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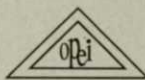
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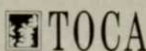
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Design/build is now

BY RON HALL / Editor in Chief

In a pre-dawn winter drizzle I'm sliding pavers out of the back the wife, Vicky's 10-year-old Chevy Blazer. It's filled with 5-lb. pavers, 258 to be exact, the last of more than two tons of pavers that we've purchased the previous several days. I carry the red, brick-sized blocks, stacked five high, in gloved hands. In the rain I arrange them in neat rectangular rows on the turfgrass and mud (now mostly mud) behind our 85-year-old, white, two-story frame home.

I'm not happy. My aged Eagle Summit won't start. Predictably. That means I'm driving the Blazer to the office. I want to drive an "empty" Blazer.

You've probably guessed what's coming next — Vicky has decided she *will* have a decorative stone patio complete with fireplace. By summer she *will* have it. My orders are clear — to remove the 18-year-old deck that we rarely use anymore and begin the task of laying pavers in spring.

Plans carefully drawn and redrawn, Vicky (even in the leafless gray of winter) envisions clinking wine glasses, friends and soft conversation on warm summer nights. She hears soft music and feels the warmth of a crackling fire as lightning bugs wink in the moon glow of her nearby flower garden. It's frightening.

Does that sound familiar, from some of your clients, I mean?

Outdoor home entertaining is not a trend; it's a phenomenon. Patios. Stone walkways. Outdoor kitchens. Water features. Pergolas. Formal gardens.

Homeowners get it. They appreciate that their properties are not there just to mow and fuss over. They realize that their outdoor properties should add

pleasure to their lives. They want to enjoy their properties. Landscape design/build is hot, hot, hot.

That's why you'll be seeing expanded coverage of design/build topics in this and upcoming issues of *Landscape Management*. Coverage will include features that you enjoyed in sister publication *Landscape Design/Build*. They're now a regular part of this magazine.

Why are we integrating LDB into LM? Partly for practical reasons. In the publishing trade they're known as production, printing and postage.

We also realized (admittedly later than we should have) that many readers of LM didn't receive LDB. Even if most of you are maintenance contractors, we feel you will eventually offer clients design/build/installation services. It's a natural progression. Why shouldn't you be getting valuable design/build information, too?

Are we excited about featuring fantastic landscapes in the pages of LM along with the great business and operations management we've been delivering for decades — you better believe it.

And from purely selfish reasons, LM's expanded coverage gives me a better chance of finding someone in the industry to give me pointers on building a decorative patio. I figure I've got about three months.

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

Outdoor home entertaining is not a trend; it's a phenomenon.



In one company we determined that there would be a monthly labor savings of about \$2,845 in cost benefit



Pros of a 4-day workweek

BY BRUCE WILSON

Many companies find it advantageous to switch to a workweek consisting of four 10-hour days rather than the traditional workweek. Some advantages are fairly obvious, while others are subtler.

- ▶ By working a regular schedule of four 10-hour days starting on Monday, if you encounter a bad weather day you still have Friday and Saturday to make up the day or days.
- ▶ You eliminate one day of travel time, morning loading and afternoon unloading. This converts that time to production time from being unapplied time.
- ▶ If you do residential maintenance, you can eliminate Monday and get more jobs done at the end of the week, which most homeowners prefer.
- ▶ You can work crews on different schedules (some Monday—Thursday and others Tuesday—Friday) and get better utilization of your equipment.
- ▶ Some companies find it advantageous to have equipment in the yard one day for preventive maintenance scheduling.
- ▶ You most likely will save fuel, as well as, wear

and tear on vehicles because they're on the road four days not five.

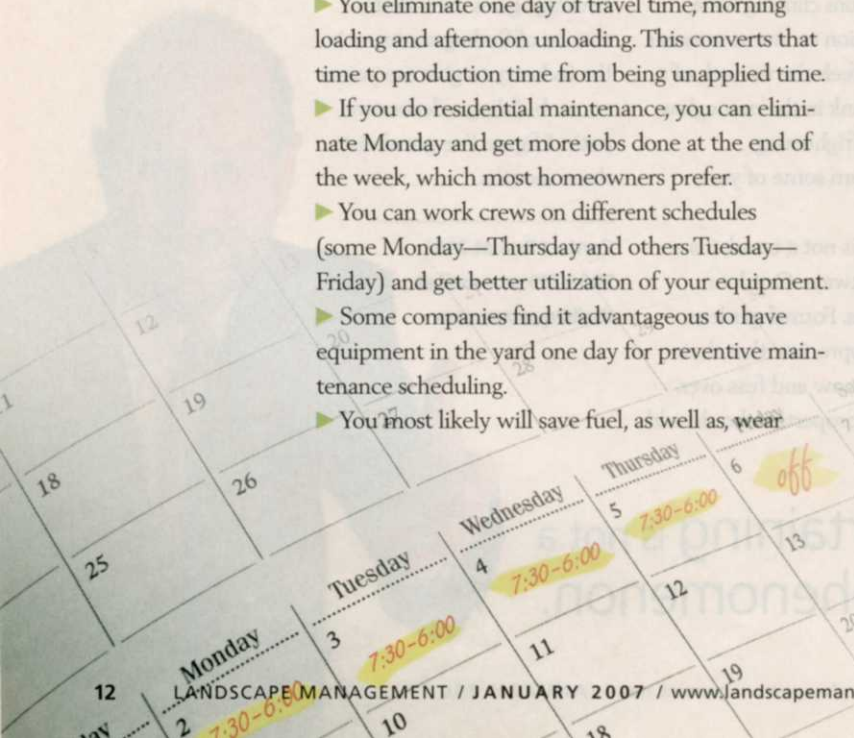
- ▶ Management employees have a workday when crews are not working freeing up time for customers and sales activities when they don't have to manage crews.
- ▶ It tends to reduce overtime since production people are already working 10 hours. If you need to work overtime there is an extra day to work the overtime, and it is better planned.

In one company, we determined that there would be a labor savings of approximately \$2,845/month in cost benefit through actual hours savings and conversion of unapplied labor to on-the-job labor with a 10-man work crew. So there are obvious benefits, but there are some drawbacks, too. In winter months, there are barely enough daylight hours. You have to start earlier than some customers may like. Some customers expect to have you work five days a week since they have to work a 5-day workweek.

From an employee perspective they get an additional day off in which to rest or work another part time job, so they usually like it. There are fewer days lost to weather, as the extra day is "make up day" and, of course, one less commute day (lower gas cost).

If you're considering changing to a 4-day week, run it by your attorney since some states have laws regulating the change. For instance, in most states you cannot work some crews four 10-hour days and others the 5-day schedule. It's all or nothing.

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



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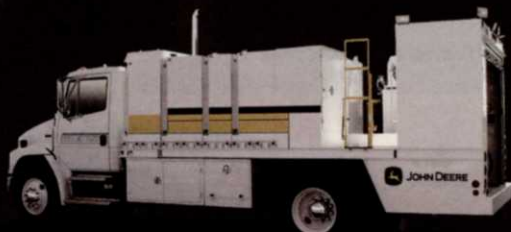
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One negative person on our team can be as destructive to your plan as a hand grenade with the pin out



Choose your team now

BY BILL HOOPES

Peter Drucker, the architect of the American business management model made our leadership mission clear. "Your business," he said in a recent PBS documentary, "is to develop and lead your people." The rest is less challenging.

I saved the quote. I refer to it in my presentations. I understand that, to operate successfully, we must begin with a realistic business plan. I understand marketing, then selling delivers customers and meeting expectations keeps customers. But with each passing season, I'm more convinced that, without the necessary service delivery team in place, all the planning in the world won't produce success.

Now, while the snow flies in the north and many of us are taking time off, think about what will matter most in 2007. You've made growth projections, and some of you have budget and marketing plans. But unless I miss my bet, many of you are hoping your staff will show up and get the job done as the weather breaks.

Is this your mindset? Many managers don't take the vital step of making sure that the people they rely on to execute their company's plan are willing, prepared and ready to do so.

Don't wait until spring to make the tough choices about who stays and who goes. Do yourself a favor. As early as you can this winter, evaluate your staff.

Here's what we know for certain; one negative person on your team can be as destructive to your plan as a hand grenade with the pin out. Have I overstated the case?

You and I have both seen what happens when, behind your back, some disgruntled, negative person slowly but surely dismantles all the positives you have worked so hard to instill in your workplace. I see it everywhere I go. I hear comments like, "I can't seem to hang on to the right kind of people. Every time I think I've got the problem solved, something happens and I have to start all over again."

Or, "How can I get this guy to care more about his job so I don't have to keep reminding him and pushing him?"

Finally, "I don't have anyone I can depend on to back me up."

Often, the owner simply needs confirmation that the only way to improve the problem and return the operation to one in which people want to produce, is to face facts and lose the people who are holding the company and the rest of the team back.

Bite the bullet now, while you still have time. Evaluate your staff and determine who stays and can help you get the job done. And who needs to go on their way.

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

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[ASLA POLL]

What will be

HOT in '07



Outdoor firepits and fireplaces will be a top pick for residential homeowners in 2007.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Homeowners will be adding firepits and fireplaces for outdoor entertaining in 2007. And they, along with commercial building owners, will be paying a lot more attention to environmentally friendly landscape options, such as adding native plants and managing storm water more effectively, according to a new survey of leading members of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA).

The informal survey conducted in December identified the most popular requests from homeowners and commercial



Better management of stormwater runoff will be a concern for commercial building owners in the New Year.

clients for 2007. For homeowners, firepits and outdoor fireplaces top the list. Also popular are requests for sustainable solutions, such as using native plants that require less watering and maintenance.

Homeowners are requesting landscape architects design complete outdoor rooms, such as kitchens and bars, for entertaining. Water features such as koi ponds, pools

and fountains continue to be popular. Incorporating rain gardens and green roofs in home landscapes will add a different, more sustainable, flavor to 2007 homes.

Steve Martino, FASLA, of Phoenix — recipient of both the ASLA Design Medal and the ASLA Residential Design Award of Excellence in 2006 — cites private living spaces, outdoor rooms and water features as top homeowner requests. He also says that clients are coming to him for green solutions for their homes.

Commercial clients are also concerned with green solutions. Members polled said they anticipate an increase in client requests for better stormwater

management options, the use of recycled materials and energy-efficient lighting, green roofs and native plantings.

Ann McGinnes, ASLA, of Garland, TX, says that she expects to see more requests from commercial clients for non-traditional means of irrigating the landscape and a focus on better management of water resources. She also says green roofs are gaining in popularity for both their environmental qualities as well as their aesthetic appeal.

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EMPLOYEE TIMESHEET

NAME: Bill Kemp DATES: 2-16

DAY	START	LUNCH	END	JOBSITE	WORK DONE	HOURS
MON	7:00	1/2	3:30	Brentw.		8
TUE			3:30			8
WED			4:00	↓		8½
THU			4:00	Crestv		8½
FRI	↓	↓	4:00	↓		8½

Employee Signature: Bill Kemp **TOTAL HOURS: 41½**



Reality?

Employee Report

Kemp, Bill 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	7:38 hours
			12:41 PM	3:22 PM	Irrigation	2:41	
Tue	2/13	Brentwood	7:12 AM	12:07 PM	Irrigation	4:55	7:35 hours
			12:43 PM	3:23 PM	Irrigation	2:40	
Wed	2/14	Brentwood	7:12 AM	12:02 PM	Irrigation	4:50	7:53 hours
			12:46 PM	3:49 PM	Irrigation	3:03	
Thu	2/15	Crestview	7:17 AM	12:19 PM	Planting	5:02	7:58 hours
			12:50 PM	3:46 PM	Planting	2:56	
Fri	2/16	Crestview	7:13 AM	12:07 PM	Planting	4:54	7:49 hours
			12:44 PM	3:39 PM	Planting	2:55	

Signature: Bill Kemp Kemp, Bill **Total 38:53 hours**



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In the Know

EPA to require new language on pesticide labels

FAIRFAX, VA — Product labels for pesticides the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) believes may affect federally listed, threatened and endangered species or their critical habitat will soon contain generic language. It refers lawn care operators and other pesticide applicators to an EPA Web site or toll-free number to obtain geographically specific Endangered Species Protection Bulletins that will contain enforceable use limitations. Bulletins will be county or parish specific.

The initiative, the Endangered Species Protection Program (ESPP), requires PMPs and other applicators to, when directed by the label, visit the EPA Web site or call the toll free number to see if the county bulletin contains information relevant to their

use. Even if the information contained in the county bulletin is not relevant to the intended use of the pesticide, applicators must still copy or download it. Bulletins will be good for six months, at which time applicators will need to revisit the Web site (or call the toll free number) to again obtain the county bulletin. EPA has stated that pesticides bearing label directions only for use indoors, and where the applied product remains indoors, will not be subject to ESPP.

While relatively few products and even fewer uses will be impacted, pesticide applicators who ignore label language directing them to obtain a county bulletin from the Web site or toll free number run the risk of violating labeling

directions. Few, if any, product labels currently contain language directing end users to obtain a county bulletin. However, such language will be added as EPA registers new active ingredients or during its registration review program.

"The main problem seems to be implementation of the program being a likely cause of an enormous logistical and paperwork burden for commercial applicator companies that do business in a large number of counties and use a relatively large number of products," said Tom Delaney, director of Government Affairs for the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET.) "In addition you will have to check a EPA Web site periodically to see if any changes occurred on the product you



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want to use. It's just one more thing to keep up with that can burn you if don't have a procedure in place to follow regularly, like remembering to renew your pesticide licenses."

Applications that adversely impact a federally listed threatened or endangered species could constitute an Endangered Species Act violation, in addition to an enforceable label violation. Applicators are encouraged to visit the ESPP Web site at <http://www.epa.gov/espp> and familiarize themselves with the bulletins.

"The label is the law so you better read it every time you buy a new batch of products," Delaney added. "Those in rural areas have more concern about endangered species than those in the cities. Check with your state pesticide regulatory agency for the latest info and help."



Target sends Xmas cheer to Marines

SANTA FE SPRINGS, CA — To honor the sacrifices of U.S. military men and women this holiday season, Target Specialty Products sent a Christmas care package to Pvt. James Carruba and his Marine platoon. The package was shipped Dec. 4, 2006, to Headquarters Platoon, D Company, 3rd AA Battalion, stationed in Iraq.

Target connected with the platoon through MGK Account Representative, Sandra Torry. Pvt. Carruba is Torry's son. Torry was "deeply moved" by the gesture and expressed appreciation for the effort put into the project.

"We appreciate all those who contributed to this worthwhile effort in support of our troops," said Target President Lon Records.

Target associates in Arizona, California and Oregon raised more than \$1,700 during the month of November for the care package.

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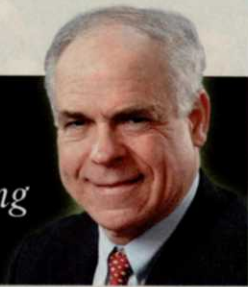


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In the Know

LEGALLY Speaking



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

Q A new company formed in my town, and its name, All About Lawns, Inc., is very similar to mine, All Lawns, Inc., and I'm wondering if can take legal action against it?

A Not to disappoint, but in truth, it all depends on the extent that you protect and secure your own trade name. Did your counsel do a full search (common law and registered, state and federal) to determine if you could use it in the first place? Who started using the name first and when? Did you file a trademark registration application in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, and did it issue to registration? If not, why not? The key question is whether the names are "confusingly similar" under the Lanham Act. If, in fact, you have a federally registered trademark and they do not, and you compete in commerce in the same market as All About Lawns, Inc., the likelihood is that you will be able to stop them, either through a negotiated settlement — which would involve their changing their name — or an outright injunction against their using their name.

Kenneth D. Morris, an attorney with more than 30 years corporate and law firm experience, will be offering *Landscape Management* readers vital information in each monthly issue of LM.

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.*



Lawn care, landscape and tree care pros beautify Arlington Cemetery each July.

PLANET, TCIA partnering for '07 Day on the Hill

WASHINGTON D.C. — The Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) is teaming with the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA) to host the 2007 Legislative Day on the Hill, July 15-17. TCIA develops safety and education programs, standards of tree care practice, and management information for arboriculture firms around the world. Together, PLANET and TCIA hope to strengthen the impact its members have in raising awareness of crucial Green Industry issues to Washington lawmakers.

The event provides Green Industry professionals with an opportunity to unite their efforts and their message as they visit with their congressional representatives on Capitol Hill to discuss issues that affect the industry. Attendees receive an issues briefing before their

Hill visits, and first-time participants receive special attention and assistance from event veterans. This year's Legislative Day is free of cost to anyone who would like to attend.

Legislative Day on the Hill will be held at the L'Enfant Plaza Hotel, centrally located and within walking distance to the Smithsonian Castle, the Air and Space Museum, the World War II Memorial and the Washington Mall. It is also convenient to four of the five Metro mass transit lines and is a 10-minute drive from Ronald Reagan National Airport and 45 minutes from Baltimore Washington International Airport and Dulles International Airport.

For more information on the 2007 Legislative Day on the Hill and Renewal & Remembrance, call (800) 395-2522 or visit www.landcarenetwork.org.

Guelph turf research land to be sold?

GUELPH, ONTARIO, CANADA — The fate of the property containing the Guelph Turfgrass Institute near the University of Guelph is up in the air. The provincial government is considering selling the institute's 150 acres for a housing development. A lot of people, including the professional turfgrass community, oppose the suggestion, according to news reports.

The provincial government floated the idea of selling two parcels of land, both of which it owns — the land holding the institute and also a swath of property surrounding several correctional centers — in mid fall. The announcement took a lot of people by surprise.

Liz Sandals, MPP (Ontario Legislative Assembly) has asked that parties with a stake in the Institute to meet early in 2007 to consider its possible move, and what that might cost and what it might mean for the research being conducted there.

Opposition grows to a plan to sell the land holding the Guelph Turfgrass Institute.

The Guelph Turfgrass Institute was established in 1987 to research turfgrass and its relation to the environment. Supporters claim that the university-operated institute is a vital resource for information relating to turfgrass production and management. It's supported by the University, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and the turfgrass industry. Institute supporters say you just can't up and move 20 years of research; too much would be lost in moving the facility.


Ron Schiedel, president of the Ontario Turfgrass Research Foundation, says that

the provincial government should abandon its plan to sell the property for a housing development.

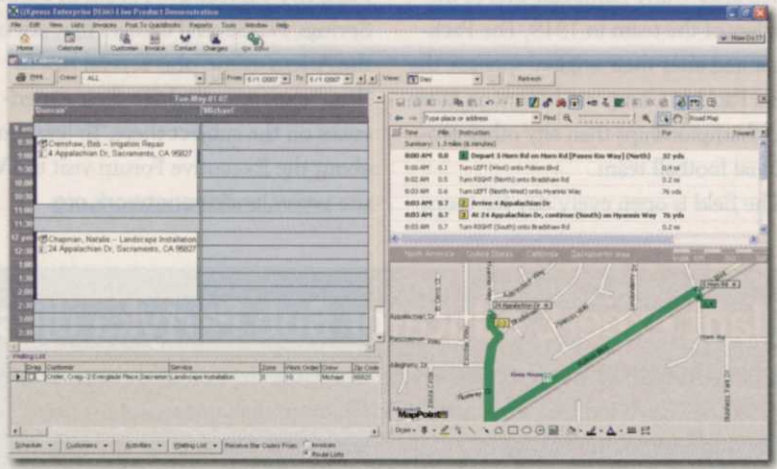
Local legislators have been split over

the possible sale. Moving the turfgrass institute elsewhere would adversely affect not only the institute's ongoing research projects, but also its "symbiotic relationship" with the nearby University of Guelph, said one legislator.

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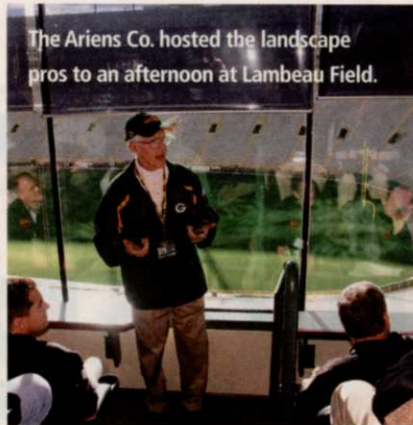
'Lean' moves from Green Bay to PLANET's Florida event

GREEN BAY, WI — The football season is over for the Green Bay Packers — no playoffs or Super Bowl appearance again this year for the fabled NFL team. Even so, about 90 landscape company owners retain fond memories of a visit to Lambeau Field this past fall.

The owners spent an afternoon at Lambeau, networking and learning about "lean" processes, guests of the Ariens Company, headquartered in nearby Billion, WI. Jim Paluch and Bob Coulter of JP Horizons, led the owners through several lively "lean" exercises before the group broke to tour Lambeau.

The stadium was built in 1957 and is named after Curly Lambeau, one of the founders of the team in 1919, The Packers, named after their original sponsor, the Indian Packing Company, have won more NFL championships than any other professional football team.

The field is open every day for tours,



but if you want to learn more about making your operation more "lean" and profitable, the place to be Feb. 15-18 is PLANET's Executive Forum in Bonita Springs, FL. Several owners that attended the Ariens event, plus several Ariens "lean" experts, will share their experiences on the subject there. To learn more about the Executive Forum visit the Web site www.landcarenetwork.org.

Plant expert, educator Bob Partyka dies

UPPER ARLINGTON, OH — Many people in the Green Industry were saddened to learn of the passing of Robert E. Partyka, 76, Dec. 24. Partyka was a full professor at The Ohio State University for 15 years in the Biology and Zoology department. From 1973 through 1990 he served as Director of the Tree and Shrub division of ChemLawn Corp. When he retired from ChemLawn he provided consultation services to the lawn care industry through his own company, Plants and Me.

"Bob Partyka taught us to look up

to see the trees and shrubs around us. He more than any man I ever met knew how plants grew and how to see and diagnose problems," said Dr. Barry C. Troutman, vice president, technical services, ValleyCrest Cos. "He taught using the most fabulous collection of photographs in a manner that made everything seem logical. He was truly the father of ornamental plant knowledge for the lawn care industry and today the industry is populated with generations of people who learned from Doctor Partyka or his students."

[CLIPPINGS]

Chackbay teams with Oprah, Habitat for Humanity

THIBODAUX, LA — Chackbay Nursery and Landscaping, partnered with Oprah Winfrey and director Tyler Perry to deliver 15 new homes and a park in Baton Rouge, LA. The first phase was featured on The Oprah Winfrey Show that aired on Dec. 6. Chackbay Nursery and Landscaping is installing the landscaping for 15 home sites in a community being built through a partnership with The Angel Network, Habitat International, and Habitat for Humanity of Greater Baton Rouge. The new neighborhood will have tree-lined streets, sidewalks, landscaping for each new home and a park with a giant decorated Christmas tree accessible to the neighborhood.

Ariens acquires National Mower

BRILLION, WI — Ariens Co. has acquired the assets of National Mower based in St. Paul, MN. Founded in 1919, National Mower produces specialty mowers designed for golf course and sporting turf maintenance at its manufacturing plant in St. Paul.

"National Mower is a strong niche player that will give us access to the golf and sports turf market," said Dan Ariens, company president. "It allows us to retain our focus on premium, durable products, and fits our commitment to independent dealers and specialty channels of distribution as opposed to mass market channels."

Brickman wins PLANET's Environmental Improvement Award

GAITHERSBURG, MD — Brickman received the prestigious Grand Environmental Improvement Award from the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) in recognition of its work with Marriott's national headquarters building in Bethesda, MD. The award highlights Brickman's commitment to high quality client service and the ability to create a fresh new look for the 3-acre campus.



Brickman's work at the 3-acre Marriott headquarters earned it a top PLANET award.

Since the beginning of the relationship in April 2005, Brickman has improved the appearance of the Marriott headquarters campus by introducing new flower rotations, increasing the frequency of turf applications and focusing landscape maintenance efforts on high visibility areas such as walkways and entrances. The result is a fresh new look for Marriott's headquarters including a more colorful display of flowers and a thicker lawn with fewer weeds.


The new look reinforces Marriott's global image as a resort destination and promotes goodwill among the 3,000 employees who work at the Bethesda campus. After Brickman completed an initial redesign of Marriott's employee courtyard, Marriott employees immediately began eating lunch outside and offering praise for the new garden-like atmosphere.

"We are proud to have helped Mar-

riott achieve a world class look and feel for its corporate headquarters," said Brickman Project Director Matt Shoemaker.


"It's especially gratifying for our team when Marriott employees and visitors recognize the Brickman uniform and say things like, 'the flowers really look great today.' PLANET's Award validates our great feelings about our working partnership with Marriott."

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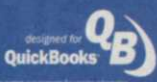
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Sky-

Green roofs move into the mainstream of landscape contracting; **are you ready?**



scaping

BY ROBERT KRAVITZ

The short of it is that a green roof is one partially or substantially covered with plants. The long of it is that it offers experienced landscape contractors the opportunity to challenge their teams to learn new skills in an emerging market. And did we mention profit potential?

“Although green roofs are still considered a novelty in some parts of North America, they’re not new,” says Sandra McCullough, a LEED Accredited Professional with Weston Solution’s GreenGrid Green roofing systems. “Green roofs are relatively common in Europe where they have topped buildings for several decades. In fact, it is estimated that more than 100 million square feet of green roofs have

been installed in Europe. And in Germany, one in eight buildings of all shapes and sizes and for all types of uses now has a green roof.”

When the Chicago City Hall green roof was completed in 2001, designed by Weston Solutions Inc., many considered it an oddity. Today, there are more than 200 green roofs existing or under way in Chicago, covering some 2.5 million sq. ft. of roof area on office buildings, hospitals, fast-food restaurants, schools, firehouses and big-box retailers.

Chicago isn’t alone. Cities from coast

to coast are jumping on the green roof bandwagon. For instance, the Gap Inc. headquarters in San Bruno, CA, has a green roof, as does the Ford Motor Co. plant in Dearborn, MI. Even the American Society of Landscape Architects building in Washington, D.C., now has a green roof. A study by Green Roofs for Healthy Cities found that the number of square feet of roof area covered with green roofing in 2005 was up as much as 80% over previous years.

The reasons to install green roofs are many. They include:

Main Image Environmental Protection Agency building, Denver, CO **1** American Society of Landscape Architects, Green Roof Project, Washington D.C. **2** Eastern Village, Silver Spring Maryland **3** 601 Congress Street, Seaport District, Boston, MA



PHOTOS COURTESY: (MAIN IMAGE) GREENGRID ROOFS; (1) AMERICAN SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS; (2) PHOTO BY: DAN CUNNINGHAM, COURTESY OF GREENROOFS.ORG; (3) GREENROOFS.ORG, SASAKI ASSOCIATES INC.

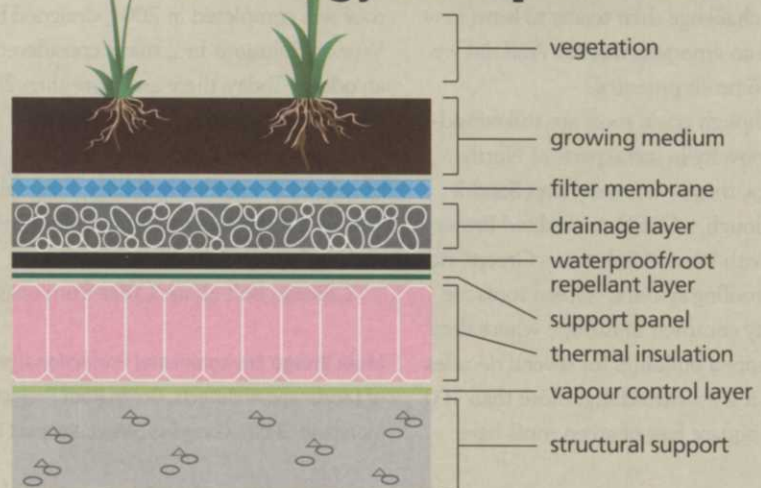


There are more than 2.5 million sq. ft. of green roofs in Chicago, including
4 Schwab Rehabilitation Hospital
5 Apple Computer store

- **Storm water reduction.** Green roofs can retain as much as 100% of a 1-in. rainfall. As a result, runoff is eliminated or, in a larger downpour, spread out over several hours to help minimize its impact on sewer systems.
- **Longer roof life.** Green roofs can double the life expectancy of an existing roof by moderating temperature swings and protecting the roof from ultraviolet rays.
- **Energy savings.** Because of the insulating qualities of green roofs, overall roof temperature is reduced, which can result in lower cooling costs in summer and heating costs in winter. These insulating qualities also help quiet the facility.
- **Reduction in "heat island" effect.** Partly because of conventional roofing systems, city downtown districts can be several degrees warmer than outlying areas due to the heat radiating from office towers and other structures. Green roofs help reduce that heat.
- **Improved air quality.** As with all landscaping, plants absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen. They also trap airborne particulates and pollutants.

Although many facilities are installing green roofs solely to take advantage of

Principal green roof technology components



SOURCE: NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL, INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH IN CONSTRUCTION

these benefits, in several cities, builders can also receive a variety of incentives to install green roofs.

Chicago, for example, has a pilot program that provides up to \$100,000 in matching funds to any developer retrofitting an existing downtown building with a green roof. The program has a total of \$500,000 available. Some cities award special grants or tax credits to developers and homeowners who install a green roof. And various localities expedite the building permit process, which can be exten-

sive, time-consuming and cumbersome in some cities — for any builder who installs a green roof on a new structure.

The growing popularity of green roofs is opening new doors for landscape professionals. Roofing contractors as well as green roof companies are working with landscape architects, landscape contractors, and nurseries to help design, prepare and install green roofs. And facility managers are contracting with landscapers to provide maintenance of their green roofs

continued on page 32



Why green roofs? 'Because we can do it'

BY STEPHAN M. COHAN, PH. D.

The many key players in a green roof installation — landscape architect, civil engineer, roofing contractor, landscape contractor and of course the client — indicate the potential complexity of these types of projects.

Why would a landscape contracting company bid on such a project? Michael Martin's answer is simple. Because "we can handle it," says the vice president of Outside Unlimited, Inc., a commercial and high-end residential landscape construction company. Outside Unlimited has dealt with structured soils, site preparation and planting, so why not a new service, such as a green roof?

Daunting material list

The project that OU got involved in was the National Audio Visual Conservation Center, Culpepper, VA. The total green roof installation involved 5-1/2 acres with roof sections up to a 2:1 slope. OU's team — estimator Rick Webster, superintendent Tom Harrington and project manager Jim Scarborough — faced challenges they hadn't faced before, such as:

- locating tons of native soil,
- screening 10,000 tons of soil and transporting it to the roof surfaces,
- installing 3,951 cu. yd. of a soil mix comprised of 55% rotary kiln slate, 30% root zone sand, to a 6" - 8" depth in designated areas,
- compacting the native soil and soil mix areas,
- planting 250,000 plug of sedum, grasses and herbaceous perennials and
- sowing 26 varieties of a meadow mix over a 106,035 sq. ft. roof area on a 2:1 slope.

Before bidding the project Martin



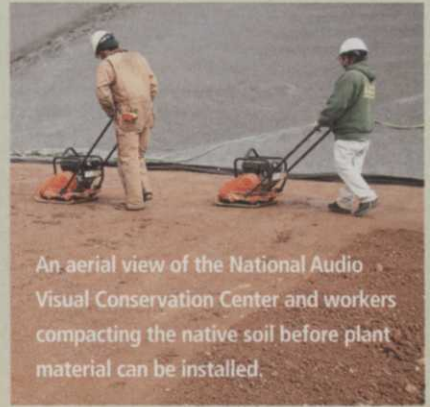
and his team researched the technology with roofing contractors, the Green Roof Center at Penn State University, soil mix vendors (Stalite tech reps) and Ed Snodgrass of Emory Farms. Snodgrass has extensive experience developing green roof plant palettes and producing millions of plugs. They also determined which roofing contractor bidding on the project had the most experience with green roof installations. The landscape contractor was bidding as a sub for the roofing contractor.

The bidding process involved constant communication and brain storming by the OU team members. They discussed every phase of the project and particularly in regard to systems that needed to be developed to implement the installatio. And, of course, there were important financial considerations.

Expensive challenges

For example, in seeking an alternative to paying \$270,000 to blow 4,000 cu. yd. of soil mix on to the roof, they purchased two used mulch-blowing trucks for a total cost of \$150,000. Then there was the costly hurdle of getting 10,000 tons of native soil to the roof. They installed a conveyor system to move the soil.

Seeding 106,000 sq. ft. of a meadow



An aerial view of the National Audio Visual Conservation Center and workers compacting the native soil before plant material can be installed.

taxed sparked an equally creative solution. This operation was estimated on the basis of employing broadcast spreaders (on ropes) to distribute a seed and sand mix. This turned out to be tricky work since seed had to be planted at different depths. The first mix had to be raked into the top 1/4-in. of soil mix and the second mix had to be broadcast over the surface and covered with a hydro-seed cellulose mulch. In effect, the OU team developed production standards as it progressed on the project. In most cases, there weren't any base lines.

In the end, the biggest challenge became the sheer volume of the soil and growing medium, including locating 10,000 tons of native soil, said Martin. He contacted local developers to find a source about 30 minutes from the project. Moving the soil kept a truck hauling company busy for a month.

The project-hardened Outside Unlimited team felt the project went well in spite of some setbacks. The experience it gained and the success of the installation at the National Audio Visual Conservation Center convinced it that it can add green roofs to its service officers.

— *The author is a professor of practice and teaches Plant Science and Landscape Architecture at the Univ. of Maryland*

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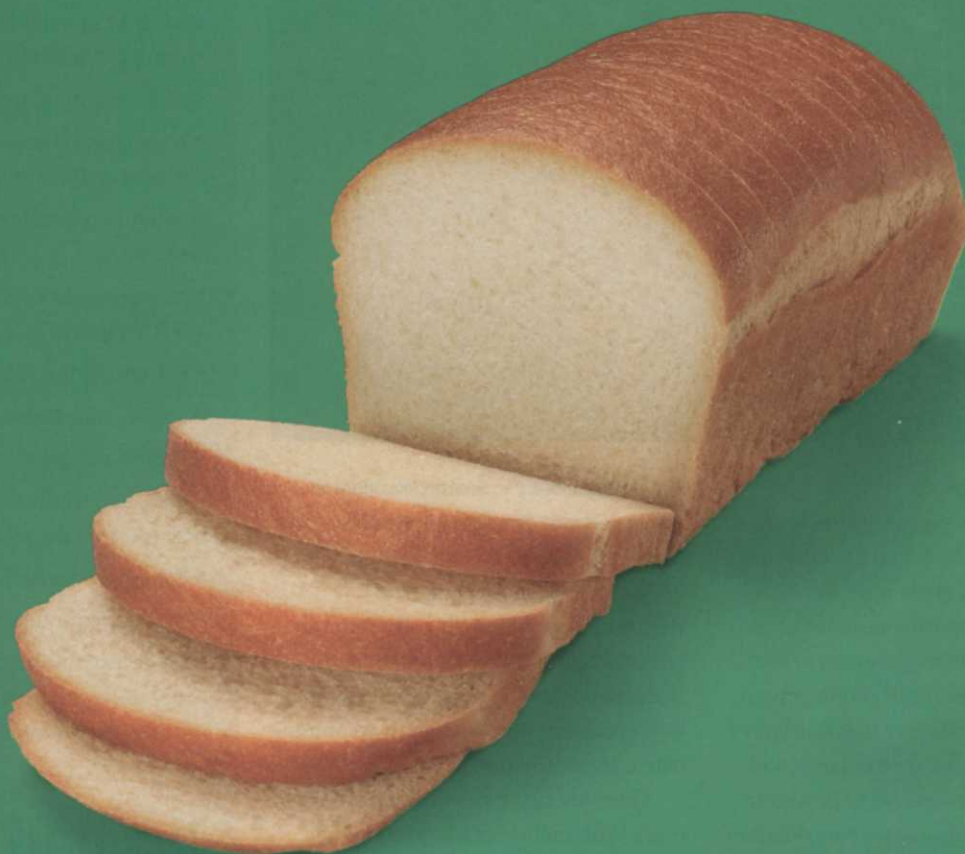
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P R O V E N S O L U T I O N S



continued from page 28

once installed. As a result, astute landscape professionals should know as much as they can about green roofs to take advantage of the opportunities they offer.

Typically, green roofs consist of four layers: plant media (vegetation), growth media (soil), a module or drainage layer — depending on the type of green roof installed — and a covering to protect the existing roof. There are two basic kinds of green roofs: intensive and extensive.

An intensive green roof is similar to a roof garden. The landscaping may consist of grasses, shrubs, bushes, trees and plants commonly found in a garden setting. With as much as 36 in. of soil, which translates to more than 120 lbs. sq. ft. when fully saturated, these are heavy roofs, and usually the architects and developers must specifically design the building to support them.

Extensive roofs, which are more common, consist of low-growing plants such as sedums and grasses planted in shallow growth media, from two to six inches deep. The plant media is drought-resistant and can vary to accommodate different climates. Extensive roofs are also much lighter, weighing 10 to 40 lbs. sq. ft. when

The Ballard Library in Seattle, Washington. The project was completed by American Hydrotech, Chicago.

fully saturated. Although a structural engineer should always be brought in to evaluate the roof, in most cases, extensive green roofs are light enough to accommodate a given structure.

There are two types of extensive green roofs. With built-in-place green roofing systems, which are actually built on the existing roof, all components are hauled to the rooftop, where several workers then install them.

“The other type of extensive green roof system is a modular system,” McCullough says. “This system uses lightweight modules made of 60% recycled plastic, which come in varying sizes and depths, rectangular and triangular. Growth and plant media are installed in the modules at a local nursery. Brought to the roof, they are then laid out atop the building’s existing roof, one after the other.”

Although both types of extensive roofing systems are used frequently in North America, the modular system is growing in popularity because of some of

continued on page 34

The good



Green roofs provide a wide array of benefits:

- Shading the roof and cooling ambient air temperatures in summer
- Shielding the roof from wind and preventing heat transfer in winter
- Absorbing, retaining, filtering and storing precipitation
- Reducing the temperature of runoff
- Minimizing the impacts of impervious surfaces on watersheds
- Extending the lifetime of roofing membranes
- Increasing the area’s green space and wildlife habitat
- Enhancing the aesthetic of cityscapes
- Improving air quality
- Sequestering carbon dioxide
- Reducing traffic noise through absorption by the soil layer
- Ballasting the roofing membrane
- Mitigating floods in certain regions
- Reducing runoff and the need to expand the urban stormwater infrastructure’s capacity

The bad



There are several implementation barriers to green roofs. Many include the lack of:

- Information and familiarity with green roof technology, design and function
- Knowledge about maintenance requirements
- Industry standards and design guidelines and specifications
- Qualified designers and contractors
- Incentives to make green roof applications more attractive

SOURCE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, FEDERAL ENERGY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
WWW.EERE.ENERGY.GOV/FEMP

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continued from page 32

its unique features: it tends to be considerably less labor intensive to install, often making it less expensive, and if roof repairs are necessary, the modules just need to be lifted and then replaced when finished. A built-in-place roof will need the growth and plant media removed from the service area and then restored and replanted — often a labor-intensive project.

“A built-in-place roof can take weeks to build and install,” McCullough says. “With a modular system, as much as 4,000 sq. ft. can be installed per day, which means the entire green roof can be installed on some facilities in a day.”

Landscaping professionals are already taking advantage of the budding green roof phenomena. Growth media for green roofs is now a major business seg-



6 Oaklyn Branch Library, Evansville, IN **7** Target Retail Store, Chicago, IL.

ment of Midwest Groundcovers in St. Charles, IL. According to Grace Kohler, sales manager with Midwest Groundcovers, the company works with several green roof manufacturers, helping them select the heartiest plant media for different climates and settings. And through their affiliated company, Midwest Trading



Horticultural Supplies Inc. in Virgil, IL, they have tested and engineered special soils that help the plants survive and thrive in different situations and locations.

Landscaping professionals are getting involved in design and installation of high-profile projects. As temperatures soared last summer in New York, break-

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ing records and maximizing demand for electricity, Silvercup Studios where HBO's "The Sopranos" is filmed, was only moderately affected because of the 35,000-sq.-ft. green roof covering. The green roof project at the studio, spearheaded by a New York landscape design firm and installed by a local landscaping company, is part of a yearlong study to evaluate the energy savings and reduced storm water runoff benefits as a result of having a green roof.

In addition, do-it-yourself (DIY)

Resources

- Greenroofs.com
www.greenroofs.com
- Green Roofs for Healthy Cities North America Inc.
www.greenroofs.org
- Penn State University
<http://hortweb.cas.psu.edu/research/greenroofcenter/>
- Environmental Protection Agency
www.epa.gov/
- American Society of Landscape Architects
www.asla.org/land/050205/green-roofcentral.html
- The Northwest EcoBuilding Guild
www.ecobuilding.org/
- U.S. Green Building Council
www.usgbc.org/

green roofing systems are now being introduced offering opportunities for landscape professionals to work frequently on smaller projects.

Growing interest in green roofs provide a whole new industry for landscaping pro-

fessionals. And many will benefit as they look for to the opportunities that are now growing up on the roof. **LM**

— Robert Kravitz is a communications professional working with organizations in the building and professional cleaning industry.

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320

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Circle 121

Innovations

TECHNOLOGY

HOT NEW PRODUCTS



1



3



2



4

1 Ford tough choices

Ford F-650 and F-750 Super Duty Chassis Cabs can be customized to fit any commercial use. The F-650 and F-750 offer the choice of three cab configurations: Regular Cab, a four-door SuperCab and four-door Crew Cab, each with a wide variety of seating choices. Customers can choose from nine different frames, rated to 120,000 psi. Three diesel engine families allow customers to choose between 5-, 6- or 7-speed manual and 5- or 6-speed automatic transmissions. New in 2007, the engine is a direct-injection, 24-valve 5.9-liter Cummins ISB I-6 diesel with eight power ranges, generating up to 275 hp and 660 lb.-ft. of torque. For more information contact Ford at 800/392-3673 or www.commtruck.ford.com/ / circle no. 250

2 Eye of the Tiger

Tiger Truck's Champ 4500 has a useful load of more than 3,300 lbs. The cargo bed of the two-door standard cab model is 103 in. by 62 in. with no wheel hump, and is the largest capacity bed in the off-road truck category. While the Champ exceeds all highway requirements, these vehicles are not licensed to be driven off-site, resulting in major reductions in insurance rates, associated unauthorized operating costs and concerns for their after-hours whereabouts. The Champ features multi-speed windshield wipers, heater/defroster, AM/FM radio with multi-speaker sound, 5-speed transmission, hydraulic brakes, turn signals and more. For more information contact Tiger Truck at 866/688-1778 or www.tigertruck.com/ / circle no. 251

3 Protect your bed

Wise Industries' BedRug lifestyle performance liner is rugged enough to stand up to gravel, mulch, oil and equipment, but it also can carry golf clubs, grocery bags and coolers so they do not slide around. Made from a weatherproof polypropylene bonded to a molded, closed-cell foam bottom, the cushioned non-skid, non-slip surface grips cargo and holds it in place. The BedRug will not scuff or compromise painted surface, will quickly dry and always be mold-free. By installing BedRug, the truck bed will remain in like-new condition without dents and scratches that threaten the vehicle's warranty. For more information contact Wise Industries at 800/462-8435 or www.bedrug.com/ / circle no. 252

4 Keep on truckin'

John Deere, truck maker Isuzu and body builder Supreme Corp. are teaming up to offer landscapers a special package of trucks, zero-turn mowers and upfitted equipment. The collection includes three models: the John Deere VanScaper, Stake Bodies and LandScaper. The VanScaper offers a fully enclosed truck body with a fold-down rear ramp. Stake Bodies feature a spring-lock tie-down system and bolted rack connectors that allow one person to remove side rails for accessibility from any direction. LandScaper lets contractors haul large loads, while maintaining high visibility and easy maneuverability for drivers. For more information contact John Deere at 800/537-8233 or visit www.JohnDeere.com/ / circle no. 253



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COMMERCIAL POWER

Enhancing winter startability

Most small engines are relatively easy to start in the summer, but for some engines, startability suffers as the mercury drops in the winter months. By paying attention to the little things, including ignition system service, fuel selection and oil weight, you can significantly improve your success in lighting the fire in your equipment this winter.

A problem in any of the engine's major systems can perpetuate issues, but in the winter, the majority of startability problems stem from an issue with the fuel and/or ignition systems. To increase the winter startability of your engines, focus on these areas:

Spark – An old, dirty or improperly gapped spark plug can significantly affect starting performance. Installing a new, properly gapped spark plug, and verifying (with a spark tester) the ignition coil is good will help ensure the ignition's ability to light off the fuel/air mixture.

Fresh fuel – The fuels at your local station are often blended for optimized performance within a certain temperature range, depending on season. The gasoline you purchase in July has a different vaporization rate than gas purchased in January. Startability is enhanced with fuel blended for the season and climate you're in. Plus, fresh fuel is less likely to contain water or other contaminants that can magnify starting issues. Regardless of season, avoid using fuel more than 30-60 days old. If you have fuel that may be too old to use safely in equipment, you can mix it with a three-quarters full tank of gasoline in a vehicle you drive often. The old fuel will mix with the new fuel and burn, no problem.

Oil weight – Consult your owners manual for the proper engine oil SAE weight and API classification. For engines used in climates lower than 40-degrees (F), you'll get easier starting with a multi-weight mineral oil such as SAE 5w-30 or 10w-30. Or you could use full synthetic oil all year long.



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

From the Shop

TECHNOLOGY FUEL FOR THOUGHT

Most small engine manufacturers get nervous when there is more than 10% ethanol in the fuel.



Know your fuels

BY HARRY SMITH

Fuel prices and alternative fuels have been in the news for months. Gasoline and diesel prices have a direct effect on our bottom lines. Just about everything we operate needs one fuel or the other. Careful routing of our fleets, reducing the time our equipment spends idling instead of working and keeping our equipment tuned can save us fuel dollars. But what is the effect of some of the additives and alternate fuels we're getting at the pump?

In many places we can buy biodiesel, 10% ethanol gasoline (E10) and even E85 fuel that is 85% ethanol and a mere 15% gasoline. What are some of the cautions and hazards associated with these fuels?

Ethanol is hydrophilic; it loves water. There is frequently a small amount of water residing in the bottom of most gas tanks. This comes from high humidity and/or poor housekeeping. This water is heavier than gasoline, stays on the bottom of the tank and causes few problems. Ethanol, on the other hand, can absorb this water, which can produce service issues.

Because of ethanol's affinity for water better housekeeping is required. Cleaning

fuel cans and tanks more often is a necessity. Ethanol has less energy per gallon than gasoline and evaporates more readily. Faster evaporation is helpful in the winter when cold fuel is reluctant to turn to vapor but not desirable in the summer when too rapid evaporation causes vapor lock. Most small engine manufacturers get nervous when there is more than 10% ethanol in the fuel. Concentrations of ethanol above 10% can have a corrosive effect on metals, plastics and soft parts within the fuel system.

What is the bottom line in all this discussion? Ethanol concentrations above 10% can cause problems in small gasoline engines. If you use E10 and a lot of water is present in your tanks and cans, you can end up with a mix that will not run your engine, but will corrode your carburetor and fuel system. Don't attempt to use biodiesel unless you have verified from the engine manufacturer that your engine will run on it. In many states you cannot avoid E10 gasoline. Every station and brand has it. Keep your storage tanks and cans clean and avoid the problems these fuels can support.

— *The author does industry training in the Workforce and Community Education Department at Lake City Community College, Lake City, FL. Contact him at harry_smith@juno.com.*

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Circle 123

RIDE THE
wave
petunias

You've got a lot on your mind planning out the coming season, so indulge yourself a little bit with these nifty toys.



Cool gadgets to check out

BY TYLER WHITAKER

It's that time of year again for New Year's resolutions, goal setting and year planning. With hard work on such serious activities consuming your time, don't forget to play hard as well. I've collected a list of "must have" gadgets to ensure your work life is balanced with some good clean fun.

Canon PowerShot SD700 IS

(<http://www.usa.canon.com/consumer/>)

This pocket-sized digital camera works like a champ. The picture quality is foolproof. The battery life lasts all day and then some. The full motion video capabilities mean you can leave your digital video camera at home. I recommend several 1-gigabyte SD memory cards and an extra battery, just in case.



SwissMemory 1-GB Army Knife

(<http://www.swissarmy.com>)

Carry your data in style with this Swiss Army knife with a built-in 1-gigabyte USB drive. It comes with the standard blade, scissors and a nail file that doubles as a screw-

driver. You'll also find the LED mini light and retractable ballpoint pen handy. Will you ever need to use all of these features at once? No way. But that's not the point. With this knife you'll be ready for anything your business throws at you.



Bose QuietComfort 3 Acoustic Noise

Canceling Headphones (<http://www.bose.com>)

Whether you fly a lot or work in a noisy office environment, these headphones block out the world and create an environment of peace and quiet. Combine that with Bose's famous sound quality and you've got an incredible sound experience.



Logitech Harmony 880 Advanced Universal Remote

(<http://www.logitech.com>)

Do you juggle three different remote controls just to turn the TV on? You need a universal remote. This remote can control up to 15 different devices with a helpful LCD screen that's fully programmable. It's even got its own help button to get you back on track. With this remote you may never get off the couch again.

Along with this year's business and personal planning sessions, make sure you budget enough time to relax and uncompress from the daily grind. You'll find that clearing your head will give you great insights into both your business and personal challenges. Hopefully this list of gadgets will help unleash the creative problem solver within.

— The author is a freelance technologist focusing in business automation.

Contact him at 801/592-2810

or visit his blog at

www.tylerwhitaker.com.



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Circle 124

PROPANE,

a promising alternative

Fuel delivery system improvements and an in-place supply infrastructure give commercial cutters another fuel option

BY BRIAN KLINE

Four years ago Billy Morell converted five 48-in.-cut mowers to propane, running them on standard forklift propane cylinders.

"I've been a wrench turner all my life," says the supervisor of vehicle services for the Austin Independent School District (AISD). "I figured I'd give it a run and make it work."

Today Morell is running a stable of propane-fueled mowers with dual mower-dedicated 7 ½-gal. propane cylinders. Morell is so confident in propane that he's removing his 88-in. diesel tractors from service in favor of new 72-in. propane-powered mowers.

"That means big tractors that aren't on the road, crews that aren't split up and a lot of dollars saved on fuel," says Morell. "And in the end I'm getting a better cut."

Lower maintenance costs

Propane's higher octane level, higher compression ratios and closed systems, while being environmentally friendly, have another benefit – they lower equipment maintenance costs.

Tests have shown that oil, oil filters,

What is propane?

Propane is found in both crude oil and natural gas. Propane and other hydrocarbons like butane and ethane are byproducts of the refining process of those raw compounds.

Propane burns cleanly, especially compared to gasoline and diesel fuel. In fact, propane, which is approved under the Energy Policy Act of 1992 for use by federal and state fleets as an alternative fuel, has an octane rating of 104 to 107 and allows for a higher compression ratio, allowing a propane engine to run just as powerfully and more efficiently than with gasoline, which has an octane ratio between 87 and 93. As a result, propane-fueled vehicles can meet the very tough Ultra-Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV) standards. — BK

spark plugs carburetors and engines in propane-powered equipment last up to three times longer than gasoline-powered equivalents and that during the lifespan of that equipment, fewer tune-ups are required. At present, new propane mowers can be somewhat more expensive than traditional gasoline equipment, but lower fuel and maintenance costs over the lifetime of the equipment more than balance the equation. Morell has seen the benefit for his fleet of mowers.

"I don't have water in my fuel; I don't have dirty carburetors, and if need be, my mowers can sit for a month or two, and they fire back up without any maintenance."

Lower fuel costs

For most grounds maintenance applications, propane is either delivered and stored in bulk tanks on site or delivered in ready-to-mount mower cylinders that are

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Articulators follow the lay of the land

One year after introducing articulating rotary mowers into the commercial market, Jeff Laskowski, founder and CEO of Indianapolis-based Laskowski, is on a mission to build distribution. That, he says, is the biggest hurdle in getting the industry to recognize the inherent advantages of his product design.

In spite of 20% growth since attacking the commercial market and growing distribution by more than 50 dealers, he admits that Laskowski's lack of a small company, well-established national brand. What it has going for it, however, is to cut grass better on residential properties — better than fixed properties with hills, bumps, depressions, uneven terrain — better than fixed deck units. And, he predicts, once commercial cutters see what his units can do, Laskowski's articulating-deck models (deck heading from 87- to 88-in. cutting capacity) will take their place as standard equipment on landscapers' trucks.

The Articulator, with multiple decks and blades that flex and contour with the ground, have virtually replaced wide-cutting fixed-deck mowers in the golf industry, says Laskowski. Why shouldn't they do the same in the commercial market?

— Ron Hill



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re-filled by the supplier after use. Either way, there is a significant cost savings over gasoline. Overall, the price of propane compares favorably with the price of conventional or reformulated gasoline, historically running at under 75% of retail costs. Many states offer fuel tax incentives or alternative fuel benefits to encourage the use of propane, helping to further increase fuel savings.

Another center of expense — fuel shrinkage — is virtually eliminated in a transition to propane. Propane is, at present, not a common fuel for cars and trucks and is less vulnerable to theft in the field and on site. Also, because of propane's closed storage and delivery systems, fuel budget losses due to loss, evaporation, spillage and theft, as well as contamination from rain, dirt and other contaminants, are essentially eliminated.

Environmental benefits

A number of states across the union are either eyeing or actively pursuing legislation to cut the emissions of mower fleets owned by the state or its institutions. This, coupled with heightened senses of environmental and fiscal awareness at every level of business and education, bring new attention to clean-burning and economical propane as a fuel.

It is well known that the gasoline en-



Envirogard 61 features EPA and CARB-certified engines.

gines on grounds maintenance equipment, in particular, emit high levels of carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides. Those engines produce on average 5% of the nation's air pollution, a number that can be significantly higher in metropolitan areas. Emissions are so low that propane mowers can be used during "Ozone Action Days" — days deemed by cities or states as especially likely to foster the production of ozone — when the use of gasoline-powered engines is either prohibited or discouraged.

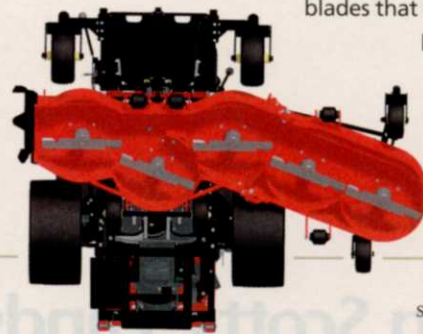
Propane-fueled equipment has minimal emissions. Studies indicate that smog-forming hydrocarbons are lowered 60% to 70% in propane-fueled engines vs. gasoline, along with 12% less carbon dioxide, 20% less nitrous oxide and 60% less carbon monoxide. Toxins and carcinogens

Articulators follow the lay of the land

One year after introducing articulating rotary mowers into the commercial market, Jeff Laskowski, founder and CEO of Indianapolis-based Lastec, is on a mission to build distribution. That, he says, is the biggest hurdle in getting the industry to recognize the inherent advantages of his products' design.

In spite of 20% growth since attacking the commercial market and growing distribution by more than 50 dealers, he admits that Lastec's footprint remains small compared to more-established national brands. What it has going for it, however, he insists, is the ability to cut grass better on real-life properties — properties with hills, bumps, depressions, uneven terrain — better than fixed-deck units. And, he predicts, once commercial cutters see what his units can do,

The Articulator 2886AD follows a site's contour for better cut, no scalping.



Lastec's articulating-deck models (decks ranging from 61- to 86-in. cutting capacity) will take their place as standard equipment on landscapers' trucks.

The Articulators, with multiple decks and blades that flex and contour with the ground, have virtually replaced wide-cutting, fixed-deck mowers in the golf industry, says Laskowski. Why shouldn't they do the same in the commercial market?

— Ron Hall

such as benzene and toluene are eliminated almost entirely as well, seeing a 96% reduction in their level.

Gasoline, in addition to being a heavy post-burn pollutant, is a spillage and evaporation hazard. While propane is a gas in its uncompressed state, it is stored as a liquid. "Closed" storage and delivery systems, meaning airtight systems that keep propane in its compressed, liquid state, prevent leaking and evaporative emissions by their nature — effectively removing spillage hazards from your environment. Should a leak develop in the system, propane escapes. As a non-toxic gas, the environmental impact is minimal.

Propane storage tanks are also safer to have at your facility, having been rated at up to 20 times more puncture resistant than gasoline tanks. On the whole, propane is a safer, more environmentally

continued on page 46

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continued from page 44

sound option than conventional or reformulated gasoline.

"My crews are no longer coming in contact with gasoline," Morrell says. "That's one less carcinogen in their lives, and that is good for everybody."

Making the transition

When it first moved to propane in 2002, the AISD found it necessary to experiment and tinker with the mowers to make the transition successful. Today, manufacturers like Dixie Chopper, Ferris, Envirogard and others produce or plan to roll out propane-fueled ZTR mowers. Envirogard (www.envirogard.com) and other companies manufacture conversion kits for older mowers, helping to alleviate the expense of transitioning a whole new fleet.

The propane cylinder itself has even been improved through experience in the field. In the beginning, Morell and other early adopters were using cylinders designed for use of forklifts, which don't often travel over rough terrain, resulting in fuel-delivery problems and frozen lines. Now, however, mower-dedicated cylinders effectively regulate the flow of propane to the engine, even on the rough-

BIGMOW, the newest robotic mower

Are the professional grounds and landscape markets ready for a robotic mower? Tom Moore of SofTee Automation, a North Carolina-based distribution company, thinks they are. He showed off the BIGMOW, 5-acre robotic mower at this past fall's OPEI Expo in Louisville, KY.

This unit, manufactured by Belrobics in Belgium, has five floating cutting heads with a combined 42-in. mowing width. The battery-powered unit cuts continuously as its onboard computer mows in a random or a systematic pattern. It uses sonar to detect trees and signage in its path, says Moore. When low on energy, the unit goes back to its recharging station for a 90-minute charge. Then it's out mowing again. A buried low-voltage wire defines the perimeter, beds and islands. Because the unit is continuously mowing, bagging clippings is eliminated.

This futuristic, battery-powered robotic unit mows continuously.

Moore says the unit is particularly suited to sites such as hospitals, office complexes, nursing homes, educational facilities, restricted areas and public building grounds. For

more information visit www.bigmow.biz.

— Ron Hall



est terrain. The mower-dedicated cylinders are engineered to be rugged, easily transportable and connected in seconds.

The idea of switching to a seemingly new, less-established fuel like bio-diesel or ethanol can be worrisome as there is not

an existing supply infrastructure. The same is not true of propane, which boasts of a well-established delivery infrastructure. The supply of propane for a mower fleet is easily secured, requiring either the delivery of a bulk tank that is regularly filled by a bulk supplier or the delivery of pre-filled cylinders on an as-needed basis.

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Won over

Billy Morell is no longer a skeptic. The environmental, cost and maintenance benefits inherent in a transition to propane fuel have won him over.

"Propane is superior," says Morell. "Were making more buys every year, and everything will either be propane-fueled right off the assembly line or we'll convert it here if we have to." **LM**

— The author is vice president, corporate development for Ferrellgas.
Find out more at www.ferrellgas.com.

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FORMULATION

— it matters

Without effective, safe and easy-to-use formulations, our pesticide products could not deliver satisfactory results

BY RON HALL / Editor in Chief

Turf and landscape care providers often overlook the importance of formulation in the effectiveness of the pest control products they choose and use. A formulation is a mixture of active and inert ingredients that make a pesticide more convenient to handle, safer and easier to apply. The inert ingredients are usually solvents or carriers.

It's easy to focus on the active ingredient (a.i.) and neglect to pay sufficient attention to formulation and how that too figures into solving particular plant health problems, whether for turf or ornamentals. Pesticide manufacturers spend well over \$100 million

in discovering, testing and preparing a new a.i. for the market. The process takes a decade, usually more. Early in the process, they begin investigating the best way to maximize the effectiveness, safety and delivery of that a.i. to the pest — a formulation. And while not as “glamorous” as the development of the active, formulation development involves its share of sophisticated science, too, not to mention regulatory oversight and end user acceptance.

In a broad sense (and because the Super Bowl is just weeks away), let's liken the relationship between a.i.'s and formulation to that of a quarterback and his offensive line. While the quarterback is the guy charged with making things happen, he can't do it

without the help of his usually less-well-appreciated linemen. At the risk of reminding Cleveland Browns' fans of the wretched '06 season let's abandon that analogy and remark that the choice of formulation is critical in solving a pest problem and achieving the desired result.

The selection should be based on the pest's habits, environmental and weather conditions, mode and ease of application, spray drift or runoff concerns and, in some cases, regulatory requirements.

Here are formulations commonly used in the professional turf and ornamental market:

- ▶ **Soluble concentrate (SL):** water soluble a.i. mixed with water and a surfactant or penetrant.
- ▶ **Suspension concentrate (SC):** water insoluble a.i. ground to a certain particle size and dispersed in a stable suspension.
- ▶ **Emulsifiable concentrate (EC):** a.i. dissolved in organic solvent and forms an emulsion when added to water.
- ▶ **Emulsifiable oil in water (EW):** water insoluble a.i.

ground to a certain particle size and dispersed in a stable suspension then blended with an oil or may be an oily pesticide blended into a stabilized aqueous suspension.

▶ **Wettable powder (WP) and soluble powder (SP):** water-soluble packaging that when dispersed forms a solution or suspension of a.i. in water.

▶ **Water dispersible granule (WG/WDG):** granules to be applied after disintegration and dispersion in water. There can be a wide range of a.i. in the granular product range.

▶ **Spreadable granule (G/GR):** a.i. coated or incorporated onto a spreadable granule.

▶ **Granular bait (GB):** a.i. coated or incorporated on a granular designed for use as a bait attractant for target pests.

Formulation technology has progressed light years in the past 10 to 15 years, resulting in a greater variety of formulations available to lawn care and landscape pros.

Applicators, whether they fully appreciate it or not, benefit from formulation technology. Advancements in formulation give them more pest treatment options as well as increasing the utility of pest control molecules and giving new life, new uses and adding value to older chemistries. **LM**




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Professional pond products

Changes in homeowner attitudes have created a flood of opportunity for landscape contractors in recent years. According to a recent study by the U.S. Census Bureau, 15% of homes in America now have a water garden, numbers up one-third in just the last four years. Why the sudden rise in popularity of water features? Several factors come into play.

In the last few years, more Americans are opting to spend their leisure time in their own backyards. Yearning for a sanctuary to relax and unwind, an increasing number of homeowners chose water features to improve quality of life. Money typically spent on family vacations became profit for pond and landscape con-

tractors. According to the National Gardening Association, homeowners spent \$35.2 billion on their yards in 2005, an increase of more than \$15 billion from a decade ago.

In addition to creating a backyard retreat, homeowners are learning that water gardens are an attractive feature, which increases the value of their home. During the current buyer's market that shows no signs of immediate relief, sellers need to differentiate their homes from the rest of the saturated real estate market. Water features are an excellent way to accomplish this.

The good news in all this for landscapers is that water features are nearly guaranteed to sell future work. Once home-

owners have a pond installed, they typically realize the rest of the yard is lacking and will often purchase additional landscaping to tie the pond into its surroundings. Not only that, but pond owners find they need a deck or patio with furniture so they can sit by their pond and enjoy the sights and sounds of their beauty. The homeowners' wish list might continue onto other items such as outdoor lighting, gazebos and more. While the trend in outdoor living rooms continues to take backyards by storm, landscapers will profit exponentially by steering their customers in the direction of water gardens.

— Jennifer Zuri, Marketing Communications Manager for Aquascape Inc.

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2
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18
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Becker Underwood

Becker Underwood's Admiral Liquid controls the growth of algae and aquatic vegetation in lakes, ponds and other bodies of water while adding a beautiful, natural-looking blue. By restricting sunlight,

Admiral controls the growth of algae and aquatic vegetation. The natural blue color of Admiral also improves the beauty of the pond, lake or waterway in which it is used. Used as an integral component in a lake and pond management program, Admiral is one of only two products of its kind on the market to receive EPA registration.

For more information contact Becker Underwood at 800/892-2013 or www.beckerunderwood.com / circle no. 254

Bioverse

Bioverse developed three new products, which reduce the excess nutrients in the water and restore water clarity quickly and naturally. **1. Rush:** an oxidizer designed to achieve quick results and also provide extended coverage through its slow release technology. **2. Awake:** stimulates bacteria in the sludge layer, giving them the enzymes they need to "wake up" and begin consuming excess nutrients, thus reducing sludge. **3. Vista:** provides a jumpstart for assisting aerobic bacteria throughout the water column to improve water clarity.

For more information contact Bioverse at 877/948-0303 or www.bioverse.com / circle no. 255

Replications Unlimited

Replications Unlimited offers a complete line of artificial rocks and rock water features that

allow you to create a natural environment for your pond, pool or spa. The rocks are based on tough polyurethane structural plastic. This allows the system to be lightweight and withstand freeze/thaw climates and is still tough enough to stand and climb on. The rockscapes are molded from real rocks and boulders to produce the ultimate in realism. Other pond products include: waterfalls, streams, cascades, self-contained waterfalls, bubbler rocks and skimmer lids.

For more information contact Replications Unlimited at 314/524-2040 or www.replicationsunlimited.com / circle no. 256

EasyPro Pond Products



EasyPro Pond Products introduced two new sizes of large waterfall pumps to its extensive line. With the additional sizes EasyPro now offers pumps from 45 gph to 16,000 gph. Some of the features of the new pumps are: continuous duty, high efficiency motors (16,000 gph only draws 7.1 amps at 230 volts); air filled motors (no oil to leak or contaminate water); double

mechanical seals for long life; built in thermal and overheat protection. Call for a free 148-page catalog.

For more information contact EasyPro at 800/448-3873 or www.easypropondproducts.com / circle no. 257

Savio Engineering

Savio Engineering Inc. introduced the newest and smallest member of the Livingponds lineup — Savio's Livingponds Filter 070. Designed to be a multi-stage biofilter, not just a weir, the '070' is the perfect intermediate-size filter to complement Savio's Skimmerfilter. Ready to keep water clear, while creating a beautiful waterfall, this Livingponds filter comes equipped with two medium density filter pads and Savio's new ceramic media that contains a 10,000 sq. ft. surface area.



Finished with a 16-in. spillway and heavy duty media grate for displaying stones or potted plants to blend the filter into your existing landscape.

For more information contact Savio Engineering at 888/333-2356 or www.savio.cc / circle no. 258

Atlantic Fountain Co.

The 3/4 hp Aerating Fountain comes standard with five interchangeable nozzles. The five fountain patterns range from 7 ft. in height to 20 ft. in diameter. With five multiple fountain patterns, you have the freedom to adjust the aerating fountain to fit your pond, weather conditions and tastes.

For more information contact Atlantic Fountain Co. at 860/669-1188 or www.atlanticfountains.com / circle no. 259

Firestone Specialty Products

Firestone PondGard EPDM geomembrane is engineered to provide dependable performance in a variety of critical containment applications. Based on EPDM (ethylene propylene diene terpolymer) synthetic rubber, PondGard is a highly flexible, stable waterproofing membrane. Specially formulated to be safe for fish and plant life, PondGard can easily be shaped to fit the unique contours of any size pond or complex landscape feature. PondGard shows outstanding resistance to the harmful effects of ultraviolet radiation (UV), ozone, oxidation and other environmental conditions. It requires little or no regular maintenance once installed.

For more information contact Firestone Specialty Products at 800/428-4442 or visit www.firestonesp.com / circle no. 260

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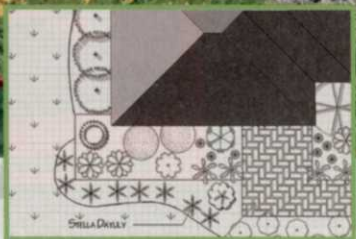


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LM Reports

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Aqua Control Inc.

Aqua Control Inc. (ACI) has the most extensive line of floating water features in the industry. The Select Series of 1/2- to 7-hp display aerators and fountains are available in single and two-stage, both vertical and horizontal configurations and more than 30 spray patterns. The Titan Series provides a wide range of big and beautiful patterns from 7 to 40 hp. In addition, ACI entered the Waterfall Pump market with innovative submersible pump technology up to 40 hp and 1,500 gpm. ACI also offers Bottom Circulators, Torrent Aerators, Lake Bed Aerators, and ClearAway, an ecologically friendly biological product to improve and maintain water quality.

For more information contact ACI at 800/377-0019 or www.aquacontrol.com / circle no. 261

Novozymes Biologicals

From the producers of Roots products, Lake Relief is a lake and pond clarifier designed to improve water clarity, reduce odors and restore natural balance to the ecosystem. Lake Relief is packaged in convenient 1-lb. soluble packets and is effective in a broad water pH range (5.5 to 8.5). The natural strains quickly populate the target area to improve water quality and when used in accordance with label directions and precautions, is not harmful to humans, fish, wildlife or beneficial aquatic organisms. Maximum efficacy is achieved when water temperature exceeds 50 degrees Fahrenheit.

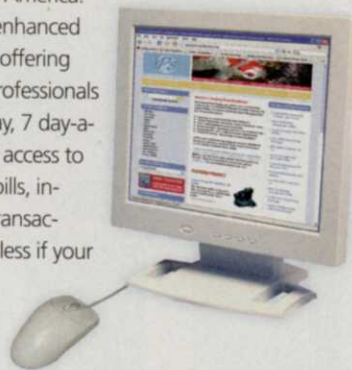
For more information contact Roots Plant Care Group at 800/342-6173 or www.rootsinc.com / circle no. 262



International Pond Supply

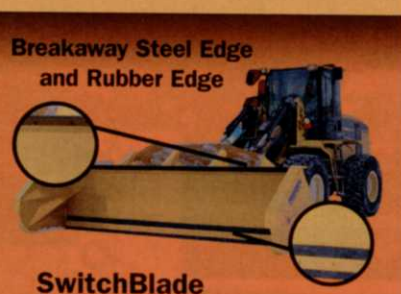
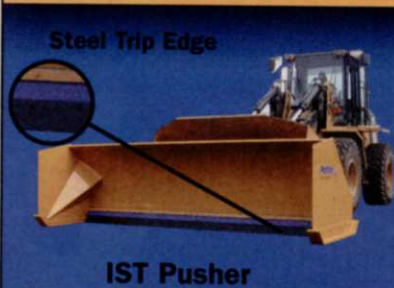
International Pond Supply (IPS) is one of the leading water gardening and pond distributors in North America. IPS recently enhanced its Web site, offering Landscape Professionals 24 hour-a-day, 7 day-a-week instant access to statements, bills, invoices, and transactions. Regardless if your order was placed online, over the phone, or in-house, you can view it all – and conduct your business — anytime day or night.

For more information contact IPS at 888/646-5474 or www.pondsource.com / circle no. 263



continued on page 58

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WaterMark by Little Giant

WaterMark UV lights promote clean, clear water for a healthier aquatic environment. Ultraviolet light waves filter water by destroying harmful bacteria, disease-causing



pathogens and other contaminants. Easy to install, these innovative light-driven filtration systems also have a safety feature to prevent UV-C radiation exposure. This solution delivers efficient,

chemical-free filtration for any water garden or Koi pond.

For more information contact Watermark at 405/947-2511 or www.watermarksolutions.ws / circle no. 264

BioSafe Systems

BioSafe Systems introduced a liquid version of its line of copper-alternative algaecides. GreenClean Liquid Algaecide/Bactericide is an activated liquid concentrate labeled to control both filamentous and planktonic algae in ponds, lakes, fish hatcheries, canals, reservoirs, storage tanks and irrigation ponds. GreenClean Liquid goes into solution immediately upon application and does not use any heavy metals or substances not approved for food consumption. GreenClean Liquid works immediately upon contact with algae and biodegrades releasing active oxygen into the water column once the algae has been killed. GreenClean Liquid is considered a reduced risk pesticide and has been registered through the US EPA's biopesticide division.

For more information contact BioSafe Systems at 888/273-3088 or www.biosafesystems.com / circle no. 265

Aquamaster

AquaAir Diffused Air Aeration Systems provide any aquatic environment superior aeration, circulation and de-stratification, without disturbing the natural, aquatic landscape. State-of-the-art cylindrical stainless steel housing creates a chimney effect, assisting compressors to operate at cooler temperatures. Sizes ranging from 1/3-1HP, 120 & 220 volts, support one to six self-cleaning diffusers, three types available. These diffusers employ a super fine micro-bubble technology, resulting in outstanding oxygen transfer rates. AquaMaster also offers optional slatted surround covers in five colors, to blend into the environment.



For more information contact Aquamaster at 800/693-3144 or www.aquamasterfountains.com / circle no. 266

continued on page 60

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- 2006 Business Planner, regional award, special section
- "Dialogue and democracy," Lynne Brakeman, national gold award, original Web commentary
- "Sell smart, not slick," Carrie Parkhill, regional gold award, front cover illustration

► TURF & ORNAMENTAL COMMUNICATORS ASSOCIATION AWARDS

- 2006 Business Planner, first place, special projects
- "It's not baseball. It's base ball," Ron Hall, first place, online original content
- "A tale of two domes," Lynne Brakeman, merit, online original content
- "10 things you must know about your competition," Carrie Parkhill, merit, design
- AthleticTurf.net, merit, e-newsletter design

► OHIO EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM AWARDS

- "On the Record," Ron Hall, first place, columns
- "St. Louis' winning season," Stephanie Ricca, second place, features-general
- "From the Shop," Harry Smith, second place, columns

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LM Reports



continued from page 58

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Watersaver Co. Inc. has sold and installed pond liners for all aquascape applications since 1953. PVC, EPDM and polypropylene liners are all available in custom-sized panels

to help minimize field work and waste. For more information contact Watersaver Co. at 800/525-2424 or www.watersaver.com / circle no. 267



Aquascape Inc.

The new, versatile color match program of the PRO-Fit System allows contractors the chance to choose between all three AquascapePRO product lines – the Signature Series, Classic and PondSweep – in order to create the perfect PRO-Fit System for their project. Pick a liner and underlayment size, choose a biofilter and grab a skimmer that suits your needs, creating the perfect system to match your specific project. Whether it's a small Pondless Waterfall or a large pond, the PRO-Fit system can be customized to fit your customer's vision.

For more information contact Aquascape Inc. at 630/659-2097 or www.aquascape.com / circle no. 268

Haddonstone

Inspired by Romanesque architecture, this double-tiered, freestanding fountain features leaf moldings on the fountain bowls with slender columns acting as supports. The fountain is self-circulating and does not require a constant supply of fresh water.

The fountain is 60 in. high and 37 in. wide at its widest point.

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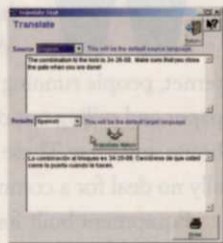
Software Links:

Links with MapPoint - automatically route all your customers on the map.

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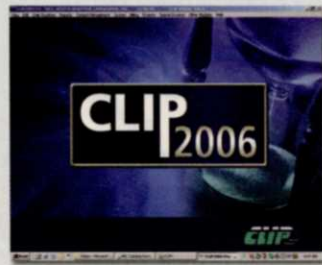
Links with Microsoft Outlook - Send email to customers from within the **CLIP** program.

Links with QuickBooks Pro - Send all billing data directly to QuickBooks.



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Align arrow on knob with eyelet.



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Feed trimmer line through eyelet.



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Buying equipment from big box stores, newspaper want ads or eBay is **NOT** a good idea



Find a good dealer

BY ALLEN SPENCE

We have all seen the great deals on outdoor power equipment at discount hardware centers, Web sites on the Internet, people running ads in the local paper and selling out of a storage warehouse and eBay. These purchases are usually no deal for a commercial operator.

Equipment built for homeowner use doesn't last as long as those created for professionals. Commercial handheld equipment manufactures say pros expect at least 1,000 hours of reliable use from tools. Try that with a \$69 discount special.

Landscapers depend on durable equipment, competent salespeople and qualified technicians to be successful. Commercial equipment dealers need the same. Consider these points when choosing a dealer:

► **Is it a known brand?** Some well known manufactures are regional in their specific offerings. So, just because you haven't heard of it doesn't mean it isn't good stuff. Do a little research when you have doubts about a brand name.

► **Can I get parts for it?** Make sure you aren't getting something that is out of date or will be hard to purchase repair parts for in a short period of time.

► **What is the shop's turn around time?**

Before you buy, ask the technicians. While you are asking, ask for repair references.

► **Do the technicians attend update schools on a regular basis?** Most dealers send their technicians; some don't. As new EPA friendly equipment comes to the market place, there will be a need for training. Make sure your dealer is up to snuff.

► **How clean is the place?** This means a lot to me. The cleaner he keeps his workspace, the better he will care for my equipment.

► **Does the dealer have a significant inventory of repair parts?** The more parts on hand, the less down time on equipment.

► **How accessible are the shop personnel?** When I need telephone assistance? Sometimes a phone call is all that is needed.

► **Will the dealer start the equipment and go over the procedure with you?** You know it will run when you leave, plus you have had a chance to ask any questions you may have. You might get a free tank of fuel also. A dollar is a dollar, right?

The dealer/consumer relationship is important. Treat it that way.

— The author is turf equipment management instructor at Hinds

Community College in Raymond, MS. Contact him at haspence@hindsc.edu.



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► A skid steer with a grapple attachment carries away a downed tree.



Steer clear of trouble

It's not easy being clean – on the job site that is. Landscapers are often given tight spaces and time frames in which to get their work done.

Whether it's selective thinning and beautification for a private landowner, trail development and maintenance for park projects, or clear-cutting for a commercial endeavor, skid steers can help finish a project quickly, efficiently and with minimal surface disruption.

Trees Unlimited in suburban Chicago, for example, employs a number of skid steers and attachments to achieve a common land clearing goal.

Skid steer attachments boost productivity and minimize site damage

Owner Curt Pfaffinger purchased a Bull Hog mulching head, a shear and a grapple, which gave his company the opportunity to do more work for park and conservation districts. Those particular customers were looking for selective thinning, so the highly maneuverable skid steers were a perfect fit.

"They want to make trails

without taking much down. Everyone wants to save a tree," says Pfaffinger. "With the Bull Hog we can do that work. We get around the big oak tree but we don't destroy anything that you don't want to."

The low ground pressure imparted by skid steers was another big selling point for the municipal work. Trees Unlimited uses a rubber-tracked Cat

287 and a John Deere 280.

"There is no compaction," Pfaffinger says. "We don't hurt the root structure so the keeper trees continue to grow and develop."

The maneuverability of the skid steers enhances efficiency with commercial projects where all of the vegetation must be removed. Pfaffinger

continued on page 66



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continued from page 64

uses a skid steer with a Bull Hog mulcher head to clear away the undergrowth before bringing in skid steers with shears, grapples, saws and other equipment to clear away larger diameter materials.

"We'll go in with a Fecon head first and get rid of all of the minus 4-inch material. That gives us room to maneuver around without brambles and thorns grabbing at the operators," Pfaffinger says. "The Fecon head goes in the day beforehand, mows it all off and gives the other guys room to work."

Often landscapers use grapples, tree saws and bunching shears to fell larger diameter trees before hauling them to a chipping location.

"We've got a 2000 Vermeer with auto-feed, which we feed with a Bobcat," Pfaffinger says. "One guy just feeds the grinder and two guys bring the material to him. He doesn't have to waste time schlepping logs."

Sticking to their specialized roles has helped increase productivity, both individually and for the crews as a whole. But that's not to say that operators never switch attachments.

"We're using all implements on any given job. We flip flop all the time, because the time to change from one to another is minimal," Pfaffinger says.

Depending upon the terrain and site conditions, operators may start using the tree



▲ A grapple attachment helps turn trees into mulch.

saw to fell large diameter trees and then switch to the bunching shear for more control.

"Both will handle the same diameter materials – about 16 inches – but the shear gives us more control since we're still holding onto the tree after it has been sheared," Pfaffinger says.

That's important in tight working areas, especially residential or where there are other crew members working in the vicinity.

Pfaffinger brings more equipment than he plans on using, so, in case of a breakdown, the project can continue. If the project calls for removal of the mulched material, then Trees Unlimited blows the chips into one of the

company's fleet of chip trucks.

"We've got 6-wheelers with a box on the back, and a box inverted on top" Pfaffinger says, "so we can handle 20 yards of chips at a time."

Someone takes the chips to the company's gravel pit and runs them through a tub grinder to produce mulch, which is then sold or used on internal projects. As the land clearing business expands, so does the mulch production. Pfaffinger produced 20,000 yards of mulch last year – up from 12,000 the previous year.

But not everything that his crews touch turns into "black gold." Sometimes they'll mulch the materials with a Bull Hog mulcher head, and then leave them onsite, which helps to control erosion. As the mulched materials decompose, they return nutri-

ents to the soil. Mulching and leaving the material on site is operationally easier and eliminates the hauling of chips and further processing at the gravel pit.

Whether they are removing the materials, or leaving them to Mother Nature, Pfaffinger wants his crews to get in, complete the project and move on to the next one. Or as he says — "Get in, get done and get on." His variety of attachments and capabilities allows Trees Unlimited to do just that. Pfaffinger estimates that they've completed projects as small as a single-tree removal to 12 to 15 acres.

"It is nothing for us to clear two or three acres a day," Pfaffinger says

That is a testament to the crews and the productivity of their attachments. **LMI**



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Project Portfolio

DESIGN/BUILD

HOME OFFICE / POOL / HOT TUB / PRIVACY / WOODED LOT

The design

A riverside getaway with a pool house office for a retiring executive

The site before construction

A small backyard along a river on a wooded lot

Project Requirements

- Create a vacation area in the client's yard
- Include a pool and hot tub
- Must have wheelchair access to the home from the lower level
- Keep as many trees as possible, especially a treasured dogwood
- Maintain privacy from neighboring properties



ABOVE The completed arbor and curved steps welcome homeowners and guests. A large *cryptomeria* (Japanese cedar) backdrop and a fireplace provide privacy.

RIGHT A before view of the pool house/office as the pool and spa are being formed. Note the closeness of the adjacent home.

Challenges and Limitations

- The backyard was constrained by river corridor setbacks, so the sideyard space had to be maximized
- Did not want the design to go past the front facade of the home
- At two feet above the 100-year flood plain, drainage was critical
- Wheelchair access and safety concerns near the pool
- An elaborate French drain system was needed for the client's integral dogwood tree
- The sideyard pool and office needed a large privacy barrier





ABOVE Upon completion, the elevation of the dogwood is visible. Situated 18 in. below grade due to a topographical map error, a series of French drains was installed to ensure the tree's viability.

LEFT The fireplace incorporates bluestone and brick detailing and an elevated 18-in. hearth for seating. The dining area on the terrace takes advantage of the warmth and charm of the fireplace.



ABOVE The water-fall spa and the gazebo are easily accessible from the office. A Lebanon cedar silhouettes the existing house, while a Japanese maple adds color.

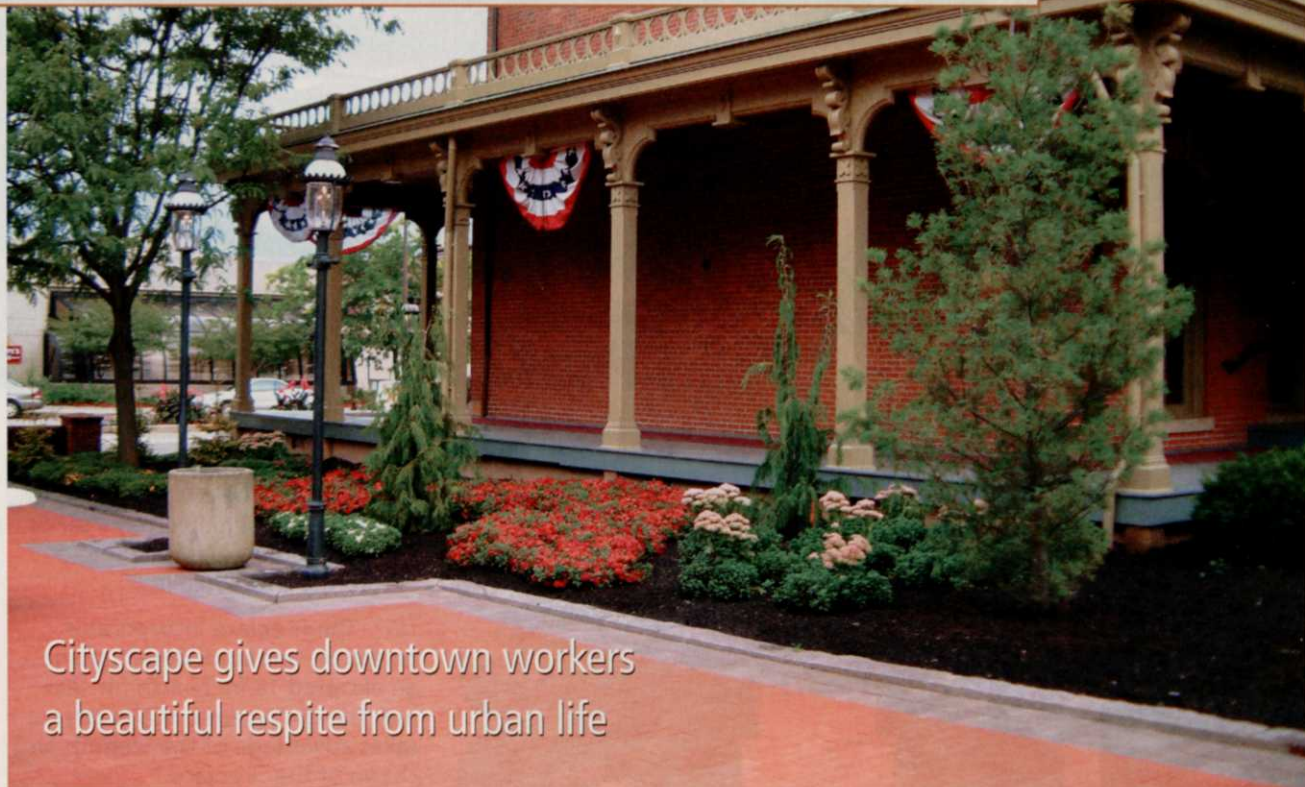


Project Principals

- Scapes, LLC, Atlanta, GA
- Pete Wilkerson, vice president of DesignBuild and landscape architect
- Jim Lesti, landscape architect
- Neptune Pools, Sugar Hill, GA, constructed the pool

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.

First Ladies National Historic Site



PHOTOS COURTESY: TODD'S ENVIROSCAPES INC

Cityscape gives downtown workers a beautiful respite from urban life

BY DANIEL G. JACOBS / Managing Editor

Some of the most honored individuals our country has ever known are recognized in Canton, OH. No, not football players at Canton's NFL Hall of Fame. We're referring to First Ladies.

The First Ladies National Historic Site honors the better halves of the 43 men who have held our country's highest office. And a visit in 1993 by the current occupant of the White House gave Todd's Enviroscapes Inc., in nearby Louisville,

OH, just three weeks to overhaul the site's 12,000-sq.-ft. garden courtyard before Laura Bush arrived.

"We laid 40,000 brick in one week working double shifts," says Terry Pesek, a landscape designer with Enviroscapes. "They had an existing garden courtyard there that they wanted to renovate. We needed to do both paver work (hardscape) and plantings, the greenscape. We had to make it look like a lovely park. It's very beautiful."

An architect designed the overall look for the \$200,000 project, but the details were left to Enviroscapes.

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The Saxton home, built in 1841, is part of the National Parks Service. (Bottom) Workers had to be extra careful because of the pedestrian traffic in an urban environment

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"You're looking for something year round, when people are going through the garden, regardless of what time of year it is, it has some interest and beauty," Pesek says. "You're looking for things that stay green as well as spring bulbs that give you that burst of color after a long winter. In fall, the deep color of mums brings that space alive."

Enviroscapes faced numerous challenges, not the least of which was the shortened time frame.

"The fact that it's an urban setting, means it has to include things that are salt tolerant," Pesek says. "It has to be material that can withstand traffic and, of course, our climate. You're looking for more durable than the delicate plants that you might find in a residential garden. But they still had to look beautiful."

Because it was an urban setting, workers had to take extra care when cutting brick because of all the people wandering about. (Belden Brick, one of Canton's founding companies, supplied the bricks.)

"It was a wonderful way for the city of Canton to be represented on a national level," Pesek says. The harsh environment was only one of the challenges.

"We had to leave the existing granite curbing and the original concrete base under the pavers, which makes it a little bit difficult, because it is easier to demo everything rather than selectively demoing," Pesek says. "When you selectively demo, you have to be very careful not to damage what you want to save."

With the hardscape in place and the plants in place it was time to make sure the courtyard sparkled for the First Lady's arrival. "We popped in 1,500 mums to give a blast of fall color," Pesek says. "The mums weren't quite ready to bloom. Mother Nature wasn't working with us on the timing side. We took about 1,700 pounds of ice and spread it around the mums to try to get them to pop, so they would be looking their best when she arrived."

It worked. Although she did not get to meet Mrs. Bush, Pesek did hear the First Lady was complimentary of the garden. One

Enviroscapes worked double shifts to lay more than 40,000 pavers.



IN THE GARDEN

Some of the less common plants used in the Ladies' garden to add style and flair:

Botanical	Common	Selected for its
<i>Pinus strobes 'Torulosa'</i>	Contorted White Pine	Cool twisted needles
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	Sculptured Scotch Pine	Interesting structure
<i>Picea orientalis 'Skylands'</i>	Golden Oriental Spruce	Beautiful gold branch tips

OTHER PLANT MATERIAL THAT IS THE BACKBONE OF THE DESIGN

Botanical	Common	Selected for its
<i>Chamaecyparis nootkatensis 'Pendula'</i>	Weeping Alaskan Cedar	Drama and evergreen
<i>Hydrangea paniculata 'Tardiva'</i>	Tardiva Hydrangea	Late summer flowering
<i>Buxus</i>	Boxwood	Winter interest and formality
<i>Picea pungens glauca globosa</i>	Dwarf Blue Spruce	Striking blue color all year round
<i>Rosa 'Knock Out'</i>	Knock out Shrub Roses	Low maintenance and bloom all summer
<i>Ginkgo biloba</i>	Maidenhair Tree	Great urban tree with unique leaf shape, one of the oldest trees on earth, estimated at 150 million years

In the planters, Enviroscapes was looking for plants that provided a blast of color, were hardy enough to stand the urban environment and were drought tolerant. The company settled on begonias, geraniums, millet, colocasia (elephant ear) for its heart shaped, colorful foliage and cannas for their height and striking foliage.

of the features of which Pesek is most proud are the large planters situated next to the street.

"It really enhanced the city landscape," she says.

The city of Canton liked the planters so much Enviroscapes was asked to add several more along Market Street, the city's main drag, to match those near the garden.

"It really added to the downtown area, as well," Pesek says.

The job earned the company a PLANET National Distinction Award, one of many honors the company has received over the years. **LMI**

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New scarlet rose

Flower Carpet Scarlet is the seventh and latest in the Flower Carpet Rose series introduced from Anthony Tesselaar Plants. Flower Carpet Scarlet boasts a profusion of vibrant red double flowers in clusters and displays an unprecedented level of natural disease-resistance. Flower Carpet Scarlet produces small buds that burst into clusters of six to eight double flowers. The flowers are a vibrant, scarlet red. The foliage is a dark, glossy green. Scarlet blooms in waves from early summer through late fall. A mature plant grows from 24 to 32 in. tall and 40 in. wide.

For more information contact Anthony Tesselaar Plants at 310/349-0714 or ddavids@tesselaar.com / circle no. 271

Multi-line install

The Vermeer multiblade plow attachment is designed specifically to install Netafim dripperline in commercial and residential irrigation projects. The multi-blade plow attachment fits the Vermeer LM42 lawn plow and RT450 tractor, and uses a high-frequency vibration to cut through the ground and close up the channel around the dripperline. It is capable of laying three rows of tubing at a time, with



Simple operation

Rain Bird's new ESP-LX Modular Controller accommodates all high-end residential and commercial installations. The ESP-LX Modular has the capacity to expand up to 32 stations in increments of four or eight stations. The ESP-LX Modular features a large display for simple operation and flexible programming options to meet specific landscape needs. In addition, the ESP-LX Modular enables automatic monthly seasonal adjustments to cut back on watering during cool weather and increase during hot weather. It comes programmable in English and Spanish.

For more information contact Rain Bird at 800/RAINBIRD or www.rainbird.com / circle no. 270



depth adjustability from 2 to 12 in. in 1-in. increments and spacing width adjustability from 10 in. to 24 in. in 2-in. increments.

For more information contact Vermeer at 888/VERMEER or www.vermeer.com / circle no. 272



Sprayable Dimension

Dow Agro-Sciences' Dimension 2EW specialty herbicide is a new water-based formulation of Dimension that offers early post-emergence control of crabgrass, pre-emergence control of other grassy and broadleaf

weeds and can now be sprayed over the top of landscape ornamentals. With the active ingredient dithiopyr, this new formulation provides application flexibility for almost anywhere users need it: established lawns, landscape ornamentals, golf courses, commercial and residential properties, sod farms, non-cropland and industrial sites. It can also be used over the top of field grown nursery ornamentals.

For more information contact Dow Agro-Sciences at 317/337 3000 or www.DimensionHerbicide.com / circle no. 273

Data loggers

Onset Computer Corp. released the HOBO Pro v2 Series, a family of four compact, weatherproof data loggers designed for use in a broad range of outdoor temperature and humidity monitoring applications. Slightly



larger than a pocket-sized flashlight, the new HOBO Pro v2 loggers address the need among professional researchers for a portable data logger that can withstand harsh outdoor and condensing environments. Example applications include field site evaluations, ecology studies and microclimate monitoring.

For more information contact Onset at 800/564-4377 or www.onsetcomp.com / circle no. 274

More comfortable Tank

Cub Cadet Commercial has added comfort and convenience to its tough performing TANK zero-turn mowers. The TANK will now offer a new two-pedal deck lift; one pedal to lift and lock, the other to release and lower; a conveniently located parking brake with effortless engagement; and a standard, foldable ROPS as part of an Operator Protection System. The TANK M72 gas model will come



with a 37HP V-Twin air-cooled Kawasaki engine. Cub Cadet has also made improvements to its exclusive Command Cut System for improved durability, reduced maintenance and cleaner overall cut.

For more information contact Cub Cadet at 330/225-2600 or www.cubcadetcommercial.com / circle no. 275

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The new Bobcat 425 zero-tail swing (ZTS) compact excavator is designed for professionals who need a two- to three-metric ton exca-












vator with zero-tail overhang to optimize spoil placement and reduce the likelihood of contact with surrounding objects. The 425 ZTS delivers a maximum digging depth of 8 ft. 4 in. and a maximum reach of 14 ft. 10 in. at ground level. The rubber tracked excavator is powered by a 26-hp liquid-cooled diesel engine and features two-speed (1.2 and 2.3 mph) travel motors. The 425 provides 3,282-lbs. arm breakout force and 5,058-lbs. bucket breakout force. The 425 is also available in a long-arm option for greater spoil placement. **contact Bobcat at 866/823-7898 or www.bobcat.com / circle no. 277**

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For more information contact Agrotain International at 888/547-4140 or www.stabilizednitrogen.com / circle no. 279

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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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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 Hydro-seeding
07 Irrigation Services
08 Bedding/Perennial Installation
09 Tree Care
10 Pond/Lake Care
11 Snow Removal
12 Landscape Design
13 Landscape Installation
14 Irrigation Installation
15 Paving/Deck/Patio Installation
16 Ornamental Care
17 Perimeter Pest Control
18 Other (please specify) _____

DESIGN/BUILD

- 19 Landscape Lighting Installation
20 Other (please specify) _____

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

- 21 Mowers
22 Engines
23 Blowers
24 Chain Saws
25 Line Trimmers
26 Fertilizers
27 Herbicides
28 Fungicides
29 Biological/Organics
30 Turf Seed/Seed
31 Spreaders
32 Insecticides
33 Ornamental/Nursery Products
34 Irrigation Systems
35 Ponds/Water Features
36 Pavers/Masonry/Bricks/Rocks (Landscape Materials)
37 Skid Steers
38 Compact Track Loaders
39 Tractors
40 Pick up Trucks
41 Cab Forward Trucks
42 Utility Vehicles
43 Business Management Software
44 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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05 Turf Aeration
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07 Irrigation Services
08 Bedding/Perennial Installation
09 Tree Care
10 Pond/Lake Care
11 Snow Removal
12 Landscape Design
13 Landscape Installation
14 Irrigation Installation
15 Paving/Deck/Patio Installation
16 Ornamental Care
17 Perimeter Pest Control
18 Other (please specify) _____

DESIGN/BUILD

- 19 Landscape Lighting Installation
20 Other (please specify) _____

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26 Fertilizers
27 Herbicides
28 Fungicides
29 Biological/Organics
30 Turf Seed/Seed
31 Spreaders
32 Insecticides
33 Ornamental/Nursery Products
34 Irrigation Systems
35 Ponds/Water Features
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42 Utility Vehicles
43 Business Management Software
44 Other (please specify) _____

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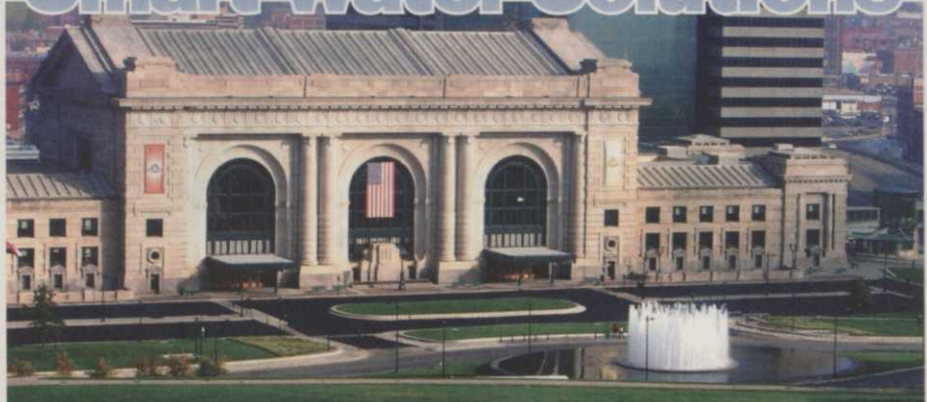



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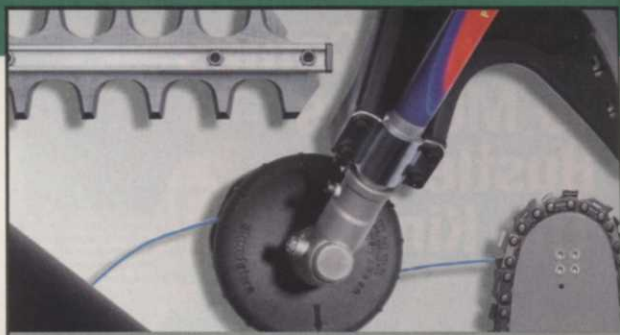
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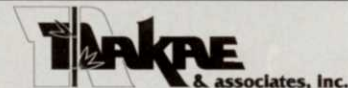
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January

22-24 Central Environmental Nursery Trade Show /

Columbus, OH, Sponsored by Ohio Nursery & Landscape Association, 800/825-5062 www.onla.org

22-26 Denver ProGreen Expo /

Denver, CO, Sponsored by Associated Landscape Contractors of Colorado, Colorado Chapter American Society of Landscape Architects, www.progreenexpo.com

25 Northeastern PA Turf Conference and Trade Show /

Wilkes-Barre, PA, Sponsored by Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council, 814/238-2402 www.paturf.org

28 - February 21 TPI Study Tour to Australia and New Zealand,

Canberra, Australia, Sponsored by Irrigation Association, 888/727-6498 www.turfgrassod.org

31-February 1, Connecticut Turf & Landscape Conference /

Connecticut Convention Center, Hartford, CT. Sponsored by The Connecticut Grounds Keepers Association & The Connecticut Irrigation Contractors Association, 203/699-9912 rtice@snet.net

31 - February 3 ANLA

Management Clinic, Louisville, KY, Sponsored by American Nursery & Landscape Association, 202/789-2900 www.anla.org

February

6-8 New England Grows /

Boston, MA, Sponsored by New England Nursery Association, Associated Landscape Contractors of Massachusetts, Massachusetts Arborists Association, Massachusetts Nursery & Landscape Association, 508/653-3009 www.negrows.org

11-15 TCIA Winter Management Conference /

Cancun, Mexico, Sponsored by Tree Care Industry Association, 800/733-2622 www.tcia.org

14-18 19th Annual Northwest Flower & Garden Show /

Washington State Convention Center, Seattle, WA, Sponsored by Salmon Bay Events, 800/569-2832 www.gardenshow.com

27 - March 1, DeckExpo /

Las Vegas, NV, Sponsored by Professional Deck Builder Magazine, www.DeckExpo.com

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Winners

RESOURCES

SMALL/MID-SIZED COMPANIES TO WATCH

Russo Lawn & Landscape

Treat your people well, and they'll treat your business well

BY DANIEL G. JACOBS /
Managing Editor

Mike Russo is a realist. He realizes that the guy down the street uses the same equipment and cuts the grass the same way.

"No one in the landscape industry is coming up with the next best way to cut grass," says Russo, owner of Russo Lawn & Landscape Inc. "We're not inventing anything different. Sooner or later you realize that whether you're cutting grass, putting down pavers, planting trees, plowing snow, (anything) service related, it's all got to do with people."

Russo's epiphany led his operation to more than triple in size in just five years after more than 10 years of slow growth. When Russo talks about people he refers not only to customers, but also to his employees.

"I defy you to name a business that has grown over the last 10 years that has screwed up dealing with people," he says. "You can grow without



Growin' and smilin'.

The Russo team (l. to r.) says training is the key: Mark Stupcenski, Molly Russo, Mike Russo, Christina Gordon

focusing on sales with sheer luck, but you can't grow by sheer luck if you screw your people, if you don't know how to manage them, if you don't know how to develop them or if you don't treat them right."

Training builds people, says Russo, who has used several consultants to motivate and train his 40-man workforce.

Training covers everything from planting shrubs to policies and procedures, many of which have changed as the company has grown. It's a continuous process. Russo confesses it wasn't always that way. For the first decade of his com-

pany's existence Russo was too focused in the business to work on the business. Then he attended an ALCA (now PLANET) meeting.

Networking is huge

"If I'd become involved in ALCA five years earlier, I'd be 10 years ahead of where I am now," he says. "You're in your own little world in day-to-day fires. Then you go to these things and you see stuff."

"If you can capitalize on it, make connections with e-mail or visit other companies or bring in consultants and keep your eyes open (and learn) how can you go wrong? It certainly makes it easier than

staying in your little square doing the same old thing day-in and day out."

Like most successful landscape operations, Russo struggles at finding good help.

It gets frantic

"That's a big challenge, but it's a challenge in the bucket of challenges," he says. "The biggest challenge for me, is to continue to struggle – and some days win and some days get my ass kicked – with the role of owning, managing and running a \$3.5 million business.

"That's the struggle that I face, trying to stay focused on what I do well and hiring for what I don't do well and then working the plan. There aren't too many owners at this stage, it seems, calm, level-headed, well thought out, soft spoken, relaxed business owners at the growing stages of a business – certainly under \$1 million to a couple million.

"Successful owners have identified their own weaknesses and strengths and plan around their strengths. Then they hire stronger people for their weaknesses."

Russo says that's something he's always working on — knowing what he does well and what he doesn't. **LM**

►► **Online:** www.russolawn.com **Location:** Windsor Locks, CT
Principals: Mike Russo, Molly Russo, Mark Stupcenski and Christina Gordon **2006 Revenues:** \$3.5 million **Founded:** 1990

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