation would address including: expanding the scope of the regulation to cover the use of general use prod-

ucts by commercial applicators and not-for-hire applicators; setting a competency gauge for commercial applicators and other occupational users of pesticides; standardizing requirements; revising the definition of "under the direct supervision;" establishing a minimum age for pesticide applicators; and modifying recertification requirements.

EPA officials stated in November that a proposed rule would likely be issued in December of 2008. Sometime this year the EPA is expected to update discussion papers and will use the feedback it receives on those documents to begin drafting the rule.



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# In the Know

## Tips for keeping your equipment fleet productive + profitable

Healthy equipment that runs efficiently and achieves top production is the hallmark of a profitable large-equipment fleet. To achieve this goal, equipment must be effectively maintained at the lowest cost. The following tips from John Deere Service Marketing Manager Diego Navarro helps equipment fleet managers accomplish maximum productivity and uptime while minimizing costs.

**Condition-based maintenance.** Condition-based maintenance requires proactive action based on the machines condition. Technicians read the health of the machine and provide services based on that information. Techniques of condition-based maintenance include a complete oil analysis and a root cause analysis.

"Root cause analysis helps us get to what is really causing the problem. It's treating the disease instead of just relieving the symptoms," said Navarro.

**Particle counts and filtration.** Hydraulic system filtration is vital to extend the component life of any machine. Technicians initially determine the particle count by examining the oil for foreign particles. Then, filtration can take place

to reach the target.

"You may need to use bypass filtration, which is an aftermarket product. An on-site filtration caddy, on the other hand, can clean the hydraulics very fast while you're performing other services. The bypass will take two or three weeks to reach that cleanliness," Navarro said.

Another technique, magnetic filtration, is effective for components such as axles, and primarily used to capture iron particles.

"Iron (can) damage veins, oxidize the oil and consume the additive," Navarro said. "When you change oils, not all the iron goes out."

**Proper lubrication.** Mixing lubricants is a risk machine owners won't want to take.

"When your machine needs more oil, and you simply add any product you find instead of sticking with what's already being used in the machine, you are instantly changing the formulation," Navarro said. "This

**A technician cleans an excavator's hydraulic reservoir with a Super Caddy filter to extend component life.**



can often affect the machine negatively and accelerate wear."

Mixing lubricants can cause copper generation. Copper comes from bronze, an alloy used in all high-pressure systems in the pumps. If copper leaches from the pump's bronze, alloys weaken and pump efficiency suffers, resulting in contamination of the system and components.

**▼ Electronic machine information download.** One useful tool to maximize uptime and keep operating costs as low as



possible is a system that allows for electronic machine download. Machines with this type of system can record up to 10,000 hours of operation information, from fuel

consumption to pressures and temperature and more. For example, this kind of data can be retrieved from John Deere excavators using a tool called Machine Information Center, Navarro said.

"Machine Information Center is vital to keeping costs in line," he said. "It helps you determine how much time your operator spends idling or working, or when the way he is operating the machine is wearing out the tracks. The result is hours and hours of information that can really help the fleet supervisor manage cost and maintenance."



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# Prepare now for the spring growing season



While not thought of as a gardening month, February can include a few yard and garden activities. There are plenty of things to do in anticipation of spring and the 2007 growing season.

If the weather is acceptable, start the process of pruning apple trees. Apples should be pruned on a regular basis to keep them productive, and February through early April is a good time to do it. Other trees and shrubs can be pruned, but be careful. Don't prune spring blooming shrubs because flower buds were formed last season. Cut them off and the shrubs will not produce flowers this spring.

Even so, old, neglected spring-flowering shrubs often require extensive pruning to rejuvenate or renew the plants. The best time to rejuvenate large, overgrown shrubs is late winter or early spring. While heavy pruning in late winter or early spring will reduce or eliminate the flower display for a few years, the long term health of the shrubs is more important.

February is also a good time to look for branches that are broken or crossing each other, those that are too low or growing into buildings. As weather conditions get

warmer, these limbs can be removed.

— Information courtesy of University of Nebraska-Extension. For more, visit <http://lancaster.unl.edu>

## Connecticut town goes pesticide free

PLAINVILLE, CT — This city of 17,000 people located about 15 miles southwest of Hartford is going pesticide free on its city property — all 167 acres. The town council on Jan. 10 voted to accept the recommendation of the 11-member Plainville Conservation Commission to quit using pesticides and synthetic fertilizers.

In addition, the town council is asking homeowners with property near the Quinnipiac and Pequabuck Rivers to quite using pesticides and synthetic fertilizers.

Plainville is reportedly the second town in Connecticut to try to maintain public property without synthetic products.

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BY DAVID FRABOTTA / Senior Editor, *Golfdom*

## Charting a course for growth

### Deborah Hamlin takes helm of Irrigation Association

**SHE PERSEVERED OVER A FIELD OF 80 CANDIDATES** to capture the executive director post of the Irrigation Association. But it won't be the biggest challenge for Deborah Hamlin as she leads a "fragmented" and a growing Irrigation Association, which bid farewell to retired head Thomas Kimmell.

We sat down with Hamlin to talk about her goals and vision for the association, which is based in Falls Church, VA. She's a certified association executive and the former executive director for the International Association of Plastics Distributors, which she ran for 10 years. During her tenure, she developed a comprehensive educational program, grew membership, reorganized the volunteer structure to streamline projects and bolstered participation at association meetings.



#### **Q Why was IA a good fit for you?**

I worked for an industry association that was basically manufacturers and distributors for the past 10 years, so that certainly helps my understanding of the business and the way things are manufactured and distributed. What I'm trying to learn more about are some of the technical issues and some of the political issues.

I'm very familiar with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America — and I know we've had a long-term relationship with them — but I'm hoping that my connections there and my existing relationships will help build a stronger relationship.

**Q What is top of mind for you begin in this role?** One of the biggest things is the fact that we're partnering with EPA and its WaterSense program. The first rollout of this WaterSense program is individual certifications. (In 2007), they are going to roll out product certifications, where you would label a product like you would an Energy Star product, except for water conservation.

We're hoping that all of our landscape and golf exams will be EPA endorsed. So if a person passed an IA program that has been approved, then the EPA will allow them to put a label on their business cards and brochures to prove that they are using water-saving techniques in their day-to-day business. That's pretty cool.

#### **Q What are your main goals in the short term of your tenure?**

One of my personal goals is to grow our relationships with our affiliate organizations. There are hundreds of irrigation associations and turf and landscape associations out there; 50 of them currently pay membership dues to us.

So we have a staff person that currently is traveling around and meeting with those people; it's been an emphasis for about a year now. But I'd like to formalize the relationship and benefits for those members.

#### **Q What will be your biggest challenges?**

Serving our diverse members. I was drawn to the industry association because you can do much more with more people and because you have the voice of everyone, but when you have everyone, each segment wants to be different. So we're in the process of coming up with programs and services to cater to each of them. We can no longer just give the same information to everybody. But electronically, we can individualize our approach. It's one-to-one marketing; we can figure out what one person gets out of the organization and then market that to them.

**Q How does IA want to be seen by irrigation professionals?** All of the contractors, especially on the landscape side, are very fragmented. They have a lot of different associations that they

belong to on a state and local level.

I would love for them to look to us as a resource and as a leader in education, specifically in training and testing.

#### **Q What are you most excited about in taking this position?**

There is so much potential. It's a small community of people, but they are so intertwined by the water issue that it certainly makes membership in the organization sellable because you have this common goal among so many different types of companies.

The other thing that I love about this group is that they are very engaged. Maybe because it's all cause related and people feel good about what they are doing, but they are working hard at getting things done.

Also, many members are going through an evolution. A lot of them are family businesses in their second and third generations, and the next generations have different ways of looking at things; they want something out of this organization in return as opposed to some of their parents who were members to network or because it was the right thing to do.

Members now are looking for different things from the organization, and I'm excited to come in during that transition so I can help provide those new benefits.

**Q How will you ensure that IA's certification program is a premium credential?** I envision a certification board for the industry where it is an umbrella, and we acknowledge all of the certifications out there under one body.

In conjunction, there needs to be some sort of training and assessment at the lower level, and I think we are missing that. The certification board is looking at that to determine whether it is their role, and if so, is there a market for that, or should that be something that stays on the education side of things?



# People & companies

**John Deere Landscapes, John Deere Golf & Turf One Source** and the company's professional mowing segment will now come under the direction of **David Werning**, president of John Deere Landscapes and senior vice president, commercial segment, John Deere C&CE.



**Phil Burkart**, vice president and general manager of **The Toro Co.**'s irrigation division, was asked to serve on the Irrigation Association's Board of Directors.

**Harvey Massey**, owner of Orlando, FL's **Massey Services**, and his wife Carol donated \$1 million to the Dr. P. Phillips Orlando Performing Arts Center, a proposed facility in downtown Orlando.

**Arsenault Associates** announced that **David L. Reed** has joined the company as Fleet Management Consultant. Reed brings more than 20 years of fleet maintenance and technology experience to the newly created position.



**Amy Briones** has been named branch manager of **Greater Texas Landscape Services'** new office in San Antonio.



**Matthew Wilson** has been promoted to service and compliance manager at **RedMax/Komatsu Zenoah America**. He will be responsible for the company's service, warranty and emissions compliance.

**Ron Wolfarth**, director of **Rain Bird's** landscape irrigation division, was named to the board of directors for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Alliance for Water Efficiency.

**The Broyhill Co.** of Dakota City, NE, named **Lee Stone**, senior product and division manager for Golf and Turf Equipment.

**Charlie Lockerson** has been named manager of **Horizon Landscape & Design** in Vero Beach, FL.



**R. Douglas Cowan** stepped down as chief executive officer of **The Davey Tree Expert Co.** at the end of 2006. Taking his place is **Karl J. Warnke**, who serves as president and CEO.

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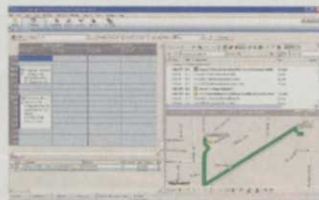


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# In the Know

## Water district limits lawn irrigation to one day a week

**BROOKSVILLE, FL** — The Southwest Florida Water Management District executive director recently declared a water shortage and restricted lawn watering to one day a week in the 16 counties in the district, including the portion of Marion County west of Interstate 75, according to the Star-Banner in Ocala, FL.

The restrictions will be in effect from Jan. 16 until July 31, unless rescinded or modified. The limits are being imposed because of low rainfall levels, which are affecting river flows and surface and groundwater levels.

As of Dec. 31, the districtwide average rainfall deficit is about 11.6 in.

Lack of rain limits watering to once a week.

"Our rivers are clearly being impacted like that of our lakes and groundwater system," said David Moore, SWFWMD's executive director. "We are very early in our typical dry season. Conditions are already low. We are asking for everyone's assistance in these six to seven months we anticipate this water shortage condition. We are asking the general public to really try to conserve as we move forward to this dry season."



[CLIPPINGS]

## Toro delivers Disney vacation

**RIVERSIDE, CA** — Two lucky Toro Irrigation customers will soon be going to the Magic Kingdom. Suzanne Heimbuch, commercial account manager for Choate Irrigation, and Shanon Holden, owner of Lubbock Turf Irrigation, were the winners of Toro Irrigation's Walt Disney World Resort Vacation Giveaway at the 2006 International Irrigation Show in San Antonio. Toro is the official provider of turf maintenance equipment for Walt Disney World Resort.

## Horiculture degree from UI

**URBANA, IL** — In fall 2006, the University of Illinois began partnering with Chicago area community and city colleges to offer a bachelors degree in horticulture. Students who have completed an associate degree can complete their final two years of coursework and earn a bachelors degree from U of I at Urbana-Champaign — without relocating. For information, call 800-252-1360 or visit [www.nres.uiuc.edu](http://www.nres.uiuc.edu).

## Minnesota Expo biggest ever

**MINNEAPOLIS** — The Minnesota Green Expo is one of the fastest-growing green industry trade shows and educational conferences in the U.S. The expo hosted 8,004 registered attendees Jan. 3-5. The show is presented annually by the Minnesota Nursery & Landscape Association and the Minnesota Turf & Grounds Foundation.

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Circle 120





BEFORE

**Problem** The client is unhappy with the appearance of this area under the shade trees in the parking lot. What is the problem? What would you recommend?

**The cause** The ugly junipers growing under the shade trees are failing to thrive because junipers require full sun growing conditions. The junipers are also being damaged from applications of snow melting products and snow removal operations.

**Solutions**

1. Quick fix, remove the ugly. Remove the junipers and redress the mulch and you are done.
2. Remove the junipers. Properly prepare the soil and install turf via seed or sod. (See photo below)
3. Remove the junipers. Install a ground cover that will grow in semi-shade conditions and with no irrigation such as Liriope, English Ivy or Euonymus coloratus. There are many other plant materials to consider.



AFTER

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](mailto:Hellerick@BrickmanGroup.com)

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	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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# Add-On Biz

BUSINESS

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## Hydroseeding

► Contractors find more efficient ways for sowing lawns

BY JANET AIRD

**Y**ou always know where hydroseeders have been: they leave hillsides, golf courses and residential lawns a strange green-gray color that turns into tough native plants and lush, green turf.

Chris Haddock, owner of CBH Landscape Contractors in New Hampshire, added hydroseeding to his business in the early 1990s. The bulk of his company's work is residential, but he also does golf courses, shopping malls and new developments.

### Obvious advantages

"Hydroseeding's a lot cheaper than hand-sowing seed," he says. "Hand-sowing a lawn takes about half a day. With the hydroseeder, it takes about an hour to an hour and a half. It doesn't take long to make up for the cost of the machine."

Hydroseeded soils hold moisture better than hand-seeded ones, Haddock says, so the seeds germinate more quickly. They usually have fewer weeds. Hydroseeding

also can increase the number of your customers. "We have customers who call about hydroseeding, then ask us to do more for them."

### Lots of applications

Jim Listowich added hydroseeding to his business, Norpine Landscape, in 1988. He does mostly housing developments and condos, across Maine with his 3,300-gallon model.

"It's the right size for big jobs, but we can still do small jobs with it," he says.

These days, hydroseeding is used for everything from lawns to erosion control, hillside stabilization and vegetation restoration after wildfires. In some places, though, such as high-traffic areas, Haddock says, laying sod can be more appropriate.

Hydroseeding begins with a slurry of water, fertilizer and mulch. For lawns and golf courses, use a high quality grass seed. For erosion control and stabilizing slopes, use a tougher, less-costly grass, or native plants, whose roots hold the soil in place.

The slurry binds with the



(l. to r.) Christopher B. Haddock, owner CBH Landscape Contractors, Tim LeMien, landscape supervisor and Joshua Marceau, hydroseed foreman, standing beside one of their labor-saving units.

soil and helps prevent erosion. On steep slopes, adding tackifier, a gum-based solution, makes the slurry hold onto slopes even better.

Haddock has a 900-gallon unit that he pulls behind his one-ton diesel truck. "This seems to be the best compromise," he says. The machine is big enough for large applications, but small enough to go down a golf cart path.

### Quality counts

As hydroseeding becomes more popular, new manufacturers have come out with less expensive models. This has allowed more landscapers to get into the business. But Haddock advises buying an established brand from a reliable dealer.

Hydroseeding is a great method for sowing seed, but it's a method with advantages, not a miracle, Haddock says. You have to use the right ingredients for the job in the right amounts, and mix the slurry properly or it clogs the machine.

Both men agree their biggest problem is that customers don't think they need to maintain their lawns, partly because they see tougher grasses growing on hillsides, and partly because their lawns come in so well.

They both give the same warning: "Take time to educate your customers."

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

Contact her at

[janet.aird@earthlink.net](mailto:janet.aird@earthlink.net)





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# PIECEWORK— does it pay?

When this landscape company began paying based on production not hours, management discovered a whole new world of good and evil

BY CHARLES SIMON

## FLEXIBLE WORK WEEK

Finish 40 billable hours in 40 hours



Work 40 hours,  
get 40 hours  
of pay.

$40 \times \$10 = \$400$

## GET A PAY BONUS

Finish 45 billable hours in 40 hours

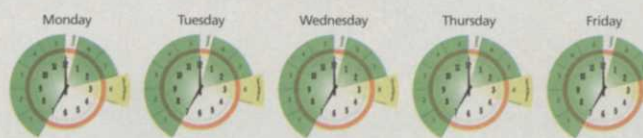


Work 40 hours,  
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## GO HOME EARLY EVERY DAY

Finish 40 billable hours in 35 hours



Work 35 hours,  
get 40 hours  
of pay.

$40 \times \$10 = \$400$

## TAKE FRIDAY AFTERNOON OFF

Finish 40 billable hours in 35 hours



Work 35 hours,  
get 40 hours  
of pay.

$40 \times \$10 = \$400$

**W**ould you like to increase productivity by 30%? Would you like your workers to

make smarter decisions? How about controlling labor costs at the same time?

A piecework pay system may be the answer. Piecework pay is also called standard hour pay, incentive pay, variable pay, pay for results or pay for performance. Regardless of its name, though, it's based on work completed instead of actual hours worked.

A standard amount of time is set to complete a specific job, and the employee is paid that set time — even if the work is completed in less time. For example, auto repair shops might set the standard time for a brake job on an F-350 at 1.5 hours. If the mechanic completes the work in less time, he still gets 1.5 hours of pay. If it takes more time, the mechanic is paid the normal hourly rate for the time spent.

Using a piecework pay system for landscaping is straightforward. You charge a customer 50 minutes in labor to mow, trim and blow a property. You pay the workers 50 minutes even if they finish early. It's possible for a worker to complete 40 hours of billable time in 35. The

*continued on page 30*





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Of course, nothing is more productive than our **RTV900** utility vehicle with turf tires, hydraulic utility valve and fuel-efficient 21.6 HP diesel engine.

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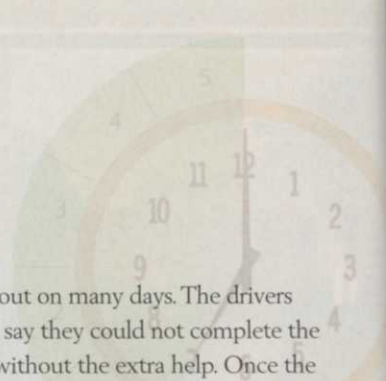
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continued from page 28

worker still gets 40 hours of pay even though he actually worked 35.

The workers are happy because they get to go home early, but still get a full 40-hour paycheck. Employers are happy

because the work was completed efficiently without paying overtime.

**Real-world results**

Here's what happened when we tried it: It was our practice to send three-man

crews out on many days. The drivers would say they could not complete the work without the extra help. Once the new system was in place and they had to split the pay with the third worker, they decided they didn't want any extra help. Two-man crews ruled.

We were amazed by how quickly the work was completed. One crew achieved savings of 30%, another about 25% and the rest between 5% and 10%.

We knew we had some slow workers. Now drivers would not accept these men on their crews. We had to let to workers go because no crew wanted them. Our efficiency improved dramatically.

**Drawbacks, too**

It did not take long, however, for the complaints to start coming in. "Your driver cut me off," complained one caller. "Why aren't they mowing my whole yard?" asked a customer. "Stop racing your mowers," demanded another.

We found our best workers worked a little faster than normal and did a good job as always, no matter what the pay system. Other workers, though, were a little too highly motivated. They finished quickly by mowing at the highest speed, cut only areas that really needed it, skipped string trimming and raced back to the shop.

Our solution was to send the crew back to a job when we received a complaint. They didn't get any billable time credits for the return visit. If they messed up, they had to go back on their time. Unfortunately, many customers either called days later or didn't call at all. In the end, quality issues cost us four good customers.

We found out later that some of the workers believed their piecework pay rate would be cut if they mowed too many lawns in a day. Others were afraid they

continued on page 32

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## Take-homes from our experiences

*continued from page 30*

would be fired if they were not as fast as the best crews. One driver believed we were trying to get more than a fair day's work and that we were just trying to speed up production.

### Bad feelings arise

Also, we learned that the competition between the crews was leading to bad feelings. This became clear when a crew had an equipment breakdown and a nearest crew didn't want to help because they were finished and wanted to go home. The workers were bound by piecework pay, and saw no reason to help.

Back in the office, the paperwork necessary to pay on a piecework basis was overwhelming. Getting payroll completed was consuming two full days each week.

Some of the gains in productivity we experienced came from workers doing more work, and some of the gain was the result of the management necessary to make such a plan work.

In the end, we kept the management and tossed the piecework plan. Perhaps you can learn from our mistakes to make piecework pay work for you. Here is what went wrong for us, along with a solution suggestion to make it work for you.

**1 We didn't set goals.** We had hoped to become more efficient and profitable by getting the crews to work faster, but we really didn't set specific goals.

**Solution:** Set your goals. If you just want to get rid of the laggards, it's a lot easier to dismiss them now than go through the trouble of a new payroll system. If you want efficiencies, set a specific goal that can be measured.

*continued on page 35*

So which is better, piecework or hourly? It depends on your business, including back office skills, the type of work you do, quality issues, safety issues and morale issues. But whatever you do, keep it simple — these systems can consume a lot of your time.

If you decide to make incentive pay work, it will, in one form or another. For

us, we decided to stick with GPS tracking reports, visiting sites for quality control and praising work well done. In this way, we have achieved better results than we did with a piecework pay system. **LM**

— *The author is a certified landscape professional and manages an East Coast landscape operation. Contact him at [cs@charlessimon.com](mailto:cs@charlessimon.com).*

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It combines the esters of Triclopyr, MCPA and Dicamba to provide maximum control in the early spring and fall, but can also be used for spot treatment throughout the season.

Cool Power® is a broad-spectrum herbicide that has proven fast and effective on weeds such as:



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When weeds are less actively growing, such as in cooler temperatures or for winter weed control, get a jump start on problems with Cool Power® Selective Herbicide.



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continued from page 32

**2** **Morale suffered.** Sadly, we didn't know how strongly our workers felt about the change until after we ended the program. They claimed we had favorites and gave the best and fastest equipment to them. They also believed some of the routes were much more profitable than others and that we had favorites there, too.

► **Solution:** Experiment with the piecework system without telling the workers. Run both payrolls, one hourly, the other a mock piecework payroll for at least three months. Be sure to get the piecework pay time even and fair for all types of properties and all seasons. Carefully balance the workloads among the crews. Your goal is to give each crew an equal chance to do well.

**3** **Quality suffered.** A customer called and asked why our crew was mowing at high speeds in the pouring rain. Our crews made bad decisions. They were so motivated to finish their routes each week that they mowed even during heavy rainstorms.

► **Solution:** Do not rely on customer complaints for quality control. In the first few months after starting a piecework pay program, check the work at each and every property each week. It's necessary to achieve 100% quality control.

**4** **Safety suffered.** One worker drove the mower so quickly onto the trailer that he broke his leg when he pinned it against equipment stored by the hitch.

► **Solution:** Establish a safety committee before starting a piecework program. Consider installing a passive GPS system in your trucks to control speeding and harsh braking.

**5** **Shop work was left undone.** Workers did not want to do shop work because they viewed it as an unpaid or poorly paid job.

► **Solution:** Decide who will do the shop work up-front. Let the crews know exactly what is expected of them regarding shop work, including pay rates.

**6** **T&M projects suffered.** We are often asked to remove dead shrubs, pick up storm debris, make small landscape repairs and do other projects. These are normally assigned to the crew that services the property. The crews did not want this time & materials work because it took extra time.

► **Solution:** Let the crews know up-front that T&M work is expected. Everyone must know that you will not add extra time to T&M work. It is just that, time and materials, and it is part of the job.

**7** **Loss of control.** Team leaders wanted to decide who was on their team, what properties were on their route, what

equipment they would use and when they wanted to work. It almost felt like we had a union.

► **Solution:** Be up front, explaining that you are still very much in control. You will assign crews, equipment and routes. Let them know they will have to train new workers as well.

**8** **Department of Labor Audit:** We made a mistake on a form and ended up with a DOL audit. Fortunately, we kept the time clock and had time cards for everyone. However, when workers get variable pay each week, their overtime rate also varies. This was OK when workers had less than 40 hours for a week and their pay exceeded a formula calculated by DOL. But when they went over 40 hours in one week, their overtime rate is based on that week's pay.

► **Solution:** Keep the time cards. Whenever there is overtime, calculate the correct rate for the week to avoid DOL fines. You must make sure their piecework pay exceeds their total pay if they earned hourly and overtime pay. Our payroll company refused to change the overtime rate each week, so be sure to check with your payroll team before starting piecework pay.

— CS

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**PROSPECTIVE CLIENTS**, Mr. and Mrs. Jones, arrive at your office for an initial meeting. They walk up a beautifully landscaped path and are greeted at the door. They are escorted down a hallway displaying numerous landscape awards.

In your conference room, they see beautiful photographs of your past work on the walls. Mrs. Jones is thinking she made the right choice by contacting your company. Mr. Jones is thinking about how much a new landscape is going to cost. He speaks first.

"We just want a patio," he says. "Nothing too fancy."

This is a common scenario for landscape design-build companies. It could lead to Mr. and Mrs. Jones having a modest patio designed and installed by your company that summer. Or, it could lead to a long relationship between the Joneses and your company. If the sales rep and designer are listening to the clients and

asking the right questions, it often becomes apparent that the clients don't think they can afford what they really want. A master design, installed in stages, could be the perfect fit.

#### **Client benefits**

"A master plan can get the focus off the budget, assuming you're forthright with the client and get them looking at things they might want to add later," says Rick Doesburg, president of Thornton Landscape, Maineville, OH. "Ideally, it can save the client money and time over the long haul by looking at the big picture."

Those savings come from planning. A master plan makes it easy to avoid in-

A **master plan** leads to long-term **relationships** with clients and ongoing **revenue** for your operation.

BY JAMIE J. GOOCH

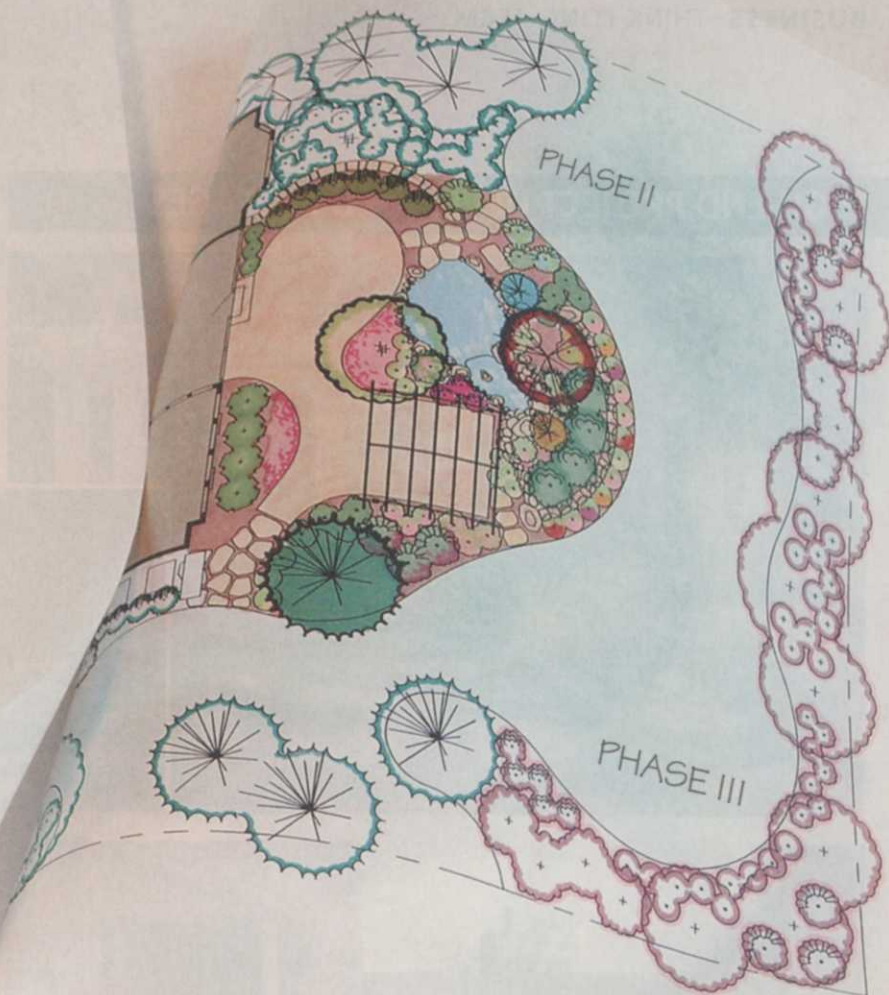
# STEP



stalling something the client will need torn out to accommodate a future project. It also helps the various phases of the project to work together.

"Maybe the client wants a circle driveway someday, and we're designing the walks and drive," Doesburg offers as an example. "We can design the way the main drive approaches the garage so it can easily accept a circle driveway in the future. That's harder to do and costs more if it's not planned."

Miles Kuperus, president of Farmside Landscape & Design in Wantage, NJ, agrees that planning yields efficiencies. Kuperus, director of the Design/Build/Installation Specialty Group for the Professional Land-care Network, says a master plan can address infrastructure requirements that make future builds on the site go more smoothly.



# BY STEP



## HIGH-END PROJECT DEVELOPED IN STAGES



Because Farmside Landscape & Design developed a well-thought-out master plan to provide the clients with a “bigger picture” of what their landscape could be, it was able to give them exactly what they desired. The project unfolded a stage at a time, allowing the homeowners to budget and enjoy each feature as it was completed. The plan also took into consideration factors such as noise and other homeowner inconvenience during construction.

“If you have a master plan that includes infrastructure, such as drainage, irrigation and lighting, you can build that infrastructure for the future,” he says. “For instance, you can install the drainage needed to allow for future projects to tie into that. With irrigation, you can install a control box that is able to receive additional zones that will be needed later. The same thing can be done with lighting.”

A master plan also allows a design-

build company to install footings for future structures when other earth moving work on the site is being done, Kuperus says. This shortens the time the client is inconvenienced by the noise and mess that excavating machinery can cause.

Zoning is another potential mess that can be lessened with a master plan. A plan can shine a spotlight on problems with what clients may ultimately want to accomplish in their landscapes. Kupe-

rus cites one of his state’s zoning laws as an example.

“In New Jersey, we have 15% to 25% non-pervious coverage thresholds,” Kuperus says. “What that means is that the house, driveway and any kind of pavement cannot exceed 25% of the property. The rest has to be able to receive groundwater so it can percolate back into the system. A master plan could

*continued on page 42*



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*continued from page 40*

give the client warning that a future phase of the landscape they want would not meet requirements."

Perhaps the biggest benefit of a master plan is that it shows prospective clients what is possible. On the design, they can see how everything is going to tie in with the various parts of a landscape. This not only addresses clients' true hopes for their landscape, it can also cement your company's long-term relationship with them.

"A master plan is an opportunity for the designer to be much more creative," Doesburg says. "It's an opportunity to stretch the client's thought pattern not necessarily their budget, but it can. It allows you to show clients how ideas relate. Instead of a pool, you might find out they really want an overhead structure and an outdoor kitchen. The master plan shows them how all their outdoor spaces and uses can function together."

*continued on page 44*

## MASTERING MAINTENANCE

A master plan can be used to show the client what it is they really want in a landscape, but it can also help you show them what they don't want to maintain. A project, built in phases over a number of years, is a great repeating advertisement for your company. However, a big project that the client can't maintain becomes an eyesore and reflects poorly on your company.

"It helps to create a master plan for plantings," says Rick Doesburg, president of Thornton Landscape, Maineville, OH. "Even if the client has the money to do a big project at once, it's a good idea to break them in slowly."

The client may soon discover that what they initially wanted would be too much for them to maintain. Thornton offers horticultural services to its design-build clients, but makes sure the client knows what kind of maintenance commitment they're getting into from the outset.

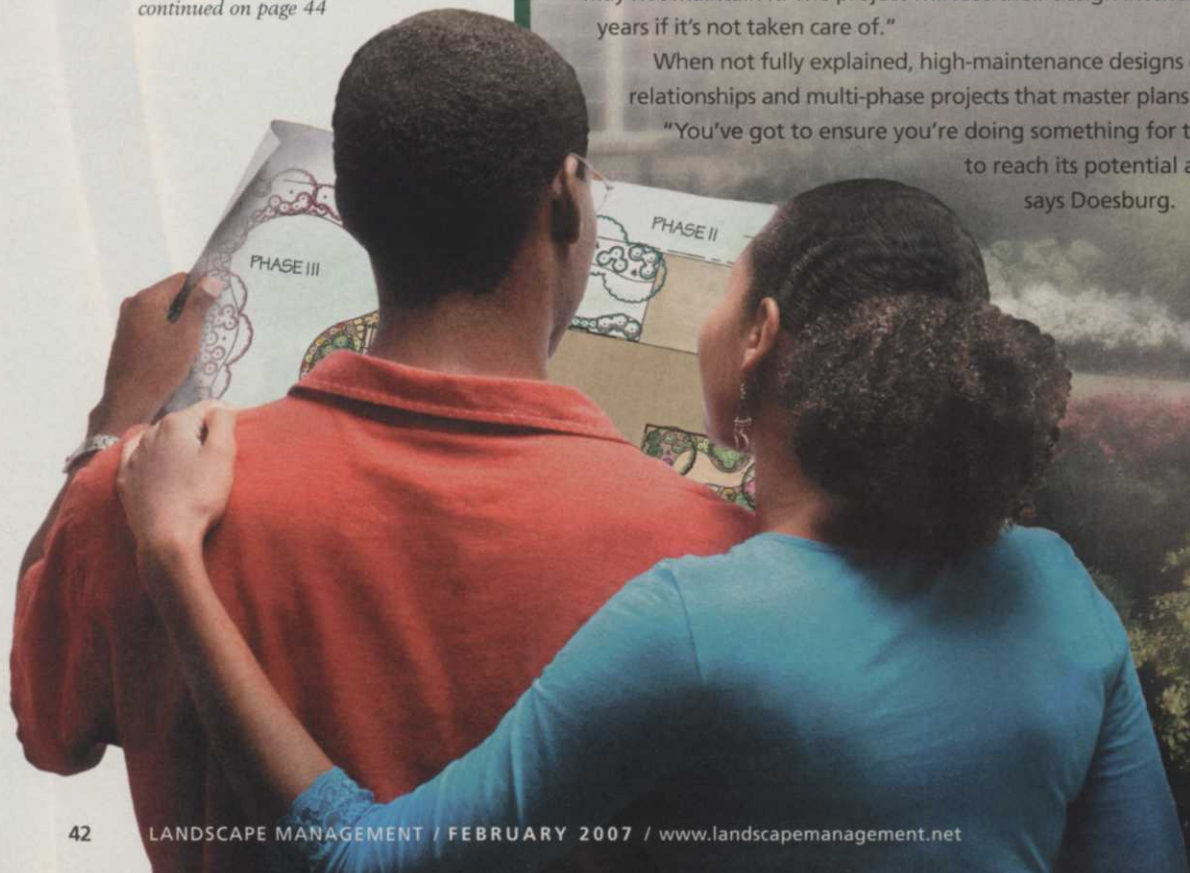
"There's nothing worse than designing a beautiful plan that the client can't maintain themselves or afford to have maintained," Doesburg says. "We didn't do our job if we presented a master design they can't take care of."

Maintenance is also on the mind of Miles Kuperus, president of Farmside Landscape & Design in Wantage, NJ, when creating a master plan. His company provides turf care, maintenance and plant health care services, in addition to design-build services.

"We do a high level of design detail on construction projects," he says. "If the customer doesn't understand what the maintenance cost is, then they may not maintain it. The project will lose their design intent in two or three years if it's not taken care of."

When not fully explained, high-maintenance designs can destroy the relationships and multi-phase projects that master plans can help create.

"You've got to ensure you're doing something for them that's going to reach its potential at a later date," says Doesburg.





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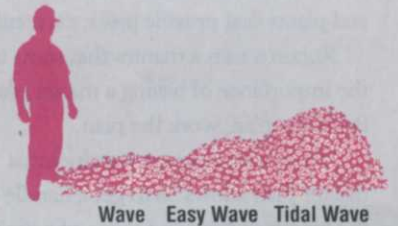
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Circle 129

RIDE THE  
**wave**  
petunias



continued from page 42

From the perspective of the design-build contractor, there are a lot of good reasons to do a master plan. Designing a project in stages may be necessary when the permitting process doesn't match up with the work season. For large projects that require outside engineering, there is often a long lead-time involved in bringing in an engineer. The master plan brings potential issues to light. It also points out the best sequence for a project.

"For instance, the client might eventually want a shaded patio," says Doesburg, whose company does about 60% of its work in stages according to a master plan. "The shade trees could be planted now so that they are mature enough to provide shade when the patio is installed five years later. Without a master plan, the client could be waiting a long time for a shaded patio. The same could be done with trees and plants that provide privacy screening."

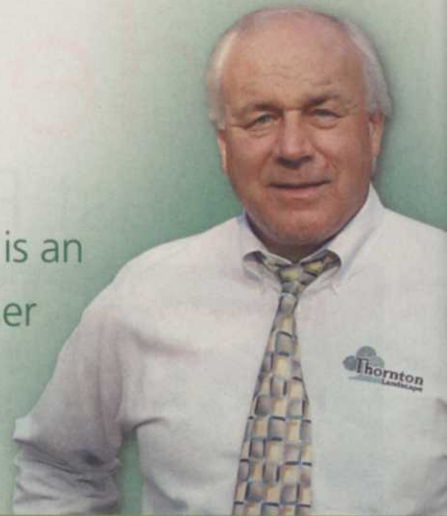
Kuperus uses a mantra that sums up the importance of having a master plan: Build the plan, work the plan.

"From a production standpoint, a master plan allows us to get a handle on the length of time and scope of a project," he says.

Master plans can also convince cus-

## A master plan is an opportunity for the designer to be much more **creative**.

— Rick Doesburg, THORNTON LANDSCAPE



tomers to go the extra mile for their landscapes.

"During our first meeting with the client, we introduce ourselves and discuss what they'd like," says Kuperus. "We take a base map to our second meeting and design the landscape in front of the client. We get a huge buy-in right there. They get a great deal of insight and value from a master plan."

Though Kuperus' company hand draws all of its master plans, he sees increasing value in digital design.

"With virtual landscapes, the client can walk through the computer-generated master plan," he says. "If you make that that a positive experience, you could really show the client what they're getting for the money."

Both Kuperus and Doesburg say clients often get so excited about seeing the master plan that they decide to do the entire project right away.

That kind of buy-in can be great for the bottom line of large companies, but small companies should be careful, cau-

tions Kuperus.

"Depending on who the client base is, sometimes smaller companies have to realize that some projects are too big for them," he says. "Sometimes you can get into big projects and be in there so long that you lose other clients because you're not available to them. Make sure that you take on projects that are properly sized to your niche. If the projects are too large or small, you can partner with other companies. Carve out your niche and perform at excellent levels in that niche."

Big or small, a master plan helps contractors build relationships with clients. It ties in especially well with companies that offer maintenance or horticulture services because routine visits to the client serve as a reminder to complete the next phase of the landscape design. But design-build-only firms can steal a trick from Thornton's Doesburg.

"It's important to continue to touch the client," he says. "Sometimes we'll pull a master plan out in the winter, color in the next step, and then send it to the client as a reminder."

"I need work now, and three years from now," Doesburg says. "If we make the client happy with the first phase of a master plan, they'll call us back to do the next. That's good." **LM**

— The author also writes and edits the monthly LDB Solutions newsletter. To receive it, visit the Web site [www.landscape-design-build.com/solutions](http://www.landscape-design-build.com/solutions). Contact the author at [jgouch@questex.com](mailto:jgouch@questex.com).

Once they **see the design**, they want to **finish** the whole thing.

— Miles Kuperus,  
FARMSIDE LANDSCAPE & DESIGN





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For more information contact Cub Cadet Commercial at 330/225-2600 or [www.cub-cadetcommercial.com](http://www.cub-cadetcommercial.com) / circle no. 250

## 2 Updated for '07

Kubota's RTV900 utility vehicle is designed for heavy-duty use with its liquid-cooled, three-cycle Kubota diesel engine, hydrostatic transmission and 1,600-lbs. payload. New for 2007, the RTV900 features a deluxe hard cab with factory pre-hung doors, thermoformed roof and door panels, sound-proofing lowers noise level to 84 dBA, standard, AM/FM/CD player and speakers in hard cab. Kubota also offers its hydraulic tool system on the utility vehicle, which allows the operator to operate one of nine different available hydraulic power tools off of the back of the RTV.

For more information contact Kubota Tractor Corp. at 888/4-KUBOTA or [www.kubota.com](http://www.kubota.com) / circle no. 251

## 3 Bobcat's 2300

Bobcat Co.'s new 2300 4x4 utility vehicle can mow, sweep, and move materials with its RapidLink attachment system. The removable attachment arm can lift loads up to 500 pounds as high as two feet with five specially designed attachments, including a bucket, mower, pallet fork, snow blade and whisker push broom. Users operate and change attachments from their seat with joystick control. The 20-hp vehicle includes Bobcat's IntelliTrak drive system for maximum traction while traversing hills or traveling soft terrain. The 4x4 reaches up to 25 mph.

For more information contact Bobcat at 866/823-7898 or [www.bobcat.com](http://www.bobcat.com) / circle no. 252

## 4 John Deere XUV

John Deere's new Gator XUV 4x4 utility vehicle will be available at dealerships in March in electronic fuel injection gas and diesel versions. The Gator XUV features a True 4WD system with an on-demand locking front differential for superior terrain capability. The Gator XUV features 11-in. ground clearance and a new Advanced Suspension System that provides customers with a comfortable ride, even when tackling the most rugged terrain. Maximum cargo capacity is 900 lbs for the cargo box, 1,300 pounds total payload. It reaches a top speed of 30 mph.

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The old saying "Knowledge is Power" could not be more true in today's world. A skilled technician not only fixes problems, but also implements a maintenance program that prevents problems from occurring in the first place. But finding skilled technicians is not an easy task, so it pays to develop an ongoing training regimen that gives your service crew the additional knowledge they'll need to keep the newest pieces of equipment up and running.

Briggs & Stratton manufactures a wide range of engines, from a model used in a hand-held string trimmer application all the way up to commercial three-cylinder water-cooled models. This product diversity creates a substantial ongoing training need to keep technicians up to speed, which is why we offer a number of education options for service technicians.

For technicians focused on commercial engines, Briggs and Stratton provides regional educational classes that feature a practical hands-on approach. Typically one or two days in length, the classes are fast paced, allowing the technician to be out of the shop for just a short time.

Technicians that have a relationship with a Briggs and Stratton distributor can view a listing of upcoming courses at [www.thepowerportal.com](http://www.thepowerportal.com) (login information required). Technicians without an existing distributor relationship can go to our Website – [www.commercialpower.com](http://www.commercialpower.com) – to find the contact information of the distributor nearest them.

The benefits of well-trained service technicians are many. Not only will technicians be more confident and trustworthy in their work. Productivity in the shop will increase and equipment downtime will decrease, and since running equipment is necessary to generate income, it's no wonder education is such a powerful tool.



By Mark Nelson, Master Instructor, Briggs & Stratton Customer Education

# From the Shop

TECHNOLOGY PERSONAL SAFETY

A left glove in your left back pocket and a right glove in your right back pocket is a simple, elegant storage solution.



## Protect your most important tools

BY HARRY SMITH

**T**hey are the best tools you have. They are frequently abused, left unprotected against the elements and exposed to an assortment of chemicals. They get dented, dinged, cut, scraped and their poor condition ignored. Why would we do that to a fine set of irreplaceable tools? Is it just because they are attached to your arms?

How many times have you stuck an unprotected hand or finger somewhere knowing the probability is high that you will get pinched, mashed or cut? Where are those mechanics gloves you bought because you thought they were so neat when you saw members of a NASCAR pit crew wearing them? Lying on the dash of the truck? Are they still in their packaging carefully stored in your toolbox? Anywhere but on your hands is their usual location. You need to get them out and put them on, and keep them stuffed in your back pockets when not in use.

### Pocket protectors

It sounds oversimplified but a left glove in your left back pocket and a right glove in

your right back pocket is a simple, elegant storage solution. You will soon get accustomed to the matching lumps, and this slight discomfort is a constant reminder that your protectors are nearby.

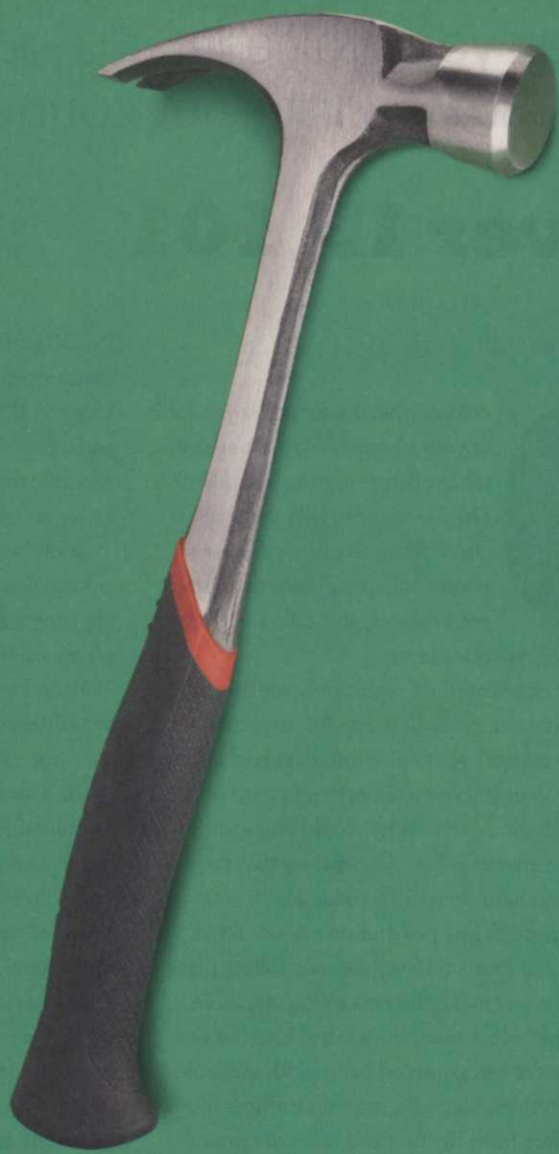
### Consider the options

Mechanics gloves, vinyl, latex, Nitrile and Kevlar gloves have great merit in the workplace. There are not only numerous cut and abrasive hazards but also many chemical hazards out there. The long-term effects of some of these hazards are unknown. Used motor oil, some greases and gasoline are known hazards with deleterious health effects.

Whether the hazards are known or unknown it is just good common sense to protect your hands. The chemical barrier gloves like Nitrile and vinyl have gotten cheaper and tougher in recent years. There are constant improvements being made in glove materials and grip technology. You no longer have to use clumsy, bulky gloves and sacrifice touch and feel for protection. There are no excuses for not protecting your best tools.

— The author is turf equipment professor at Lake City Community College, Lake City, FL. Contact him at [harry.smith@juno.com](mailto:harry.smith@juno.com).







VoIP is a technology that allows you to convert your voice into data packets and send it over your Internet connection.



## Voice over IP 101

BY TYLER WHITAKER

**D**oes your head ache when you look at your phone bill? Are long distance charges getting you down? Do you wonder why taxes account for nearly 30% of your phone bill? If so, Voice over Internet Protocol, also called VoIP, may be the answer to your prayers.

VoIP is fast becoming a realistic choice for business communications. VoIP is a technology that allows you to convert your voice into data packets and send it over your Internet connection instead of the traditional phone system. Why would you want to do that? The answer is cost. Companies that provide VoIP services claim up to 50% reduction in your phone bill through low per-minute rates or fixed-price unlimited local and long distance calling plans.

Several factors make this cost savings possible. First, the wide adoption of broadband Internet connections creates extra, unused bandwidth available in homes and offices. Secondly, Internet traffic is unregulated and free from the fees and taxes of current phone service providers. Also, the unique nature of the technology used to compress and transmit voice over the Internet allows more concurrent voice conversations to occupy the same fixed-cost bandwidth.

I've played with VoIP for years in both home and commercial situations. But I was recently reminded of the cost savings while I was in Zermatt, Switzerland. Several people I was traveling with had purchased long distance calling cards at a rate of 1 Euro

(\$1.30 USD) per minute for calls to the United States. Fortunately I had my PocketPC with me. Using VoIP software from Skype ([www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com)) and a free wireless Internet hotspot at a local pub, I was able to call to the States for 2 cents a minute saving roughly 99%.

How do you get started? You have several different options. Both Skype and Windows Live Messenger ([www.msn.com](http://www.msn.com)) offer PC to PC, and PC to phone calling. This is a great way to get started with VoIP and test the functionality. You can then upgrade to VoIP services like Vonage ([www.vonage.com](http://www.vonage.com)) to use your existing phone number.

Be aware that VoIP services offer varying degrees of Enhanced 911 functionality. The flexibility to move your phone service anywhere you have an Internet connection also plays havoc on the 911 service. Read your VoIP provider's 911 disclosures so you understand what happens when you call for emergency services. Another downside is Internet connectivity and power. If either goes down, your phone doesn't work. If you live and work in areas where the power or your Internet connection has frequent outages, VoIP may not be your best solution.

As a business tool, Voice over IP has its place. For example, deploying VoIP between branch offices can significantly reduce your long distance bills. But like any technology, understanding the pros and cons can help you make the most informed and correct decision for your business.

— The author is a freelance technologist focusing in business automation. Contact him at 801/592-2810 or visit his blog at [www.tylerwhitaker.com](http://www.tylerwhitaker.com).



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**P R O V E N   S O L U T I O N S**





# BIG irrigation

Working with a "beast" of a project — Will you be dinner or the diner?

BY LORNE HAVERUK AND RUSS PROPHIT

Let's look at a typical big project," said Tim Malooly, president of Irrigation Consultants & Control, Inc., Plymouth, MN, "1,200-acre master-planned community with common area irrigation being fed from multiple linked small lakes. Add holding ponds, delivering thousands of gallons of water per hour through a network of buried pipes ranging in sizes from one to 10 inches in diameter stretched out over 12 miles."

Get the picture? Big project. Welcome to some of the most grandiose, largest, mind-boggling irrigation in the nation. If this was golf or Ag, not so large, but for turf and residential, this is humongous.

State Capital Mall, Dancing Waters. Cobblestone Lake. Spirit of Brandtjen

Farm. ARCC Campus. These names sound large. And, for good reason. These are big commercial, master-planned and institutional projects that have been completed in Minnesota or are still ongoing, phase five. They will devour you if you let your guard down — even for an instant.

### Getting started

Your goal is not only to survive, but to feast on the monster, which first comes into hazy view as a concept by a dream team, part of a large development company or consortium that acquires a large tract of land. Slowly its features emerge as the development moves a step at a time towards culmination. Engineering firms

Portico, a residential development project, required a massive irrigation plan.

create AutoCAD and/or PDF drawings, and the features of the beast sharpen. Next, the

landscape design firm creates concept and renderings again and again.

Take a pool table, get out your tape gun and paste the drawings together. The green felt is now covered with white paper full of lines and symbols depicting the scope of the project. The true size of this thing comes into focus.

But wait, the irrigation system must be designed. Pick a corner and work your way to the other corner. Sounds easy doesn't it? Yeah, if you're an experienced design firm and have talented staff to back you up.

Then there's the question of time. Do you have 10 days to devote to this design, and that is after all of the legwork and investigations are completed?

Welcome to the profession of irrigation design. You're an artist, engineer, scientist, horticulturalist, mathematician, dreamer and a get-it-done person. But make

one mistake on the hydraulic calculation for the mainline and you become lunch for the beast.

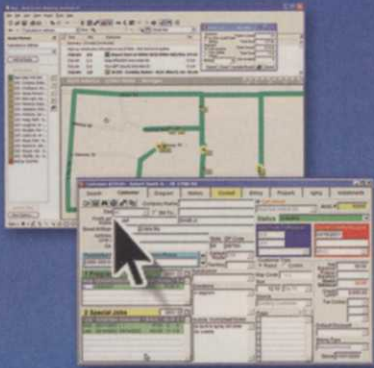
There are more than a few brave souls who routinely take on these projects. To their credit, they're willing to share insights into the training, approach, strategy and completion stages, so we can better understand how to win.

One of them is Rick Walter, president, Northway Irrigation, Circle Pines, MN. "We are working on a project in Woodbury that is in stage five and has one more to go," said Walter. "Stages three to six are about \$3.8 million for landscaping, irrigation and sod. We weren't involved in the

*continued on page 54*



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first two but I'm sure the total will be somewhere around \$5.5 million. The area covers about 700 acres. They're planning another development in Farmington that is around 1,100 acres.

"Last year we completed a development in Rosemount and watered about five miles of boulevard and entryways with center islands," added Walter. "In Hugo we're working on another development that is large. This is the third development we have done for this company, and it's planning another in Forest Lake and in Rochester. This is a private developer."

Continued Walter, "The larger developers are still doing their thing and the small ones have slowed down. With housing slowing down you would think that the developers would stop making new lots. They have slowed but not stopped. Maybe they know something."

### Getting help

Northway Irrigation doesn't deal with consultants or designers on these projects because the company does its own designs. But that's not always the case on smaller projects.

"There have been smaller projects we did this year that have been designed by others and have been done, shall we say, poorly. We had one that the consultant had the wrong scale," explained Walter. "We bid a park at one inch to 20 feet when the right scale was one inch to 40 feet. The consultant tried to put the blame on us but it didn't work. The city paid us for the main line and the consultant will have to make up the difference in price."

"The irrigation contractor takes huge risks bidding on projects that have not



A Hoover Pump Station will supply 2,100 gpm of water to homes and common areas.

## Tips for tackling THE BIG JOB

- ▶ Sell the result. Stress project partnership.
- ▶ Be up front to build trust. It makes everything move more smoothly.
- ▶ Don't even think about the job if you're doubtful about your ability to deliver the desired outcome.
- ▶ Make it clear that you are the go-to person.
- ▶ See the "big picture" of the project and how all the pieces come together.
- ▶ Always be professional. Your professionalism is part of the value, perceived and real, of your work.

been designed right. There should be more credibility among designers," said Walter, who insists that the designs make it possible that everybody is bidding on the same thing. His company scrutinizes every design it gets now. For one thing, projects are sometimes designed in other areas of the country and specify unusual components. How do you win if the design isn't right for the region or particular components aren't available?

Walter gave the example of a project that his company attempted to land for a nearby school district. His company had done work for the school before and had established a good relationship. Even so, it didn't get the job.

"They put out a bid about five years ago for a new school on their campus," he said. "The contractor who installed this got in over his head. There were glue joints that had trouble. They used pipe cement on the nipples installed in valves and tore the threads out of the valves. They probably had an inexperienced person involved with putting the pipe together. Five years later they couldn't trust the system to run."

"Well, the irrigation contractor did not have to put up a bond, the general contractor did," Walter continued. "The school is going after the general, and he might have to use his bond to redo this project."

The lesson here is that taking the low bid can not be a good thing unless the irrigation contractor has a good reputation and is certified.

Get the idea? Think it might always be a good idea to step back on these types of projects and take a critical look at what it takes to create the proper design and put together a solid plan for a project of this size?

Creating a good design takes experience and training, said Russ Proffit, president of Precise Irrigation Consulting and Design, Winter Haven, FL. "You can't start

*continued on page 56*



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*continued from page 54*

a project without knowing what's up. A good irrigation consultant needs to be involved from the get go."

In other words, conception of the project needs to be discussed. Get a handle on soil, plant, materials, anything and everything that you will be dealing with. A professional design takes careful planning, conceptualization and good old fashioned engineering. Often this necessitates partnering with a professional design consulting team.

### Developing a plan

What about the water window? How long can you irrigate? How many times per week? Do you have an understanding of plant water requirements? If that didn't make the equation complicated enough, we're all aware that each region is different and requires designers to know and be able to deal with a daunting variety of conditions and restrictions.

"Once we are given the sheet of paper, the mathematical process begins," added Prophit. "Once we decide what the true maximum irrigated area will be, then we can determine the source of the water – lakes, rivers, streams, reclaimed/reuse water and, in worst case scenarios, potable water. Next we figure out how to deliver the water. Pumping stations are commonly used for big jobs. They cause their own special problems. For one thing they require power and lots of it. Availability of type of power will dictate the type of pumping station specified. Due to different power requirements – VFD pumping stations allowing us more flexibility in our selection due to single-phase power than three phase. Now we can use larger capacity pumping stations with single-phase power," he explained.

"Ability to pump and location is next determined. Also the feasibility to have multiple pump stations gives us the abil-

ity to move massive volumes of water utilizing multiple stations."

With the heads and emitters laid out, the piping systems and other components can be placed. The mainline is drawn on the plan with appropriate isolation valves, road crossings and sleeving shown, so the development can continue to build its roads, medians and curbing while the landscape architect contemplates the overall image of the project.

Now, the control system must be decided. What type of system? This process alone can be time consuming. The various new technologies available for master controls for large systems require careful consideration and knowledge. Consider patterns, how the site will be built, number of phases, as well as how the development will be maintained and by whom? Developers need to supply input

## A good irrigation consultant needs to be involved (on a project) from the get go.

regarding what level of efficiency they are striving for regarding water savings, efficiency, operational expenses, reuse water, cisterns, LEED points, green roofs and budgetary restraints.

We now play the waiting game. Factors that cause us to wait include permitting issues, design changes, the weather, endangered species act, more permitting issues, more weather and we finally get the go ahead. We now have the landscape architectural plans in hand. We are ready to begin designing irrigation with piping,

At over 600 acres, the Portico site was designed and installed by Big Tree Inc. in Fort Myers, FL.



valves and heads. Now becomes the daunting task of deciding the most efficient way to deliver the water to the required areas, said Prophit. And to stay within budget, usually the most fearsome aspect of the beast.

You've worked through the design process. Are you still in the game? What next? In many instances the designed and specified project now goes through the bid process.

### Following through

You must be in the circle of influence to be able to find the posting, then track down the information and, once in hand, take a good sober look at the beast to see if you're up to grabbing him by the horns.

You'll make your final decision once you thoroughly read and understand the specifications and the plan. If the materials on this plan are not something that you're not familiar, stop. Do your research before you bid.

Once you become familiar and comfortable with the design and specs, the task of doing your material takeoff is upon you. Even when the designer provides a material takeoff, check it. Many plans coming from professional design and consulting firms have a disclaimer that states something like: "It is the responsibility if the contractor to check all quantities."

*continued on page 58*



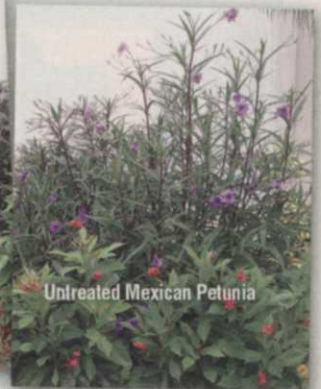
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## TECHNOLOGY DO YOUR HOMEWORK

You need to know the maximum area to be irrigated. So every project begins with a sheet of paper and some math.



continued from page 56

Once the material takeoff has been completed, the process of locating the prices for these materials begins. Check multiple sources. Keep in mind that the majority of irrigation products are manu-

factured from petroleum. Prices fluctuate just like gasoline. Since large projects may take months or, occasionally, years to complete, take cost variables into "We include an escalating material cost clause that can be tied in to your products and

fuel costs," said Proffit.

Now comes labor. It can kill you. It's becoming increasingly difficult to find and keep quality installation technicians. This shortage means that technicians are moving from company to company more now than in the past. The availability of trained, reliable technicians complicates the process of nailing down true production rates on big jobs. Then, of course, there's Mother Nature. She can be as kind to you as a blue bird or as snarly as a grizzly. Regardless of the care you take in crafting your bid, your labor rate still end up being a guesstimate.

And finally, don't forget your bid bond, your cost and insurance. Know your policy. It must meet the requirements specified in the bid documents.

If you have all this done you're ready to turn in your bid, stop one last time. Check your math again. One decimal point misplaced could spell disaster.

Now you're at the bid opening and you learn that you're the low bidder and have won the job. What does this really mean? It means that you have promised that you deliver a system that can meet the owner's expectations at a lower price than anyone else.

You can be forgiven if your first thought is — "Did I miss something?"

But perhaps that doesn't occur to you and you're excited about taking on that big, high-profile project, the one that you can add to your portfolio.

Never forget, you have challenged the beast and he has lots of tricks. It's to you and your team to grab him by the throat and not let go of him until he's tame. **LM**

— The author is a certified irrigation designer, auditor, contractor and consultant whose goal is to provide water efficiency.

To contact him or learn of the services or products he provides, please visit [www.dhwatmgmt.com](http://www.dhwatmgmt.com) or email him at [lorne1@dhwatmgmt.com](mailto:lorne1@dhwatmgmt.com).



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# Power up your pre-emerge program

**You can control most of the factors that lead to successful weed control — now go out and do it!** BY DAVID GARDNER, PH.D.

**P**re-emergence herbicides continue to be our best choice for the control of annual grassy and broadleaf weeds. Depending on where you live, it may be time to be thinking about applying them very soon.

Pre-emergence herbicides are effective only for a finite period of time after application, weeks or in some cases a few months. Factors that influence the overall performance of a pre-emergence herbicide and how long it will remain effective following application include: timing of application, product chosen, application rate (and whether the application is split),

climate (and weather post application) and the amount of thatch and organic matter in the turf/soil profile.

Climate and weather cannot be controlled. The warmer the temperatures or the higher the rainfall, the faster the product will degrade or leach and lose effectiveness. Similarly, the amount of thatch and organic matter can usually only be slowly altered over time. Higher amounts of thatch and organic matter

will cause the product to degrade more rapidly. Unlike these two factors, however, you do have a choice of product selection, application timing and the application method.

## Why timing is critical

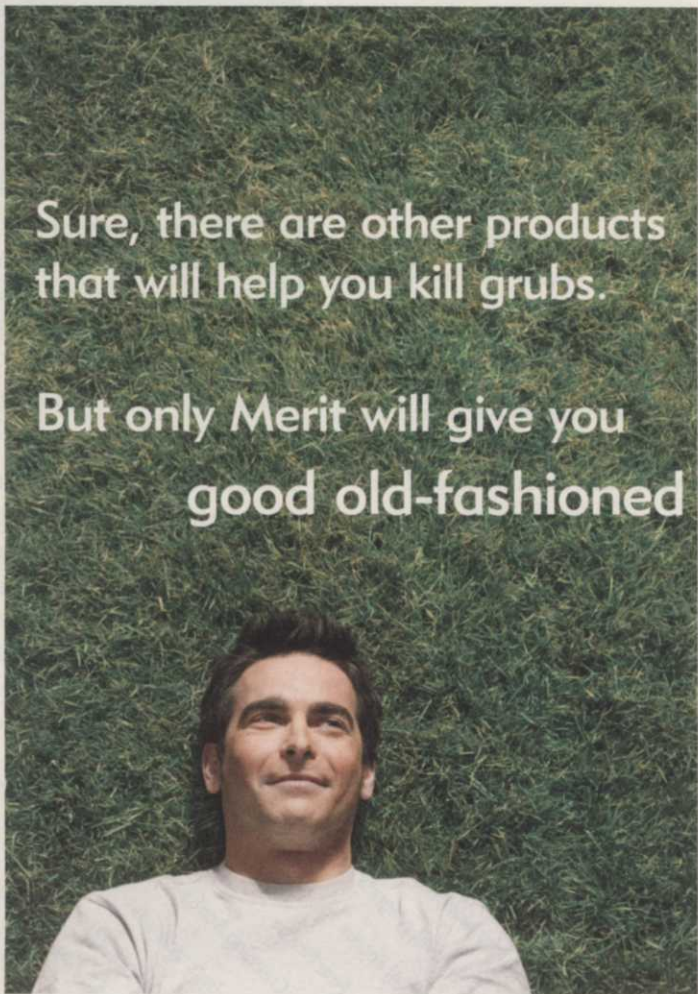
Proper application gives you the maximum chance of season-long control with your pre-emergence product. In a typical year the earliest germinating crabgrass may be killed by subsequent frosts. However, in order to be effective, the pre-emergence herbicide must be applied before the first crabgrass that germinates following the last frost. It must also be ac-

*continued on page 62*



**FIGURE 1.** Expected dates of crabgrass germination. While crabgrass can germinate earlier, it is often killed by late spring frosts. However, to ensure good control, preemergence herbicides are usually applied about three weeks prior to the dates listed in this figure.





Sure, there are other products that will help you kill grubs.

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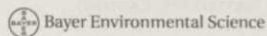
the job done. If you ever have questions or problems, we're here to help.

It's Science. It's support. It's peace of mind.



\* Average based on university science and field trials.

Bayer Environmental Science, a business group of Bayer CropScience 2 T.W. Alexander Drive, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709. Merit is a registered trademark and Backed by Bayer is a trademark of Bayer AG. Always read and follow label directions carefully. © 2006 Bayer CropScience





continued from page 60

tivated by either rainwater or irrigation after application. Figure 1 shows a map of expected dates after which crabgrass would germinate and there would be no more killing frosts. Pre-emergence herbicides must be applied before this date. Typically, they are applied two to three weeks earlier, when an indicator plant, such as forsythia in the northern United States (see figure 2) or dogwoods in South are in bloom.

Some of the products released during the 1990's had claims that they could be applied the prior fall. However, subsequent university research showed that, because of pesticide degradation dynamics (more on this later), best control is achieved by waiting until forsythia bloom or soil temperatures reach around 50°F.

**Choices, choices, choices**

Pre-emergence herbicides vary greatly in their duration of effectiveness. Table 1 lists the products currently on the market. Products that contain either pendimethalin, prodiamine or dithiopyr usually give the longest control. The other materials on the chart also have advantages. Formulations that contain benefin or bensulide, for example, tend to be less expensive. The trade off is shorter duration of residual activity and slightly less effective control. Consult the label for specific usage recommendations.

There tends to not be a significant difference in crabgrass control whether the same active ingredient is applied as a liquid or as a granular formulation. Both require light irrigation for activation. One note of caution, however — pre-



**FIGURE 2.** In the northern United States, the best time to apply a pre-emergence herbicide for the control of crabgrass is when *Forsythia x intermedia* is in bloom (shown). The blooming of either dogwoods or azaleas is often used to indicate proper timing in the South.

emergence herbicide formulated on an excessively large granule can be a problem because this may result in sporadic distribution of the herbicide around the particles. The granule does not need to be "greens grade" but it should not be excessively large either.

continued on page 64

**TABLE 1.** Turf tolerances to preemergence herbicides. Consult the pesticide label for specific usage recommendations.

† Dormant bermudagrass only. \* ‡ Fairway and tees height bentgrass only. \*  
 § Seaside, Highland, Astoria, and C-7 creeping bentgrass only. \*  
 ¶ Use restrictions on putting greens vary among formulations. \*  
 \* Consult label for specifics.

Products	Turf Species									
	Kentucky bluegrass	Perennial ryegrass	Tall Fescue	Fine Fescue	Creeping Bentgrass	Bermudagrass	Zoysiagrass	St. Augustinegrass	Centipedegrass	
Bensulide (Betasan, Bensusumec, Lescosan) - Controls P.annua, others	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethofumasate (Prograss) - Controls P.annua, other weeds	✓	✓	✓		‡	†		✓		
Benefin (Balan, LESCO Benefin 2.5G)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Oryzalin (Surflan, XL – combination with benefin)			✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pendimethalin (Pendulum, LESCO Pre-M, PROTURF)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Prodiamine (Barricade)	✓	✓	✓	✓	‡	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Trifluralin (Team) - Combination product with Benefin	✓	✓	✓	✓	‡	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dipeptides (Corn Gluten Meal)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Siduron (Tupersan) - Safe to turfgrass seedlings. Consult label	✓	✓	✓	✓	§					
Oxadiazon (Chipco Ronstar) - Controls goosegrass and other weeds	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		
Dithiopyr (Dimension) - Pre + Post-emergence	✓	✓	✓	✓	¶	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Isoxaben (Gallery) - Broadleaf weed control	✓	✓	✓	✓	‡	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Atrazine						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Simazine (Princep)						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Metribuzin (Sneacor)						✓				
Metolachlor (Pennant)						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Napropamide (Devrinol)						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



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\*\*Not on all models.

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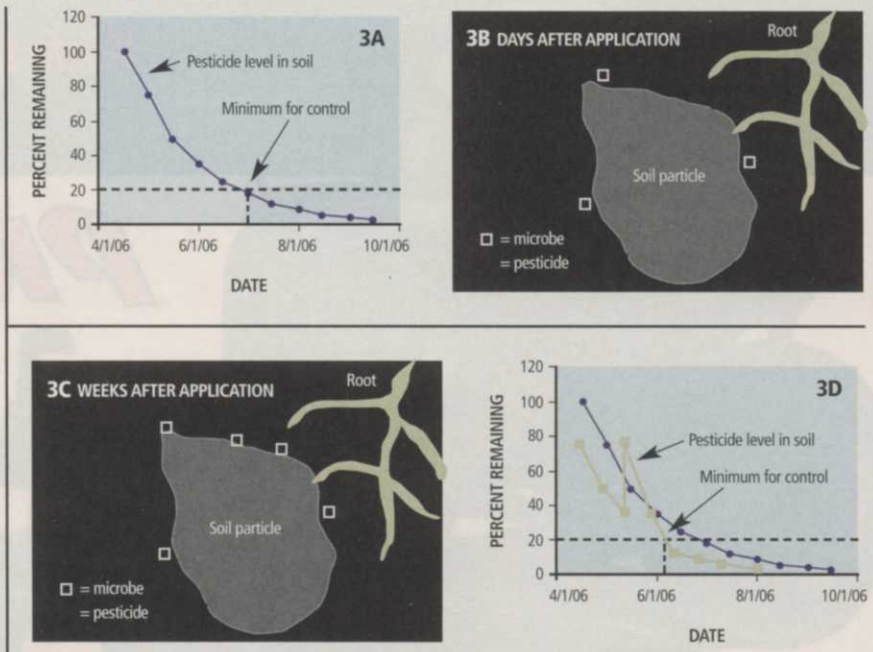
**Rates and frequency**

To be effective, a pre-emergence herbicide barrier must last for about four months in the northern United States and up to seven months in the South. After application, these herbicides are subject to numerous processes that act to degrade the product. To discuss all of the processes that govern how long a pesticide will persist after application is beyond the scope of this article. However, one of the most important factors that governs the effectiveness of pre-emergence herbicides is microbial degradation, which is summarized briefly in Figure 3.

The amount of time it takes for 50% of a product to degrade in the soil is referred to as its half life. If, for example, a product's half life is 50 days, then 50 days after application about 50% of the product will remain and 100 days after application about 25% of the product will remain. Once the level of product in the soil falls below a certain minimum concentration then crabgrass will be able to germinate through the herbicide barrier (See Figure 3). As long as you are within the label limits, you can increase the duration of effective control by increasing the initial application rate. In other words, if your pesticide has a half life of 50 days and you wish to get an additional 50 days of control, you would double the application rate.

**Split or not to split?**

In a split application you apply a portion of the pesticide initially followed by a subsequent application around six to 15 weeks later. This practice is widely followed in the South due to the extended season. However, research conducted in the 1990s suggests that with some products this can actually decrease control. The reason for this is that the initial application results in an increase in the soil



**FIGURE 3.** After a pre-emergence herbicide is applied, it dissipates, primarily due to microbial degradation. **Figure 3A** shows a model of hypothetical degradation following an application made April 15. Once the pesticide is degraded to below a certain minimum (in this example 20% of application just prior to July 1), crabgrass will begin to break through. **Figure 3B** shows a diagram of a soil particle with a hypothetical distribution of pesticide and soil microbes that degrade the pesticide. The microbial population then may increase, such as what is modeled in **Figure 3C**. **Figure 3D** shows a hypothetical example of a split application where a 75% rate is applied two times about six weeks apart. The first application degrades normally. However, the second application of the herbicide may degrade more rapidly due to the increased microorganisms. The result could be an actual decrease in the duration of effectiveness of the product (as modeled by the red line in **Figure 3D**). You should consult the pesticide label and your state's extension literature for specific recommendations if you are going to make split applications.

microbial populations that degrade the pesticide. This increase in microbial activity then can result in subsequent applications of the pesticide being degraded more rapidly (See **Figure 3**). Many studies have showed that, at best, splitting the application of certain herbicides is not more effective than the single application and in some cases, can result in significantly less control of crabgrass. However, this is not the case with all pre-emergence herbicides.

Generally speaking, in the northern

United States you should make one application and increase the duration of control by increasing the application rate. If you are in the South and you're going to make split applications, wait 60 to 90 days (or according to label directions) before making the second application. Also, consult your state's extension literature, because some products benefit from sequential applications and some do not.

Since the introduction of quinclorac in 2000 the industry has had a tool to reli-

continued on page 66





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*continued from page 64*  
ably control crabgrass post-emergence during mid and late season. However, pre-emergence herbicides continue to be our best option, especially in areas with moderate or heavy infestations of crabgrass. And, with the recent cancellation of the arsenical herbicides MSMA and DSMA,

the use of pre-emergence herbicides becomes more important for the control of weeds such as dallisgrass and goosegrass. Pre-emergence herbicides can be very effective for controlling crabgrass, other annual grasses, and even some annual broadleaf weeds. Taking into consideration the proper product choice, applica-

tion timing, and the effects of application rate and frequency will assist you in maximizing the potential control afforded by these products. **LM**

— *The author is Associate Professor Horticulture and Crop Science at The Ohio State University and a frequent contributor to LM. Contact him at [gardner.254@osu.edu](mailto:gardner.254@osu.edu).*

## What happens if **MSMA** bites the dust?

BY BERT MCCARTY

On August 9, 2006, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a ruling disallowing reregistration of the organic arsenical herbicide family. Important members of this family include MSMA, DSMA, and CMA (Table 1). The organic arsenical herbicides have been used in turf since the 1950s and are the backbone products for post-emergence grass weed control, especially in warm-season turfgrasses. These herbicides provide good broad-spectrum post-emergence weed control including crabgrass, goosegrass, sandspur, annual nutsedges and annual broadleaf weeds. With repeat applications, they eventually control perennial weeds such as dallisgrass, yellow nutsedge, bull (or thin) paspalum, johnsongrass, bromesedge, carpetgrass, crowfootgrass, St. Augustinegrass, centipedegrass, kyllinga species and various perennial broadleaf weeds.

These herbicide formulations are termed "organic arsenical" as carbon is attached to the basic molecule as a methyl (CH<sub>3</sub>) group. The EPA contends that through the process termed demethylation, the organic forms of arsenic from pesticides are degraded into the more toxic inorganic (or without the methyl group) form.

When the EPA cancels a product, a 60-day public response period is allowed for interested parties to voice their opinions or concerns about the pending action. For the organic arsenicals, due to overwhelming response, the EPA extended this deadline from October 2006 to January 19, 2007. Once the public response period expires, the EPA will consider these and



Control of certain weeds without MSMA will become more challenging and probably more expensive. This is especially true for perennial weeds such as dallisgrass (shown), which currently has no comparable control substitute.

Control of certain weeds without MSMA will become more challenging and probably more expensive. This is especially true for perennial weeds such as dallisgrass (shown), which currently has no comparable control substitute.

For post-emergence crabgrass control in bermudagrass and zoysiagrass, quinclorac (trade name Drive) will become the main product of choice. Fenoxaprop-ethyl (trade name Acclaim Extra) will still be available in cool-season grasses along with quinclorac. Drive is an extremely fast acting and effective herbicide, if good soil moisture is present (in other words, the weed is actively growing) and works best on immature plants. Also, in warm-season grasses, pre-emergence herbicides will

issue a final ruling approximately 30 days later. The following Web site can be accessed to track the latest ruling or progress of this issue: <http://www.epa.gov/fe-drgstr/EPA-PEST/2006/August/Day-09/p12905.htm>

### Weed control without MSMA

What does this probable cancellation mean to lawn care operators who depend on the organic arsenicals? Unfortunately, post-emergence weed control is about to get more expensive and selective. For example, post-emergence dallisgrass control typically requires three to five MSMA applications (Figure 1). Three applications of MSMA cost \$18 to \$24 per acre and provide approximately 90% - 95% dallisgrass control. The next most effective material provides only about 65% suppression with two applications at a material cost of \$293 per acre.

*continued on page 77*



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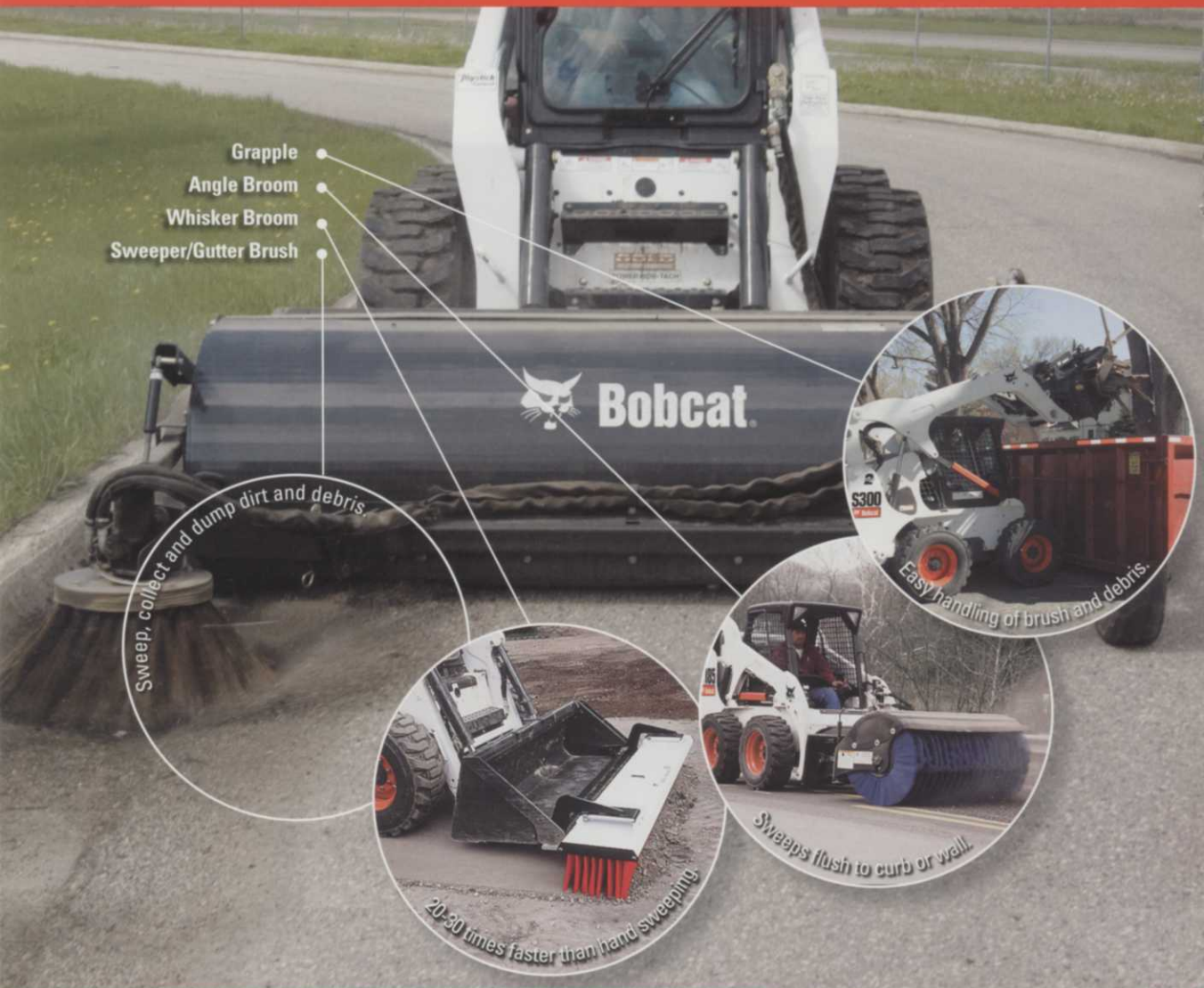


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- |                          |                           |                          |                           |                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| <small>Own</small>       | <small>Interested</small> | <small>Own</small>       | <small>Interested</small> | <small>Own</small>       | <small>Interested</small> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| Skid-Steer Loader        |                           | Compact Excavator        |                           | Utility Vehicle          |                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| Compact Track Loader     |                           | Telescopic Tool Carrier  |                           | Compaction & Portable    |                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  | Power Products           |                           |
| Mini Track Loader        |                           | Toolcat™ Utility         |                           |                          |                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  | Work Machine             |                           |                          |                           |
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**2. Please provide me with information on attachments for the following applications:**

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Landscaping - Contracted Maintenance    | <input type="checkbox"/> Site Development/Land Clearing | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Landscaping - Design, Build and Install | <input type="checkbox"/> Excavating and Grading         | <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Snow Removal                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete and Asphalt           | <input type="checkbox"/> Mining       |

**3. Would you like someone to contact you regarding:**

- |  |                                      |                                 |                                   |   |
|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstration | <input type="checkbox"/> Price Quote | <input type="checkbox"/> Rental | <input type="checkbox"/> Trade-In | <input type="checkbox"/> Used Equipment |
|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|

**4. What is your purchasing time frame?**

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|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Immediately | <input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 months | <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 months | <input type="checkbox"/> 6-12 months | <input type="checkbox"/> Over 12 months |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|

**5. Are you a current customer of a:**

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|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bobcat dealer who handles Bobcat equipment | <input type="checkbox"/> Other compact equipment dealer | <input type="checkbox"/> Have not previously purchased compact equipment |
|---|---|--|



For more information, visit [www.bobcat.com/landscape](http://www.bobcat.com/landscape)

One Tough Animal

Kn-70M-1106-#6036-F

LM-0207





**Bobcat®**



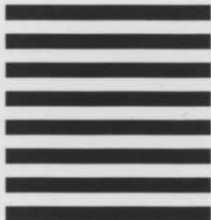
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- Digger
- Tree Spade

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## Mini Track Loaders

*More than 20 available attachments mean you can work where only shovels and wheelbarrows could before. Easy to operate, economically priced – the only mini track loaders offering a removable platform to give you ride-on or walk-behind capability.*



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*After a heavy rain, tracks get you back on the job sooner. A solid-mounted track undercarriage provides consistent tractive effort for extra pushing power and smoother leveling.*



## Compact Excavators

*Bobcat® models 430 and 435 are the world's first compact excavators with ZHS and FastTrack™ drive. ZHS delivers 360° of unrestricted motion while FastTrack drive allows travel speeds over 5 mph, making these machines the fastest-grading compact excavators in the industry.*



## Attachments

Only Bobcat offers all the attachments you need for every landscaping job – from soil preparation to turf application. The faster you get it installed, the sooner you can get on to the next job.

## Utility Vehicles

Four different models – three including the 4x4 IntelliTrak® drive system, which automatically engages and disengages four-wheel drive.



## Toolcat™ Utility Work Machine

The world's first utility work machine – an attachment carrier, loader, pickup truck and utility vehicle all rolled into one. Plus, more than 25 attachments are available.

## VersaHandler® Telescopics

Reach over sidewalks or fences and preserve the existing landscape while creating a new one. VersaHandler telescopic tool carriers are ideal for transporting landscape materials, placing sod, grading, stacking and building retaining walls.



**One Tough Animal™**



**Bobcat®**



continued from page 66

probably become increasingly important for crabgrass control as cost savings will become paramount.

For post-emergence control of annual sedge and yellow nutsedge, lawn care operators will choose between bentazon (trade names Basagran and Lescogran), halosulfuron (Sedgehammer) or sulfosulfuron (Certainty). Bentazon provides better yellow nutsedge control compared to purple nutsedge. Halosulfuron and sulfosulfuron provide good control of most sedges and kyllinga species assuming a repeat application is made three to five weeks following the initial. Sulfosulfuron is available in bermudagrass and zoysiagrass while halosulfuron can be used on most turfgrasses.

Unfortunately, selective post-emergence control of perennial grassy weeds such as dallisgrass or thin paspalum will not be available in warm-season grasses. Spot treatment or rope wicking with glyphosate (Roundup) followed by replanting, is an option. Otherwise, a shovel will be necessary to remove these weeds.

On a positive side, basic manufacturers have started exploring for MSMA replacements. However, this requires time and

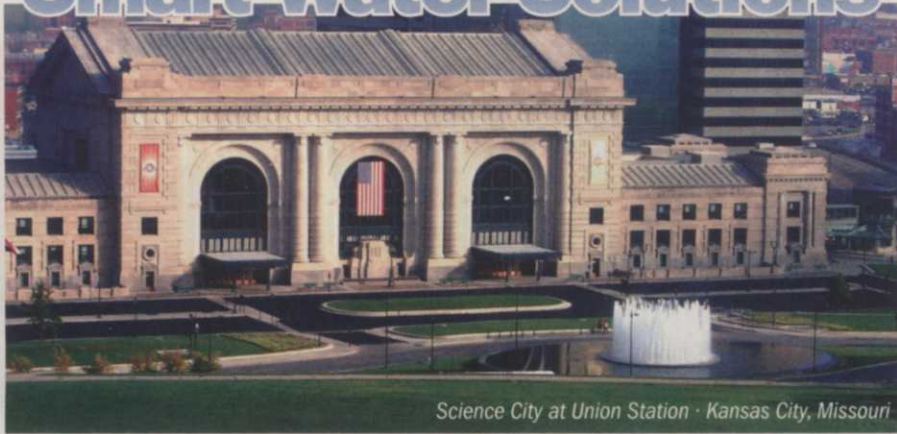
Trade name examples of various members of the organic arsenical herbicide family.

Common name	Trade name examples
MSMA	Bueno 6L, 120, Crab-E-Rad, Daconate 6, Daconate Super, Dal-E-Rad, Drexar 530, 912 Herbicide, Mesamate, MSMA 6.6L, MSMA Turf, Summer Crabicide, Target MSMA, Weed Hoe, plus others
DSMA	Ansar, DSMA 4, DSMA Liquid, Methar 30, Namate, Selective Crabgrass Killer, plus others
CMA	Calar, Ortho Crabgrass Killer - Formula II, Selectrol plus others

newer products will be more costly due to the expense in pesticide development, registration and marketing. Newer herbicides typically have a much narrower control spectrum than MSMA, thus, different herbicides are often needed for different weeds. Lastly, MSMA provided a unique mode of action with only limited weed resistance occurrence. Newer herbicides typically do not possess this characteristic. Proper timing and selection of pre- and post-emergence herbicides will become more critical as the organic arsenicals are phased out.

— Bert McCarty is a professor of Turfgrass Science at Clemson University

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## Mulching/ Hydromulching Equipment

**M**ulching helps ornamental plants and trees conserve moisture, maintain a more uniform temperature in the root zone and become established more quickly. Mulching also protects plants from mechanical injury caused by lawn mowers and string trimmers, improves soil structure and limits weed growth. Mulches can even add to the beauty of the landscape by providing a cover of uniform color and interesting texture to the surface.

The best time to mulch new plantings is right after you plant them. Around established plants mulch is best applied in early spring. This is when plants are beginning to grow and before weed seeds start to germinate.

Tips on mulching from the Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service include:

- ▶ Before applying any type of mulch to an area, it is best to weed the area.
- ▶ Spread a layer of mulching materials over the entire plant bed.
- ▶ Keep mulch two to three inches away from the stems of woody plants. This will prevent decay caused by wet mulch and rodent damage during the winter.
- ▶ Keep mulch six to 12 inches away from the walls of buildings to prevent termites from using it as a bridge to cross treated soil.



▶ Newly planted trees require a circle of mulch three to four feet in diameter. Maintain this for at least three years. Do not pile mulch against the trunk.

▶ For established trees in lawns create a circle of mulch about two feet in diameter for each inch of trunk diameter. Increase the size of the mulched area as the tree grows.

▶ Try to apply the mulch at least six to 12 inches beyond the drip-line of the tree. Because the root system can extend two to three times the crown spread of the tree, mulch as large an area as possible.

Mulching can be a profitable service for your company, though it's not always an easy job. Here are some pieces of equipment that can help make mulching easier on your crews, especially for those large scale mulching / hydromulching (hydroseeding) operations.

### Dakota Peat

The Dakota 550 Turf Contractor dump box is designed to carry a big load with a light foot print. The heavy duty frame with walking beam axle and four 16-in. Dakota Turf Tires distributes loads evenly, protecting the turf. Other features include: easy to maneuver, all functions are controlled from the tractor seat, dump height of 25 in. and 10,000 lbs. capacity.

For more information contact Dakota Peat & Equipment at 800/477-8415 or [www.dakotapeat.com](http://www.dakotapeat.com) / circle no. 254

### Peterson Pacific ▲

Peterson introduces the Blower Trailer series, an addition to its line of Blower Trucks. Available in 45, 70 and 90 cu. yd. capacities, the BTR series features the same high capacity delivery system as our popular Blower Trucks, with several additional features, including a self-contained power system, innovative forward-feed design and lightweight aluminum construction. Peterson's Live Floor moves a wide variety of materials toward the feeder more efficiently than a conveyor. Bridging that occurs with a V-shaped hopper is eliminated. Powered rotation eases hose loading and unloading, saving time and energy.

For more information contact Peterson Pacific at 800/269-6520 or [www.petersonpacific.com](http://www.petersonpacific.com) / circle no. 255

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# LM Reports

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## North American Green

Guardian Seed Protection Mulch Mat protects seed and soil from being washed or blown away and serves as mulch. Mulch Mat features a uniform layer of 100% agricultural straw securely stitched with degradable thread between two layers of lightweight polypropylene netting that degrade when exposed to the sun. Each roll weighs only 10 lbs., and can be easily rolled out, cut to conform to the size and shape of the area to protect, and quickly secured to the ground.

For more information contact North American Green at 800/772-2040 or [www.nagreen.com](http://www.nagreen.com) / circle no. 256



## Green Industry Innovators

The New Mini Mule by Green Industry Innovators is a new design incorporating a rust free aluminum frame covered in a lighter high-density impact resistant composite floor and side walls. This makes the Mini Mule light enough to be pulled by a smaller one ton pickup truck while still being as rugged as its bigger brother the original Mulch Mule. Options include, 16-hp leaf vacuum, extension conveyor, canopy, remote control and more.

For more information contact Green Industry Innovators at 330/875-0769 or [www.mulchmule.com](http://www.mulchmule.com) / circle no. 257

## Easy Lawn

Easy Lawn's Contractor Series features John Deere Turbo Engines, stainless steel tanks and mulch grinders, and an aggressive paddle design, which keeps even wood mulch and bonded fiber matrix in suspension continuously. Machines have a large deck storage capacity, many standard safety features and are



the only units that have ZDM — zero daily maintenance points. The C280 and C330 have the only digital display control panel available in a hydroseeding unit. C SERIES machines are for large seeding jobs, and erosion control.

For more information contact Easy Lawn at 800/638-1769 or [www.easylawn.com](http://www.easylawn.com) / circle no. 258

## Express Blower Inc.

Express Blower's RB-20 is designed to blow aggregate materials all day at great distance. Blows soil behind retaining walls, in drainage ditches, into indoor gardens or up four stories for rooftop terraces. Works for erosion and sediment control, topdressing, mud control, Terraseeding or safety surface application. Also check out the EB-30 and TM-30, entry-level models for the entrepreneur who wants to be in the blower application business. The TM-30 can be truck mounted, trailer mounted or configured as a roll off.

For more information contact Express Blower at 800/285-7227 or [www.expressblower.com](http://www.expressblower.com) / circle no. 259

## Finn Corp.

The T75 HydroSeeder fits right between the big trailer-mounted models and the little tank units. Trailer mounted, its 700-gal. tank covers 8,700-10,500 sq. ft. per load with spray distances up to 150 feet from discharge gun. Other features include hydraulically controlled paddle agitator, liquid recirculation, toolbox in hitch for storing nozzles, and in-line common-shaft clutch for centrifugal pump.

For more information contact Finn Corp. at 800/543-7166 or [www.finncorp.com](http://www.finncorp.com) / circle no. 260

## Sundance Equipment

The Sundance Kid III compact horizontal grinder yields the best fine grind for your compost, mulch or energy requirements. Redesigned concaves provide improved grinding action for a finer, more uniform particle size.

The patented grinding process eliminates



troublesome screens that tend to plug with wet or stringy material. Other improvements include a central control panel for both engine and grinder functions, a telescoping tongue and more horsepower.

For more information contact Sundance Equipment at 800/570-3551 or [www.sundancegrinders.com](http://www.sundancegrinders.com) / circle no. 261

## Turbo Technologies Inc. ▼

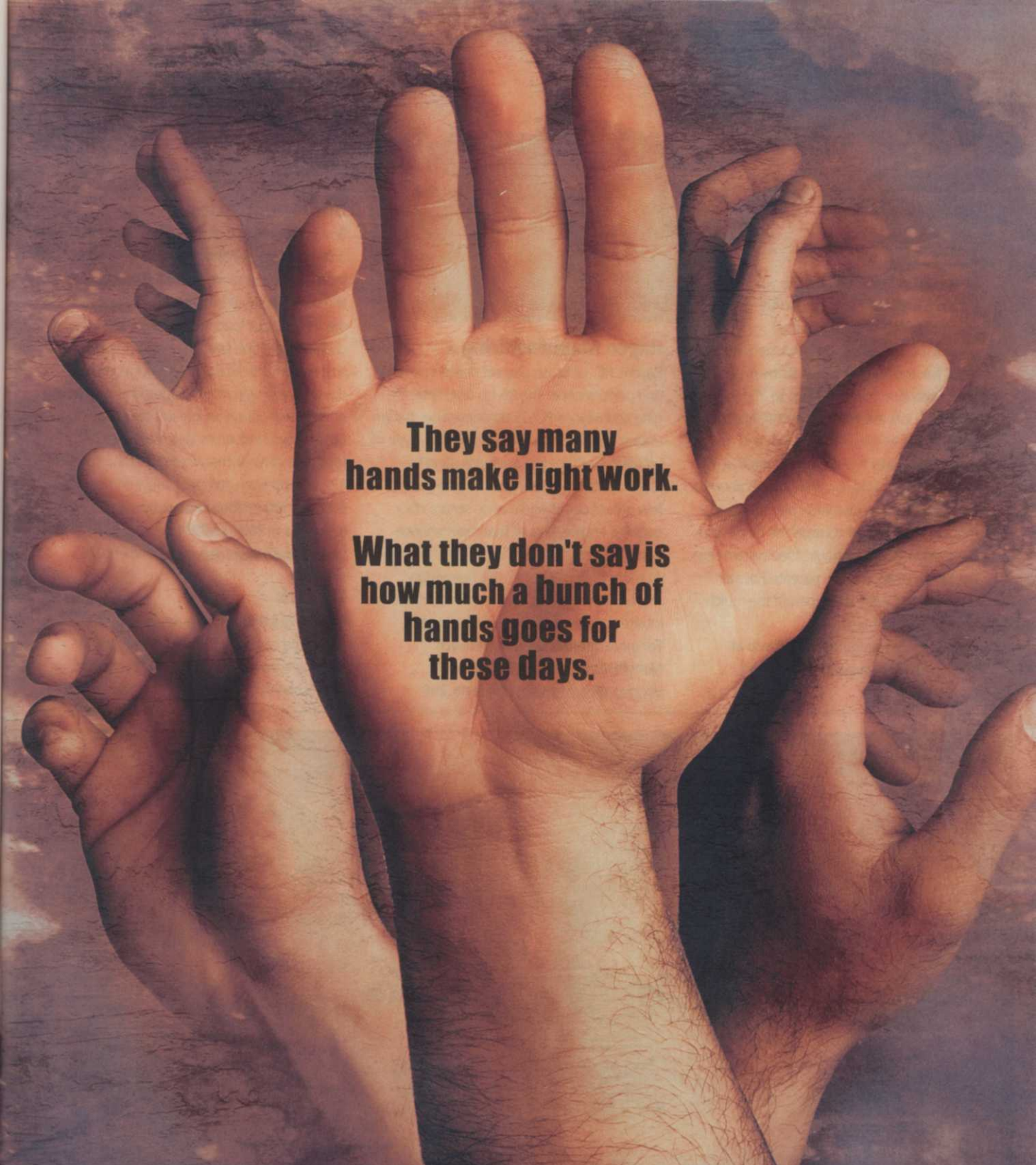
Turbo Technologies' HM-500-HE is a 500 gallon hydroseeding system that is both a mechanical and a jet agitated unit. It is available as both a skid type and a pull type system. It will seed 6,600 sq. ft. per load. It is equipped with a 13-hp Honda electric start engine that is directly coupled to a 3-in. by 3-in. high volume centrifugal pump and an 8-hp Honda electric start engine that drives an aggressive mixing paddle. The paddles allow you to easily mix even the most difficult products such as 100% wood and BFM's (Bonded Fiber Matrix.) The unit also incorporates a jet mixing action that eliminates the dead spot many mechanically agitated units have.

For more information contact Turbo Technologies Inc. at 800/822-3437 or [www.turboturf.com](http://www.turboturf.com) / circle no. 262



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**They say many  
hands make light work.**

**What they don't say is  
how much a bunch of  
hands goes for  
these days.**

Sprayable PREEMERGENT BROADLEAF Herbicide

Fact is, hand-weeding can strangle your profits in no time. Maybe that's why so many nursery operators are opting for the proven, long-lasting weed control of Gallery\* specialty herbicide. Gallery effectively controls 95 species of broadleaf weeds – including chickweed, spurge and oxalis – for up to eight months. And Gallery can be used on 440 field-grown and 230 container-grown ornamentals. Gallery can also be applied in an over-the-top application on more than 400 ornamentals. This year, take a hands-off approach to weed control with Gallery.

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**Saves on Labor Costs.**

Dow AgroSciences  
**Gallery\***  
Specialty Herbicide



# LM Reports

continued from page 82

## Reinco

Reinco power mulchers are designed to stand up to the rigorous requirements of the professional contractor. Models range from the TM-Jr, rated for two tons of hay or straw mulch per hour, with direct discharge up to 35 feet, with hose kits available for remote applications, to the M-90 — the biggest and most productive trailer mounted unit, rated at 20 tons per hour of hay or straw mulch at up to 100 foot effective discharge placement range. One operator controls the range and the feed rate. The hydraulic feed system segments the bales into the patented beater chamber to thrash and separate the mulch for uniform discharge.

For more information contact Reinco at 800/526-7687 or [www.reinco.com](http://www.reinco.com) / circle no. 263



## Rayco Manufacturing ▲

Rayco's RC 12 brush chipper delivers power and performance. The 86-hp Cat diesel engine and Rayco's PULSE downpressure system ensure top-notch performance on any type of material. Features like a self-adjusting hydraulic clutch, planetary feed wheel motor, few grease points and a large service door over the engine, ensure that maintenance costs and downtime are kept to a minimum. At more than 6,000 lbs., this heavy-duty, drum style chipper is built to withstand harsh jobsite conditions over years of service.

For more information contact Rayco Manufacturing at 800/392-2686 or [www.raycomfg.com](http://www.raycomfg.com) / circle no. 264

## Bowie Industries

Bowie Industries' hydro-mulchers were the first machines designed specifically to handle seed slurries containing a mulch material. The shredder bar breaks mulch bales into small pieces for quick loading, and the superior mechanical agitation keeps the mulch slurry in suspension. The straight through plumbing design prevents pump clogging and the extra horsepower allows for greater discharge distance. Bowie Industries also manufactures four sizes of strawblowers from 25 hp to 125 hp and two models of straw crimpers.

For more information contact Bowie Industries at 800/433-0934 or [www.bowindustries.com](http://www.bowindustries.com) / circle no. 265

## Unifork

Lightweight and carefully designed, the Unifork is the easy way to transfer mulch and landscape bedding material, more efficient than a pitchfork and easier to handle than a







shovel. The Uni-fork's unique shape means that it scoops under the material you wish to pick up without digging into the soil below and making the task harder. The tapered and profiled tines guide the material into the high back of the Unifork allowing quite large loads to be moved without it falling off.

For more information contact Union Jack Stable & Garden at 800/672-8119 or [www.unionjackstable.com](http://www.unionjackstable.com) / circle no. 266

### TGMI Inc. ▶

TGMI's Tailgate Mulcher is the fastest compact straw blower on the market. Capable of handling straw and hay, wet or dry, two to three bales per minute, belt drive, skid or trailer mounted, 18- or 20-hp engine. The Aqua Mulcher comes in 500-, 800- and

1200-gallon sizes. Paddle agitation, positive displacement gear pump, 100 feet of hose and spraying tower are included. Unit will pump thick slurries through as much as 300 feet of hose.

For more information, contact TGMI at 800/241-8464 or [www.mulchers.com](http://www.mulchers.com) / circle no. 267



### Bobcat

For optimal performance when grinding through branches, trees and limbs, customers can turn to the new 8B high-flow chipper attachment from Bobcat. The Bobcat 8B high-flow chipper attachment reduces branch volume 10-to-1, thus limiting trips to the dumpsite and improving wood decomposition. The high-flow chipper also has several new features, including a variable gpm setting, a reset override system and a smart valve and pressure valve to maximize chipper performance. The attachment is approved for use on Bobcat machines with high-flow hydraulic systems.

For more information contact Bobcat at 866/ 823-7898 or [www.bobcat.com](http://www.bobcat.com) / circle no. 268

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# Zeros

## remain industry's workhorse

While the basic concept of the zero-turn mower hasn't changed much in decades, do yourself a favor, and check out differences among brands before writing that check.

BY RON HALL / Editor in Chief

**P**rofessional landscape maintainers have their choice of zero-turn radius mowers in just about every color of the rainbow, including a few colors that beg description. At last count, they can choose from more than 30 different brands offering well over 100 models. Not all brands are available everywhere, of course. Some manufacturers' products are strong in one region of the country, and others, in another. This is due to many factors, including differing terrains, grasses and cutting conditions, but mostly, the availability of local servicing dealers.

Is color the only difference among competing brands? Absolutely not. Each manufacturer boasts unique features in its units. These features can offer substantial benefits in terms of increased productivity, durability, and/or ease of

use/operator comfort depending upon a contractor's particular operations and the properties under his/her care. Other important considerations include serviceability (on-the-job and in-the-shop), parts availability and, in recent years, fuel consumption. In other words, while the majority of zero turns have much in common in terms of basic design and function, differences among competing brands are substantial enough to warrant a fair amount of investigation before making a purchase.

### Take a test drive

Since commercial-quality equipment doesn't come cheap (In this case, you do get what you pay for), it's always a good idea to demo units or, better yet, allow your operators to demo them before writing that check. (See sidebar.) Beyond the large number of brands, property maintenance contractors are faced with many considerations when se-

lecting the best mowers for their operations, three of the more important being the size of mower (cutting width, engine selection, horsepower), style (front-mount, mid-mount, stand-on, articulating) and, in recent years, fuel source (gasoline, diesel, propane).

### Zero growth

The proliferation of zero-mower choices within the past decade is testament to their popularity, not only with professionals but with homeowners, too. In 2000, shipments of mid-mount zeros totaled just over 60,000 units. By 2005 shipments had jumped to more than 150,000 units.

Much of this demand is coming from homeowners discovering the advantages of mowing with zero-turn units. They're purchasing zeros from "big box" stores and from traditional servicing dealers. Manufacturers are responding to and stoking this demand with effective marketing (often enlisting popular sports figures or celebrities as pitchmen), and with smaller, less expensive versions of their professional models. What they're selling to homeowners, in addition to saving time and ease of use, is mowing fun, judging by the smiles on the faces of the models (some-

*continued on page 88*





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continued from page 86  
times attractive females) photographed atop these shiny, colorful units mowing green, weed-free turfgrass.

**Still a favorite**

While mid-mount sales have leveled the past several years, the zero-turn category, as a whole, remains the category of choice for most commercial mowing projects as it has been for the past generation. That's not to infer that zero turns are the do-all and be-all of professional mowing; they're not.

In spite of the industry's love affair with their ability maneuver around trees, beds and turn on a dime, increasing productivity considerably, contractors continue to need and buy other style professional-quality mowers, including a

variety of trim and walk-behind power mowers.

Advances in zero-turn mower technology have progressed a step at a time since John Reiger is reported to have built the first so-called zero turn in the spring of 1963 in his shop in Mount Ridge, KS. That unit, named the "Workhorse," had a 36-in. cutting deck. According to information on the Hustler Web site ([www.hustlerturfequipment.com](http://www.hustlerturfequipment.com)), Reiger produced 24 units, which he renamed "Hustler," borrowing the name of a B-58 fighter-bomber.

Eventually Reiger's machines attracted the attention of the partners of Excel Industries in nearby Hesston, KS, which began producing a 12-hp, 65-in. cut version of the Hustler, according to the Web

site. The introduction of hydrostatic drive in 1969 – this time the innovation of Ray Rilling, another persistent tinkerer – was another big step in the evolution of zero turns. From that day, manufacturers have been entering the market with their own variations, adding patented improvements, of that basic concept.

Today's zeros don't much resemble those first production models of 40 years ago, but by greatly increasing the efficiency on contract mowing, their impact on the professional landscape maintenance industry is almost incalculable. It makes you wonder who will come up with the next new equipment breakthrough that will have a similar impact on landscape maintenance. **LM**

# 15

## zero turn radius buying tips

1. Is it really a zero? Can it turn in its own length?
2. Will it hold enough fuel to satisfy your production needs?
3. Is the deck height adjustable in fine increments?
4. Are the controls operator-friendly?
5. How about seat comfort and adjustments?
6. Blade tip speed is a good indicator of "oomph"
7. Will the deck design allow you to mow in different grass conditions?
8. Gas, diesel or propane?
9. How about the unit's traction? Mowing sloped areas can be tricky, if not dangerous
10. Anti-scalp rollers are worth the added cost
11. Width is important. Compact zeros will pass through a 36-in. gate
12. How big is big enough for the properties you mow? Units over 70-in. mowers are tough to trailer
13. Can you get a full line of attachments?
14. What kind of service and parts support can you expect from your dealer?
15. Speed is cool, and we all like to go fast, but remember you can only mow as fast as conditions (safety, quality of cut) allow.

— RH

## Put 'em through their paces first

The best way to evaluate power equipment of any sort, and especially a pricey item like a commercial zero turn radius riding mower that can cost \$10,000 or more, is to try it out — a demo in real-life conditions.

Some dealers host field days where you can operate their models, others bring units to local or regional educational events but almost all dealers will let you test out their units either at their facility or on your properties. Just ask. But since dealers generally offer a limited selection of brands, it's difficult to compare one manufacturer's product against another.

Mark Oct. 25-27 on your calendar and plan on being in Louisville, KY, those days for the Green Industry & Equipment Expo. You can operate dozens of different brands and models on the 20-acre outdoor demonstration area immediately adjacent to the indoor trade show at the

mammoth Kentucky Exposition Center. The Expo will run concurrently with educational conferences hosted by the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) and the Professional Grounds Management Society. For more information about the Green Industry & Equipment Expo visit the Web site: [www.gie-expo.com](http://www.gie-expo.com). — RH







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# THE OUTDOOR KITCHEN AND *beyond*

Why limit your client's plan to just an outdoor barbeque when today's materials allow you to offer so much more

BY RAY RODENBURGH

Are you leaving opportunities on the table? Many contractors are seeing opportunities for increased business and profits in constructing outdoor landscape features and structures that only a few years ago were not even considered an opportunity. The landscape industry is constantly growing new opportunities and some of us are missing them.

Looking back 30 years, it was rare that a landscape contractor would even construct or install a driveway. When the paving stone was introduced to North

America, it opened up a whole new area of business for landscapers. Soon they were installing driveways and, with the help of pressure treated lumber, constructing steps and elaborate front entrances.

Several years later, concrete segmental retaining walls became a staple of the landscape business, allowing contractors to construct large walls, steps and planters.

Not long after that, gazebos and arbors were added to their repertoire.

Today, there is yet another addition to this growing list of services and skills which you can capitalize on. The "outdoor kitchen" is a trend that is getting hotter and hotter. Built-in grills, bar fridges, sinks and marble countertops can

be economically constructed using a variety of modular concrete blocks manufactured for that purpose. Some systems are much easier to use than others.

If the idea of installing a grill seems daunting, it's time you took a closer look. Almost all of the popular grill manufacturers have installation specs on their Web sites. Your task is almost like constructing a large planter with an opening on one side and the top allowing the grill to be easily set into the structure. (Always use a qualified technician for final gas or propane hook-ups and observe local construction and safety codes.)

One thing you should always consider when designing and building these struc-





If you use your imagination you will be able to offer your clients "outdoor living" designs and projects that will delight them.

These are easily incorporated at the same time and will add tremendous value to the outdoor kitchen. Always include these into your initial plan. They can be easily taken out of the plan if your customer chooses to do so.

This outdoor kitchen helps people extend their season outdoors. Even when the air gets cool in the fall, many people are still outdoors enjoying a beautiful fall evening and entertaining friends and family. This is especially true now with the

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tures, is the foundation. Soil conditions, drainage and the size of structure will dictate how the foundation should be built. Floating slabs on a granular base may be okay for some locations, but in others a frost-free foundation may be warranted. Remember also that new housing developments tend to have areas of loose soil around the house. In these cases, a foundation that goes down to a solid soil is important. The last thing you want is to have a customer calling you back to raise their sinking barbecue.

The outdoor kitchen does not stop at the barbecue. If you're building a built-in grill, then installing a cooking top, a bar fridge and a sink is a natural progression.

Circle 145



ever-increasing number of outdoor fireplaces being built using the same landscape products that were used to construct the kitchen area. Work that into your plan, too. Outdoor fireplaces are very popular in today's backyard. Always check local build-

ing codes and ordinances prior to designing or constructing a fireplace or fire pit.

Seating is another great opportunity not to be overlooked. Whenever you are designing an outdoor room of any kind, consider "seat-walls" as part of the plan.

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Circle 146

# 6 product selection factors

1. Texture. No sharp edges.
2. Colors available. Do they match the pavers you intend to use for the patio?
3. Dimensional compatibility. You need this to facilitate quick and efficient construction.
4. Consistency of unit size.
5. Design choices.
6. Can the product be combined with other textured wall units or pavers to provide a one-of-a-kind creation?

— RR

By incorporating a seat-wall into the plan, you can easily add 15 to 20 seats at less than the cost of expensive patio chairs. The seat-walls also add a couple of other important things to the mix. Seat-walls, with some design creativity can become an attractive feature or focal point to the patio. They also add a sense of privacy or coziness to the room.

All these opportunities are not only available in the backyard, but in the front yard too. Mailboxes with engraved names and numbers bring a stately appearance to any home. They can be designed elaborately with accent pavers, gates, ledges and lampposts or simply and modestly. Either way they will add curb appeal to any home. Built-in mailboxes also have the advantage of being vandal resistant.

With advancements being made in modular concrete wall systems and concrete adhesives, projects that were traditionally left up to stone masons and bricklayers, are now opportunities for the landscape professional.

What opportunities can you see? Perhaps a tool shed constructed all or in part with a modular wall system? A garage? Or even maybe even a swimming pool. Rise and design to the challenge. This summer leave no business opportunities on the table. **LM**

— The author is director of marketing for Unilock. Contact him at [Ray.Rodenburgh@unilock.com](mailto:Ray.Rodenburgh@unilock.com).



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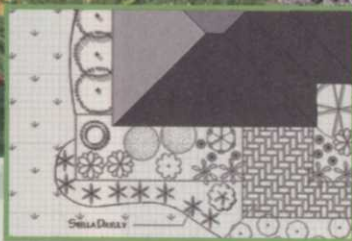


Before

## NEW 3D



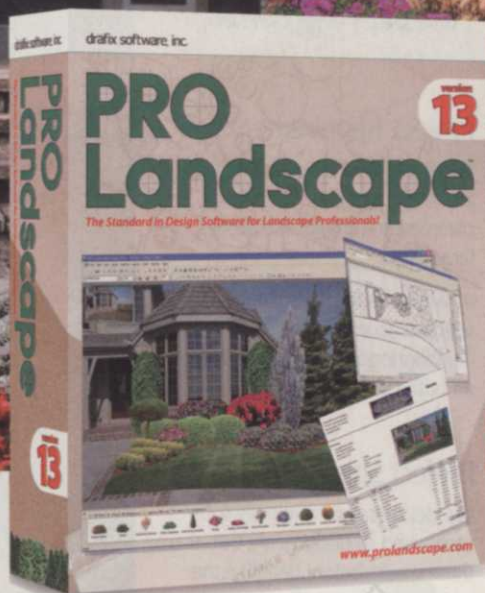
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# Project Portfolio

DESIGN/BUILD

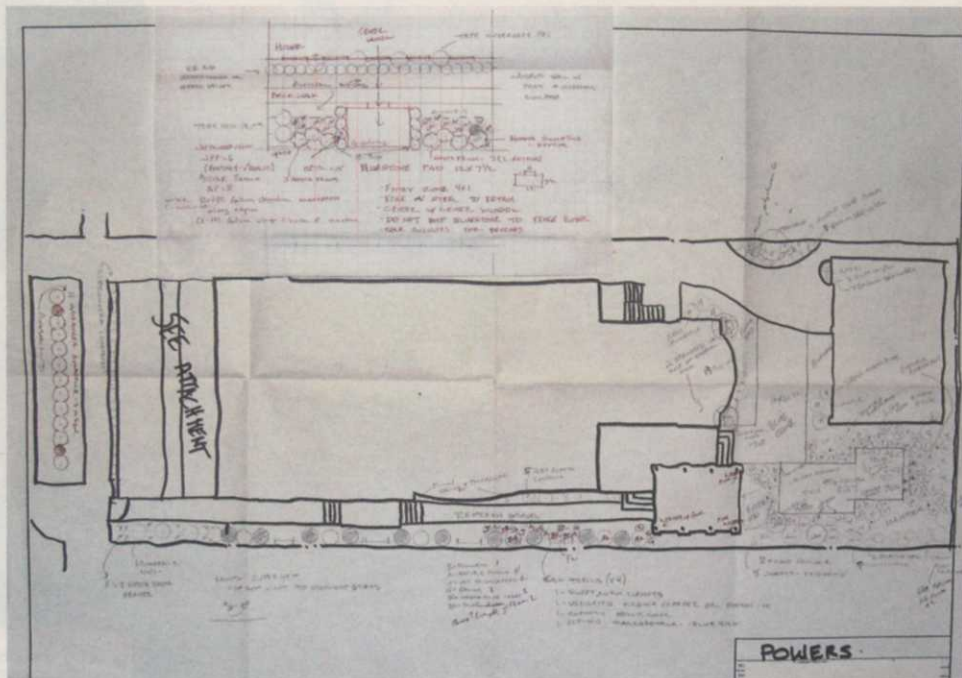
RESIDENCE / COMPLETE RENOVATION / MIXED PLANTINGS / PERGOLA

## The design

A French chateau style home built in 1927 gets a landscape renovation in time for a large celebration

## The site before construction

The existing front plantings were a mass of yews and other mixed plants. The pergola at the visual destination of the path was barren.



## Project Requirements

- Just one week to schedule and order and two weeks to complete in time for the client's large event.
- Overcome the severe light and shadow issues caused by the neighboring high-rise buildings on both sides of the home.

## Project Specifics

The designer was originally sub-contracted as design-only, but three weeks before deadline the contracting firm realized it could not complete the project on time and turned it over to the designer. The two firms agreed that the designer would focus on the softscape while the original firm would do the bluestone work.



**ABOVE** Today, hydrangeas, boxwoods and shade-loving perennials frame the entry. The trellises have vines and light is able to reflect off the other building. Also note that the pergola hosts wisteria and pots.

**RIGHT** In warmer weather, this is what pedestrians and motorists see while passing the home.







**ABOVE** The neighboring building's wall shows off the new trellises. In the foreground, plantings of mixed shade-loving annuals and perennials surround the patio area (unseen).

**LEFT** The pergola and back yard were practically begging for attention. All the turf was removed and bluestone was added. The custom-made iron hoops were installed to keep the client's dogs out of the beds.



### Project Principals

- Spiegelberg Landscape Design, Chicago, [www.landscapetchicago.com](http://www.landscapetchicago.com)
- Founded by President Will Spiegelberg, CLP, who still works on-site on company projects

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](http://www.landcarenetwork.org).





## Giardini del Palazzo

Period statuary and garden elements bring an authentic taste of Italy to this Dallas landscape

BY MICHAEL SEUFFERT / Associate Editor

Sitting on one acre in one of the more elegant areas of Dallas, you'll find a taste of Italy, courtesy of Lambert Landscape Co. That taste is the Giardini del Palazzo, a residential design/build project more than two and a half years in the making, and recently the winner of the Professional Landscape Network's (PLANET's) Judges' Award at the 2006 Green Industry Conference in Columbus, OH.

The project began when the existing home on the site was razed. From there, as the project moved along, the crews from Lambert Landscape worked closely with the home's architect and construction companies, capturing every small detail to truly transform the property into a classic Italian landscape.





Reminiscent of an Italian estate, Giardini del Palazzo is an award-winning landscape, which incorporates traditional decorations and trees, like the Italian cypress, to create an authentic feel.



Lambert Landscape sited the home and set a finish floor to take advantage of 9-foot topography and existing trees on the 1-acre site. The team implemented a planting schedule on its larger trophy trees – live oaks, magnolias, Italian cypress and others – to have them in place and flourishing when the project would be complete. The building plans were scheduled so Lambert's crews could get the back walls in for an Italian-styled grotto, with two trophy live oaks placed symmetrically on either side.

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Circle 148





Fountains, museum quality statuary and 17th to 19th century garden ornaments, many brought in by crane, provide the grounds a sense of maturity.

"To walk the project, you know it's a special place," says Bill LaSalle, project manager at Lambert Landscape.

Lead landscape architect Paul Fields designed the front garden around 30 geothermal

wells that were built, and created a side entry of dichondra-interplanted limestone lined with Impruneta terracotta of clipped box globes.

Additionally, stucco and carved stone piers with a wrought-iron gate begin the 250-foot axis, terminating into a 17th-century Italian statuary. Other touches of Italy include a linear fountain lined with Italian glass tile, 30-foot Italian cypress, and marble urn, bracket, and cartouche, all carved in Italy.

"The project took quite a while; it was months in design," LaSalle says. "The house is extraordinarily detailed, interior and exterior. We did all of the paving work – the diamond shaped stones in the front entry, the squares and pickets in the rear garden. All of that is kind of a geometric nightmare, getting it cut into the sizes and shapes we wanted and then actually getting it on the ground. It takes a lot of dry work, meaning you lay it out dry, make sure that your diamond points meet edges. A lot of detail went into the stonework."

In keeping with the classic Italian style of the home, LaSalle described Fields' design for the project as axial, symmetric, highly ornate and detailed.

"Those are the things that drive everything, from the smallest detail to the grand view," LaSalle says. "It's important in a landscape like this that extraordinary detail be paid to whole and half stones – that the project be designed around the geometry of the space. You don't just order X number of square feet of diamond cut stones and try to make it fit."

One of the most striking features is the entrance sequence. You walk through a large iron gate and a rough-hewn cobblestone path.

"The cobblestone slows you down, but once you get to the oval front entry where the diamond pattern is, you move to a more comfortable surface to walk on and elegance starts to emerge," LaSalle says. "There, we installed a piece of museum-quality statuary, a 16th or 17th century relic that was imported."

*continued on page 100*



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**Challenge:**

Providing flatwork materials that would blend with existing buildings spanning from 1865 to 1965," tells Jean Aidy, ASLA with Smallwood, Reynolds, Stewart, Stewart and Associates Atlanta of unifying the campus of the American Tobacco Historic District in downtown Durham, NC. This was one of the largest historic restoration projects on record in the US.

A major hurdle for the designers was to create a new brick matrix that would blend with the many tobacco warehouses that had been built over a 100 year span and tie the campus' unique spaces together.

**Solution:**

Finding a material that could be used throughout was essential to the success of the design. Clay pavers were a logical choice to create continuity in the vertical and horizontal surfaces. New tumbled pavers provided the antique appearance that preserved the project's historic integrity, with more durability and at less cost than reclaimed pavers. The cohesive elements were completed by using a flashed color range to tie all elements of the campus together.

Materials used: Rumbled® Full Range Pavers



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Every detail was considered including the use of a wrought-iron gate while carefully designed lighting highlights the architectural forms and makes the garden glow at night.

continued from page 98

There's a transition from the exterior to the interior, and gives you a feeling of being contained within this property."

Another striking feature of the property is the lighting put into the landscape.

"The landscape lighting magically transforms the space, playing up the beauty of classical architectural forms," says Lara Moffet, Lambert Landscape garden designer. Lights illuminate banks of white azaleas set up in the front, making the

garden glow in the night.

"What we really wanted to convey was that 'Aha' factor that takes people's breath away," says LaSalle. "When you step into the back garden with the linear fountain to your left, the grotto fountain axial in front of you and a mass of magnolias to contain the space, that is probably my favorite space. It is so textured, there's just so much going on there.

"It's a kind of a visual candy. As you move through it, it becomes sensory and you almost have to sit down to take it all in."

The amount of work in all phases for the project was monumental. Lambert Landscape crews did construction, landscape installation, fountains and pool building. Fields helped the homeowners acquire the extensive collection of 17th-19th century garden ornaments, strategically placed to give the garden a sense of maturity. Some of the mature trees had to be craned in to be placed correctly. Other landscaping pieces were so large, it took 10 to 15 members of Lambert's crews to roll them in. "Like the Egyptians," LaSalle jokes.

"It was quite a process," he adds. "It seems at times it goes fast, but everything is so deliberate, so planned, it just plods along for us and worked out perfect. It's a project we're all really proud of." **LJM**

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**For more information and a list of distributors, contact Brian Pancoast at 800/379-9677 or [bpancoast@enviometrics.ca](mailto:bpancoast@enviometrics.ca) / circle no. 269**

## Magnetic scheduling board kits

Magnatag Visible Systems has introduced several magnetic whiteboard systems to ease the burden of logistics on owners of landscaping businesses. Among the most effective systems is the WorkView Daily Line Item Service Schedule board system, which enables owners to track workers, equipment and customer jobs for a month or season. Magnatag's landscape board systems include all the magnets, tabs, cards, tape and other equipment necessary to track employees, equipment, and customers. Other systems include the Do-Done Job Stage Tracker, The 31-Day Crew Schedule board and the Service Route Schedule system.

**For more information contact Magnatag at [www.magnatag.com/landscape/](http://www.magnatag.com/landscape/) / circle no. 270**

## The Honda Commercial Series

Completely re-engineered from the ground up are Honda's HRC Commercial Series mowers. First introduced in 1989, the existing HRC series features two models: the self-propelled, hydrostatic drive HRC216HXA and push-type HRC216PDA. The HRC Series' mowing performance is enhanced by offering Honda's exclusive MicroCut twin-blade mulching technology. Both HRC mowers are strong, fast, light, efficient and incorporate a number of key features: dome shaped deck design that facilitates both bagging and mulching while delivering finer clipping particles; offset twin blade MicroCut System (the only two-blade 21-in. commercial mower); new hydrostatic cruise control transmission that has been redesigned for increased durability and higher top speed; improved handlebars adjustable for height; and front bumper provides mower deck and engine protection.

**For more information contact Honda Power equipment at 678/339-2600 or [www.hondapowerequipment.com](http://www.hondapowerequipment.com) / circle no. 271**



## Ball Serena angelonia

Serena angelonia from Ball Horticultural Co. is the first-ever seed-grown angelonia, making it an economical choice for landscapers who want to provide an upscale look to their clients without paying an upscale price for inputs. Serena varieties are full, yet compact, and continue blooming without dead-heading. The plants grow 10 to 12 in. tall and spread 12 to 14 in., displaying flower spikes in lavender, lavender pink, purple, white or a mixture. Serena angelonia is an excellent selection for full sun landscapes in moderate to hot climates with a range from low to high humidity.

**For more information contact Ball at 630/231-3600 or [www.BallLandscape.com](http://www.BallLandscape.com) / circle no. 272**



## Corona Clipper post hole diggers

Corona Clipper has added three professional post hole diggers (PHD) to its arsenal giving users more variety when choosing the right tool for a particular job. Corona's new PHD line includes the PD 40020 Atlas PHD with a 14-gauge steel head for good strength and a long service life. It has a sharpened blade edge for easy ground penetration and a 48-in. hollow core fiberglass handle that provides the best combination of weight and strength. Also new is the PD 40000 Atlas PHD, a mid-level heavy duty tool featuring a 14-gauge, tempered steel head, sharpened blade edge and 48-in. extra thick ash handle; and the PD 10000 Promo PHD, which has a 15-gauge steel head and 48-in. hardwood handles.

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# Products

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## Water sensor

The Irrigation Moisture Switch, IL200-MS, controls irrigation by an accurate measurement of soil moisture. Irrigation for landscapes, trees, crops or vegetables is scheduled only when water is needed so water bills may be reduced 30% to 50%. The SM200 Moisture Sensor is buried in the root zone where water is needed. The Dynamax IL2-MS Moisture Switch regulates water applied by continuously monitoring the soil conditions at the sensor and interrupts the controller schedule when enough water reaches the plant roots. As soon as the soil dries out below the recommended moisture set point, an internal switch closes and signals the controller to continue irrigation as needed.

For more information contact Dynamax at 281/564-5100 or [www.dynamax.com](http://www.dynamax.com) / circle no. 274

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IMMS 2.0 is Hunter's low-cost, easy-to-use central control that expands the capabilities of the original IMMS 1.0 system. Notable additions include remote programming and full two-way communications with Hunter's new ACC controller. While retaining the point-and-click simplicity of the first-generation IMMS, the 2.0 platform also includes actual flow reporting, more sophisticated alarm monitoring and response capabilities, and in-

creased reporting options. Other features include: flow total reporting – IMMS 2.0 retrieves and displays actual irrigation totals from ACC controllers equipped with Hunter Flow Sensors; full two-way communications with ACC field controllers; true "non-water" windows – pre-program sensitive times for no irrigation.

For more information contact Hunter at 760/744-5240 or [www.HunterIndustries.com](http://www.HunterIndustries.com) / circle no. 275

## New Verti-Quakes

Redexim Charterhouse is offering new heavy duty models of their popular Verti-Quake rotary decompactors: the new Verti-Quake 2516 and 3822. The Verti-Quake is a rotary aerator that de-compacts the soil using a set of rotating steel blades. As these blades cut cleanly through the soil, they create a wave action that shatters compacted areas and



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The new 170 BT backpack blower from Husqvarna is designed to meet the challenges of the most rigorous commercial jobs. The 170BT's X-TORQ engine delivers substantially higher power and torque compared to standard two-stroke engines yet reduces fuel consumption and emissions. The advanced engine technology improves per-



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For more information contact Compact Power, Inc. at 800/476-9673 or [www.boxerequipment.com](http://www.boxerequipment.com) / circle no. 278



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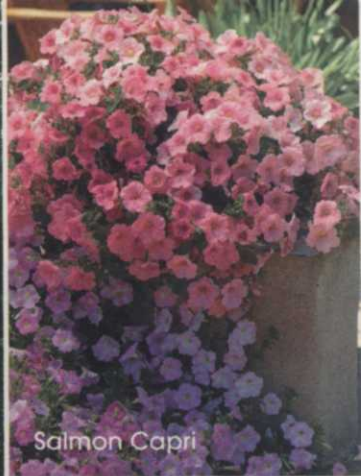


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# Products



continued from page 104

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With cutting widths up to 61 in., Wright Manufacturing's Sentar zero-turning-radius mower can cover a wide area with the agility of a standup as well as the power and comfort of a sitdown. The padded seat with mono spring suspension folds out of the way, allowing for more room on trailers. Cut height can be adjusted from the driver's seat or standing platform. Operator Balance Con-

trol (OBC) lets the operator shift his/her weight as terrain changes. The two-cylinder, 19-hp engine powers the Sentar up to 11 mph forward and five mph in reverse. In an emergency, or to move debris, the operator can just step off the platform and the mower stops immediately.

For more information contact Wright Manufacturing at 301/360-9810 or [www.wrightmfg.com](http://www.wrightmfg.com) / circle no. 279

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## Turf Enforcer

Cub Cadet Commercial's Enforcer zero-turn mower is designed for small and mid-size businesses looking for high-performance at a reasonable price and exceptional commercial warranty. Equipped with premium Kawasaki V-Twin engines ranging from 19-, 21- or 23-hp air-cooled, Enforcer models feature a pivoting front axle, easily accessible Timken tapered roller bearing spindles, a fully welded steel frame, high-back suspension seat and dual five-gallon fuel tanks. In addition, the series offers a charged

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Circle 155

Circle 156



Hydro Gear ZT 2800 transmission, allowing for instantaneous user-machine response. The Enforcer comes standard with Cub Cadet Command Cut System, featuring a fully fabricated Command Cut Deck available in 44-, 48- and 52-in. cutting widths.

For more information contact Cub Cadet at 330/225-2600 or [www.cubcadetcommercial.com](http://www.cubcadetcommercial.com) / circle no. 281

Tanaka's new 25-cc, 1.3-hp PureFire engine. Other features include: 7-mm, solid steel drive shaft; blade and attachment capable, heavy-duty, padded



front handle; throttle lock; 5-in. semi-automatic cutting head; and weight of 13.2 lbs.

For more information contact Tanaka America at 253/333-1200 or [www.tanaka-usa.com](http://www.tanaka-usa.com) / circle no. 283



### Helix irrigation filters

Miller-Leaman Inc.'s new injection-molded plastic Helix filters filter irrigation water (well water, pond water, etc.) to keep the irrigation sprinklers from plugging. The filters are available with a polypropylene disc media (Helix MTD Series) or a stainless steel screen (Helix MTS Series). As dirty water enters the filter housing, a high velocity spinning action occurs, spiraling heavier particles from the disc/screen cartridge, down to the base of the filter housing. These accumulated particles are then flushed from the filter via the 3/4-in. flush port connection, either manually or automatically.

For more information contact Miller-Leaman at 800/881-0320 or [www.millerleaman.com](http://www.millerleaman.com) / circle no. 282

### Big & tall trimmer

Tanaka America's TBC-260PFL extended reach grass trimmer / brush cutter is designed primarily for professional landscapers that are over 6 ft. 5 in. in height. The TBC-260PFL features a 71-in. drive shaft and is powered by

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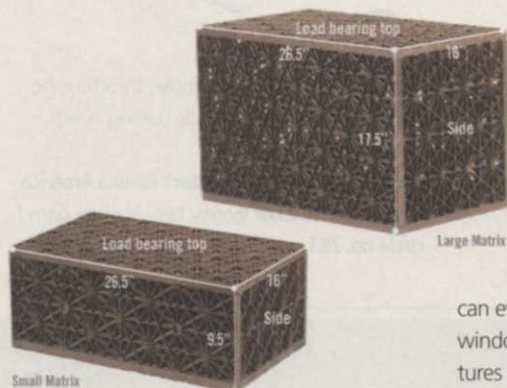


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Circle 157



# Products



## In the Matrix

When used with the Pondless Waterfall, the AquaBlox Water Matrix from Aquascape is designed to replace 90% of the gravel used in the reservoir. While gravel can only hold two gallons of water per cu. ft., the Water Matrix, designed with a load-bearing top, can hold seven gallons. When used in a wetland application, the AquaBlox Water Matrix is used at the lowest part of the wetland, replacing the 4-in. to 6-in. boulders, which aids in water distribution. The AquaBlox Water Matrix's design also makes cleaning a snap for both types of projects and there's much less clogging than traditional gravel basins. Another benefit is the fact that the design is modular – it ships flat and can be assembled at the jobsite.

For more information contact Aquascape at 866/877-6637 or [www.aquascapeinc.com](http://www.aquascapeinc.com) / circle no. 284

## See every angle

Drafix Software, the leading provider of landscape design software, has announced the

latest version of its PRO Landscape design suite. The new Version 13 now features 3D imaging, which allows users to zoom in and out and rotate at any angle to view landscape designs from various perspectives; the new 3D feature can even show the landscape as seen from a window inside a house. The software features a tutorial DVD to help landscapers learn the software and get started quickly. The software also provides the common, botanical and Spanish names of plants for easier cross-references.

For more information contact Drafix Software at 800/231-8574 or [www.prolandscape.com](http://www.prolandscape.com) / circle no. 285

## Combo-pack

Bayer's TopChoice + Fertilizer provides the superior fire ant control of TopChoice and the convenience of a fertilizer, allowing professionals to work more efficiently. The active ingredient in TopChoice is the industry leader

**topchoice**  
+ FERTILIZER

for mole crickets, providing four months of control. Top-

Choice + Fertilizer reduces active mounds twice as fast as TopChoice alone. TopChoice + Fertilizer can be applied at convenient rates of 3 lbs., 4 lbs., or 5 lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft. (up to 219 lbs.-per-acre).

For more information contact Bayer Environmental Science at 800-331-2867 or [www.bayerprocentral.com](http://www.bayerprocentral.com) / circle no. 286



## Kubota ZD321, ZD326 and ZD331

Kubota has introduced a series of zero-turn commercial mowers, engineered to deliver more commercial power, durability and performance, enabling both commercial operators to obtain a manicured lawn even in the toughest terrain. The new models feature energy-efficient Kubota diesel engines: the 21-hp ZD321, the 26-hp ZD326 and the ZD331 with 31 hp. Kubota's new PRO Commercial mower decks on the ZD-300 series include a deeper deck design and a new baffle design with increased air flow for premium mowing performance. The new flexible, yet durable, discharge chute is 27% wider for better dispersion of grass clippings, and helps prevent damage to trees and bushes when mowing around these obstacles.

For more information contact Kubota Tractor Corp. at 888/4-KUBOTA or [www.kubota.com](http://www.kubota.com) / circle no. 287

## Remote handset



The LEIT-2 is a new, virtually invisible, wireless solar powered irrigation controller. The RC2 handset operates 100% of the controller functions elim-

inating the need to visit a LEIT-2 controller after installation (operating distance 300 feet line of sight). Each LEIT-2 controller operates two valves. The RC-2 handset operates up to 198 stations; perfect for all irrigation needs from small parks and residential applications to expansive cityscapes.

For more information contact Dig Corp. at 760-727-0914 or [www.digcorp.com](http://www.digcorp.com) / circle no. 288

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- 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 & Brokers
- 12  Manufacturers
- 13  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

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 105 117 129 141 153 165 177 189 201 213 225 237 249 261 273 285 297 309  
 106 118 130 142 154 166 178 190 202 214 226 238 250 262 274 286 298 310  
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**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 SERVICES

- 01  Mowing
- 02  Turf Fertilization
- 03  Turf Insect Control
- 04  Turf Disease Control
- 05  Turf Aeration
- 06  Turf Weed Control
- 07  Irrigation Services
- 08  Bedding/Perennial Installation
- 09  Tree Care
- 10  Pond/Lake Care
- 11  Snow Removal
- 12  Ornamental Care
- 13  Perimeter Pest Control

DESIGN/INSTALL

- 12  Landscape Design
- 13  Landscape Installation
- 14  Irrigation Installation
- 15  Paving/Deck/Patio Installation
- 48  Landscape Lighting Installation
- 98  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

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

- 17  Mowers
- 18  Engines
- 16  Blowers
- 17  Chain Saws
- 26  Line Trimmers
- 20  Fertilizers
- 23  Insecticides
- 22  Herbicides
- 21  Fungicides
- 40  Biological/Organics
- 36  Turf Seed/Seed
- 32  Spreaders
- 39  Bedding/Perennials Plants
- 28  Ornamental/Nursery Products
- 24  Irrigation Systems
- 38  Ponds/Water Features
- 29  Pavers/Masonry/Bricks/Rocks (Hardscape Materials)
- 31  Skid Steers
- 42  Compact Track Loaders
- 33  Tractors
- 44  Pick up Trucks
- 43  Cab Forward Trucks
- 37  Utility Vehicles
- 41  Business Management Software
- 97  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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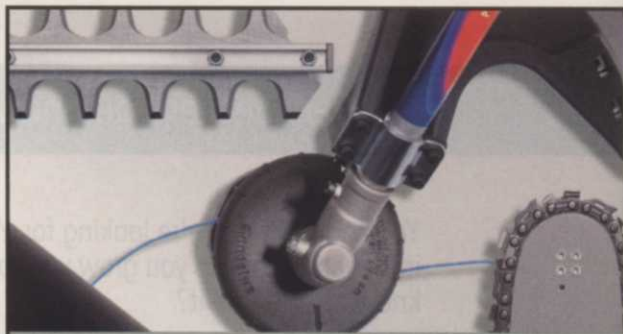
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## Heaviland Enterprises Inc.

Growth means knowing when to let go and when to get aggressive.

BY DANIEL G. JACOBS /  
Managing Editor

**G**rowing plants successfully means knowing which environment they like, when and how much to water and when to apply the right fertilizer. Running a business isn't much different.

Tom Heaviland, president of Heaviland Enterprises Inc., has spent two decades cultivating his commercial landscape operation and has built a \$5 million business by knowing when to take on new business and new talent.

"The last couple of years is when we got back on track," Heaviland says. "In 2001, 2002 we had flat years. That's when I made the decision to put somebody into sales and start to get more aggressive. We had grown previously just by referrals and because we were good guys."

Heaviland added a director of sales to his team, someone skilled to handle the tasks he didn't enjoy and, by his own admission, were not his strength. Heaviland does



### Made in the shade.

The Heaviland Enterprises executive team comprises a mix of new and veteran employees.

mostly commercial landscape management, which provides about 70% of the gross revenue. The other 30% is enhancement work on existing contracts – new planting and irrigation upgrades.

"I was looking back and we were losing market share," he says. "You need either to grow or get squeezed out. We're still playing catch up."

Heaviland also added a controller, a human resources specialist and a director of operations. The HR specialist has been particularly helpful when it comes to keeping Heaviland's

land's 100 employees happy.

The company does 360-degree reviews. In the process subordinates evaluate superiors. Also, the company has new tools to gauge employee satisfaction

### Surveying the troops

"We do a formal survey once or twice a year," Heaviland says. The survey has led to changes. They're not always big changes but sometimes it is the little things that can make big differences.

"We try to get that feedback from the guys," he says. "That's important. We never knew they preferred carne asada to hot dog barbecues.

Little things like that. Our production workforce is 100% Hispanic here. We're trying to understand that culture."

"We just started self-evaluations this year," he added. "Employees do a self-assessment of their own skills and abilities. Their supervisor will get with them and review that and see if 'Yeah, this is right on' or 'No we need to do a little bit more work here.'"

The benefits of Heaviland's attention to detail are clear. If he is going to make customers happy, he needs to keep employees happy. And more importantly, they need to know what is expected of them.

"We share our vision and mission statement before every company meeting," Heaviland says. "Am I 100% sure that employee No. 98 is delivering on that? No, I'm not. That's the challenge and that's why we come to work every day."

"We drill it up. It's our job to serve them. Everything we do is for the benefit of those guys in the field. That's a challenge to make sure that employee No. 98 does understand that we are trying to deliver the best in landscape services. We're not there yet. We've got work to do to get there." **LM**

►► **Online:** [www.heaviland.net](http://www.heaviland.net) **Locations:** Vista, Poway and Chula Vista, CA **Principal:** Tom Heaviland  
**2006 revenues:** \$5 million **Founded:** 1985



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