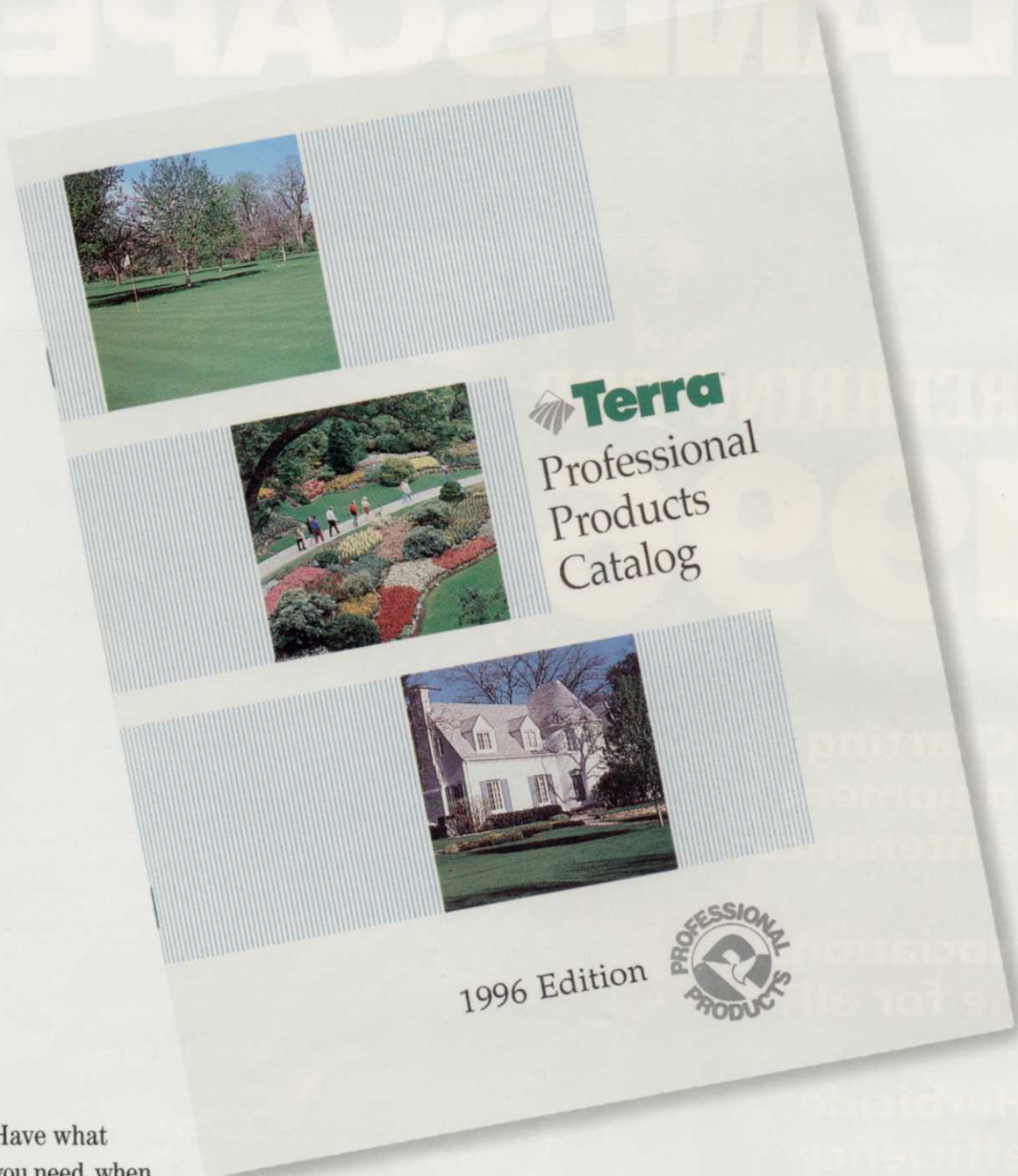


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Don Wahl speaks out of both sides of his mouth. But he can afford to—indeed, it's his duty to. You see, he's a reporter for WFAA-TV, the ABC affiliate in Fort Worth, Tex.

Wahl, however, is not just *any* reporter. He's the station's *environmental* reporter, and he gave a generally balanced report to members of the Turf & Ornamental Communicators Association during a break in the Green Industry Expo two months ago. Which is to say, the news is good and the news is bad for the green industry.

The good news: "I'm encouraged by the efforts of [green] industry leaders," Wahl said. "Chemicals and fertilizers are keys to the way we live, in many ways."

The bad news: "It's a fact that pesticides and fertilizers are showing up in wastewater. And it would be a mistake to assume that all the information is misguided, uninformed and detrimental to your industry."

But the ongoing controversy over pesticides in

our environment has really evolved past whether they are good or bad.

Most educated people will admit to the fact that pesticides, used in moderate amounts, are good. They kill unwanted agricultural and household pests, and—in the process—they give us higher agricultural yields, safer homes, and prettier yards and parks.

However, most educated people will also admit that over-use of pesticides can result in groundwater contamination; ozone layer depletion; beneficial insect deaths; and irritating skin rashes, flu-like symptoms and other acute chemical responses in humans.

"But people's ideas are changing," Wahl continued. "People are developing different perceptions about their yards [see page xx]. There is a

trend nationally against environmental reporting."

Once upon a time, environmental reporters were all the rage at local television stations. Flick the remote once and you got Jason Pompadour reporting from the local chemical waste disposal site. Flick it again and you saw Jane Bouffant interviewing some suburban housewife who wouldn't stop bawling because the smell of fertilizers emanating from the neighbor's yard were making her throw up.

Nowadays, though, when you turn on the television, you're more likely to see "Par for the Course," a beautifully-produced ESPN program sponsored by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America that "establishes superintendents as leaders in the environmental movement," according to Scott Smith.

Smith, the GCSAA's director of media relations and video services, also spoke to TOCA members. He told us that his association is spending \$1 million this year on public relations, and—with the addition of government relations lawyers—"is now in the lobbying business."

This, of course, is fine. But I repeat, for effect: the debate over chemicals in the environment has evolved beyond the notion of good versus evil. While keeping one eye on the short term and pesticides' impact on your lawn care company or golf course, you must also keep one eye on the long term and their impact on the environment.

"The important thing to remember is that you are an advocate for using products," stated Wahl. "While you are trying to provide more information, you might find that a cooperative spirit is very useful. [So] don't look at government regulations as the enemy. In the environmental arena, it's what happens down the road, long term, that's important."

I couldn't have said it any better myself.

The chemical controversy evolves past good vs. bad



Jerry Roche

JERRY ROCHE
Editor-in-Chief

INSIDE

THE VOICE OF THE GREEN INDUSTRY

LANDSCAPE *management*



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16 TALK BACK: DOG-GONE GEESE

Although we shouldn't have been, we were surprised at the incredible range of solutions you readers offered to our November "Talk-back" column on controlling Canada geese. A couple of the more inventive were "dead duck" decoys and "robo-goose."

RON HALL



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To make the new year your best year, use this winter as a time to improve your budgeting and personnel management skills and learn the latest news from across the green industry.

ED & AARON WANDTKE



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Quack, quack, quack

Is there a selective herbicide that removes quackgrass and nutsedge in ornamental plantings? These aggressive weeds are giving us problems.

—OHIO

You can use Vantage herbicide to manage quackgrass. It is a selective broad-spectrum post-emergence herbicide for use on annual and perennial grassy weeds in turf and ornamentals. It has very limited use for turf; therefore, follow label specifications for best results.

Vantage does not control nutsedge. In your area, yellow nutsedge is most common. To manage this, you may use a herbicide such as Basagran. For better results, treat nutsedge plants when they are small and young.

Because of the underground bulbs produced by nutsedge, they are difficult to manage in one season. Reports indicate that it could take two to five years. Follow good cultural practices to help minimize weed problems.

Timing fall fertility

When is the best time to apply fertilizer in fall? What are the differences between a quick-release source of nitrogen such as urea, or a slow-release such as sulfur-coated urea? Will there be any problems with these products leaching into the soil or into drinking water?

—MICHIGAN

In the fall, when air temperature is below 50° F, respiration and growth in turfgrass tillers

slows down. Photosynthesis continues to produce sugar, which accumulates and is translocated to the crown and roots. Roots will continue to grow until the ground freezes.

Nitrogen fertilizer applied at this time will help to prolong photosynthesis by stimulating chlorophyll production. Turfgrass remains green longer into the dormant season and greens up earlier in the spring. Root growth also is stimulated with nitrogen applied at this time.

Late-fall fertilization occurs at about the time of the last mowing and should not be confused with dormant fertilization which occurs after the leaf tissue turns brown. For fall fertilization, water soluble, quick-release sources of nitrogen—such as urea—are the preferred products. They are not temperature dependent. You can also use slow-release products such as isobutylidene diurea (IBDU) or sulfur-coated (SCU). IBDU is not temperature-dependent, while the sulfur coating in SCU is rather temperature-dependent. Natural organic fertilizers are the least-preferred for fall fertilization because they require microbial degradation, a temperature-dependent process.

The likelihood of nitrogen leaching out of a root zone of clay or other heavy soils is remote. However, nitrate leaching can occur on sandy soils although in one experiment on Long Island, NY, fertilized plots produced no more leachate than unfertilized plots. It may

be advisable to use slow-release fertilizers on sandy soils until additional research provides clarification of the fate of nitrogen in different soil textures.

Where and how can we get current information and facts about pesticides used in turf and ornamental plant pest management?

—PENNSYLVANIA

Where to find info

Kathy Zahirsky, director of Environmental and Regulatory Programs at the The Davey Tree Expert Company, referenced the following sources:

- search local libraries to find reputable horticulture or green industry magazines; also look for *Agricultural Chemical News*;

- land-grant university libraries carry university extension service publications.

- manufacturers: pesticide labels and material safety data sheets (MSDS); research data; technical and/or promotional literature.

- state and federal agencies, such as EPA; state departments of agriculture; the National Pesticide Telecommunication Network (NPTN); Department of Transportation; Cooperative Extension Service;

- national/local industry associations: ALCA; PGMS; PLCAA;

- computer access: World-Wide Web (through EPA); CompuServ's Knowledge Index Program); Exttoxnet, network services.

- private consulting firms.



BALAKRISHNA RAO

Manager of Research and Technical Development for the Davey Tree Co. Kent, Ohio

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Bankruptcy filings are on the decline

The Administrative Office for U.S. Courts reports that all bankruptcy filings for 1994 were down 6.6 percent compared to 1993. Total filings were 837,797 compared to 897,251 in 1993. Business bankruptcies decreased 16.1 percent, and non-business filings decreased 5.9 percent.

Filings in eight states accounted for 53.1 percent of the business filings, led by

California's 12,144. Other top states: New York (3,593), Texas (3,395), Florida (2,248), Minnesota (2,025), Pennsylvania (1,956), Illinois (1,861), Georgia (1,717).

California, incidentally, also led in non-business bankruptcy filings with 134,227, nearly three times that of the second-highest state, New York with 43,980.

Keeping pace with inflation?

To find out if your personal income has kept up with inflation, multiply your earnings in any year by the multiplier for that year. If your current earnings are less than the total, your "real" income has declined.

1960 .. 5.01	1970 .. 3.82	1980 .. 1.80	1990 .. 1.13
1961 ... 4.96	1971 ... 3.66	1981 ... 1.63	1991 ... 1.09
1962 ... 4.91	1972 ... 3.55	1982 ... 1.54	1992 ... 1.06
1963 ... 4.85	1973 ... 3.34	1983 ... 1.49	1993 ... 1.03
1964 ... 4.78	1974 ... 3.01	1984 ... 1.43	1994 ... 1.00
1965 ... 4.71	1975 ... 2.76	1985 ... 1.38	
1966 ... 4.58	1976 ... 2.61	1986 ... 1.35	
1967 ... 4.44	1977 ... 2.45	1987 ... 1.31	
1968 ... 4.26	1978 ... 2.27	1988 ... 1.25	
1969 ... 4.04	1979 ... 2.04	1989 ... 1.20	

Pay her, hug him

Working women want more money, while men yearn for security, according to a telephone poll of workers conducted by ICR Survey Research.

Sixty-one percent of women vs. 54 percent of men would opt for higher salary over increased job security. The female focus on pay is entirely logical: they make 28 percent less, on average, than men.

Only about 40 percent of women, compared with 50 percent of men, think they are paid what they're worth.

Nearly 56 percent of workers with household incomes of \$50,000 or more are satisfied with their pay, as opposed to 42 percent of those with incomes of \$40,000 a year or less, the survey notes.

College grads most likely to buy tree care

Seventy-three percent of all tree care services are purchased by college-educated consumers, according to statistics from the National Gardening Association. The average college-educated consumer spends about \$400 per year on such services.

In 1994, a survey by the Gallup Organization noted, 4.9 million U.S. households purchased professional tree care services. Average spent was \$337. More survey highlights, courtesy of the National Arborist Association, in its "NAA Reporter:"

	Client	Average spent	% total sales
BY SEX	Male	\$274	40
	Female	\$384	60
BY AGE	18-29	\$347	12
	30-49	\$394	45
	50+	\$296	43
BY EDUCATION	college	\$400	73
	H.S.	\$248	26
	grade school	\$40	1
BY OCCUPATION	professional	\$344	29
	business	\$359	18
	clerical/sales	\$223	4
	manual labor	\$384	15
	farmer	\$0	0
	retired	\$204	13
	non-labor	\$200	1
BY MARITAL STATUS	undesignated	\$1,343	19
	married, no children	\$277	37
	married, children	\$505	41
	single	\$286	14
BY INCOME	sep/div/wid	\$214	8
	\$99,999+	\$404	9
	\$75K-\$100K	\$549	6
	\$50K-\$75K	\$340	17
	\$40K-\$49K	\$240	8
	\$30K-\$39K	\$435	24
	\$20K-\$29K	\$264	8
	\$15K-\$19K	\$192	7
under \$15K	\$135	4	
undesignated	\$397	17	



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A million snow throwers, a million reasons for safety

Shipments of snow throwers have topped the one million mark for model year 1995, meaning more chances for professional landscape maintenance contractors who "throw snow" to have an accident.

Here are some important safety recommendations made by the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute for all operators of snow throwers:

- Read your owner's manual thoroughly and understand all of the recommended safety procedures before using it the first time.
- Keep the area of operation clear of all persons, particularly small children and pets.
- Clear the area of doormats, sleds, boards, wires and other debris. Snow can sometimes hide objects that might clog the chute or cause other damage.
- Never throw snow toward people or cars, and never allow anyone in front of your snow thrower.
- Always turn the machine off and wait for all moving parts to come to a complete stop, if you have to repair the machine, remove an object or unclog built-up snow from the auger blades or chute. Then disconnect the spark plug wire.
- Use a stick to unclog the snow thrower.
- Keep hands and feet

away from all moving parts.

- Dress properly for the job, including footwear that will improve footing on slippery surfaces. Avoid loose-fitting clothing that can get caught in moving parts. Be

careful of extra-long hair.

- Use non-spill gas containers with spouts. If possible, fill the tank while the engine is cold.
- Do not clear snow across the face of slopes. Use ex-

treme caution when changing direction on slopes. Do not attempt to clear very steep slopes.

- Never operate a snow thrower without good visibility or light.
- Keep a firm hold on the handles.
- Walk, don't run.

Well-maintained yards increase in importance

More Americans enjoyed the multiple benefits of a well-maintained lawn and landscape in 1994 than in 1993, according to a survey by the Gallup Organization for the Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA) and the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA).

Homeowners that participated in the sur-

vey were more inclined to view a yard as a safe play area for children in 1994 than in 1993. They are also more interested in a yard that beautifies the neighborhood and having a comfortable place to entertain, work or visit, the survey noted.

Complete results of the survey:

BENEFITS OF A PROPERTY WITH A WELL-MAINTAINED LAWN AND LANDSCAPE

	1993	1994	% change
1. A property that helps beautify the neighborhood	45.0%	60.7%	+15.7%
2. A place of beauty and relaxation for the family, employees or visitors	38.6%	53.8%	+6.7%
3. A property that reflects positively on its owner	38.4%	50.3%	+11.9%
4. A property that has increased real estate value	35.3%	48.1%	+11.9%
5. A comfortable place to entertain, work or visit	32.5%	48.1%	+15.6%
6. A property that provides a safe, high-quality play area for children	26.7%	45.4%	+18.7%
7. A place that provides an exercise area for pets	12.7%	22.5%	+9.8%
8. A property that helps purify the air	12.4%	24.8%	+12.4%
9. A property that helps cool the air	12.2%	20.7%	+8.5%
10. An environmentally-friendly property that filters water that drains into the ground	12.1%	22.8%	+10.7%
11. Other	1.2%	3.5%	+2.3%