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an innovation this big, man  
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**Introducing DuPont™ Imprelis™ herbicide—  
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DuPont™ Imprelis™ is the most scientifically advanced turf herbicide in over 40 years. Thanks to its innovative new technology, you can control even the toughest broadleaf weeds—like ground ivy and wild violets—with more application freedom than ever before. Apply Imprelis™ on rainy days, hot days, dry days, cold days ... even reseeding days, and experience longer-lasting residual control on a wider range of broadleaf weeds. Imprelis™ is easy on the environment too—with one of the lowest application rates in lawn care, combined with low mammalian toxicity.

**Make the leap with DuPont™ Imprelis™ herbicide.**



*The miracles of science™*

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# The benefits



BENEFIT	% OF CONTRACTORS OFFERING		
	Hourly/ seasonal labor	Salaried employees	Executive/ management team
Paid vacation	52%	78%	75%
Paid personal days	12%	43%	47%
Paid sick days	15%	46%	46%
<b>Paid holidays off</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>67%</b>
Health insurance	24%	50%	55%
Dental insurance	11%	20%	21%
Vision insurance	7%	14%	13%
Life insurance	6%	16%	21%
Disability insurance	7%	12%	11%
<b>401k plan</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>31%</b>
Profit sharing	7%	13%	23%
Company-supplied uniforms	66%	54%	49%
Use of company car	20%	47%	80%
Use of company cell/smart phone/PDA	30%	63%	80%
Performance bonus	25%	37%	33%
<b>Year-end/holiday bonus</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>38%</b>
2011 raise/pay increase	40%	36%	31%



Source: Landscape Management, February 2011

## Health inspector

Tempe, AZ's Paramount Landscape is right around the 50-employee mark.

As a result, "I'm really on the fence on whether to pursue growth or not — all based on healthcare," says company president Brian Golembiewski.

The reason for Golembiewski's trouble is the Health Reform Act passed by Congress in 2010, requiring employers with more than 50 employees to provide health insurance or pay fines of \$2,000 per worker each year if any worker receives federal subsidies to purchase insurance.

And he isn't the only one who's worried. The new health care legislation tops the list of landscapers' employment concerns this year, followed closely by the lack of ability to offer all employees health care at No. 3 and competitively offering all employees a full array of benefits at No. 5.

As written right now, the current legislation could cost Golembiewski \$100,000 a year.

"The incentive to grow over 50

employees is just not there with this issue," he explains. "Why would I want to grow my business and put up with these headaches? It's just not worth it. Small businesses are trapped. If something doesn't change, I'm going to be in a holding pattern."



Health care costs could make or break growth for Brian Golembiewski.

### TOP EMPLOYMENT CONCERNS

1. New health care legislation
2. Ability to fill middle management positions with qualified employees
3. Lack of ability to offer all employees health care
4. Recession's affects on employee morale
5. Competitively offering all employees a full array of benefits
6. Retaining employees as we come out of recession

PricewaterhouseCoopers says landscape businesses offering health care will see their costs jump 9% on average this year with most employees paying higher deductibles as a result. — NW





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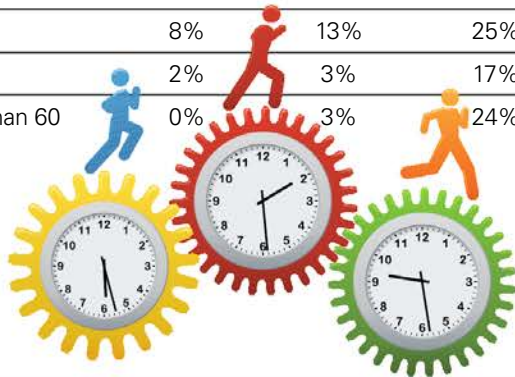
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# The workweek

## HOURS LOGGED

How many hours per week do employees work?

	HOURLY/ SEASONAL EMPLOYEES	SALARIED EMPLOYEES	OWNER/ MANAGEMENT TEAM
Less than 40	15%	9%	5%
40-45	57%	40%	13%
45-50	18%	32%	16%
50-55	8%	13%	25%
55-60	2%	3%	17%
More than 60	0%	3%	24%



## 5 DAYS STILL REIGN

What is the length of your company's standard workweek?



Source: Landscape Management, February 2011

## Employee experiment:

*Working weekends to better utilize equipment*

**M**any contractors have wondered, "How can I get more utilization out of my equipment to get a better return on my investment?"

Kurt Kluznik is one of them. "Like most contractors, we typically worked Monday through Friday, so our equipment was idle nearly 30% of the time, not counting the five months of winter when the mowing fleet sits idle all of the time," he says in *Innovate or Die: How Green Industry Companies Will Thrive in the New Economy*, PLANET's 30th Crystal Ball Report.

"For 128 hours per week, your equipment sits idle," agrees Langdon Morris, owner of Innovation Labs LLC, Walnut Creek, CA. Morris discussed Kluznik's case study during PLANET's Executive Forum & Leadership Meeting Feb. 15-20 in

Amelia Island, FL. "Adding Saturday and Sunday to your schedule would give you a 33% utilization boost."

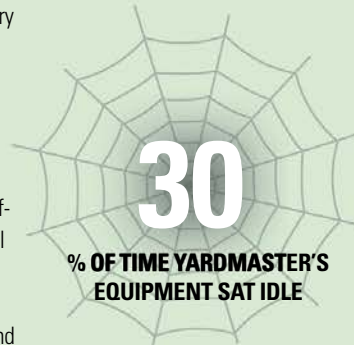
*Landscape Management* research shows 82% of the industry follows the standard five-day workweek, but Kluznik decided to "try something different" and give working weekends a try.

Potential gains started adding up. "We could avoid rush hour traffic delays and work on commercial sites when parking lots were empty, allowing us to complete jobs in less time and minimize hand trimming around parked cars."

The big challenge was employees. "It's difficult to find qualified account managers and supervisors who want to work weekends," Kluznik says. "To solve that problem, we developed a rotating schedule where each account manager cov-

ered one weekend a month and took a day off during the week."

Kluznik also experimented with crew scheduling. Each week, one set of crews worked four 10- to 12-hour days and another set worked three 12-hour days. Every crew worked four days one week and



three days the next. The rotation meant "no crews got stuck working all of the weekends, and everyone enjoyed working long days so they could get three or four days off each week," he explains.

The advantages piled up, but so did the challenges. Different crews

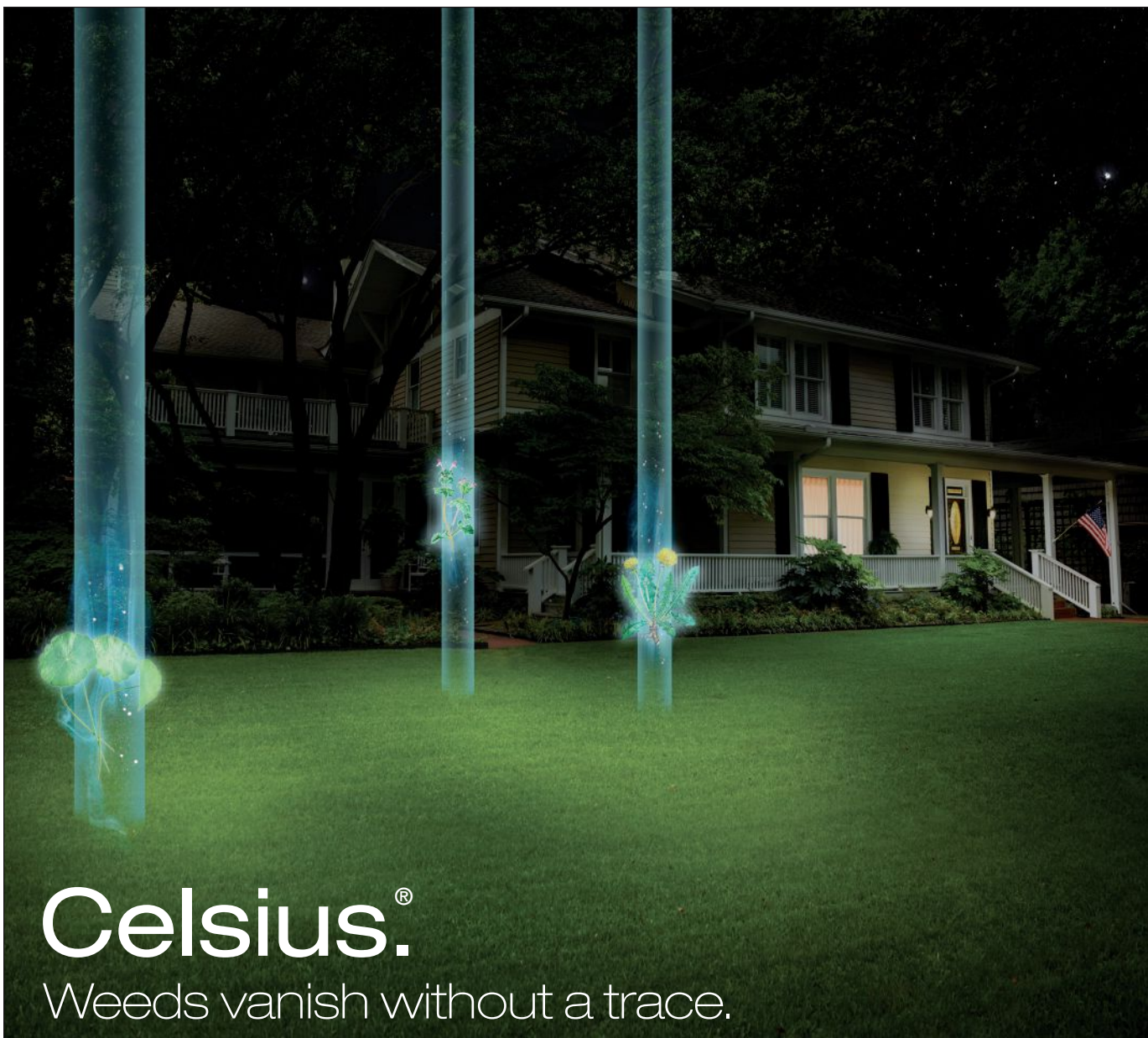
on sites could lead to continuity and quality losses, Kluznik recognized. Better documenting site and customer requirements to maintain service levels improved customer expectations and company operations.

"Another benefit was that since we always had people with days off every day, we were able to call them in to cover for absences," Kluznik adds.

Yardmaster operated this schedule for a few years. "We were able to improve profits, acquire new equipment and gain new customers," Kluznik says. But in the end, we went back to a five-day schedule because our managers really didn't like alternating weekends or the longer workday routine."

Even though the experiment is over, Kluznik calls it a success, saying it helped the business get to where it is today. "We would not hesitate to go back to this schedule," he points out, "if business needs required it." — *NW*





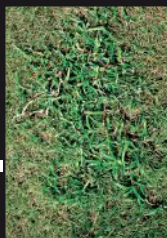
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## Celsius®. A higher degree of weed control.

Unlike traditional herbicides, Celsius works with less risk of turf damage, even at high temperatures. Celsius, the newest generation post-emergent herbicide, effectively controls over 100 weeds, including several hard-to-control grasses and broadleaf weeds. Plus, Celsius offers pre-emergent control of germinating weeds – after all, healthy, weed free turf is the best herbicide available on the market. Celsius delivers superior results in balance with consideration for our environment, because we believe in Protecting Tomorrow, Today. And, as always, you're Backed by Bayer and all the science and technology that support it. Sustainable weed control from a name you trust.

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*Murdannia nudiflora* (Doveweed) is a summer annual identified by its fleshy, narrow lance-shaped leaves as well as its stems that root at nodes. Doveweed is also identified by short leaf sheaths with short hairs on the upper margins. Doveweed usually germinates later in the growing season than other summer annuals and can be found from Virginia, into Georgia, through Florida and west into Texas.

# Saying goodbye to cost-of-living boosts

Only 11% of U.S. employers say they award cost-of-living adjustments to employees, according to a recent WorldAtWork study called “Compensation Programs and Practices.”

A cost-of-living adjustment is defined as an across-the-board wage and salary increase designed to bring pay in line with increases in the cost-of-living to maintain real purchasing power. Despite its low use, the practice still dominates in many workers’ perceptions of their raises, believing they are given to cover cost-of-living increases rather than reward them for job performance.

The more prevalent types of pay increases are characterized as promotional (94%), merit (92%) and market adjustments (76%).

“From a rewards perspective, it doesn’t make sense to base pay raises solely on

the Consumer Price Index,” explains Kerry Chou, compensation practice leader, WorldAtWork. “Pay raises are a tool to motivate and retain employees. How motivating can it be for the top performer to receive the same base pay increase as a low or average performer?”

When asked how base salary increases are determined, 89% of U.S. employers select individual performance against job standards and or “management by objectives” over a general increase.

Eight out of 10 employers assess performance either formally (65%) or informally (15%), the study also showed. “Given the prevalence of tying pay to performance,” says Alison Avalos, research manager for WorldAtWork, “we expect the number of employers awarding cost-of-living increases to stay flat if not dwindle in the coming years.” — *NW*

“*Pay raises are a tool to motivate and retain employees. How motivating can it be for the top performer to receive the same base pay increase as a low or average performer?*”

Kerry Chou, WorldAtWork

## FLOODED MARKETS

With a 12% unemployment rate in Florida, “we get plenty of applications,” reports Bruce Bachand, vice president of Orlando’s Carol King Landscape Maintenance. The problem is quality.

“Unfortunately, in most cases, people are looking for short-term jobs so they can continue seeking ‘better’ opportunities or they are lower caliber individuals who can’t meet our qualification requirements or have previous problems,” he explains.

Finding good, talented workers “is something that hasn’t changed just because there are more people look-

ing for work,” agrees Ron Skover, owner of Greenlawn LLC, North Street, MI. In

fact, where unemployment rates are highest, contractors seem to be having the most problems finding quality employees.

Here are the latest

unemployment statistics by state, ranked from lowest to highest. Florida and Michigan are two of the top 10 worst states when it comes to unemployment. — *NW*

