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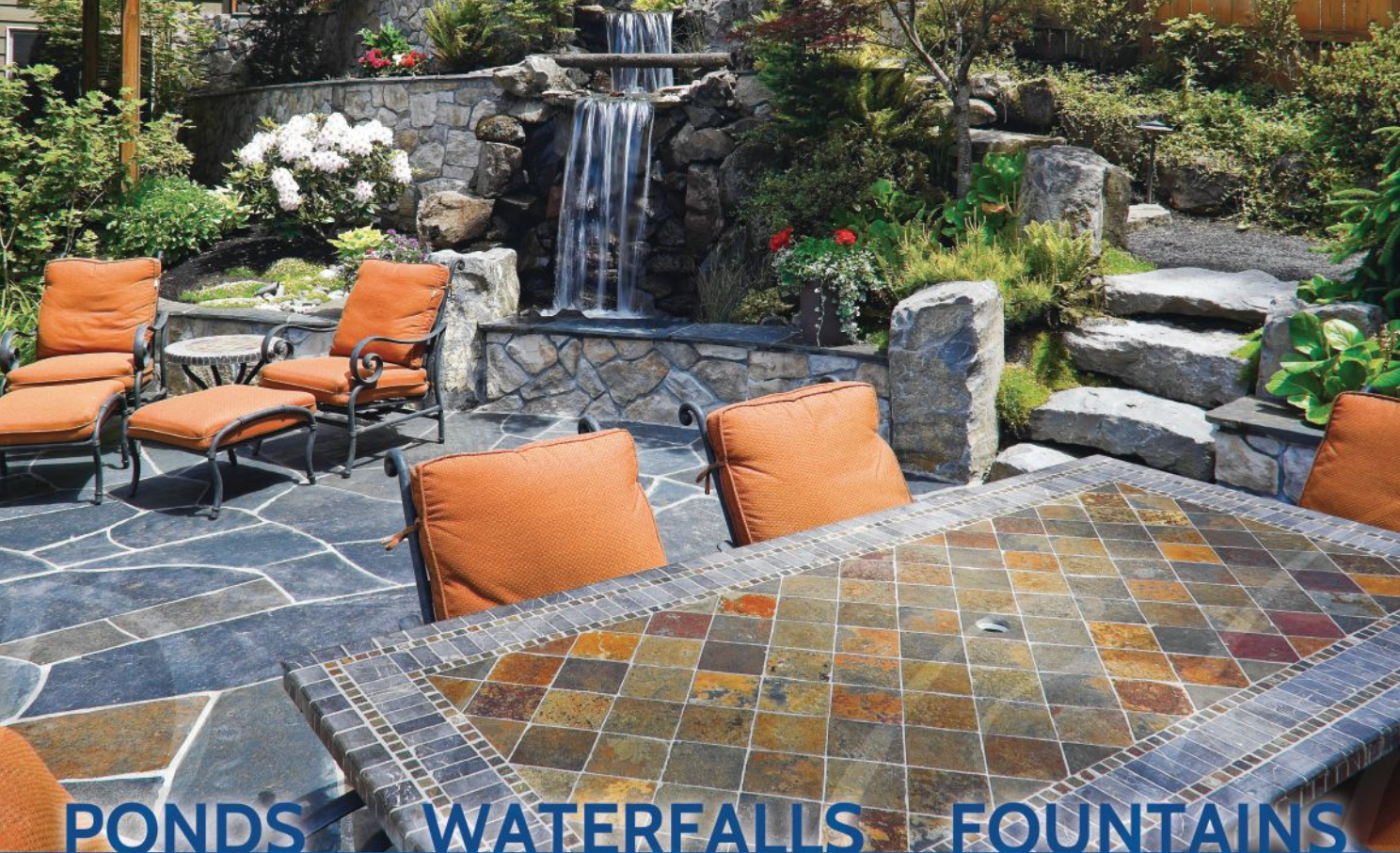
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HAPPY FIVE-OH, TURFCO

The first mechanical topdresser celebrates 50 years of consistent spreading. BY SETH JONES

IT MIGHT SEEM hard to imagine, but 50 years ago, topdressing was done by a laborer armed with a shovel. He'd start on one end of a property and pitch sand until the entire area received a layer.

By the end of the day, the consistency of the amount of sand being spread was, well, lacking.

Enter the mechanical topdresser. The first Mete-R-Matic — with wooden slats and a wooden hopper — was shipped by Turfco in September of 1961.

A lot has changed in 50 years for Turfco. Now the company offers riding

applicators, heavy-duty spreaders and advanced edgers.

But that doesn't mean the 1961 Mete-R-Matic is totally out of style.

"We still get calls for the old wooden machines wanting to know if we have replacement parts," laughs Scott Kinkead, executive vice president.

The warranty pool

Turfco Manufacturing, founded by John Kinkead, is a family-owned and operated company. (John Kinkead's father, Robert Stanard Kinkead, founded National Mower in 1919.) John's two sons, George, president and Scott, executive vice president, have been working with the company 26 and 20 years, respectively.

The family atmosphere transforms into a team atmosphere from the front office to the factory. That's because



The first powered topdresser in the industry was sold by Turfco. This Mete-R-Matic was bought by Christina Lakes Golf Course near Grand Forks, British Columbia, in 1962.

employees at the facility are driven to make machines that won't break down. The better the machines, the better their bank accounts.

Every year the company establishes what they call "the warranty pool." The pool is money dedicated to repairing equipment still under the company's two-year warranty.

At the end of each year, the money that isn't spent from the pool gets distributed to the staff in the factory. So the fewer machines returned for service, the bigger the warranty pool check.

"It gives them more incentive to do good work," John Kinkead says. Scott adds, "Quality is important — operators expect this equipment to last."

What it all comes down to for the company is the desire to help people do their jobs better.

"These guys are running their own businesses," Scott Kinkead says. "We're making products that are fundamental to them making money. We're involved with helping guys grow their business. That's pretty fun." **LM**

In honor of their 50th anniversary, Turfco is giving away 10 Apple iPads and a grand prize of a WideSpin 1540 EC. To enter the drawings, visit www.turfco.com/50years.



John Kinkead, CEO of Turfco, and Scott Kinkead, executive vice president of Turfco.

Seth Jones is editor-in-chief of Landscape Management's sister publication, Golfdom.

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Damien Tollefson of Wyoming Landscape Contractors in Jackson Hole said, "TransFilm was hands down my choice. After the 21 day tour to Washington DC, it looked great!"



PROFITING FROM DESIGN

JODY SHILAN

Shilan is editor of FromDesign2Build.com. Contact him at 201/783-2844 or jshilan@gmail.com.

Competing with value, not price

Q Many companies offer “free drawings” to get installation work. We’ve always charged for our landscape plans, but often lose work because of this. What can we do?

— **Bill Smith**, Greenscapes Unlimited, Greensboro, NC.

A This is a common problem no matter where your landscape design/build business is located.

There will always be companies that provide “free plans” as a strategy to get installation work. One could argue this is no different than offering a 10% discount on a new installation.

Don’t get me wrong. Creating landscape plans for free, is bad business. It might get you a signed contract, but the chances of the work being profitable, the customer being satisfied, and the project coming out well are extremely slim.

There is no such thing as a “free” plan. The time it takes to create a design, present it to the client, and make revisions in hopes of getting the work, costs you, the contractor, a considerable amount of time and money.

Most contractors roll the cost of the plan into the installation estimate, thereby charging clients “full price” for their “free plan.” This is fine if you get the installation, but what about the other four or five “free plans” that didn’t turn into any work? Who pays for those drawings? You do.

There are many variables at work here, including the size of the property, the scope of the work, the amount of detail in the drawing and the proximity of the project in relationship from your office.

During the typical design/sales process, contractors can expect to spend about 20 hours creating a

free plan. That’s half of an average workweek (or one-third of a landscape contractor’s workweek).

I’ve listed the basic steps of the design/process below, including average times for each step. Keep in mind that each step includes drive time to and from the office.

Initial meeting: 2-3 hours

Site analysis: 1-2 hours

Concept plan: 3-4 hours

Estimate: 3-4 hours

Client presentation: 1-2 hours

Plan revisions: 2-3 hours

Estimate revisions: 2-3 hours

Client presentation: 1-2 hours

Total: 15-23 hours

To dissuade clients from working with a free plan, the best thing that you can do is educate them on the value of working with your design team and installation crews. Explain how you will work closely with them to make sure the design and installation are exactly what they envisioned, and how a landscape plan is the least expensive, but most important part of any landscape installation. Compare the benefits of hiring a professional company such as yours versus the potential pitfalls of working with a company that provides free plans.

Clients willing to pay for a professional plan and go through the proper design process are typically a better clients. They are also the clients who usually increase the scope of work and their budgets during the design/build process — providing you with a more profitable project and a very satisfied customer.

By charging for plans and weeding out the “tire kickers,” you free up countless hours of wasted time. You can now use those 20 extra hours a week to keeping your paying customers satisfied. These satisfied clients will happily refer you to their friends and families, who in turn will expect to pay for their drawings.

Profiting from Design is a quarterly column from award winning landscape designer, consultant and former design/build contractor Jody Shilan. Shilan is also the President of the New Jersey Landscape Contractors Association. If you have a question you would like answered in Profiting From Design, please contact Shilan at jshilan@gmail.com.

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GROUND IVY

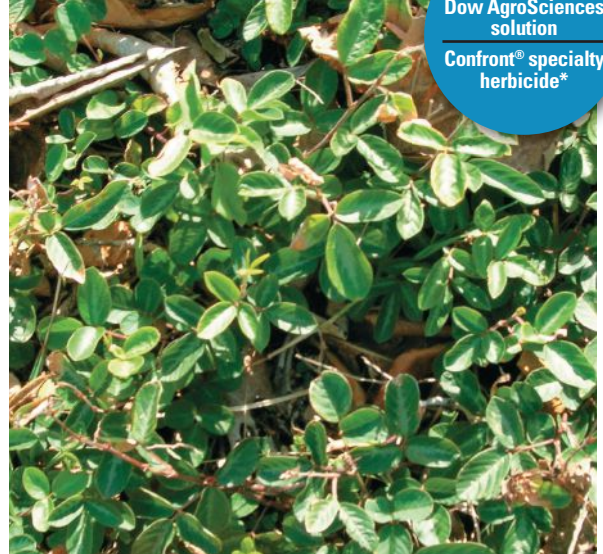
Glechoma hederacea

IDENTIFICATION TIPS

- ▶ This prostrate creeping perennial, featuring a strong mint odor, has square stems several feet long that root at the nodes.
- ▶ Rounded, scalloped leaves and small, funnel-shaped purple flowers grow in clusters.
- ▶ It prefers moist, shady sites — and can tolerate low mowing heights.

CONTROL TIPS

- ▶ Fall is an excellent time to treat ground ivy. Applications in spring, when the ground ivy is in flower, are also effective for control.
- ▶ Products containing triclopyr have proven to be highly effective in spring and fall, and more effective than 2,4-D-based products during the difficult summer period.
- ▶ Alleviate shade, wet soil and poor fertility to help maintain control.



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CREEPING BEGGARWEED

Desmodium incanum

IDENTIFICATION TIPS

- ▶ This perennial broadleaf weed, featuring pink flowers, is found across the Southeast United States.
- ▶ It develops from a large taproot and has many branched runners capable of rooting at nodes along the stems.
- ▶ Leaves are composed of three leaflets — elliptic in shape, pointed at the tip and rounded at the base. Both stems and leaves are hairy.
- ▶ Creeping beggarweed spreads by seeds, stolons or segments of the taproot.

CONTROL TIPS

- ▶ Creeping beggarweed can reproduce and spread in multiple ways. Two or more applications of a post-emergence herbicide may be needed.
- ▶ When beggarweed is young and actively growing, apply a two- or three-way product that will translocate through the foliage and root system.
- ▶ Keep proper mowing height, fertility and moisture to facilitate healthy, dense turf that can compete with beggarweed's aggressive nature.

* Confront is not for sale or use in Nassau and Suffolk counties, New York. State restrictions on the sale and use of Confront and Turflon Ester Ultra apply.

For more information regarding these and other turf weeds — and related control technologies and tips — please visit www.DowProvesIt.com or call 800/255-3726.

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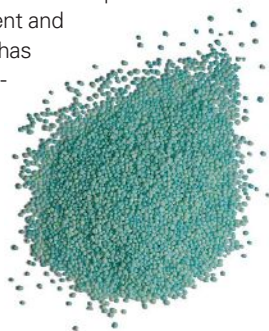


ProScape LockUp enables post-emergence control of annual and perennial broadleaf weeds in residential lawns, golf courses, parks, sports fields, sod farms and other established turf-grass. The granular product provides activity at

low use rates — generally 0.02 to 0.06 lbs. of active ingredient (penoxsulam) per acre — and can be used on wet or dry foliage and on warm- and cool-season turf. The specialty fertilizer/herbicide also includes Lebanon-Turf's MESA, the first nitrogen source to combine ammonium sulfate with methylene urea in a single particle. LebanonTurf.com

Agrium Advanced Technologies

The XCU 10-Week Mini feeds turf for 10 weeks or more, and is — according to the manufacturer — the longest-lasting, mini polymer-coated, sulfur-coated urea (PCSCU) on the market. Along with the XCU 8-Week Mini and regular-sized XCU products, the fertilizer offers a consistent and predictable release profile. It also has a low risk of leaching and volatilization, which means nutrient losses to the environment are minimized. AgriumAT.com



Agrotain International

Providing consistent nitrogen feeding for as long as eight weeks, UFLEX is specifically intended for turf uses where repeat application is desirable. It features an exclusive inhibitor that blocks urease, which helps to minimize nitrogen loss to the atmosphere — allowing time

for rainfall and irrigation to effectively transport nitrogen to the root zone for plant utilization. Once in the soil, another inhibitor keeps it in a plant available form, ensuring no other losses occur from denitrification or leaching. AgrotainTurf.com/uflexx.php



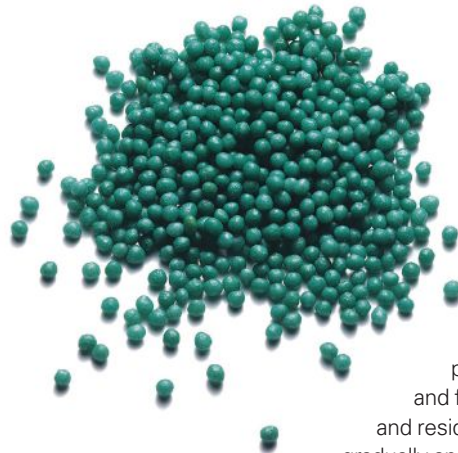
Harris Seeds

Harris is the primary distributor of Worm Power organic fertilizer in the United States. Certified by the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) for organic

production, the product is odorless and considered safe for use around children and pets, the company says. Its fine, crumbly texture — like that of ground coffee — makes it easy to spread and handle. It delivers a guaranteed NPK analysis of 1.5-0.7-1.5, plus abundant micronutrients and a robust community of beneficial microorganisms essential for plant production. HarrisSeeds.com

Masterblend/Tyler Enterprises

Greensward was developed for athletic field maintenance, grounds maintenance and landscaping professionals to develop and maintain strong and lush turf. Constant use and play can cause your turf to lose strength and make it more susceptible to insects, weeds and even total loss. Greensward is specially formulated and custom blended to provide turf the strength it needs and the beauty you want. Masterblend.com/turf.html



Harrell's

Harrell's is the exclusive eastern formulator and a leading distributor of Polyon Controlled-Release Fertilizer, which has been used by turf professionals for nearly 20 years. Its patented Reactive Layers Coating technology is backed by many years of basic and applied research, both in laboratories and field applications on commercial turf and residential lawns. Nitrogen is released gradually and consistently via temperature-controlled diffusion and it is not affected by moisture. The controlled release of nutrients helps professional turf managers achieve green, healthy turf and lawns for up to seven months. And, because nutrients are released gradually throughout the growth cycle, there is less nutrient loss to the environment. Harrells.com/focus/polyon

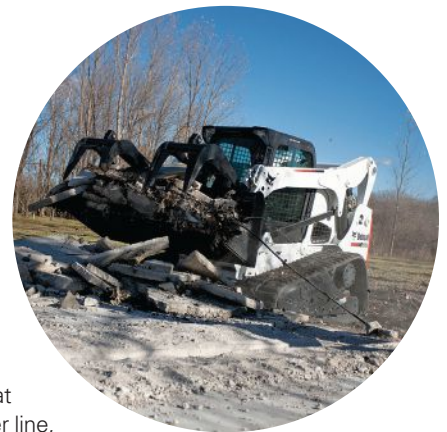
MAINTENANCE: COMPACT EQUIPMENT



Toro

Toro has upgraded its compact equipment line with the new TRX-16 (pictured) and TRX-20 walk-behind trenchers, replacing the TRX-15 and TRX-19 models. Along with the Toro TRX-26 model, these gas-powered machines make trenching easier with a tracked design and operator-friendly controls.

The new models are equipped with powerful 4-cycle Kawasaki twin-cylinder engines with a large oil reservoir to help maintain low engine temperature and prolong engine life. Delivering 10 gpm of hydraulic flow at 2,900 psi to the boom helps maximize digging efficiency. Each unit is also equipped with a standard hydraulic oil cooler that provides a cooler running machine in the most demanding conditions. Engineered with a low-profile tracked design, the Toro TRX models provide a low center of gravity for performance on a wide range of ground conditions. Tracks help the operator maneuver over perpendicular trenches effortlessly, where wheeled units may get stuck in the existing trench. The Toro TRX trenchers can be outfitted with a 24-, 36- or 48-in. boom. All three models offer chain widths of 4 or 6 in., and the TRX-26 has an additional 8-in. chain configuration. Available accessories include a backfill blade, a boring attachment and a custom TRX trailer. Toro.com/trx



Bobcat Co.

The new T750 joins the Bobcat M-Series loader line, which includes the T630, T650, T770 and T870 compact track loaders and the S630, S650 and S850 skid-steer loaders. It delivers a lift height-to-hinge pin measurement of 132 in. — more than 3 in. higher than a T300. It also features a 23 gpm standard hydraulic flow, an operating weight of 10,327 lb., a rated operating capacity of 3,325 lb., and it's powered by an 85-hp turbo-diesel engine. New job-enhancing features were added to the optional deluxe instrumentation panel. Available only on M-Series machines, the panel intelligently monitors key loader functions, and the keyless start helps prevent theft. The new 5-in., full-color LCD screen offers better readability and interaction. Easy-to-read virtual sweep gauges allow the operator to quickly read and understand the machine's performance. Bobcat.com