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The new eight-by-eight fully-synchronized, power-reversing torque converter transmission creates its own world. It's coupled with a 540-rpm independent PTO to make more efficient use of power for a wider range of work.

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**Find out how good a Ford C-Series tractor loader can be.**





# DISEASE CONTROL FOR ORNAMENTALS

When conditions are right, ornamentals are easily susceptible to disease. Effective disease control begins with prevention.

by Douglas Chapman, Dow Gardens

**D**isease control strategies for use on ornamentals are varied. They include the use of resistant cultivars, planting in the correct ecological niche, proper sanitation, plant diversity and health, and the use of fungicides.

To understand disease control, the conditions favorable for infection must first be understood. If one of these four conditions is not met, then infection of the plant does not occur.

The main conditions needed for infection are: (1) the presence of a patho-

gen, (2) free water, (3) temperature favorable to infection, and (4) a suitable host.

### Don't let water linger

Any conditions or practices that either reduce the amount of time moisture is on the foliage or impacts the roots lessens the opportunity for disease infection. This can mean watering plants in the morning so they have time to dry before evening, removing dew by "poling greens," or setting up conditions for good soil

drainage.

Conditions for good drainage can mean a well-drained medium for a pot crop, or surface sloping and drainage tiles for landscape plants in areas where the soil is slow to drain.

Temperature adjustment in the landscape is all but impossible. But if correct temperatures exist for disease infection to occur, one can either delay watering (if possible), or be aware of when conditions are right for fungicide application. For example: anthracnose becomes a problem



Cedar apple rust covers leaves of a Hawthorn tree.

## DISEASE-RESISTANT CRAB APPLE VARIETIES

The following crab apple tree varieties are resistant to applescab, fireblight, and several minor foliar diseases. It should be stressed that these trees are for the upper Great Lakes region of the U.S. Resistance will vary in other parts of the country.

Adams	Ormiston Roy
Beverly	Prairiefire
Bob White	Professor Sprenger
Candied Apple	Profusion
Centurian	Red Baron
Christmas Holly	Red Jewel
David	Red Splendor
Donald Wyman	Royalty
floribunda	Ruby Luster
Halliana parkmanii	Sentinel
Harvest Gold	Silver Moon
hupehensis	Snowdrift
Indian Magic	Strawberry Parfait
Indian Summer	Sugar Tyme
Jewelberry	tschonoskii
Liset	White Angel
Mary Potter	White Cascade
Molten Lava	Winter Gold

—Dr. Chapman □





The Hopa crab apple tree on the right is in full bloom after treatment the previous year for applescab disease. The control tree is on the left. ( All photos by Dr. D.L. Caldwell, The Davey Tree Company. Used by permission.)

when temperatures reach the high 40s during late spring.

#### Crab apple trees resistant

A suitable host is one area that can frequently be adjusted as a disease control strategy. This can mean plant-

ing disease-resistant varieties.

One of the classic strategies used in the contemporary landscape is using disease-resistant crab apple trees. By selecting a resistant cultivar, one can all but eliminate the need for multiple pest control applications, while keep-

ing healthy, well-foliated crab apples (see chart).

Diversity is another strategy that can be used to reduce the impact of any one disease. In designing a landscape, use many different plant types. All landscape managers know that



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Apple scab lesions infect this crab apple leaf.

monoculture, be it turfgrasses (Merion bluegrass), shrubs (Andorra juniper) or trees (elm) can lead to problems. As we increase the variety of plants in a landscape, the opportunities for infection decrease and catastrophic plant death is reduced.

#### Isolate infected plants

Sanitation is one way to reduce the source of pathogens. If a plant becomes infected by a disease, the infected parts or the entire plant should be removed and destroyed.

During the early stages of fireblight

infection, many canker diseases can be slowed or eliminated by removing the branch below visible signs of infection.

Plants in the correct ecological niche help many from becoming infected. Junipers grow best in full sun and infertile, well-drained soils. Generally speaking, junipers grown in the shade thin and die out. Further, junipers growing in landscapes composed of fertile soil that are frequently irrigated get a disease called *Phomopsis juniperovora*.

If growing is necessary under these

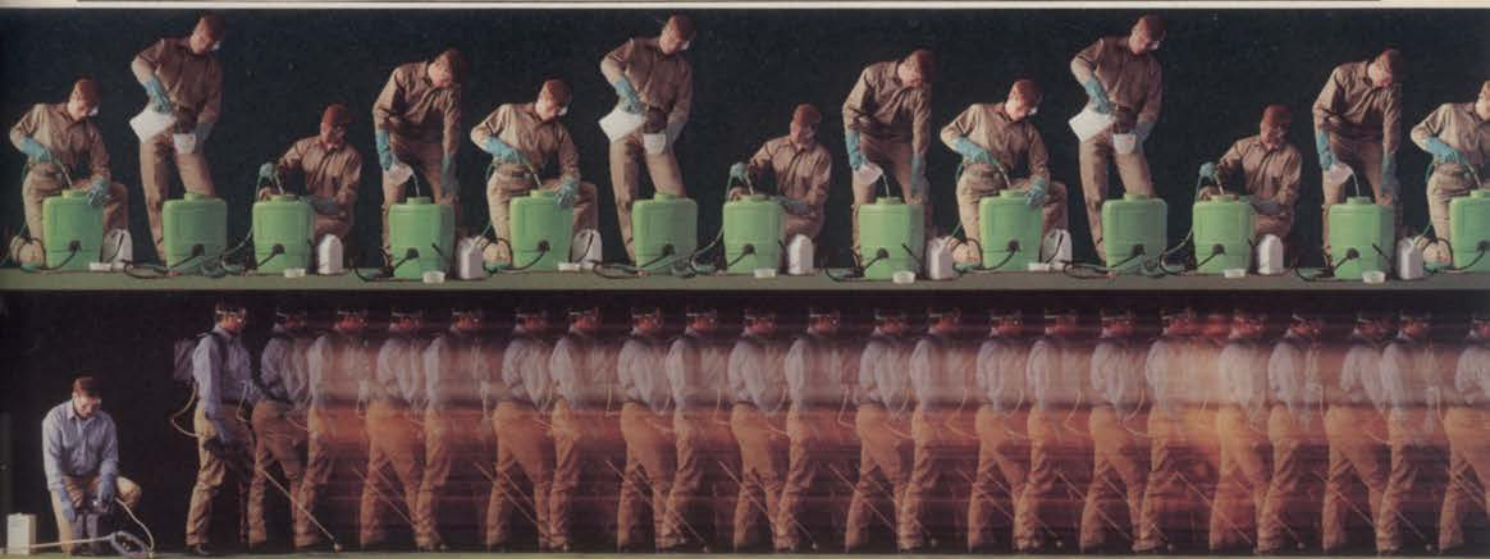
conditions, apply fungicides regularly or grow restricted lists of resistant cultivars such as *Juniperus chinensis* (Ames), Armstrongil, Fairview, Hetzii, Keteleeri, Mountbatten, Pfitzeriana compacta, sargentii and procumbens, *Juniperus horizontalis* (Douglasii), Emerald Spreader, Wiltoni, *Juniperus sabina* (Acadia), Broadmoor, and Von Ehron.

When the above strategies aren't economically feasible, fungicide application should be considered. Identify the cause of the disease prior to chemical application.

Preventing plant diseases remains the cornerstone of a good ornamental disease control program. **LM**

Dr. Chapman is horticulturist-administrator of The Dow Gardens in Midland, Mich., and an editorial advisor to *LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT*.

The chart on page 66 of fungicides for use on ornamentals shows examples of fungicides that can be used to control diseases. Since approved chemicals may vary from state to state, check the label and local cooperative extension service for specific recommendations in your area.



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## FUNGICIDES FOR ORNAMENTALS

Chemical			
Common Name	Brand Name	Mode of Action	Disease Controlled
Propiconazole	Banner	Systemic	Rusts, foliar diseases (many ascomycetes)
Ethazol+ Thiophanate Methyl	Banrot	Soil fungicide	Phytophthora, pythium, rhizoctonia
Triadimefon	Bayleton	Systemic	Powdery mildew, rusts
Benomyl	Benlate	Systemic	Apple scab, powdery mildew, botrytis, rhizoctonia (damping off)
Bordeaux	Bordeaux	Protectant fungicide	Powdery mildew, diploia tip blight of pines, fire blight
Iprodione	Chipco 26019	Contact	Botrytis, sclerotinia, rhizoctonia
Chlorothalonil	Daconil 2787		Apple scab, botrytis, rusts, powdery mildew
Maneb	Maneb	Foliar treatment	Rusts, leaf spots
Mancozeb	Manzate, Fore		Rusts (cedar apple rust), phytophthora, anthracnose, needle case (Lophodermium pinastri)
Vinclozolin	Ornalin		Botrytis, sclerotinia, turf (dollar spot, helminthosporium)
Metalaxyl	Subdue	Systemic	Pythium, phytophthora (rhododendrons)
Sulfur	Sulfur		Powdery mildew, black spot
Quintozene	Terraclor	Soil fungicide	Root rots, botrytis
Triforine	Triforine	Eradicant	Powdery mildew, rusts, apple scab
Zineb	Zineb	Foliar treatment	Leaf spots, rusts (cedar apple)



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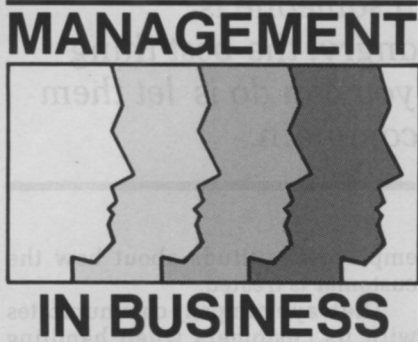
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# HANDLING CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS

Every service business needs a cool-headed, well-spoken person to appease the occasional irate customer.

by Rudd McGary, Ph.D.



**M**ore and more, the way a company handles complaints is becoming a major issue for the consumer.

From the customer's viewpoint, there are several companies in your market area that are capable of delivering the services they require. If you can't do it, they'll find someone who will. Consequently, as long as prices remain competitive, the company ultimately chosen by the consumer is the one that communicates best, and is probably the one with the highest profitability and growth rate, too!

How a company handles complaints often plays a major part in the customer communication process. Therefore, it's important for your company to consider three areas when formulating a successful complaint response program.

## Office mechanisms

First, there are office mechanisms that need to be in place in order to make sure complaints are handled effectively. Second, certain techniques need to be used by the people who are actually going to handle these complaints. Finally, it's important that employees' attitudes reflect a spirit of cooperation—not confrontation.

It is always best if one person handles complaint calls. This person has to be good on the phone, with an ability to listen to angry people without

responding in kind, and to direct complaints to the correct person or department.

If there's no way you can route complaint calls through just one person, use several—but don't have everyone in the office taking these calls. Some people are simply better at it than others.

## Logging complaints

Make sure all complaint calls are logged. Put in the date of the call, who took it, and most importantly, what was done about it.

This complaint response system should allow you to track the handling of the complaint. A quick glance at the log book should reveal when and why the complaint was made, who handled it and how.

Today's customer isn't satisfied by simply talking with your office. Action must occur that helps rectify the perceived problem.

After you're sure that someone has responded to the complaint, it's a good idea to call the customer a few days later to make sure they're satisfied with the company's actions. Most companies don't do this, which is why yours should.

## Your technique

If someone is angry, the best possible thing you can do is let them air their complaint. Give them the opportunity to express themselves without interruption.

It's often hard to let someone ramble on when you have the solution to the problem. However, it's important to remember that the caller wants to make sure you understand why they're calling.

The receiver of the complaint should take notes about the nature of the complaint. This will help make the log book as thorough as possible.

Always restate the complaint to make sure that you have heard it correctly. This helps you to focus on the

problem and lets the person know that the complaint has been heard.

## Making peace

After carefully listening to and logging the complaint, it's time to offer the customer a solution. This solution must have a tangible start. For example, don't simply say, "Someone will get back to you." Instead, give them something more concrete such as, "The crew chief will be back to you by 4:30 this afternoon."

By using people's titles and a definite response time, the consumer will regard your efforts as more sincere.

Conclude the conversation by asking if there is anything else that can be done. In some cases the person calling is so obnoxious it's impossible to deal

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*Customers aren't always right, but they always think they are.*

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with the complaint. But in most cases the caller will be fairly easy to talk to, especially after you've completed the above steps.

## Employee attitude

Customers aren't always right, but they always think they are. Make sure you understand that perspective and remember that whatever their complaint is, it is a valid one.

Often you'll find that allowing customers to complain will itself get rid of the problem. The key is understanding that customers wouldn't call with a complaint unless they felt it was legitimate.

Keep in mind that the customer isn't angry with you personally, but with something that happened. This may be difficult when there is a really



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obnoxious person on the phone, but it's important. If necessary, keep repeating it to yourself while talking with them.

Your attitude should acknowledge that the customer is the only reason you are in business. It doesn't make dealing with obnoxious or surly people any easier, but if you do a good job, most people will respond in kind.

### **Customer as king**

The understanding that the customer is the key to a successful business should be the cornerstone of every

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*If someone is  
angry, the best thing  
you can do is let them  
complain.*

---

employees' attitude about how the customer is treated.

The way a company communicates with its customers when handling problem or complaint calls may determine whether or not the customer remains a customer.

It's extremely important to let everyone in the organization know what is expected, how to do it, and who is responsible for the handling of customer complaints.

Many companies excel technically but fail to communicate effectively. By taking the initiative in complaint response, you can keep even unhappy customers happy. **LM**



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