

people in your market, your purpose, tell something about the quality of your employees, past performance, productivity, products and services.

And, while you're at it, you might as well include information on products and services, affiliations, awards and technical information.

"We've taken the big brochure and reduced it for a direct mail program," Frank explains. "We qualify the prospect before we send the brochure; and we've gotten good response from this type of program."

Frank's company has been especially active in meeting with the public in two distinct ways: a home improvement show, and the annual "Parade of Homes."

The home improvement show is held at a local exhibition center, and is open to all design/build companies that want an opportunity to show the public what they can do.

For the "Parade of Homes," the public is allowed to visit the various residential properties designed and built by the company.

Market the value—Hooks believes strongly in marketing the "value" of landscape services. But to make it work, you need:

- commitment to excellence;
- commitment to customers; and
- reliance on employees.

"Failure to deliver is an Achilles' heel for many companies. Once we fail to deliver with a degree of regularity, our word becomes a fal-lacy," says Hooks.

Post is first and foremost an apartment developer, with 40 apartment communities in Atlanta, Florida and Washington, D.C.

More companies have found that involvement in their community is an effective way to practice good public relations and establish visibility.

Post's promotional activities include participation in an adopt-a-school program, in which it donates landscaping services; plantings at the Atlanta Botanical Gardens, and free maintenance of a public park in Marietta, Ga. "It's not inexpensive," admits Hooks, "but it gets our name out to the public."

An important ingredient in the marketing message, says Hooks, is a company's professionalism. "We've got to promote professionalism to the public and our people." Hooks devotes a lot of time to the

Phone Accessibility Checklist

We Offer		Updated Yearly?
<input type="checkbox"/>	White page listing in appropriate areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yellow page listing under applicable topics and in appropriate geographical areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Answering services/system with clear instructions	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	"800" numbers	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Numbers listed on cards, receipts, order forms, mailers, vehicles, repair labels, and publications	<input type="checkbox"/>

Help your customers find you with ease. Use these checklists to rate your accessibility to prospective customers. (Excerpted from "Marketing Without Advertising," by Michael Phillips and Salli Rasberry, Nolo Press, and reprinted with permission from Nolo Press, Berkeley, Calif.)

Mail Accessibility Checklist

We Offer	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clear, stable address
<input type="checkbox"/>	Return address on everything we distribute Mail forwarding up to date
<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal relationship with mail delivery person to avoid mistakes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clearly identifiable mailbox, with alternative places to deliver packages and postage due mail
<input type="checkbox"/>	If in out-of way location, maps are included in mailings

people. "Don't think regularly scheduled meetings alone will foster communication," says Hooks, who believes in promoting an atmosphere that allows communication to occur at any time, both ways. This is done largely through company social events, with family participation.

—Terry McIver

For best ad results, choose the right approach and message

■ "Control your destiny...and don't fall victim to haphazard advertising," advises Barbara Lambesis, author of *101 Big Ideas for Promoting Business on a Small Budget* (Marketing Methods Press, Phoenix, Ariz., 1989). Plan your advertising and promotional activities, and select those that are likely to reach and motivate your potential customers. Other points to remember:

● **Choose your approach.** Decide what you will emphasize in your advertising. Your approach should be one that you believe in and that you are comfortable with. If you don't believe in what you are presenting to the public, nobody else will. Remember the needs and wants of your preferred customer.

● **Examine your entire business,** including the environment, service capability, facilities, dress of employees, and attitude toward the customer. Determine what you think makes your business different from your competition.

● **Select the right media.** No single media approach will reach and motivate all your prospects and customers. Repeat your advertising in the selected media as often as you can afford to do so.

● **Develop an advertising and promotion budget.** There are several ways to determine an appropriate budget. One is to determine a percentage of the operating budget, an amount per unit, or a percentage of gross receipts to apply to advertising and promotion.

● **Give your advertising and promotion plan time to work.** A business owner should develop a plan that covers at least a full year. Stick to the plan, and make adjustments as needed after six to eight months.

● **Be consistent** in message, methods and image. Make a commitment to one approach and stick to it.

Lambesis says landscaping is a strong referral industry, and existing customers are the best source of new ones. "Send thank you notes to customers, and tell them you're looking for new clients, 'just like them,'" Lambesis advises. Another suggestion: tell your existing customers they'll get a free service for each referral.

—Excerpted from "101 Big Ideas," by Barbara Lambesis. Available in bookstores, or by calling (800) 745-5047.

What you're looking at is a way to go an entire season on a single herbicide application—a control zone in the top inch of soil that keeps weeds from

one application gives you up to eight full months of control. If you like what Surflan does, but prefer a granular form, you can use XL* herbicide. It



our 40-page book, The Nursery And Landscape Guide To Responsible Pest Management. It also contains information on better ways to con-



Actually, the most this picture is containi

germinating all season long. It can greatly reduce your use of post-emergence herbicides and hand-weeding in your ornamentals.

contains the same active ingredient as Surflan. Apply it in the spring, and you'll get a full season of broad-spectrum grassy weed

How To Make Your First Roundup Your Last Roundup.

Here's a way to make your first application of Roundup herbicide last all season. Mix 3 oz. of Surflan per 1000 square feet with ¾ oz. of Roundup per gallon of water and apply when weeds are less than 6" tall. Roundup will knock the weeds down, and Surflan will keep them from coming back for the rest of the season.

We have three different pre-emergence herbicides that make this possible. All of them are very gentle on your plants. And they bind tightly to soil particles, which makes them very resistant to leaching.

control. And for woody ornamentals, you can use Snapshot* herbicide. It controls both grassy and broadleaf weeds. A single application lasts up to eight months. And it's available as a sprayable or in a granular form.



Our preemergence herbicides set up a gentle control zone that keeps weeds from germinating all season.

preemergence herbicide. Surflan is, in fact, so gentle that you can spray it directly over the top of delicate ornamentals. Yet

We can show you lots of ways to control weeds more safely and effectively. They're explained in





control insects and diseases.
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 coupon, or call our toll-free number.
 Because you don't need a lot of her-
 bicide to get beautiful results.

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 1-800-729-3693 ext. 2492.

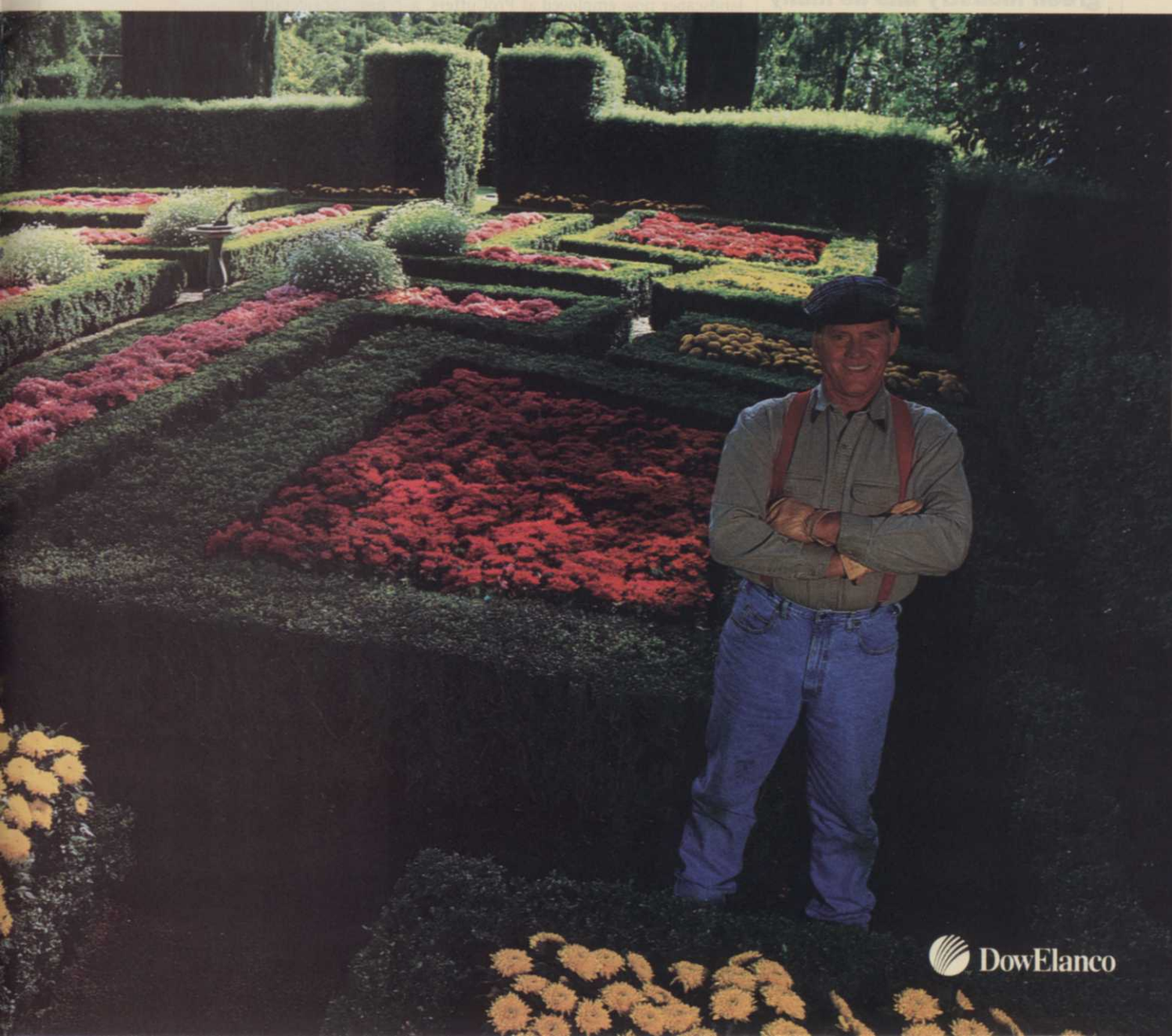


Name _____
 Company _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____
 Zip _____ Phone (____) _____

The chemistry is right.™

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st beautiful thing about ned in the top 1" of soil.



What's new in mid-sized walk-behinds

No other piece of equipment used in the green industry has as many standard and optional features.

■ Do not let the appearance of the mid-sized walk-behind rotary mowers on the market fool you.

Most look pretty much the same. But outward appearance has nothing to do with the wide variety of standard and optional features the landscaper or superintendent should be inspecting before making a purchase.

For instance, according to Dane Scag of Scag Equipment, you should match the mower deck to the job size. If you're mowing mostly 1/4-acre properties, you should be using a 36-inch deck. If the properties are around 1/2 acre, you should be using a 52-inch deck. And if they're full-acre size, the deck should be at least 60 inches wide.

Here are more considerations:

● **More or less horsepower?** This is one of the main purchase considerations, according to Tony Lewicki Jr., a former landscaper now employed at ProCutters, a distributor in northern Ohio. It is most important to make sure the engine size matches its purpose.

For instance, if you're going to be cutting in wet conditions, you are going to need a more powerful engine. And if the mower deck mulches, it may need as much as 30 percent more power than a deck without mulching capabilities.



Lewicki: match horsepower with purpose

● **Belt or hydrostatic drive?** Belt drives are less expensive—by about \$1000, according to Lewicki. But they do need replacement on occasion. Hydrostatic drives, on the other hand, offer more efficient power in wet conditions, and many are guaranteed for the life of the mower.

"The difference between hydro and belt drive is like the difference between automatic transmissions and standard transmissions in automobiles," says George Hudson of Bearco Distributing, also in northern Ohio.

In addition, many manufacturers are now offering dual hydrostatic drive, with individual controls that allow true zero turning radius—which takes us to the next consideration:

● **Inside-wheel zero turning radius or true zero turning radius?** Inside-wheel zero turning radius machines lock one wheel while the mower turns on the other. The true zero turning radius machines feature independent wheel drives: one goes forward, the other in reverse, allowing the machine to pivot in one spot. But you'll usually pay more for true zero turning radius machines.

● **Electric or recoil start?** For a few dollars more, you can buy an electric start. But for a little more effort, you can opt to yank the cord and save the money.

● **Is it comfortable for the operator?** Controls and handlebars come in every configuration imaginable. Make sure that the people who will be using the mower feel comfortable with it before you buy.

● **Ease of maintenance?** Simple design usually means ease of maintenance. You should check the location of grease fittings and other areas—belts, wheels, spindle assemblies, filters—that will be routinely maintained, to make sure they are readily accessible.



Hudson: hydro like automatic transmission

APPROXIMATE GRASS CUTTING PRODUCTION PER 8-HOUR DAY (in acres)

Deck width in inches	Ground speed in MPH			
	3.5	4.0	4.5	5.0
60	14.5	16.5	18.5	20.5
52	12.5	14.3	16.1	17.9
48	11.6	13.2	14.9	16.5
36	8.7	9.9	11.1	12.3

NOTE:

Productivity will vary with conditions. These are conservative averages, based on 15% of maximum speed being lost to turns and obstacles.

—The Editors

continued on page 36

COMMERCIAL INTERMEDIATE WALK-BEHIND MOWERS

COMPANY NAME	MODEL NAME	CUTTING WIDTHS	ENGINE SIZE (HP)	SELLING POINTS	
Ariens	Commercial	32, 36	12, 12.5	gear transmission; convenient controls; large pneumatic caster wheels dual drive belts; 1" dia. spindle in heavy-duty cast iron	Circle No. 300
		48, 60	14, 16		
Bunton	Commercial	36, 48, 52, 61	14, 16, 18	dual hydrostatic drive; Eliminator grass mulcher and BLC Leaf Mulcher attachments available	Circle No. 301
Encore	Pro	32	12, 12.5	Peerless 5-speed trans.; double V-band belt, unique corners allow close trimming; Hydro-Sense has fewer moving parts	Circle No. 302
		36, 48	12, 12.5, 13, 14		
		60	16		
Exmark	5-speed	32	8.5, 12.5	basic mower	Circle No. 303
	Viking	36, 48	12.5, 14	Micro-Mulching, TriVantage deck and hydrostatic drive available	
	Turf Tracer	52, 60	14, 18, 20	floating cutting decks; anti-scalp rollers; hydrostatic drive available	
F.D. Kees	MBV models	36, 48	14	5-gal. fuel tank; easily adjustable front wheels; Peerless 5-speed transmission	Circle No. 304
	MKW models	36, 48	12.5		
Ferris	Ultra-Belt	36, 48	13	8-speed drive; runaway stopper	Circle No. 305
	Hydro-Walk	36, 48, 52, 61	13, 14, 18	ComfortPlus easy controls; dual hydrostatic drives, easy controls	
Gravely	Pro Series	32, 36	12, 12.5	Individual twin belt drives; heavy duty control linkage; choice of power unit/mower deck combinations; variety of discharges	Circle No. 306
		36, 40	12.5, 14		
		50, 60	16, 17, 18		
Honda	HRC7013ZXA	36,48	13	two-step cutter deck; clippings can be bagged or mulched; Infinitely variable speeds; blade brake system; dual drive double-wide traction belt; deck: 7 gauge sides, 10 gauge top	Circle No. 307
H'd Price	Turf Blazer	36, 48	12.5	floating deck; quick height adjusting fixed deck; individual brakes; large casters	Circle No. 308
Jacobsen	CrewKing	36, 48	14	floating deck; quick height adjusting fixed deck; individual brakes; large casters	Circle No. 309
		32, 36, 48, 60	12.5, 16		
J. Deere	Commercial 38	38	12.5, 14	entry-level price; decks, engines interchangeable with Deere 48s & 54s wet-disk drive system; exclusive oscillating deck	Circle No. 310
	Commercial Walk-Behinds	48, 54	14, 17		
Kubota	CW1336	32	12.5	4-cycle, air-cooled overhead valve engine; five forward speeds	Circle No. 311
Lesco	Commercial	32, 36	12.5	extra-deep, balanced cutting deck; double V-belt traction drive	Circle No. 312
		48	12.5, 17		
Ransomes	Bobcat Classic	36, 48	12.5	most popular model	Circle No. 313
	Bobcat	32, 36, 48	12.5, 14		
		54	14		
		61	18		
Bobcat Hydro	54, 61	18, 20	no drive belts; blade stops within 5 secs. of drive disengagement		
Scag	SW series	32, 35.5	12.5	twin power belts, comfortable, patented operator presence controls	Circle No. 314
		48	14		
		52	14, 18, 20		
		61	18,20		
	SWZ series	35.5, 48	14	cast iron hydro drive system; positive reverse; comfortable controls	
		52	14, 18, 20		
61	18, 20				
Snapper	Pro Series	36, 48,	12.5,	gear drive; loop handlegrip available; choice of engine/deck combinations variable speed drive; eight models	Circle No. 315
		52, 61	14, 18		
	Commercial	32.5, 36.5, 48,5	12, 12.5, 14		
Toro	Proline	32, 36, 44,	12.5, 14	traction units and cutter decks can be mixed & matched; 48" deck features patented Recycler feature	Circle No. 316
		48, 52, 62	16, 18		
Woods	CM36, 48	36, 47.5	13	8-speed shift-on-the-fly; fingertip control dual transmissions	Circle No. 317
	Dual HydroWalk	52	14		

Source: LM mail/phone survey, August 1992

Mower sales steady, at least

■ "The reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated."

That quote, from Mark Twain, could fairly easily be applied to sales of intermediate walk-behind rotary mowers to the golf and landscape markets, according to manufacturers.

Though there has been a country-wide hiatus on buying capital goods, the slow state of the economy hasn't made a dis-

cernible dent in sales of mid-sized walk-behind rotary mowers.

"Based on what I heard at the OPEI show," notes Mike Schaefer of F.D. Kees, "everybody's pretty optimistic about this coming year."

Stan Byers reports Bunton sales being "up slightly," and Exmark's Harold Nielsen says recent sales have been encouraging since they've "taken a surge in the last 60

days, probably because of the rainy weather early in the season."

Also typical of the comments we've been hearing was that of Jack Steinhour of Woods Div. of Hesston. "It's been a mixed bag," he told us. "Our first quarter was pretty good, but June was like somebody closed the door."

"The weather has created some problems, with rain in the Midwest and heat in the East. So this will be a status quo-type year for us."

Steinhour notes that dealer inventories are apparently becoming depleted and that the demand for repair parts has indicated a preference by golf course superintendents and landscapers to run their old equipment longer than usual.

According to the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute, sales this year of all walk-behind power mowers—including those smaller models to the homeowner—have declined 2.3 percent from 1991, which means that commercial walk-behinds are probably more than holding their own in relation to the total power mower market.

—J.R.

WALKER DOES TOP LEVEL WORK ON THE ROOF



When Atlanta based landscape contractor, **Scapes Landscape Management**, wanted to improve efficiency in mowing the award winning Northpark Town Center Rooftop Park, they found Walker fit the job. Steven Coffey, owner of Scapes, told us:

We were surprised to find the Walker gave a better quality cutting job on the Zoysia turf grass than the walk behind reel mower we had been using. In fact, the building management asked us to continue using the "new" mower on their project after the first week we used Walker. Best of all, while improving quality, we cut our job time with the efficiency of the Walker rider. And Walker fits the job because it was compact enough to fit in the service elevator to ride to the third floor park.

We invite you to discover Walker quality and efficiency on your top level work.

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Walk-behinds from page 34

● **Options?** Mulching blades are becoming more popular as laws are passed that limit the amount of yard waste going to sanitary landfills. Grasscatchers are offered by nearly every manufacturer. For an additional \$5 or \$10, you can purchase debris bags. Sulkys (sit-behind attachments) and velkys (stand-behind attachments) are also popular options.

● **Inexpensive pricetag or not?** Most of the 32- to 60-inch machines LM viewed were in the \$2500 to \$5000 price range, depending on size and options. Make sure not to buy too much machine, or it will take longer to pay for itself. Make sure, also, not to buy a machine that is too small, or your crews won't be operating at maximum productivity.

● **Finally, is the dealer customer-conscious?** Are warranties fair? Does the dealer have a dependable service department? Are parts available immediately, or must they be shipped from the manufacturing facility? Is the sales staff helpful? (It might not be a bad idea to talk to other customers of the dealer before making the final purchase.)

—Jerry Roche

Once you make Daconil 2787® the cornerstone of your turf management program, this is what you're left with.



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With Daconil 2787®, you get the broadest-spectrum contact-fungicide protection on the market. And a history of 20 years without a known case of disease resistance. Which is why more course superintendents make it the cornerstone of their turf management program.

It controls 12 major diseases, including Leaf spot, Melting out, Brown patch, Dollar spot, and Rust, on all Southern grasses. Especially on

Bentgrass tees, greens, and overseeded turf. And it's the most economical fungicide per day of control on the market.

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To plow or not to plow...

...that is the question.

Whether 'tis nobler to just forget the whole thing, or to try to generate cash flow during the cold, wet, boring winter months.

by Ed Wandtke

■ Snow plowing: either you like it for the money it generates during the off-season, or you hate it for all the troubles it creates.

Having snow plowing accounts means being able to keep your summer employees—at least some of them—on the payroll throughout the year. But you've also got to make an extra effort to keep them happy; who in their right mind likes to be awakened by a telephone call from their boss at 2 a.m. telling them to report to work?



Market opportunity—How is the market opportunity for contracted snow removal services in your city? How many of your customers contract for snow services in the winter?

Today we see many customers *requiring* that the lawn care contractor provide winter snow removal services.

For some lawn care companies, this can pose a real problem. Do you have the equipment needed? Are the service expectations clearly defined? (See sidebar.) How many snow plowing contracts do you already have?

What services—Many lawn companies try to offer more snow services than they can deliver. This often causes the contractor to incur high maintenance costs, have high driver fatigue resulting in property damage or accidents, or over-commit early deadlines to too many customers.

In choosing the services you can offer, you need to determine answers to these questions:

- 1) What snow moving equipment do I have?
- 2) How many qualified operators do I have access to?
- 3) What timeline do my customers demand for snow removal?
- 4) What type of backup equipment does my company have for major storms?
- 5) Considering typical snow conditions, to what geographical area should I provide these services?
- 6) How much money is needed to make snow plowing a profitable business?

The right mix—Performing all the snow removal services is not necessary for most lawn care companies, which often do not have the full range of equipment or manpower needed. A more profitable method is to hire subcontractors with specialized equipment.

Many lawn care companies can make money by performing light plowing, salting, snow blowing and limited hand shoveling themselves. When heavier equipment is needed, subcontractors should be factored into the contract—at rates allowing some profit for you.

Three dilemmas—I often see green industry companies making promises to customers that they cannot keep. These companies have over-extended themselves, and could lose those valuable customers.

It is better to limit your winter services, or to advise clients before possible delays. The uncertainties of the weather, driving conditions, human fatigue, and state-of-emergency rules all may have an impact on your ability to deliver the promised services. Make sure your customer understands this when you sign a contract.

Also, many lawn care companies do not have the necessary equipment to deal with unusually heavy snowfalls. So knowing the true limits of your equipment will make it easier to determine the necessary backup procedures. Heavy snow, ice storms, sudden temperature swings—all can lead to unexpected snow servicing requirements.

Writing a snow plowing contract

■ "There are 10 different ways to set up a contract," says Thomas Mann of The Caretakers in Eagen, Minn. "There's a monthly rate as soon as the snow comes, a yearly rate, a yearly rate with a minimum, an hourly rate, and so on."

One of the major obstacles to providing profitable snow plowing services is the contract. If not done correctly, it could mean a lot of headaches and perhaps some legal tussles.

James Zellen, counsel for the Metro Detroit Landscape Association, recommends including these provisos in your contract:

- 1) Price per season with dates to begin and end season clearly delineated.
- 2) Minimum snowfall required to commence plowing; any additional charges over a maximum depth or drifts.
- 3) Make sure areas are described by sketch and/or monuments, and areas not covered by the contract are also delineated.
- 4) Note any extra costs for extra equipment like front-end loaders and dump trucks.
- 5) Make sure any extra plowings per snowfall are charged extra. And, by initialing, make sure customer agrees.
- 6) Make sure the contract contains language for salting. "It may take some salesmanship on your part," notes Zellen, "but convince the customer that salt and/or chemicals should be applied at your discretion rather than when called by the customer."
- 7) Make sure the customer will hold you harmless for any liability for trespass due to their neglect.
- 8) Make sure a disclaimer clause to this effect is included: "The customer agrees to hold you harmless for any and all liability due to slips and falls on his or her property."

Finally, many experienced lawn care companies sign subcontract arrangements with heavy-duty equipment operators before the season starts in order to assure themselves of priority when the equipment is needed. This is an excellent method of protecting yourself from customer complaints.

Despite the above, snow servicing can be profitable if you know the customers' requirements and expectations, what services you can realistically deliver, and how much work will need to be subcontracted.

'Environmental monitors' for golf courses in the '90s?

■ In an effort to control development of the 18-hole Chateau Whistler Resort Golf Course, the nearby municipality of Whistler, British Columbia, Canada, required the builders to employ an "environmental monitor."

Acting as an environmental watchdog, Mike Nelson consulted on water-related issues throughout the courses' development, construction and maturation.

Nelson is principal of Nelson Environmental Services in Squeamish, B.C.

According to course manager Dave Gordon, the municipality had two major concerns about the new Robert Trent Jones Jr. golf course:

1) It needed to be more environmentally responsive than Whistler's Arnold Palmer course developed in 1982, and

2) It could not harbor the risk of polluting Lost Lake, a beautiful alpine lake bounded by the course on three sides.

In response to these concerns, resort owners hired Nelson to develop water quality guidelines. The task began prior to construction when Nelson conducted studies to determine drainage patterns.

Nelson also monitored water quality in Lost Lake for a year, on a weekly basis. Using an Alpha Sampler, he took numerous water readings.

To better organize his data, Nelson developed a model to predict the effects of golf course construction and fertilizers on Lost Lake. Using an agricultural model because no workable golf course model was available, Nelson forecast a worst-case scenario showing the lake's visibility would decrease by about two meters (25 percent) and then stabilize.

After review, the municipality agreed this level was acceptable. As it turned out, tests showed the construction and later fertilization affected the lake very minimally. However, the runoff from several storms during 1990 temporarily decreased the lake's visibility by the allowable two meters.

Part of Nelson's role as environmental monitor was to document all concerns to the municipality, and to communicate on an almost daily basis with Gordon and the project manager.

Monitor duties—Because water quality

of the creeks downstream from Lost Lake had to be maintained as habitat for rainbow trout, Nelson was involved in almost every aspect of the permit process, rechanneling and construction. Working with Gordon and the contractors, Nelson's job also included:

- Making sure tree removal did not impact on the lake, streams or public traffic to Lost Lake;

- Helping prepare all the major documents dealing with stream works, including forestry and cutting permits and timber stamps;

- Writing memorandums on how best to divert the creek through the irrigation pond so the contractor could work on the creek in dry conditions;

- Helping obtain clearing debris applications for both main creeks;

- Procuring Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks work approvals;

- Placing \$360,000 worth of tile drainage used to pick up runoff and take it to the lake untouched;

- Consulting with fisheries concerning the timing of a pond diversion in order to cut a 300-meter channel through the course. (The gravel, excavation and diversion cost about \$40,000, completely

restoring Fitzsimons Creek, a spawning habitat for Dolly Varden trout.)

"We all agreed how to do things like build the settling pond," says

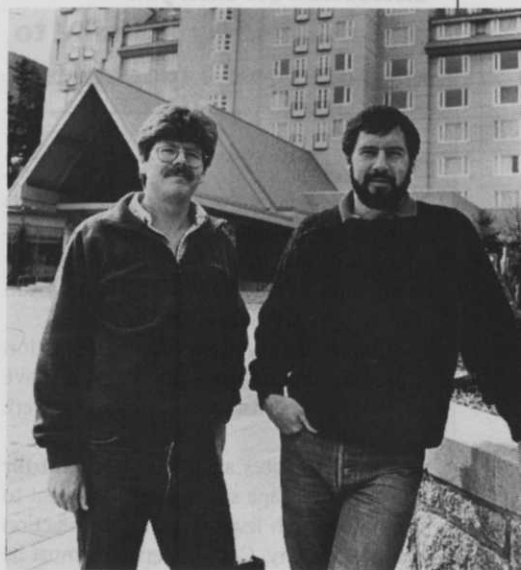
Nelson. "But it was part of my role to put our plans into a written form and submit them to the division biologist for final approval."

Last October, Nelson submitted a report to update Gordon, the municipality and the Minister of the Environment. The report included the effects of the project; conclusions; and whether the environmental monitoring program should continue.

Continuing responsibilities—Until the municipality deems otherwise, Nelson will continue to monitor water quality in Lost Lake and make fertilizer and herbicide recommendations. His job now includes taking quarterly nutrient loading budget levels up- and down-stream from the lake and submitting his findings to Gordon and the municipality.

Nelson and Gordon have worked closely to develop a fertilizer program acceptable to all parties.

"Once the course is well-established, we will reduce the amount of fertilizer used and review our program annually," says Gordon. "We never intended to dump fertilizer on this course. But now we are



Mike Nelson, left, and Dave Gordon worked together to develop water quality guidelines.

more aware than ever what we can do. We apply fertilizer in small amounts so there is very little leaching.

"There have been times when Mike's questions have helped us see the project more clearly and come up with better solutions. He also forces us to explain the rationale behind our fertilizing program. This is good; then we all know what's going on in a documented fashion."

Since the municipality's main concern of maintaining the water quality of Lost Lake has been realized, the environmental monitor's role has decreased somewhat. Still, for at least one year following the course opening this month, Nelson will continue to monitor the water quality twice a year in the spring and fall. In fact, he and Gordon anticipate water testing will eventually fall under the golf superintendent's supervision.

Nelson will continue to plug in new data in the Lost Lake environmental model, and Gordon's staff will continue to fertilize by hand within 10 meters of any water.

Both men agree that less fertilizer and more accountability are the landscape trends of the future.

—Leslee Jaquette

The miracle mower or, how to destroy employee morale

You can improve your employees' job satisfaction and job performance by learning to manage their expectations.

by Joe Carbone

■ Did you ever go to see a movie that was built up so much by advertising and promotion (like last summer's "Batman Returns") that, even though the movie was okay, you still felt that it was a letdown?

In that case, your level of satisfaction was *lower* than it otherwise would have been. Why? Because your expectations were too *high*.

This illustrates an important point for golf and landscape supervisors who want to maintain a high level of worker satisfaction and productivity. Good supervisors must be aware that they are always in a position to

influence worker expectations, and as such, can benefit by practicing "expectations management."

The key to successful expectations management is for the supervisor to become aware of how what he or she says influences what employees come to expect. And how employee expectations influence job satisfaction.

This often means that you may have to temper your own optimism, frustration, apprehension or excitement.

A good example—Suppose you order a new piece of lawn care equipment. Quite understandably, you are excited about its advanced features and the prospect of improved efficiency. Prior to its arrival, you cheerfully announce, "Wait until you see it! It's going to be the end of all your problems! These jobs will be a snap!"

You continue to sing the praises of this "miracle mower" until it arrives. Your people are trained on it, and you sit back and wait for the return on your investment. But instead of increased productivity, your peo-

ple have nothing but complaints:

"I thought you said this would be the end of all our problems."

"This thing's more trouble than it's worth."

"If you had enough money to buy this monster, how come you can't give us a raise?"

Where did you go wrong? Your enthusiasm was understandable, but by unintentionally raising worker expectations, you virtually guarantee lower satisfaction, more complaints and lower productivity.

The answer—Your feelings are your feelings. Your expression becomes their expectations. *Be moderate and realistic.* Don't get people's hopes up too high, but don't be a prophet of doom, either.

Think about how your expression affects worker expectations. Learn to manage them by becoming more aware of what you say and how you say it.

It's not that difficult, and the payoff will make the effort worthwhile.

—The author wrote "Getting It Right: What It Takes to Become a Good Front-Line Supervisor." For more information, write Carbone, P.O. Box 267, Lansing, NY 14882-0267.

Spill control protects pro applicators

■ Spills, when handling, transporting or using pesticides, are a concern for every applicator. Knowing what to do if a spill occurs, whether it's on your property or on the road, minimizes the risk and prevents water contamination.

Here are precautions to take when a spill occurs, according to A.C.R.E. (Alliance for a Clean Rural Environment):

✓ **Control the spill** as quickly as possible by restoring the container to its upright position, closing a leaking valve or hose, or putting a secondary container in place to catch the leaking solution. Use appropriate personal safety equipment like rubber gloves, rubber boots and eye protection.

✓ **Call your dealer** for advice on clean-up of their chemical. They will also give you special safety advice and other information.

✓ **Contain the spread** of the spill when the leak has been stopped by creating soil dams in the path of the spilled liquid. It may be most important to first divert a spill away from a nearby pond or stream and then attempt to stop the leak

or spill. This is a judgment call that only you can make.

✓ **Begin clean-up** as soon as the situation has been stabilized. Quick action on your part to clean up a spill is not only required by many states, but will prevent the chemical from leaching or washing away in a rainstorm.

✓ **Use absorbent materials** on

EPA regional offices:

Atlanta	(404) 347-3004
Boston	(617) 565-3715
Chicago	(312) 353-2000
Dallas.....	(214) 655-6444
Denve	(303) 293-1692
Philadelphia	(215) 597-9370
San Francisco.....	(415) 556-6478
Seattle	(206) 442-5810
Kansas City	(913) 551-7003
New York	(212) 264-2525

pavement or concrete to capture the spilled liquids. They can then be shoveled or swept. An excellent, inexpensive material to keep on hand for such purposes is nonchlorinated pet litter.

✓ **Properly dispose** of the drenched soil or absorbent material. This will depend on what and how much was spilled and the rules for disposal in your state. Contact state or local officials for legally-acceptable options of disposal.

✓ **Report the spill** if required, before it threatens public health or the environment. If the spill is large or enters a waterway, you'll need to call the local EPA office, the local emergency planning office or the state health department. The reporting criteria vary with the chemical spilled, however, so check your Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) or call the manufacturer for further details.

—For more information on handling pesticides, contact ACRE at P.O. Box 413708, Kansas City, MO 64179-0386; phone (800) 545-5410.