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*Fully charged battery voltage measured without a workload is 40 volts. Nominal voltage is 36 or 37 depending on battery used.

WEEDWATCH

STANDING SENTINEL TO PROTECT PLANT HEALTH

Recommended
Dow AgroSciences
solution
Dimension®
specialty
herbicide



SMUTGRASS

Sporobolus indicus

IDENTIFICATION TIPS

- ▶ This erect, bunch-type perennial grass commonly is found in warm-season turf and often is identified by a black fungus growing on the seedheads.
- ▶ Its collar is divided into two parts by the midvein, and its sheath is smooth and round. The seedhead is a narrow spikelike panicle.
- ▶ Smutgrass spreads by small seeds dispersed in wind and rain and by the transfer of equipment and grass clippings.

CONTROL TIPS

- ▶ A preemergent herbicide containing dithiopyr will control smutgrass prior to germination of seedlings.
- ▶ Because this weed can be tough to eradicate, consider making two to three sequential applications of dithiopyr, with the first application in spring and subsequent applications occurring six to eight weeks after the last application.
- ▶ Conduct cultural control practices, including proper mowing, fertilization and watering.

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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.



Recommended
Dow AgroSciences
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STINKGRASS

Eragrostis ciliaris

IDENTIFICATION TIPS

- ▶ This grassy summer annual is best identified by its distinctive odor and grayish-green panicle.
- ▶ Seedlings develop into tufted plants relatively quickly.
- ▶ Leaves are rolled in the bud. The lower surfaces are smooth and glossy, while the top of the leaf is rough with hairs along the margins.
- ▶ Auricles are absent, and the ligule is a fringe of hairs. Sheaths are round and slightly flattened.

CONTROL TIPS

- ▶ For landscape or container-grown ornamentals, apply a labeled product containing both isoxaben and trifluralin.
- ▶ Apply labeled preemergent products in early spring and again two to three months later for season-long control.
- ▶ Hand-weed any plants that may have emerged prior to application.
- ▶ Stinkgrass is not a common problem in well-established turfgrass.

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Scan this code for more information at www.DowProvesIt.com.



YOUR INSURANCE RESOURCE

Storing pesticides safely

HOW TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT AND YOUR EMPLOYEES.

IMPROPERLY STORING PESTICIDES is not only a liability to your company, it's a danger to the health and safety of your employees. Landscape and lawn care companies that use pesticides and store them at their facilities need to take the proper measures to protect their company and their people.

The first step is to understand exactly what a pesticide is and how to use it, says Thomas Richey, vice president of property/loss control with Hortica Insurance & Employee Benefits. Sometimes when an applicator uses a product frequently, he or she gets comfortable with it and as a result may forget how dangerous the product can be. Adhering to regulations and understanding guidelines is an important part of the equation.

"The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires registration numbers on all products, indicating they are registered and its label was approved for sale," Richey says. "The contractor should go through applicator training yearly and fully understand the requirements of the EPA and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)."

While pesticide applications require great caution, many professionals make mistakes when it comes to proper product storage. That's because applicators are primarily involved with ongoing training about the use of the chemicals in the field. The focus on safety needs to carry over to the shop with safe storage measures.

Storage location is one possible problem area.

"What we commonly see is pesticides are stored in dark areas where the tem-

peratures fluctuate and the area is damp," Richey says. "Extreme temperatures can cause pesticide deterioration. Proper lighting helps ensure the correct pesticide for the task is chosen and if there are any leaks or spills they can be seen and cleaned up immediately."

Containers also can be an issue. Keep all pesticides in their original containers unless there's a leak and needs to be changed. Without the original container or a replacement label, you will lose valuable identifying and safety information about the pesticide. Another common mistake, Richey says, is when the technician leaves the product inside the application tool.

"This leads to confusion regarding the proper mixture before making the next application," he adds.

These are all important issues, considering improper pesticide storage and disposal can be hazardous to human health and the environment.

"Proper storage not only protects the health of people, animals and the environment, but it also prolongs chemical shelf life," Richey says. "The EPA has strict laws and regulations regarding the sale, use, storage and disposal of pesticides—and they need to be adhered to."

The best tool for promoting safe storage practices is ongoing education. He emphasizes it's important to conduct pesticide safety training for applicators and any employees who may come into contact with chemicals stored at your facility.

"Continued education is very important when you're dealing with a product that claims it can control, kill, eradicate and repel certain pests," Richey says. "When there are danger signs and the skull-and-bones symbol on the label, all warning caution, you can rest assured the product can be deadly. When it comes to something as serious as pesticides, you cannot be too careful."

9 MUST-DO'S FOR PROPER PESTICIDE STORAGE

- 1 Read the product labels for specific storage information.
- 2 Store pesticides in locked cabinets.
- 3 Keep pesticides in their original containers with their tops tightly closed.
- 4 Understand *what* a pesticide is and how to use it.
- 5 Never store pesticides in food or drink containers.
- 6 Store pesticides in cool, dry, well-lit areas.
- 7 Store dry pesticides above liquid pesticides.
- 8 Never store pesticides in application equipment.
- 9 Keep emergency numbers on hand.



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NEW DIREC

How landscape and lawn care pros use strategies from their first careers to improve their Green Industry operations.

BY **MARISA PALMIERI** EDITOR

For years, every Monday morning Bruce Ward boarded a plane from Columbus, Ohio, to Philadelphia to commute to his job as senior director of oncology sales for pharmaceutical company Cephalon. He'd fly home Thursday night either to Ohio or to an underused second home in Florida. Two weekends a month, he was off to a medical meeting. Such is the life of a corporate sales director.



TION

“Of the 26 years I worked in the pharmaceutical industry, I spent 22 of them in airplanes,” Ward says. “As much as I loved the people I was working with and the good work we were doing in oncology, I was ready to be sleeping in my own bed.”

On top of that longing for the comfort of home, Ward had the itch to be his own boss. In 2010, he and a Florida golf buddy in a similar situation teamed up buy a small business they could run together.

Within three months, Ward and his business partner Dan Buettin were owners of Florida Evergreen Landscape & Lawn Care in Fort Myers, Fla.

In the four years since Ward joined the Green Industry, the company has grown 50 percent. It has an anticipated 2014 revenue of \$3.3 million. That growth takes into account a considerable shift in client base from government contracts to more private work, including a push into landscape installations.

“It’s interesting because it’s a very different business from where I was, yet the fundamentals and how you behave and go about creating a vision for the future, those things don’t change,” Ward says.

He’s not alone in this realization. Other professionals who’ve pursued a new direction in the landscape industry also discovered the skills they sharpened elsewhere are universal—and they’ve seen their companies benefit as a result.

Among the skills people in their second careers bring are wisdom, introspection and decision-making abilities, experts in “second-act” careers say.

“They usually come with a broader palette of skills and many times deeper expertise,” says Dorothy Tannahill-Moran, a speaker, second career coach and author of *Career Mapping for*



BRUCE WARD

Co-owner,
Florida Evergreen
Landscape & Lawn Care
Fort Myers, Fla.

Former pharmaceutical
sales exec at Cephalon

Climbing Managers. “While the second career may not use all of those skills, they are an easier fit into a wide array of possible jobs.”

In industries where second-act professionals aren’t experts, they often have the self awareness and knack for networking to fill that gap with someone better suited for the job rather than try to do everything themselves, says Nancy Collamer, author of *Second-Act Careers*. “Those people have a good sense of their strengths, assets and abilities,” she says.

The result of businesses being run by owners in their second careers is often a calmer, more structured environment, experts add.

“Fewer things upset or disturb this group, as they’re better equipped to put things into perspective than many others,” Tannahill-Moran says.

MANAGEMENT AND TRAINING SKILLS

Patrick Hawkins was unsure how things would turn out when he left a 20-year career at DHL Express to join his wife’s family’s lawn care company, Lawn Cure of Southern Indiana, based in Sellersburg, Ind.

» WEB EXTRA

Read about a service quality audit program Hawkins picked up from his former career in the Web Extras section of [Landscape Management.net](http://LandscapeManagement.net).

“I was dealing with thousands of people and budgets in excess of hundreds of million of dollars,” he says. “I didn’t know what to expect at first, but within a few months I realized every skill set I learned at DHL—and they put a lot of time and money into their managers—was all transferrable.”

For Hawkins, that meant focusing on people first.

“At DHL, I managed people every day. Here, I’m managing people every day,” says the president and general manager of Lawn Cure, which was founded 36 years ago by his father-in-law, Larry Messina. When Messina wanted to step away from the business in 2009, he retained a

2 percent stake and gave each of his daughters 49 percent. Hawkins’ wife Michelle and her sister Missy Fromme run the administrative side of the business and he came on board to handle operations.

continued on page 20

QUALI-PRO®



Customers have requested it, Quali-Pro® has delivered it.

Strobe™ 50WG, the first post-patent azoxystrobin, is a new wettable granule from Quali-Pro that **prevents or cures** over **30 ornamental diseases**. Due to preventative properties, Strobe 50WG is **systemically** absorbed by treated plants to control **fungal diseases**. Strobe 50WG is conveniently packaged in one and six pound tip-and-measure bottles. This **innovative packaging** allows for cleaner and easier dosing. Strobe

50WG is used to control pathogens causing foliar, aerial and root diseases including leaf, tip, and flower blights, **leaf spots**, downy mildew, powdery mildew, anthracnose and rusts of **ornamental plants**. Strobe 50WG may be used to control certain diseases of container, bench, flat, plug, bed or **field-grown ornamentals** in greenhouses, shade houses, outdoor nurseries, retail nurseries, and other **landscape areas**.



Introducing

Strobe™ 50WG

Broad Spectrum Fungicide



The wait for a post-patent Strobilurin is over!

As the first post-patent azoxystrobin, Strobe™ 50WG is a new wettable granule from Quali-Pro that **prevents** or **cures** over **27 turf diseases**. As a **curative**, it controls diseases that are already present when applied to turf. As a systemic **pre-ventative**, the turfgrass will absorb the fungicide to control fungal diseases, protect lawns, landscapes and **golf courses**. Strobe 50WG's **innovative tip-and-measure** bottles allow for cleaner and easier dosing to control pathogens causing foliar, stem, and root diseases including leaf

and stem blights, leaf spots, patch diseases, mildew, molds and rusts of **turfgrass**. Use Strobe 50WG to control certain diseases on **golf courses**, lawn and landscape areas around **residential**, institutional, public, **commercial**, and industrial buildings, parks, recreational areas and **athletic fields**. Strobe 50WG is a perfect addition to your integrated pest and **disease management** program.



Innovation you can apply.

QUALI-PRO

Q:

WHAT'S DIFFERENT ABOUT YOUR GREEN INDUSTRY ROLE COMPARED TO YOUR FIRST CAREER?

"When I was in the corporate world, for many of those years I had a staff of people to assist me and do a lot of the work. The scale is very different here. Now, as a business owner, you've got to be prepared to do everything."

—Bruce Ward

"It took me some time to adjust from a multibillion dollar corporation to a small, family-oriented business. Everything there was go, go, go—and very structured. We're a little more laid back here. It was different, but I think it made me take a couple steps back and put things in perspective."

—Patrick Hawkins

"A lot of the fixes we did in IT were, 'It's old, (so) throw it away and replace it.' We don't do that with a lawn. We take lawns that are a wreck and turn them into something beautiful."

—Nick Shaw



PATRICK HAWKINS

President/General Manager, Lawn Cure of Southern Indiana, Sellersburg, Ind.

Former DHL Express senior manager of contract relations

continued from page 17

Part of Hawkins's background at DHL was training and development, and he brought that perspective to Lawn Cure, revising safety training, on-road training and redeveloping the compensation structure for lawn care technicians.

Part of managing people is understanding culture, and Hawkins was sensitive to this truth.

"I knew from day one I couldn't go in like a bull in a china shop," he says. To learn the business at a faster rate and earn the respect of the company's production employees, Hawkins became one of them for his first six months on the job.

"I came in every day in uniform, loaded up my truck and went out to spray," he says. "I was coming in off the street having never sprayed a lawn in my life. Doing this made me be next to the technicians every day."

For one thing, he learned their jobs aren't easy. Hawkins revamped their pay scale, tying incentives to productivity, to benefit the employees and the company. "They can work more, hit their targets and get additional pay and time off," he says.

Additionally, with some of his engineering and transportation knowledge from DHL, Hawkins improved route efficiency by 25 percent in terms of how much in dollar volume each technician sprays per day. The savings came from condensing routes and letting go of some business that was too far out of a newly defined service area.

The changes have yielded good results. Lawn Cure, which will do more than \$1.7 million in annual revenue this year, was

already a successful firm when Hawkins took the reins, he says. Still, it has seen double-digit growth over each of the last five years.

"What's important is we've kept it a family business, but we've put some corporate structure in place," he says.

CUSTOMER SERVICE SMARTS

In 2003, when Nick Shaw opened his Lawn Doctor franchise in Griffith, Ind., he was surprised how quickly he could translate his information technology (IT) and retail backgrounds to his newfound career caring for turf.

Shaw started his career in retail, first at Sears and then at Kmart. He later put to use the IT skills he picked up at his college work-study job as a campus Apple support technician when he landed a dream role in 2001 as one of the first Apple Store "geniuses"—before the establishment's employees were given that moniker.

"Apple was looking for nerdy Apple tech support people who also knew about retail, so it was a perfect fit," he says. After a temporary training period in California—and a stint opening two of the original five Apple Store locations—Shaw was back living in Indiana, "working for the coolest company in the world," but his job was in Schaumburg, Ill.—a 70-mile one-way commute.

"The job was awesome, the people were awesome, but it was retail," which he says he was sick of, and the drive was getting to him. When an opportunity for a corporate IT position arose, he took that job for a short time before pursuing owning his own business. By 2003, he bought into Lawn Doctor,

PHOTO: LAWN CURE OF SOUTHERN INDIANA; ILLUSTRATION: ISTOCK.COM/BEEBY