



BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

AMERICAN SOD PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

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DECEMBER, 1987 / JANUARY, 1988

1988 CONSTRUCTION IN U.S. TO EASE 3 PERCENT ACCORDING TO ANNUAL DODGE REPORTS FORECAST

Something close to an across-the-board decline next year will face the construction sector of the economy according to one of the nation's leading economic analysts. Although most of the setbacks will be relatively small ones, the total 1988 construction contract value will drop 3 percent of this year's projected total of \$248.4 billion.

According to George Christie, vice president and chief economist for McGraw-Hill Information Systems, "Lower interest rates, more than anything else, will make the difference between a shallow and a steep decline of construction activity next year. Economic uncertainty resulting from the stock market crash requires giving top priority in 1988 to domestic affairs. In this instance, that means supporting a shaky economy with monetary accommodation."

In terms of contract value, declines are expected in all four regions of the U.S. next year. Total construction will be down 4 percent in the South and 3 percent in the North Central states. The West will post a 2 percent decline, while the Northeast remains almost even with this year's totals.

AMERICAN EXPRESS CARDS NOW ACCEPTED
FOR DUES, FEES AND OTHER PURCHASES

Members may now use their American Express credit cards to pay for ASPA items ranging from annual dues, meeting registration fees or marketing items.

American Express cards will now join Visa and MasterCard that have been accepted for the past three years.

In response to member requests, ASPA successfully negotiated an arrangement with American Express that will permit accepting the card for any ASPA service or fee. In addition to in-person use at ASPA events, the cards can be used for mail or telephone orders.

Although the American Express identity will not appear on some ASPA items until they are reprinted, purchasers need only to jot a note that the card number and expiration date being used is American Express. All other authorization will be automatically handled by ASPA.

Use Different Cards for Business and Personal Use to maximize interest deductions under the tax act. It is recommended that firms should use one card for personal expenditures and pay off the balance monthly, with a second card being used for business expenses such as travel or entertainment. The tax deduction for consumer interest is being phased, while business interest is not.

OSHA 'HAZARD COMMUNICATION STANDARD'
ESTABLISHES TRAINING NEED FOR FARM WORKERS

By May 23, 1988, all employees exposed to hazardous chemicals in the workplace must have received information on the hazards via labels on containers, material safety data sheets and employer provided training. ASPA, along with others in the Green and Farming Industries, is exploring various means to assist in developing acceptable materials and programs to be in compliance.

The new standard resulted from a U.S. Court of Appeals ruling in favor of the United Steelworkers who sought to expand a standard originally limited only to manufacturing industries. Now, all employers, in all industries with employees exposed to hazardous chemicals, must comply with the standard.

BE THANKFUL FOR ALL YOU'VE GOT....but...
BEGIN PLANNING NOW ON HOW TO KEEP IT!

Prepared by Ronald Nixon, Chairman
ASPA Business Management Committee

This holiday season is the traditional time of year to be thankful and we do have a lot to be thankful for. We work in a profession that allows us to work with God's good earth. Our products are not only necessary, but also bring beauty and pleasure to one's home. Turfgrass brings that needed contrast to the concrete and asphalt of the city. Fortunately, our industry is not overly regulated by government, at least not in comparison to many others. We can shape and mold our business in the way we choose.

Being thankful for what we have translates into a positive attitude. This positive attitude is essential in facing the many changes that will come in the future. As our industry matures, there will be many new developments in turfgrass varieties and methods of production practices.

One of the changes we are facing this year is the Tax Reform Act of 1986, which makes tax planning essential. We have to change our old ways of tax thinking. Early tax planning is always important, but this year, with the decrease in deductables it will be an even greater challenge.

Another change we are facing at this time is the new level of competition which is being brought on by many new people entering the turfgrass industry. Even though competition makes our lives more difficult, it also inspires us to do a better job of managing our businesses and incorporating new techniques into our production.

It seems our industry has recently been discovered by government officials. This new awareness of our industry very likely will bring new regulations and intervention into our businesses. This calls for us to become more aware of any government regulations that could affect our industry and our lives. We need to become more politically involved. We not only need to vote, but also stay aware of legislative and regulatory developments and then let our elected officials know how we stand on an issue.

I am thankful to be in such a fine profession and I'm proud to be associated with my fellow ASPA members. Our association can be a tremendous help in facing the changes of the future.

ASPA JOINS GROUP LAW SUIT TO OBTAIN PERISHABLE DEFINITION FOR SOD

Final complaints are now being drafted in a law suit to seek reversal of the Department of Ag's refusal to define turfgrass sod as a perishable commodity. ASPA will join the Sod Producers Association of Mid-America, several individual farm owners and a class action group of farm workers.

A legal support fund may be established to help underwrite the cost of this suit. ASPA will advise all members if this becomes necessary so that all growers can assist in this issue that could establish a burdensome precedent in farm worker and other significant areas.

MANAGEMENT-MOTIVATION SEMINAR SHOWS STRONG RESPONSE BY MEMBERS

Within days of its mailing, ASPA members began returning registration forms for ASPA's pre-conference seminar, "Motivational Leadership." Limited to the first 100 registrants because of the degree of inter-action that will take place in the day-long course, members are encouraged to give the one-time program special consideration.

Lead by Eric P. McCarty, President of Managment Concepts, Inc., the February 10 program in New Orleans will run from 8 am to 3 pm, including lunch, breaks and study materials.

The course is designed to focus on how people can better relate their needs to the firm's objectives and help achieve meaningful goals. Employee motivation and management leadership will be stressed throughout the program.

For additional information contact ASPA by calling 312/705-9898.

ASPA SEMINAR ENROLLMENT FORM

Motivational Leadership Seminar

Please enroll the following:

FIRM _____ PHONE (____) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE/PROV _____ ZIP _____

FULL NAME

FIRST/NICK NAME

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

FEES:

First registrant \$75.00. Additional registrants from the same company \$50.00 each

(Sorry, ASPA cannot bill you. All fees must be paid in advance in (U.S. Funds) and accompany this form)

☐ My check payable to American Sod Producers Association is enclosed.

☐ Charge my _____ VISA _____ MasterCard Acct. # _____ Exp. Date _____ Signature _____

☐ Please send me complete information about the Feb. 10-12 ASPA Midwinter Conference

Please enroll _____ people

Enclosed is \$ _____

MAIL TO: ASPA, 1855-A Hicks Road, Rolling Meadows, IL 60008