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MAINTENANCE: TURF CARE



Grasshopper

Improve productivity, reduce time-consuming hand-edging and eliminate the need for two-cycle edgers with Edge-EZE. Electric and manual models deliver a clean edge up to 2.5 in. deep up to 500 ft./minute along sidewalks, driveways and roadways, and vertical adjustment up to 12 in. and allow edging from the sidewalk, turf or curb. An optional electric actuator increases downward pressure in tough conditions and raises the disc to cross sidewalks. By increasing productivity and decreasing labor, Edge-EZE can have significant impact on the bottom line. GrasshopperMower.com/edge-eze.php

Pearl's Premium

Pearl's Premium Ultra Low Maintenance Lawn Seed is drought-resistant and low maintenance. Available in sunny mix, shady mix and sun & shade mix varieties, the seed grows at one quarter the rate of bluegrass and requires only monthly mowing on average. It grows 12-in. roots, does not require chemical fertilizer, rarely needs water after it is established, and looks like a lush green lawn — even during winter, the company says. PearlsPremium.com



Pennington Seed

Princess 77 is Pennington Seed's first seeded F1 hybrid bermudagrass, with the texture and color to match the best vegetative varieties. It is less expensive and has faster establishment time than sprigging — plus requires 21% less water. Princess 77 has improved drought tolerance, density, wear and damage recovery, helping to make it one of the top choices among landscape professionals. A trusted name since 1945, Pennington Seed has provided much of the world's bermudagrass and continues to be a key player in the research and development of top quality grass seed. PenningtonSeed.com

FMC Professional Solutions

The Echelon herbicide Spring Rebate is an in-season promotional program based on purchases for a minimum of 30 acres. In addition to the discount(s), all purchases qualify for the Echelon Performance Assurance Program. The Spring Rebate includes all purchases invoiced and delivered between March 15 and May 15, 2011. Discounts by formulation are as follows:

- Echelon 4SC (1-gal. container): \$15 off the purchase of 6 gal. or more
- Echelon 0.3% on fertilizer: \$23 off the purchase of 5 tons or more
- Echelon 0.375% on fertilizer: \$28 off the purchase of 4.5 tons or more
- Echelon 0.5 percent on fertilizer: \$38 off the purchase of 3.5 tons or more

For program details and online redemption, look for the Echelon logo at the URL below. Or, buy Echelon and then use your smartphone to enter purchase information by snapping a picture of the Microsoft tag depicted at right. FMCproSolutions.com/Home/Promotions.aspx



Echo Inc.

The new PAS-225VPB Combo Pack is part of the Echo Pro Attachment Series (PAS). The kit combines a power source, trimmer attachment and a blower attachment in one box. Its power source is equipped with a 21.2cc Power Boost Vortex engine and an i-30 starter for a 30% reduction in starting effort. The power source employs a coupler that allows fast and easy changing of attachments without the use of tools. The PAS-225VPB power head can also accommodate nine other PAS attachments, including the brushcutter, articulating hedge trimmer and power pruner. The combo kit also includes the new Speed-Feed trimmer head. Echo-USA.com



Gravely

Gravely has added the Thatch-O-Matic to its Chore Line. Housed in heavy-duty, fully welded 12-gauge steel, the Thatch-O-Matic Power Rake digs out thatch where major lawn repair is needed. Interchangeable tine,

flail or knife reels allow operators to adapt to any commercial or rental application. A 12-position height moves in 1/4-in. increments from 1 to 4 in. with a locking collar. The clutching mechanism and actuator design are optimized to extend the life of the product. Additional features include an adjustable height handle with a vibration-absorbing comfort grip. *Ariens.com*



Knox Fertilizer Co.

Knox Fertilizer Co. has been granted registration by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for its product, Shaw's Turf Food with Acelepryn and Dimension, which provides season-long control of crabgrass and grubs in one early-season application. The company says the product provides balanced plant nutrient needs for as long as 90 to 180 days. The new plant food-insecticide-herbicide combination is a granular product that is easy to apply in standard equipment to provide uniform coverage, even in difficult-to-reach areas. *KnoxFert.com*

United Turf Alliance

ArmorTech PAC 223 uses the active ingredient paclobutrazol to slow turfgrass growth for up to two months, while improving grass quality. This plant growth regulator can reduce frequency of mowing and clippings up to 50% for as long as two months, according to the company. *UTAarmortech.com*



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MAINTENANCE: MOWERS

Dixon

The new Grizzly SE features a ground speed as fast as 12 mph. A welded tube frame, extensive use of cast iron components, premium commercial engines and high performance hydro systems combine to achieve long service life and increase productivity. A rugged new 7-gauge steel cutting deck design provides a high quality of cut. Dixon-ZTR.com



Schiller Grounds Care

The new BOB-CAT Predator-Pro LP-61 is a no-hassle, propane-powered commercial zero-turn rider that use two 33.5-lb. standard liquid withdrawal tanks — no conversion system needed and no costly, specialty tanks required. It is powered by a 30-hp Generac 990 engine. The mower is available in a 61-in. side discharge DuraDeck or a new 61-in. rear discharge deck that allows trimming on both sides of the mower. It also offers a Dual Choice 2-year/2,000-hour or 5-year/500-hour warranty, with a lifetime warranty on deck, deck cradle and engine deck. BOBCATturf.com



EverRide

Available in three deck sizes (48-, 52- and 61-in.), the Fury features a fabricated flat deck for mulching, easy-to-use controls and a low center of gravity for improved hillside performance. All models cut at a speed up to 9 mph and have 12-volt, 340-amp batteries with a 90-minute reserve capacity. EverRide.com

MAINTENANCE: TREE CARE

Morbark

The Beaver M18RX is a new lightweight option package for the Beaver M18R Brush Chipper. Weighing in at less than 10,000 lbs. fully charged with fluids, spare tire and a rugged winch, this rigid and efficient machine can be towed without a CDL. Other key modifications include the single feed-wheel yoke pivot assembly with TorqMax drive, which minimizes dead space between the feed wheel and chipper drum, and increases down pressure efficiency. The unit is available in 140 hp to 170 hp, with Cummins, John Deere or Caterpillar power options. Morbark.com



Vermeer

The SC372 stump cutter offers power and agility in a compact package. Powered by either a 378 hp diesel or 35 hp gasoline engine, the SC372 has the torque to cut through the toughest stumps.

The unit features the optional AutoSweep monitoring system from Vermeer, and a combination belt and gearbox direct drive system offers an efficient transfer of horsepower from the engine to the cutter wheel. An operator presence system monitors the operator's touch and maintains cutter wheel engagement. When the operator's hands leave the control levers, an automatic disengage and braking sequence will stop the cutter wheel in less than nine seconds. Vermeer.com



Cub Cadet Yanmar

The Tank S D and Tank S LP (pictured) mowers feature Synchro Steer technology for intuitive zero-turn control with a steering wheel and dual foot pedal controls instead of lap bars, while giving users the choice of diesel or liquid propane. Both options offer increased fuel economy and extended engine life. CubCadetCommercial.com



Excel Industries

The Big Dog X Series is powered by Kohler and Kawasaki commercial V-twin engines. Durable side discharge decks feature multiple reinforcements. Large 24-in. drive and 13-in. front caster tires provide a smooth ride, and an optimal center of gravity provides superior balance. The mowers' top speed is 11 mph, and fuel capacity is 10 gal. BigDogMowers.com



Billy Goat

The new DL Series of debris loaders offer CustomFit options to build a machine that's just right for the job. Features include an exclusive dual-shredding system with Piranha blade, a replaceable steel housing liner, rotational discharge and a heavy-duty, clear urethane helical intake hose with user-friendly handles and hose connection for improved hose management and maneuverability. The unit can be skid-mounted as standard; options include a tailgate mount or swing-away truck hitch. BillyGoat.com



Husqvarna

The TechLite chain saw bar is made with an aluminum core and steel side plates to give the bar structural integrity comparable to a professional solid bar. The TechLite, on average, is 27% lighter than a standard professional replaceable sprocket nose bar. The reduced weight allows chain-saw operators to run a 20-in. TechLite for the same weight as a 16-in. solid pro bar, both weighing 2 lbs. Husqvarna.com



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IRRIGATION: SYSTEM SOLUTIONS



Underhill International

Bubblers for low-volume irrigation is now available from Underhill International for use on planting beds, shrubs, medians and other landscaped areas. The bubblers feature a self-sealing design that allows them to be installed without special tape,

saving time and material. They provide full-circle coverage and allow water output to remain constant, even with input pressures from 5 to 60 psi. Two models are available: pre-set flow bubblers and adjustable flow bubblers. Pre-set flow bubblers have three rate options: .25, .50 and 1.0 gpm. Adjustable flow bubblers can be set from .10 to 1.0 gpm. They are both compatible with any 1/2-in. MIPT nipple or fitting. *Underhill.us*

Netafim USA

New Techline EZ is a 12mm drip line for "looped" on-surface irrigation installations. It efficiently irrigates a 1,500-sq.-ft. shrub or planting area with one 250-ft. roll of 12mm Netafim tubing and two fittings that include a Low Volume Control Zone Kit and Line Flushing Valve. Dripper spacings are placed at 12 and 18 in. for uniform water application; the system can be installed within an hour and "disappears" into the landscape with mulch or ground cover. Techline EZ contains a minimum of 25% post-consumer recycled materials, and Netafim is the only manufacturer that offers drip products that qualify for LEED credits. *NetafimUSA.com*



Weathermatic

The SLRC is a new wireless handheld remote for SmartLine controllers that offers the benefits of SmartLine "wireless irrigation network" technology, including plug-and-play capabilities. The unit works with models SL800, SL1600 and SL4800 (Firmware version 1.08 or later) and uses the same "communications hub" as other components in the SmartLine system, such as the SLW15 weather sensor. Powered by two AAA batteries, the SLRC operates within a 1,000-ft. line-of-sight — accessing up to 48 stations instantly. It measures just 2x3 in., and has a bright LCD screen that displays zone number, RF signal indicator and hourglass icon for zone run time. Individual zones can be identified and run from 1 to 90 minutes, or an entire program (A, B, C and D) can be accessed and run for the pre-set length of time. *Smartline.com*



Rain Bird

The IQ v2.0 Central Control System is comprised of four basic components: the central computer, IQ v2.0 software, one or more on-site controllers and a network communications cartridge. Depending on the site's specific needs, the central control system can be configured using Direct Satellites, Server Satellite and Client Satellites. Each system can use one satellite type or a combination of satellite types. Built-in control is available for up to five satellites; however, the central control system's capacity can be easily and affordably expanded in five-satellite increments to meet larger system requirements. IQ v2.0 is designed to work with either of Rain Bird's newest modular controllers: the traditionally wired ESP-LXME or the two-wire, decoder-based ESP-LXD. Each of these controllers features Rain Bird's Extra Simple Programming language for easy set-up and adjustments. *RainBird.com*

LAWN CARE: SPREADERS



Ecolawn

Save time, labor and operating costs with the new Ecolawn Applicator 2011. This multi-purpose and motorized unit is built for turf professionals to aid in top dressing, compost spreading, turf renovation and seeding organic matter. Ecolawn spreads a wide variety of materials, including soil mix, pelletized product, calcite clay and crumb rubber. EcolawnApplicator.com

TurfEx

The new TS-75 commercial-duty, manually powered spreader features a heavy-duty, corrosion-resistant, 1.3-cu.-ft. polyethylene hopper. Nylon axle and wheel bearings provide self-lubrication with wear and load-carrying performance. Large gears are constructed of Nylatron GS nylon, which provides wear and impact strength. A rugged gear cover with quick-release clamps keeps gears well protected, while also allowing for quick and easy serviceability. Large 13-in.-diameter pneumatic tires are featured on the spreader to easily traverse rough, uneven terrain and to minimize pushing effort for the operator. Other standard features include a clear, fitted hopper cover and one-year warranty. TrynexFactory.com



PSB Co.

PSB, a division of White Castle System Inc., introduces the PS200 — the newest addition to its line of Prizelawn fertilizer spreaders. With its 6 mph transport and application speed, coupled with its 200-lb. capacity, the unit can be on and off jobs as large as an acre in as little as eight minutes. Its 2.5-ft. turning radius, instant reverse and 35-in. width allows the operator to get in and out of tight spots or through garden gates with ease. The Honda GXV 160 commercial engine ensures years of reliable operation. Find a video featuring the PS200 at the company's website. PrizelawnSpreaders.com



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MY BIGGEST MISTAKE

LESSONS LEARNED THE HARD WAY » BY CASEY PAYTON



Letting an employee problem fester brought Landscape America's owners to the boiling point. Today, they address employee issues head-on.



Doug
McDuff

COMPANY: Landscape America, Inc.

PRESIDENT: Doug McDuff

HEADQUARTERS: Wrentham, MA

FOUNDED: 2006

EMPLOYEES: 15

SERVICE MIX: 30% maintenance; 60% design/build; 10% snow

CLIENT MIX: 70% residential; 30% commercial

2010 REVENUE: \$1.2 million

WEB: www.landscapeamericainc.com

BEST ADVICE: Everyone has different motivation factors. Find out what drives your employees and what they want to achieve. We want employees who are motivated to move up and to grow with the company.

ONE DISGRUNTLED EMPLOYEE can easily cause problems that

spread through the entire company. It's something that needs to be stopped in its tracks. But Doug McDuff, president of Landscape America, Inc., in Wrentham, MA, says he didn't realize this soon enough and a problem with an employee grew much larger than it had to be.

The problem stemmed from an employee who was a friend and had been with the company from its start. The fact that he was a friend made it a little difficult to address complaints, so the concerns went unhandled for quite some time. "Things started out well, but over time the employee became negative and was making other employees negative as well," says McDuff. "It was mostly just a bad attitude but it became like a cancer within the company."

Each day, a negative tone would be set the minute the employee showed up for work. "He was always in a bad mood and difficult to communicate with," says McDuff. "His performance was never really an issue and in that aspect he was a good, well-rounded employee who we relied on. He knew how to do whatever we needed him to do and we could send him out

and trust he would handle things well. The problem all came back to his attitude around the office."

With the negativity mounting and other employees starting to complain, it came to the point where McDuff thought he'd have to fire the employee. But when he sat down to have that hard talk, he realized the sit-down itself should have happened a long time ago. "We flat-out told him he had been showing up to work with a bad attitude and we couldn't have that anymore," remembers McDuff. "But then he started telling us why. He thought by this point with the company he'd be at a management level. So we talked it over and came up with some goals for him to hit."

When McDuff realized this employee wanted more responsibility, he found ways to give him just that. "We started doing a weekly meeting and had him facilitate some of those meetings," says McDuff. "Getting up in front of the group gives him a little bit of local fame. One of his strong points is speaking about plant material and now the employees go to him if they have questions. That's been a big motivator. Using key employees' names more when talking about the functions of the business allows them to feel

important and also lets the younger guys look up to them and gives them some motivation of their own to get to the next level."

Today, things have improved all around. McDuff says failing to sit down with the employee earlier was a mistake on his part, and many of the issues could have been avoided. "I learned I need to communicate better when I have an issue with an employee," he says. "The fact that this employee was not communicating with me was my fault, too, and I should have sat him down sooner. My advice to other business owners is not to let problems go until they reach the boiling point."

In addition, McDuff also set up a peer review system that helps address employee problems head-on. "Every year we send each of our employees a peer review form and ask them to fill one out for other team members in our business," he explains. "Every employee gets back three forms that other employees have filled out about them, and we sit down and go through all the comments. The employee never knows who wrote it. From there, we set our goals for the next year for each employee. They have been great for communication and have really helped address concerns. This is also a chance to share positive employee performance comments, which is important for motivation."

Payton is a freelance writer with six years of experience covering landscaping.