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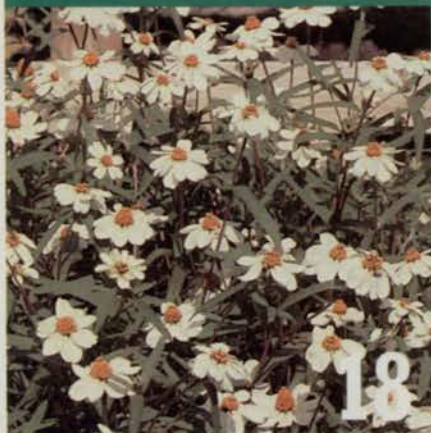
**ZENECA** Professional Products  
LEADERSHIP THROUGH INNOVATION

Circle No. 124 on Reader Inquiry Card

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THE VOICE OF THE GREEN INDUSTRY

# LANDSCAPE *management*



**ON THE COVER:** LET IT SNOW! AS YOU PLAN YOUR STRATEGY FOR THE NEW YEAR, WE TRUST THE JANUARY LM WILL HELP YOU ALONG. HAPPY NEW YEAR! PHOTO COURTESY IMAGE BANK.

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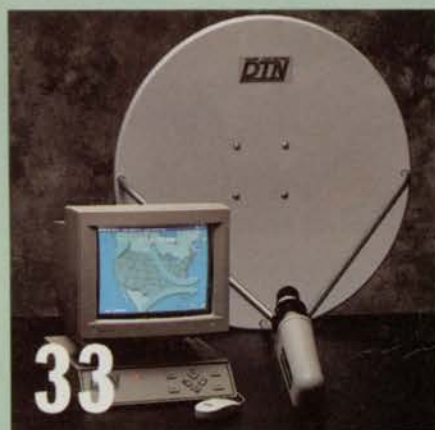
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*RON HALL*

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*RON HALL*

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# MEANS BUSINESS

Circle No. 102 on Reader Inquiry Card

## Trouble from fire ants goes well beyond their bite.



*Terry McIver*

TERRY McIVER  
Editor-in-Chief

**T**here is nothing good you can say about the fire ant. It's a tenacious, hungry, vicious little pest that's caused all kinds of control problems for our readers in warm climates.

I wasn't aware of the damage fire ants can cause until I started work on the news story found on page 12.

The fire ant has just about obliterated the quail and horned toad populations of Texas. The ants attack the eggs of these animals, and it's impossible for the parents to fight them off. Dottie

Woodson of the the Tarrant County Cooperative Extension, explains that the fire ants are so large in number and so menacing that they even attack and kill newborn calves.

During the great "storm surges" that hit Texas every so often after periods of dry weather, swarms of fire ants are seen floating down the Trinity River on leaves, logs and branches as the water carries them away.

But there are always more. Which brings us to

the related problem of diazinon contamination in the waste water of a couple dozen Texas cities.

Homeowners there are misapplying diazinon by the bagful. As we've heard before about homeowners everywhere, the ones in Texas also believe if one tablespoon is good, three tablespoons are better.

(Funny how they never use that reasoning with aspirin. If two are good, wouldn't four or five be better?)

Tarrant County recommends a two-step program of application which uses a combination of diazinon and baits, with the diazinon being applied according to label recommendations. But Woodson says it doesn't work well in urban areas. People just don't go along with the program.

The serious truth here is that the misapplication of diazinon has put cities in Texas and other states in non-compliance with the Environmental Protection Agency.

Gardeners who prefer all-organic methods have called for a ban on diazinon, which, A) isn't within the state's power to do; B) would deprive responsible professionals of an effective, *well-tested and approved* product; and C) would give further credence to the misconception that "all pesticides are bad."

One solution to the Texas problem would be a new \$80 million treatment facility, which would of course require a tax hike.

Fortunately, the EPA has withheld \$25,000/day fines, thanks to city efforts to educate the public.

Those education programs are not new, however. Fort Worth has warned the public about product misuse before. It's just that as the city budget fluctuates, so does the regularity of the literature that is given to consumers.

Product stewardship is an "out of sight, out of mind" practice with people everywhere.

How ironic: some of the same people who sprinkle diazinon on their lawns like sugar on cereal may be the same ones who see red when a professional applicator shows up next door.

As a professional applicator, strive to make your company's customer education campaigns consistent. Send your clients—and even people who aren't your clients—regular reminders on proper product application.

This problem, as serious as it is, certainly provides you with a sales approach.

As funny as it sounds, the line, "Don't try this at home. I'm a trained professional," is where it's at. Encourage homeowners to leave anything that has to do with chemicals to you, the trained professional! **LM**

*Correction: The address for the Sports Turf Manager's Association was listed incorrectly on page 8 of our December Green Book. Correct address for STMA is: 1375 Rolling Hills Loop, Council Bluffs, IA 51503-8552*



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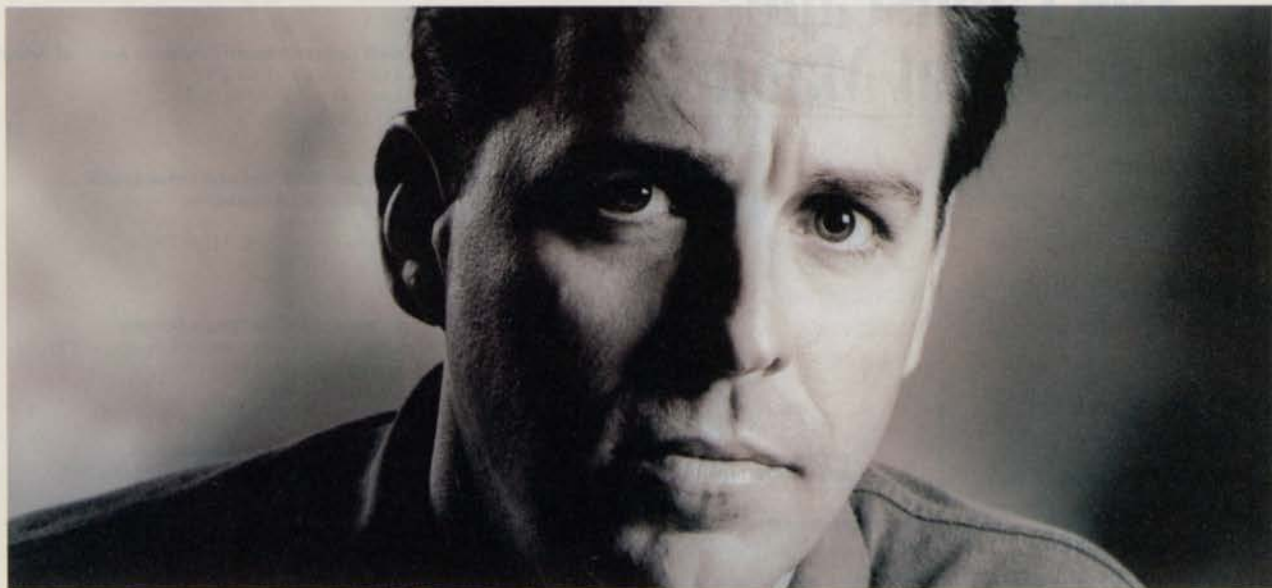
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**Turf and Ornamental Communicators Association**  
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## Stop the zoysia!

*Is there a way to stop zoysiagrass from spreading farther and farther in a lawn? If it is not possible, what is the easiest way to get rid of this grass and establish a Kentucky bluegrass lawn?*

—OHIO

There is no practical solution to stop zoysiagrass from spreading without damaging the rest of the lawn. One option is to use a non-selective herbicide such as Roundup, Finale, or Scythe to kill the edges. This may kill the zoysia as well as the adjacent desirable turfgrass. The treated area needs to be overseeded with desirable turfgrass. This would be a temporary solution.

The best option for permanent removal of zoysia is to use a non-selective herbicide as mentioned above. Depending upon the density and aggressiveness of zoysia, a follow-up treatment may be necessary to manage any regrowth.

After using a non-selective herbicide, the treated area can be either sodded or seeded. Sodding would be labor intensive and expensive, because the existing dead zoysia turfgrass should be removed and then the new sod needs to be installed properly.

One of the best options is to overseed the treated area using the no-till renovation method of seeding. With this method there is no need to remove the existing dead zoysia. Using a Slicer Seeder (Aeroseeder) the area can be seeded with desir-

able turfgrass cultivars. In this method the Aeroseeder machine will slice the ground with its blades and drop the seeds in the machine-made grooves. With this method the seed will be in direct contact with the soil. Seed to soil contact is very important for better seed germination and establishment. Make sure that the Slicer Seeder (Aeroseeder) machine drops the seeds properly in the grooves. This may be a critical problem on slopes. These areas may require some broadcast applications of seed.

## Pine resin by moths

*On some Scotts pine we are finding excessive resin coming out. This is found at the base of branches where branches are attached to the main trunk. What causes this? How can we get rid of them? When is the best time for treatment?*

—MICHIGAN

Based on the description you provided, it appears that the problem is related to an insect called Zimmerman pine moth. Zimmerman moth larvae mature around late summer and results of their boring activity become very noticeable. When the problem becomes severe, the infested tree trunk is covered with resin just below the branches. The larvae feed at the base of the branches, generally in the top two whorls. Because of their extensive feeding, the infested trees can break from the infested site. Pitch masses can cover the entire tree from

the base of the tree to the top. They produce brown, flaky, sawdust-like material indicative of their activities. Inside the pitch mass a pinkish-brown, spotted caterpillar may be found.

Where the problem is not severe, Zimmerman moth larvae can be hand-picked by disturbing or pulling the pitch mass and destroying them.

For better management, insecticides such as Dursban or Talstar should be applied around mid-April. Proper coverage of main trunk and branches is important.

## pH not burn agent

*Does pH have a burn potential? When we fertilize shrubs or trees at a recommended dose, will it have an adverse reaction (burn) at low pH (acid) neutral or high pH (alkaline) soils?*

—PENNSYLVANIA

Soil pH does not have a direct role in burn potential. It may indirectly influence the burn potential of some sources of fertilizer by the pH effect on solubility, volatilization and nitrification identification.

Burn potential is based on a fertilizer's salt index. Inorganic fertilizers generally have higher salt indexes and tend to have greater burn potential than organic fertilizers. Burn potential will rise with an increase in temperature, or if you use a quick-release fertilizer at higher than the recommended rate. **LM**



**BALAKRISHNA RAO**

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

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