



BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

AMERICAN SOD PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

1855-A HICKS ROAD
ROLLING MEADOWS, IL 60008

FIRST CLASS MAIL

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

Rolling Meadows, IL 60008

Permit No. 662

Rush to:

FILE

FEBRUARY / MARCH, 1989

YELLOW PAGE 'LAWN INSTALLATION' HEADING ELIMINATES HYDRO-SEEDERS FROM SOD SECTION

A hydro-seeding firm ran two ads in the "Sod & Sodding Service" section of the Seattle, Washington, yellow pages directory, noting in the ads that it was, "The Sod Alternative"! Other firms in the section were traditional turfgrass sod farms, nursery or garden centers and those offering a combination of sod, seed or hydroseeding.

Darwin McKay, ASPA's Public Relations Committee Chairman, contacted the directory's headquarters office and suggested that the inclusion of such a listing amounted to little more than a "bait and switch" sales tactic and that the firm should not be permitted to engage in such practices. In less than 30 days, the publisher responded with a reasonable solution.

Effectively immediately, in all states served by U S West Direct, "Lawn Installation" will be offered as a new heading in the yellow page listings. Just as significantly, according to the firm's sales manager, "Any advertisers who do not grow, wholesale, retail or install sod cannot advertise under the sod heading and must be moved to an appropriate heading." Sod farms may also want to consider placing an ad in this new section of the directories, as well as their ad in the sod section.

Yellow pages continue to be the most popular form of advertising for ASPA members and thus it is very important that the listing maintain its true meaning and intent. Members are encouraged to review their local yellow page directories and confront the publishing sales department if inappropriate firms are included.

TRUCK SHIPPING MANIFESTS REQUIRED FOR
GVWs OVER 10,000, CARRYING 'HAZARDOUS MATERIAL'

All states have now adopted the Federal Regs. that require any commercial vehicle with a gross vehicle weight (GVW) over 10,000 pounds, carrying a "hazardous material" to have a shipping manifest within reach of drivers. The difficulty arises in defining a "hazardous material", because for example, gasoline in quantities exceeding one quart would require a manifest.

Pesticides and other materials used on turfgrass sod farms, carried on trucks with GVWs in excess of 10,000 pounds, may be classified in some states as "hazardous." Consult your state department of transportation or local office of the Federal Highway Administration for specifics. The following basic shipping manifest can be used to satisfy the requirements:

FIRM / FARM NAME				
ADDRESS, CITY, STATE				
NUMBER OF CONTAINERS SIZE & TYPE	PROPER SHIPPING NAME	HAZARD CLASS	ID NUMBER	TOTAL QUANTITY (lbs./gals.)
2/2 1/2 gal metal cans	Gasoline	Flammable Liquid	UN 1203	5 gals

HEALTH INSURANCE CLIMBS,
OTHER FORMS BEGIN TO SHOW DECLINE

Although health-care costs continue to drive up the cost of health insurance coverage, perhaps by as much as 18% in 1989, others forms of insurance such as property and liability are showing a decline. Many businesses are closely examining their plans and costs to determine how best to minimize the climb and maximize the decline.

Business surveys show that firms are shifting the increased cost of health premiums to their employees in the form of larger deductibles or an increased portion of the premium. Many are also taking the time necessary to carefully "shop" for their health insurance needs to seek-out a lower base cost.

Because commercial insurance rates are softening, now is also an excellent time to develop long-term relationships with the insurance companies. Firms are advised to review all of their insurance needs with their broker and advise him of the firm's attitude toward loss control, risk assumption and unbundling of coverage. When the rates go up, as they most certainly will, having a positive, long-term relationship will help protect against lost coverage.

HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM YOUR EMPLOYMENT DOLLARS

Prepared by Ronald Nixon, Chairman
ASPA Business Management Committee

Our highest paid people are often times our least expensive employees because they are also the most productive. Our most expensive employees are very likely on the lower end of the pay scale because they are the least productive and require constant supervision.

It makes sense to hire the best people you can and give them the tools to do their job. One of those tools is proper training. So many times a person is hired, given very little orientation and sent to learn by doing and following the other employees. No employee can do a good job if he is unsure of what is expected and how the job is supposed to be done. Worse, his training may repeat mistakes or poor methods the current workers are habitually committing.

Employee training has to be done for the new and old employees to achieve their full potential. This does not mean you can take any employee and train him or her to fill any position, or train a person past their ability or desire to accept a more challenging position.

On the job training will always have the most influence on people whether it be positive or negative. The problem with on the job training is it can only teach the way things are, not what you might like them to be. Employee training can be accomplished in many ways. It leaves much room for creativity of the employer. One of the newest methods of training is the use of a VCR and training tapes. This seems to be wide-spread and I am finding it in most industries, including the green industry. Another good source of training is ASPA, its meetings and publications. Taking a foreman to the Summer Field Days can be a great investment and something as simple as passing around the newest issue of "Turf News" can be very effective.

There are potential problems associated with untrained employees, such as costly accidents and liability claims. Many companies can show evidence that their active safety programs save them money as it results in fewer accidents. Recently, several government agencies have shown interest in whether or not an employee has been fully trained for the position. The best pay-off for employee training has to be that you are getting more and better work for your employment dollar.

Effective employee training will pay off in more capable employees, a safer workplace and increased production. This will allow employees to advance, which will be more personally and monetarily fulfilling for them. This in turn makes a more effective and pleasant workplace, which will make the company more profitable and easier to manage.

'SENATE BILL 2812' MAY BECOME ISSUE
AS HATCH WANTS AG COVERED BY NLRB RULES

Legislative alert

If Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT) gets his way, agricultural employees will soon lose their exemption from the National Labor Relations Board coverage. Senate Bill 2812, entitled, "Agricultural Labor Amendments Act of 1989, introduced by Hatch, would eliminate the exemption from the NLRB rules that it has enjoyed since the NLRB was first developed in the '30s.

As proposed, S. 2812 would allow any state to request the extension of the National Labor Relations Act to agricultural laborers employed within the state. After such request or upon otherwise being notified of such a state law, the President is to issue an order providing that agricultural laborers employed within the boundaries of such state shall be considered employees for the purposes of the NLRB jurisdiction. Any such Presidential order must be published in the "Federal Register" and shall have the force of law. The order would not become effective until the first day of the second calendar year commencing after its publication.

Senator Hatch is convinced that the exemption to the federal law is no longer justified in light of the changing nature of agriculture in the U.S. In this regard, he made the following comment when he introduced S. 2812: "During the past 25 years, agriculture has undergone profound changes, including far-reaching changes in agricultural employment. Agricultural exemptions from most labor protection laws have been modified or repealed. During the past 10 years the number of farmers has been reduced substantially, while the number of hired workers on farms has remained virtually constant. Taken together, these two facts mean that an increasing percentage of the total work performed on farms is accomplished by employees relative to that done by the farmowner or operator and members of the family."

Many members of ASPA are currently exempt from the jurisdiction of the National Labor Relations Board. This situation may change as the new Congress proceeds. U.S. ASPA members are encouraged to carefully watch the Congressional debate in this area and to contact their own Congressional delegation to voice concerns and objections.

Editor's Note: Information for the preceeding article was furnished by ASPA's Legal Counsel. Effective January 1, 1989, the firm of Nelson & Harding which has represented ASPA for more than 10 years, merged with the firm of Heron, Burchette, Ruckert and Rothwell, which shall become the name of the merged firms. This action will bring together nearly 200 lawyers, with offices in Austin, Denver, Lincoln, Mesa, Omaha, Phoenix, Rapid City, Sacramento and Washington, D.C. ASPA will maintain its long-standing relationship with the firm.