

# MANAGEMENT LETTER

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To discourage employees from stealing gas...possibly consider selling gas to employees at or a little above cost. In this way they get a break and might be less inclined to "midnight requisition".

An employee morale builder...send a gift to the spouse when the employee is promoted. This recognizes the importance of the other person in the worker's success.

Scheduling your off-season maintenance is a wise move. It gives incentives to maintenance personnel to meet deadlines instead of setting their own pace with resultant possibility of wasted time. Inventory list of all equipment and then list after all maintenance and repair work that must be done in the off-season. Draw this up with your maintenance people and they'll be more inclined to meet these deadlines if they have a part in making the decision.

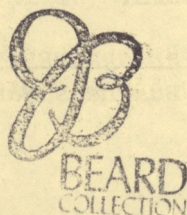
Off-season gives opportunity for promotion! Now is the time to begin organizing and outlining your various promotional and advertising programs aimed at increasing sales. Inventory your supply of promotional brochures, radio spots, audio-visual presentations and so forth. Set a schedule for beginning your advertising and various promotional activities. Again, establishing goals and deadlines by utilizing sales people in the planning will give everyone a comfortable feeling in that there won't be many "surprises" in aiming at early season sales. The economic situation is TOUGH and much more sales promotion is needed.

Consumer price index has modest increase...an annual rate near 5% is projected at the present time. Grocery prices to hold reasonably steady - 3% to 4% up at most.

Banks and Savings & Loans will have money market accounts available. Minimum \$2,500, but highly liquid with withdrawals anytime. Limited checking. Most will pay about the same as money markets - now about 8% or 9%. Insured by the government is special incentive. Will represent a good investment vehicle for idle cash that maybe needed on short term.

Year end report from Washington...indicates that business is about to start turning upward.. Inflation will stay a little bit below 5% for this year and a little above 5% for next year, they report. Business profits to improve nicely, but unemployment slow to recover.

(OVER)





Postage rates up??? Postal service will ask for higher rates probably next spring. Don't know if you've had the experience we've had, but the other day we were called by the Post Office to come down and take bulk permit mail out of trays (which had been provided to us by the Post Office) and put this same bulk permit mail into mail bags while postal employees watched! Fortunately no postal rate increase forecast until possibly 1984.

10¢ to 15¢ drop...in gasoline and heating oil prices is expected with wholesale price to be \$26 to \$30 a barrel as compared currently to \$33. Oil producing countries are having a great time competing with each other and can't get together.

Advertising budgets up for businesses that are looking for ways to increase their business as things gradually improve. Reports indicate that the most aggressive firms and the ones likely to benefit are those who are busy now working on advertising plans and doing both individual as well as business promotion activities. Most efficient utilization of the advertising dollar and one-on-one contacts are productive. Wintertime is a good time to be making presentations at garden clubs, service clubs, securing newspaper, radio and television interviews. The sod industry is regarded as "unique" and thus subject for news stories in many areas. Individual aggressiveness is the key.

Company priorities for management needs...are you spending too much time on daily concerns rather than long-range planning? Suggested top priorities include cash management, pricing strategies and cost reduction.

Know-how...savvy...shrewdness...knowledge...that gives an edge to the successful businessman...these are the elements to be presented at the ASPA Financial Management Seminar "TURFGRASS PRODUCTION-WHAT DOES IT COST?" Dates of the Seminar are February 15-16, 1983 (just prior to the ASPA Midwinter Conference) at the Hilton Palacio del Rio, San Antonio, Texas. The Seminar will be limited to 40 ASPA members... be among the lucky ones...mail in your registration form and payment immediately!!!

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May the blessings of the Christmas Season be with you and yours now and throughout the years to come.

\* \* MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR \* \*

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Note: This monthly newsletter is compiled and published under the auspices of the ASPA Business Management Committee to serve as a helpful business update for all ASPA members. We invite your comments and recommendations.

AL GARDNER, Chairman  
Business Management Committee