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## UNIONS from page 58

to most individuals. If an employee does not feel he belongs with the employer or is part of the company and team, perhaps he would feel that he could become part of something if he joined a labor union.

**4 Wages and Benefits** - These are issues that always arise in a situation where employees may want a union. Each employer should be sure that his wages and benefits are competitive with the industry and his geographical vicinity. Furthermore, because many employers in the Green Industry pay employees on a fixed salary for a fluctuating work week plan, it is important that employees realize how these complicated pay systems operate, so that during the long, hot summer days, the employees do not feel that they are underpaid because they are not getting time-and-a-half or overtime.

Though pay raises nationally are averaging four to six percent in many industries, the key factor that employees are looking for is improved health and benefit programs. A six percent raise is certainly appreciated, but, if a health care program is not provided that protects the employee and his family against catastrophic medi-

## Unionization Reasons

- Unreasonable working conditions
- Favoritism
- Concern for employees as individuals; prompt response to problems
- Wages and benefits
- Due process at work



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Houndog is normally cut at 1½ inches but will retain its appearance and prosper at heights up to three inches.

As a low maintenance variety, it is recommended that a minimum amount of fertilizer be applied annually.

Houndog is a product of



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cal matters, that raise could be wiped out quickly. We generally advise employers to focus on improving the health and benefits package, because that ultimately is more meaningful to employees.

**5 Due Process at Work** - Most states permit employers to terminate an employee for any reason, whenever they choose.

Employees are concerned about whether an employer has a fair and impartial approach to matters such as employee discipline or termination. This would

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**Last year, more than  
2,500 employers in  
the U.S. who were  
non-union the year  
before became  
unionized.**

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include counseling with an employee about unsatisfactory job performance that could result in discipline or termination, giving an employee a final warning that continued problems could result in termination, and affording the employee an opportunity to respond to the employer's statements. This response would be investigated by the employer before the employer made his final decision.

A union contract frequently contains a grievance and arbitration procedure, in addition to progressive disciplinary steps before an employee may be terminated. Modifying this structure is a good approach for promoting job security.

Last year, more than 2,500 employers in the U.S. who were non-union the year before, became unionized. Employers should disregard the obituaries written by many individuals about organized labor. Unionization will continue to be possible in the Green Industry unless each employer consciously decides to conduct employee relations such that employees believe they are being treated fairly in a non-union environment and do not need a union.

**WT&T**

# ***We promise to tell the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth. So help us BPA.***

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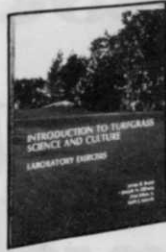
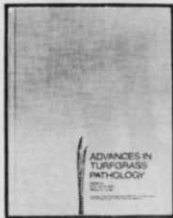
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Class tested for over three years, this manual provides fourteen exercises which can be easily adapted to your particular course structure. Exercises involve students in vegetative and seed identification, equipment and irrigation system selection and operation, problem solving of typical math problems involved in turfgrass operations and the diagnosis of problems with emphasis on weeds, diseases and insects. Encompasses both warm and cool season turfgrass. **\$12.95**

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**110.120-TURF MANAGERS' HANDBOOK** by Drs. William Daniel and Ray Freeborg  
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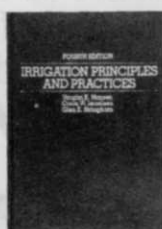
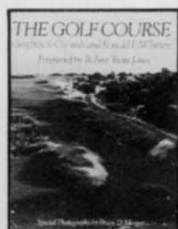
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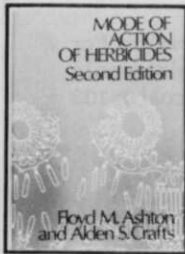


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WTT 14

# PROBLEM SOLVERS

by Balakrishna Rao, Ph.D., and Thomas P. Mog, Ph.D

## Ammonium nitrate safety

**Problem:** *Is ammonium nitrate fertilizer explosive and dangerous to transport or store? Would you please discuss its safety from the explosive point of view? (North Carolina)*

**Solution:** I think you have mistaken ammonium nitrate fertilizer for ammonium nitrate which is explosive. These are two different products.

The ammonium nitrate is a low-density product produced for blasting purposes and then sensitized with fuel oil and ground walnut hulls. Heat and pressure from the blasting cap or dynamite can trigger the material to explode. This product is classified as a blasting agent by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Ammonium nitrate fertilizer is a high density product produced for agricultural purposes. This can be purchased and transported in bulk or bags. It is classified as an oxidizer by the U.S. Department of Transportation. It oxidizes in the presence of heat, producing nitrous oxide and other gases. This nitrogenous nutrient is safe in storage and transportation. It will not explode when exposed to heat, fire, etc. Reports indicate that it can become potentially dangerous only when the material becomes contaminated with organic (carbon-containing), combustible or reactive materials such as organic chemicals, oils, solvents, acids or chlorates.

According to the reports, in case of fires involving ammonium nitrate fertilizer, in storage or in transportation, firefighters should be aware of the following:

**1** Ammonium nitrate fertilizer dust is not explosive. Tests by the Bureau of Mines have reportedly verified this fact.

**2** Ammonium nitrate fertilizer will not burn except when supported by combustible materials. It will melt and decompose when exposed to fire and heat, and its oxides will support combustion - even in the absence of oxygen.

## Firewood unaffected by disease

**Problem:** *Is there any danger in using elm trees infected with Dutch elm disease as firewood? How good is this wood for fire? Appreciate your comments in this regard. (Ottawa, Canada)*

**Solution:** I am not aware of any particular danger in using elms infected with Dutch elm disease fungus. If the tree also had bacterial wetwood disease, then it may present a problem in drying and burning. Further, it may have an unpleasant odor. The diseased wood may also be infested with insects and serve as a breeding ground for bark beetles, which can spread the disease to other elms nearby if the wood is not used before the beetles emerge from overwintering. To minimize this problem, remove the bark to facilitate further desiccation of wood, overwintering bark beetles and fungus.

Reports indicate that the wood is difficult to split and may present a problem in initial lighting. It is

considered as having low to medium BTU value. For example, one cord of air-dried American elm would have equivalent energy of about 0.4 ton of coal or 103 gallons fuel oil.

## Microbes and nitrogen fertilizer

**Problem:** *Recently, I bought a product that contained microbes which supposedly make nitrogen fertilizer when applied to the soil. Is it true if I use this there is no need to apply any other fertilizer? (New York)*

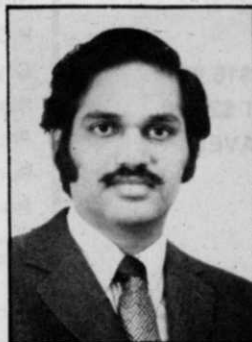
**Solution:** Higher plants primarily absorb nitrate or ammonium nitrogen for growth and development.

In nature, there are some microbes that can "fix" nitrogen and convert it to ammonium or nitrate for plant use. Certain soil inhabiting bacteria and blue-green algae can fix nitrogen. You might have also heard of the nodule-making bacteria in legumes which can fix nitrogen. Remember that not too many plants in nature have this ability. Therefore, I am not sure whether the product you have can fix enough nitrogen to support plant growth since nodule development is dependent on plant species, proper moisture, pH and temperature of the soil.

## Silvex use still pending

**Problem:** *How effective is 2,4-DP against hard to control weeds like oxalis, ground ivy, violets and wild onion? Is there any chance that silvex will be available soon for use on lawns? (Pennsylvania)*

**Solution:** 2,4-DP provides acceptable control of the weeds mentioned except for violets. Silvex cancellation hearings are still proceeding and, at the present time, no decision has been reached regarding its status for use on home lawns.



Balakrishna Rao is plant pathologist and Thomas Mog is pest management specialist for Davey Tree Expert Co., Kent, OH.

Questions should be mailed to Problem Solver, Weeds Trees & Turf, 7500 Old Oak Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio 44130. Please allow 2-3 months for an answer to appear in the magazine.



# WOODS New Compact Backhoes... the sure-footed way to dig in!



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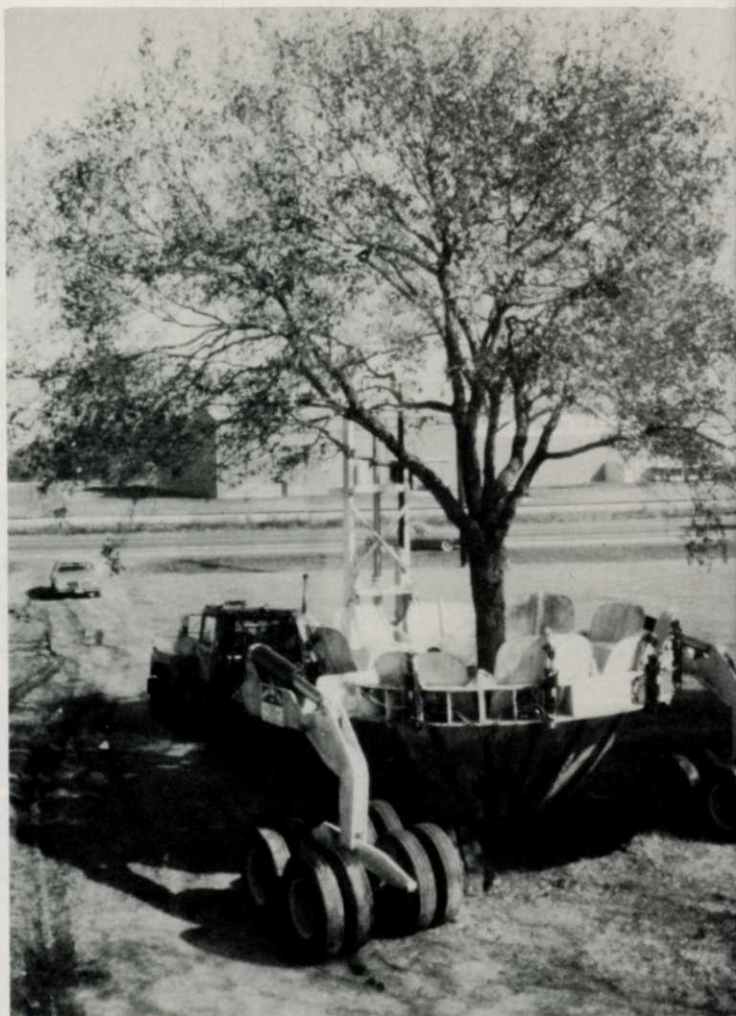
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