

Interview with new Tru Green chief

Consolidation to bring professionalism

By ELLIOT MARAS
Editor

SPECIAL REPORT—Many LCOs are uneasy about the numerous regulations aimed at their industry.

Not John Slocum, president of Tru Green Corp. A 16-year veteran of Waste

Management, Inc., the nation's leading solid waste disposal business, he's seen it all before.

Environmentalism demands for lawn care regulations are similar to what the waste disposal business went through, says Slocum, who shuttles between Tru

Green's Atlanta headquarters and Waste Management's Chicago headquarters.

Ultimately, he says, regulations are good for the industry if they're not excessive. They bring about uniformity of service.

Consolidation, which

Tru Green in large measure brought to the lawn care industry, also contributes to professionalism, Slocum says.

The man knows of what he speaks: Slocum was active in Waste Management's solid waste disposal

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Slocum: Consolidation good.

LAWN CARE INDUSTRY

Serving commercial mowing and chemical lawn care professionals

VOLUME 13 NUMBER 7

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JULY 1989

Lyme disease stirs tick control interest

By ELLIOT MARAS
Editor

Media attention on Lyme disease this summer has left LCOs in some regions swamped with requests for tick control—a service few LCOs are willing to provide.

While most of the insecticides LCOs use for surface feeding insects will control the disease-carrying ticks, many LCOs are wary of the liabilities tied to tick control. Most are aware that nothing can control ticks 100 percent.

Public concern about Lyme disease has been strongest in Minnesota, Wisconsin, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Massachusetts and

Connecticut. These states have reported the highest incidence of Lyme disease, according to a cover story in the May 22 issue of *Newsweek*.

"It's scaring people," says Vincent Tummino, owner of the Sayreville, Edison-Metuchen, Parlin and South

See **LYME** Page 9

EPA moves on Tempo, Confront

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has registered Tempo insecticide for home lawn use and Confront herbicide for the control of annual and perennial broadleaf weeds.

Tempo, a pyrethroid, was introduced for indoor pest control and ornamental uses last year. In addition to home lawn use, Mobay Corp. is presently seeking approval for use on commercial turf and golf courses.

Confront, a non-phenoxy herbicide, is for use on ornamental turf and cool season grasses, according to the Dow Chemical Co. It will be introduced in the fourth quarter of the year.

The EPA withheld registration of Tempo for commercial use.

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BATTLEGROUND: KANSAS CITY



Low bids irk LCOs

By JAMES E. GUYETTE
Managing Editor

Many Kansas City consumers shop price when purchasing lawn care and landscape services, and that practice has some quality-conscious turf managers concerned about the state of their industry.

Charges of "lowballing" are flying as a price war rages on, despite efforts of the Professional Lawn Care Association of Mid-America to encourage a keen sense of professionalism.

Some turf managers believe that too-low prices result in unacceptable work, and that, in turn, makes the entire occupation look unprofessional.

"It's throughout the city, it's a hell of a price war," says Lance Schelhammer, owner of Grass-Roots, Inc. in Olathe, Kan. "It's degrading the industry as a whole."

An informal survey by **LAWN CARE INDUSTRY** could

not establish that rampant lowballing exists.

Most Kansas City turf managers contacted are unwilling to publicly point an ac-

See **KANSAS** Page 21

Rulings okay for NY LCOs

By JAMES E. GUYETTE
Managing Editor

New York turf managers are conducting business as usual this summer following two recent court decisions.

A 1987 New York state law mandating customer contracts and posting is still being enforced, but more restrictive regulations have been ruled "null and void."

Under the two court decisions, states are permitted to make laws regulating pesticide use notification, but state officials can only write regulations that are authorized by the state legislature.

In one case, New York State Supreme Court Justice Paul E. Cheeseman ruled that the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's

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TODAY'S TURF

Prof. Noel Jackson describes chemical and cultural methods needed for optimum control of turf-infesting fungi.

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Zero-turn radius models gaining.

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LATE NEWS

Ohio LCOs accept posting law

OHIO—Aggressive action by Ohio's green industry has resulted in statewide posting regulations that are acceptable to both LCOs and environmentalists.

The posting requirements, which were approved by the Ohio Legislature's Joint Committee on Rules and Regulations, are similar to those seen in other states.

They call for the posting of a standard sign with the company's name on it. The signs are to remain for at least 24 hours.

Currently, there is some flexibility as to what constitutes a suitable warning sign, but after 1990 the signs are required to be at least 4 by 5 inches, and they need to contain a drawing of an adult, child and dog inside a circle with a line drawn through it.

Abutting property owners have a right to be

See **OHIO** Page 26

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ABP BPA

MEMOS

ChemLawn's first quarter revenues dropped 13 percent from last year due to poor spring weather, according to Ecolab's first quarter shareholder's report. The first three months' revenue for 1989 was \$28 million compared to \$32 million in 1988.

The operating loss worsened to \$24 million for the quarter from \$19 million in 1988, reflecting delayed revenue and increased manpower investments, the report says. "However, the delayed production is expected to be recovered in the second quarter."

Orkin Lawn Care's 1988

operating income dropped 3 percent from 1987 due to accelerated expansion of new branches and the 1988 drought, according to Rollins, Inc.'s calendar 1988 annual report. The drop, which resulted in \$42 million in operating income, followed a 7 percent gain in 1987.


Orkin Lawn Care opened 12 new branches in 1988, the report stated. The operating loss was called a "major disappointment."

Florida is a booming market for landscape firms, reports Mike Counselman, president of Stiles Landscape Service Co., one of the area's largest firms.

Counselman says the property developers have finally realized the importance of landscape work and there aren't enough high volume providers to service the demand.

The 2,4-D Hotline has been reinstated by The Industry Task Force on 2,4-D Research Data. The hotline, 1-800-345-5109 (In Canada, 517-835-2091) is best used for media relations. Manning the hotline is Wendell Mullison, Ph.D., author of about 60 herbicide-related publications. He was recently elected fellow of the Weed Science Society of America. LCI

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Nationwide testing gives Arid the lead.

Mean Turfgrass Quality Ratings of Tall Fescue Cultivars At Four Shade Locations in the United States

Quality Ratings 1-9 9=Ideal Turf	
Name	Mean
Arid	6.0
Finelawn I	5.6
Trident	5.4
Pacer	5.3
Mustang	5.3
Apache	5.2
Tempo	5.1
KY-31	5.0
Falcon	5.0
Hounddog	5.0
Adventure	4.9
Jaguar	4.9
Bonanza	4.8
Olympic	4.8
Maverick	4.7
Willamette	4.6
Rebel	4.5
Clemfine	4.4
Brookston	4.4
Johnstone	4.0
Kenhy	3.4

Data from USDA National Turfgrass Evaluation Program

Drought Tolerance (Dormancy) Ratings of Tall Fescue Cultivars

Dormancy Ratings 1-9 9=No Dormancy	
Name	Mean
Arid	7.7
Olympic	7.7
Apache	7.3
Jaguar	7.3
Finelawn I	6.3
Mustang	6.3
Rebel	6.3
Bonanza	6.0
KY-31	6.0
Adventure	5.7
Falcon	5.7
Finelawn 5GL	5.7
Chesapeake	5.7
Tempo	5.3
Hounddog	5.0
Pacer	5.0
Johnstone	5.0
Kenhy	5.0
Maverick	5.0
Brookston	4.3
Clemfine	4.3
Trident	3.7
Willamette	3.3

Data from USDA National Turfgrass Evaluation Program

Brown Patch Ratings of Tall Fescue Cultivars

Brown Patch Ratings 1-9 9=No Disease	
Name	Mean
Arid	6.3
Adventure	6.2
Jaguar	6.1
Rebel	6.0
Pacer	5.9
Maverick	5.8
Falcon	5.8
Clemfine	5.7
Apache	5.6
Tempo	5.6
Olympic	5.6
Hounddog	5.6
Chesapeake	5.5
Finelawn 5GL	5.5
KY-31	5.5
Mustang	5.5
Bonanza	5.5
Trident	5.5
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Data from USDA National Turfgrass Evaluation Program

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Organic Lawn Care winning Minneapolis customers

By ELLIOT MARAS
Editor

MINNEAPOLIS—One of the most pesticide-alarmed communities in the country, Minneapolis/St. Paul, has spawned a company that promises lush lawns using no synthetic chemicals.

In two years, about 1,000 Minneapolis area homeowners have signed on with Organic Lawn Care. The service costs as much as 30 percent more than standard services for lawns 6,500 square feet and above and includes no pest control.

(Costs are comparable for lawns 3,500 to 5,000 square feet and less for lawns under 3,500 square feet.)

The company's claims have drawn skepticism from some turf experts.

One thing that can't be argued, however, is that Organic Lawn Care has found a market.

Owner Mark Miles, 28, has been extracting plant nutrients and studying their effects on plant roots for the last six years. He has been farming since he was 13.

Miles hopes to persuade the University of Minnesota to test his fertilizer mix, which consists of alfalfa, kelp and corn extracts.

Miles' and other natural fertilizer programs are based on the premise that turf at optimum health will resist pests naturally. A proper nutrient mix, the theory holds, will achieve stonger root systems.

"We fertilize with all (16) of the elements that are necessary for plant growth, as recognized by the University (of Minnesota)," Miles says.

Miles studied agronomy for a year and a half at North Dakota State University and has consulted with agronomy professors in Iowa and Minnesota in his research.

An advocate of all natural fertilization for both turfgrass management and agriculture, he feels consumer concerns about risks associated with chemicals are justified.

Miles does give his customers tips on how to control weeds and insects, should these pests appear. But he claims there have been few complaints.

"Plants of all kinds are naturally resistant to insects and disease if they are at optimum health," he says.

The mixture

Miles' fertilizer, applied at a rate of two pounds per thousand square feet, is mixed at a commercial mixing facility in Minneapolis. It is bottled in 55-gallon drums, then mixed into backpack sprayers, on-site, on customers' lawns.

The extracts provide all of the macro-nutrients, micro-nutrients, enzymes and natu-

PESTICIDE CONCERNS PROVIDE READY MARKET

ral microorganisms associated with plant breakdown.

"When you extract the alfalfa in its purest form, you end up with 20 percent nitrogen in protein form, and a good potassium concentration in a form that the plant can ingest within minutes," he says.

Calcium, extracted from the corn, strengthens disease resistance, Miles says.

He says the mixture at a lower concentration works well for shrubs and at a higher concentration for trees.

Miles says fertilizers that are high in nitrogen are popular because they give a fast greenup and dark, green color. However, the high nitrogen concentration hurts the plant's ability to resist heat and drought stress.

"It (excessive nitrogen) encourages fungus, disease and evapotranspiration," he says.

The key benefit his mixture provides to turf is deeper root depth, Miles says. He claims that within five applications, roots will be eight inches deep.

"We force that root system to expand."

Miles says his customers' lawns grow slower and have a lighter, but pleasant, shade of green compared to most lawn care customers' lawns. The advantages, he says, are that less watering and mowing are needed.

From these benefits spring still others.

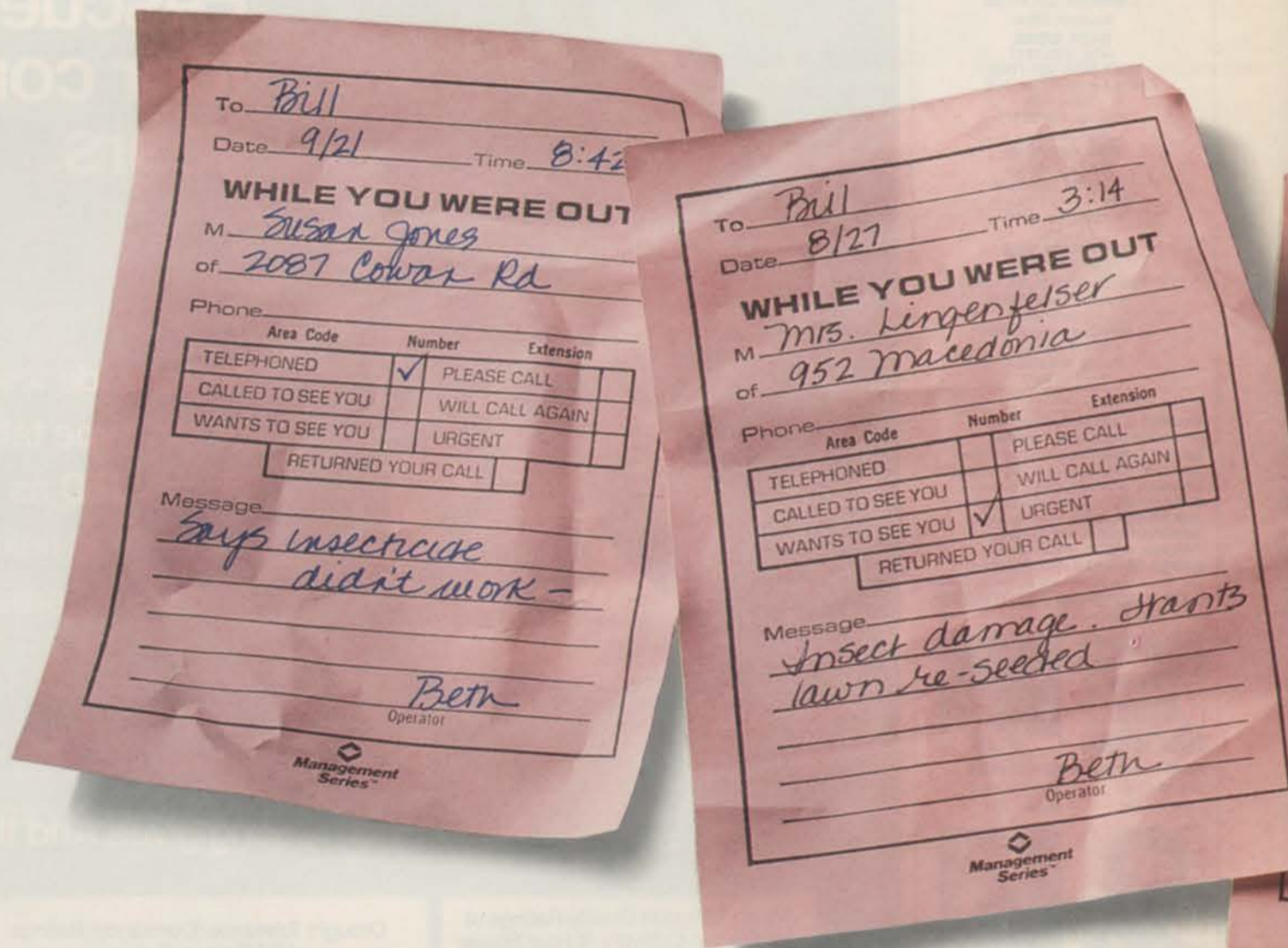
"The less you water, the less fungus and disease you have," he says. He recommends his customers water

only when the grass has begun to wilt.

Will it work?

One researcher, R.E. Schmidt, Ph.D., an agronomy professor at Virginia Tech, is skeptical of Miles' claims. Schmidt has tested seaweed-based fertilizers (See June issue of LAWN CARE INDUSTRY.) and believes that some plant-based fertilizers have commercial potential.

"He (Miles) may have some validity, but not to the extent that he's claiming," Schmidt says.



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Miles: Deeper roots help.



Schmidt: Questions the claims.

Schmidt says the turf plant will not be able to take up enough nitrogen in the alfalfa extract. He also suspects the alfalfa has much less nitrogen content than the 20 percent

Miles claims it has.

"The plant can't take up plant matter of organic nutrients" fast enough to provide results, Schmidt says. "I don't think most of the clientele would be happy with the results they would get from nitrogen released from ground up alfalfa."

One of Miles' competitors, Steve Hoogenakker, president of Granulawn, Inc., has not had success offering a no-pesticide program.

Hoogenakker, who last year switched to Ringer Corp.'s products for his "organic" customers, was able to reduce his high turnover among those customers by adding

pesticides to the program.

Agreeing with Miles that a dense, healthy turf will resist pests naturally, Hoogenakker points out that pesticides may be needed to get the turf into shape. "A lot of times you have to clean the weeds out of the lawn first to give the lawn a chance to thicken up," he says.

Attending to pests

Miles claims his customers experience less crabgrass than other homeowners do if they have his initial spring treatment. If they do see crabgrass, he offers suggestions.

He tells them to set their lawnmower blade at the lowest setting, then mow the infested

area. Or, they can spot spray the area with a pre-mixed, post-emergent herbicide.

Or, they can spray Listerine on the area during the hottest part of the day.

Insect problems? Miles tells customers to apply ivory soap solution. For grubs, he suggests a solution of ivory soap, chewing tobacco juice and alcohol.

All of these methods are questioned by Greg Senst, agriculture inspector for Hennepin County. Senst particularly takes issue with the idea of mowing out the crabgrass area. He says it would do more to augment the crabgrass than eliminate it.

Liquid aeration

The first two applications of Miles' five-round program include a solution Miles claims releases the attraction between soil particles; a liquid aeration process.

Since his patent on the product is pending, he does not wish to describe it except to say that it's an all natural product.

Future plans

While Organic Lawn Care has been popular with many Minneapolis homeowners, Miles' long-term goal is to sell his mixtures to LCOs and do-it-yourselfers. He already sells to 25 retailers and seven lawn care firms.

"People don't buy us for price," says Miles. "They buy us because they know we're safe and we're effective."

He notes that his firm is exempt from state pesticide regulations and pays much less for liability insurance than other lawn care firms.

Schmidt believes that tests to date show limited value for all natural fertilizer products. He thinks those who have signed up with Miles are people who want to believe in such a program. **LCI**

LCI adds new marketing rep

CLEVELAND, OHIO—Barbara Thomas has joined LAWN CARE INDUSTRY as eastern marketing manager. She replaces Gloria Cosby, who accepted another job with Edgell Communications. **LCI**



Barbara Thomas

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Cool heads needed on "organic" issue

No issue has the capacity to incite squabbling within the industry's ranks like "organic" versus "chemical" lawn care. Reasonable dialogue often gives way to emotion and accusation.

This happens because the producers and marketers of the more natural lawn care materials have a tendency to say their products are safer than the traditional products. But that's only half of the problem.

The other half is that the "chemical" firms tend to as-

sume that all "organic" competitors stoop to the above-mentioned tactic.

Controversy has to be expected when different technology is introduced. It would be unfortunate, however, if the industry failed to support an open-minded yet critical view of these technologies.

Our recent State of the Industry Survey showed a large number of readers are interested in more natural alternatives such as soil biostimulants and natural



ELLIOT MARAS
EDITOR

pesticides.

But the credible research in these areas is in its infancy. Much of what turf professionals hear about these products is hearsay—testimonials about products being marketed by small,

often mysterious outfits. Eventually, a more credible sense of what these products can provide will be available.

Until then, hostility continues to erupt when someone claims their "organic" program is safer and better, or when someone thinks that someone is doing that.

These incidents usually occur in the more chemophobic markets, as happened recently in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. Rumor held that the

Ringer Corp.—suppliers of some of the best studied natural products and a member of the Professional Lawn Care Association of America—was responsible for a very negative portrayal of the lawn care industry on KSTP-TV. The rumor is completely false.

I contacted the station to learn from the reporter who did the story that Ringer made no contact with him regarding the Public Citizen attack on lawn chemicals. It was in no way responsible for the story.

Ringer, a very visible player in the industry, may have been taking the heat for some negative advertising that appeared in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area last year.

Organic Lawn Care, Inc., featured in this month's issue, circulated flyers showing a chemical applicator dressed in a spaceman's uniform. (The company has fortunately refrained from such practices this season.)

Fanning the animosity between the "organic" advocates and the rest of the industry is the consumer media—always looking for a fast, easy story.

In fielding reporters' questions, I've found that reporters doing stories on "chemical" versus "organic" lawn care often presume that the two methods are adversarial. Convincing them otherwise takes some doing.

Then there are the environmental alarmists, ready to enlist the "organic" lawn care firms in their crusade against chemical use.

Companies that wish to market alternative methods should be aware of what organizations promising endorsements are saying about the rest of the lawn care industry.

At present, an all natural lawn care program has not been successfully marketed on a large scale.

Dick Schmidt, a researcher at Virginia Tech who is studying some of the products on the market, points out that the customers who buy these programs are probably motivated by personal bias. They don't represent a large customer base as far as the average LCO is concerned.

Some LCOs are offering natural programs as alternatives for customers who are willing to pay more. So far, they don't report great success with these programs.

Universities, chemical manufacturers and the larger lawn care companies, meanwhile, continue to study soil biostimulants, natural pesticides and other products. These efforts deserve the support of all who are interested in the largest possible selection of methodologies.



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JULY 1989

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MORE
FACTS

LYME

from Page 1

Amboy Lawn Doctor franchises in New Jersey. He notes there have been several articles in local newspapers. "Everybody's picking up on it."

Holding most LCOs back for now is the lack of available data on tick control.

The debilitating disease is spread by deer ticks, which mostly inhabit wooded areas. Newly-hatched larvae usually pick up the disease from field mice, then pass it on to other hosts during the succeeding stages of their life cycles.

Humans and pets can both be infected.

"There's just not a lot of data out there right now (on controlling the ticks)," notes Rich Harding, salesman for Rockland Chemical Co., West Caldwell, N.J. Since ticks can migrate from an untreated property to a treated one, LCOs have no idea how often insecticides need to be applied.

"Lawn care operators are very interested in getting into it," Harding notes.

Gordon Morrison, national sales manager for Zoecon Corp.'s Professional Pest Management Division, doesn't see a lot LCOs can do about the ticks since the ticks congregate in largely unpopulated, wooded areas. However, he thinks periodic yard applications can minimize a homeowner's exposure for him/herself and his/her pet.

Morrison also thinks LCOs can educate their customers about minimizing their exposures when they go camping, hunting or hiking. People can protect themselves by wearing boots, long pants and insect repellants.

Morrison suggests professional applicators send their local media safety tips for homeowners. "It is a way for lawn care and pest control operators to get a little free publicity and at the same time promote their services," he says.

Studies under way

The Dow Chemical Co. is presently studying tick control with its insecticide, Dursban. The company recently distributed a four-page bulletin on treating for ticks with Dursban 50W, a wettable powder.

The bulletin recommends entire lawns be treated, as well as weeds and bushes along the edges. There is no recommended frequency as of yet.

"It's something the lawn care people could offer, have a very viable money making proposition, and at the same time be providing another service," says Bill Davis, turf sales specialist for Dow's Northeast district. "It could be a good image builder."

Davis thinks LCOs could minimize liability simply by using proper wording in their

'It's something the lawn care people could offer, have a very viable money making proposition, and at the same time be providing another service.'

service agreements.

One product that is being marketed specifically for tick control is Damminix. It consists of biodegradable cardboard tubes filled with cotton balls soaked in permethrin, an insecticide. The tubes, placed in the ground, attract mice, which bring the lethal balls back to their nests. The ticks are then killed.

Damminix, developed at the Harvard School of Public Health, is owned and marketed by EcoHealth. Spokesman Bryan Spielman says a package is being developed specifically for LCOs.

Rockland's Harding sees two drawbacks to Damminix: 1) The property may not have mice; 2) Dogs and cats, and possibly small children, could

get into the tubes before any mice do.

Tick control sells

Tummino, the New Jersey Lawn Doctor dealer, is one LCO who has marketed a tick control program this year—and with good results.

Offering dry Dursban applications in rounds two, three and four for tick control, Tummino signed up about 15 percent of his customers. He charges \$4.50 per thousand square feet for one application; \$3.50 per application for the three-round package.

The Dursban is applied on the entire turf and shrub areas. It is not applied along founda-

tion walls.

Tummino tells his customers that nothing will guarantee 100 percent control—he guarantees that the product will be applied at suggested rates and that it will reduce the tick population.

Tummino also provides customers literature about Lyme disease if they request it.

Lawn Doctor, Inc. began offering its flea and tick control program to dealers last year, notes Ewald Altstadt, director of operations.

The Lawn Doctor program is not, however, designed specifically to prevent Lyme disease. LCI

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Zero-turn radius mowers add up to faster mowing

By JAMES E. GUYETTE
Managing Editor

Zero-turn radius mowers offer superior mobility, and they are gaining in popularity with professional cutters. Industry experts are predicting that the concept will become the accepted standard in the not-too-distant future.

They say that a zero-turn radius mower can complete a cutting job much quicker, and that the use of trim mowers is virtually eliminated.

"I think it's the coming thing," says Consultant Philip D. Christian of Alpharetta, Ga. "It leaves less work to be done by smaller, less-efficient, pieces of equipment."

Because of complete fingertip control, using a zero-turn radius mower avoids wasted motions, turns and backups, according to Art Evans, president of Magic Circle Corp., makers of the Dixie Chopper.

"It eventually will prevail because it's a better way of doing things," he forecasts, noting that a standard tractor needs an acre-and-a-half of travel to mow just one acre of turf.

"The worst zero-turn radius machine out there will make a tractor run and hide," Evans comments.

Zero-turn radius mowers are on the job at Environmental Care, Inc., headquartered in Calabasas, Calif. "They enable us to use a larger piece of equipment on a smaller lawn area," reports Robert L. Scofield, vice president of corporate relations.

A zero-turn radius mower is basically defined as one that can turn around within its own diameter. The drive wheels have individual hydraulic motors that allow them to spin independently when the operator moves two hydrostatic steering levers back and forth.

The wheels on one side can spin backwards while the wheels on the other side move forward during a turn. They operate similar to a bulldozer or tank.

While most zero-turn radius mowers do indeed have a lever system for steering, Gravley's new Pro Master has a yoke handlebar. The new

Exmark Explorer has a wheel that functions the same as levers.

"We've taken that technology and put it to a steering wheel," says Exmark President John Smith. He adds that many mower operators feel more comfortable using a steering wheel instead of levers.

Kubota makes a tractor with a steering wheel that permits all four wheels to steer the vehicle around obstacles.

Because the gearless drive wheels have separate drive units, the blade rotation rate is

not affected by how fast the mower moves. "You can match the speed to ground conditions," Christian says. "You can rev the motor and go whatever speed you feel like."

Christian maintains that some machines in the industry are inappropriately termed zero-turn radius. He offers a simple test for a potential buyer: "Can it zip around a fireplug?"

High-production mowing/management contractors report that they just love zero-turn radius

mowers.

"I think that's the only machine to use," says Ann Witzig, owner of Tidy Turf in Tremont, Ill. "I have a push mower, but I use it very rarely."

At one point Ann and her husband Jerry were mowing 360 lawns a week—by themselves! "You can move your fingers an inch and go wherever you want to go."

They used a Grazer mower that they bought after watching one in action. "We saw one being used at an apartment complex," she recalls. "He

could go all around the trees; we stopped and talked to the fellow."

Witzig has since purchased a Walker zero-turn radius mower. She likes the built-in vacuum system that features an oscillating spout inside the polyethylene catcher.

Ease of maintenance is another plus, she says. "If you need to change a spark plug or anything you don't have to crawl into anything. The whole deck flips up like a funny car would."

The mower also offers a precision cut, Witzig notes.

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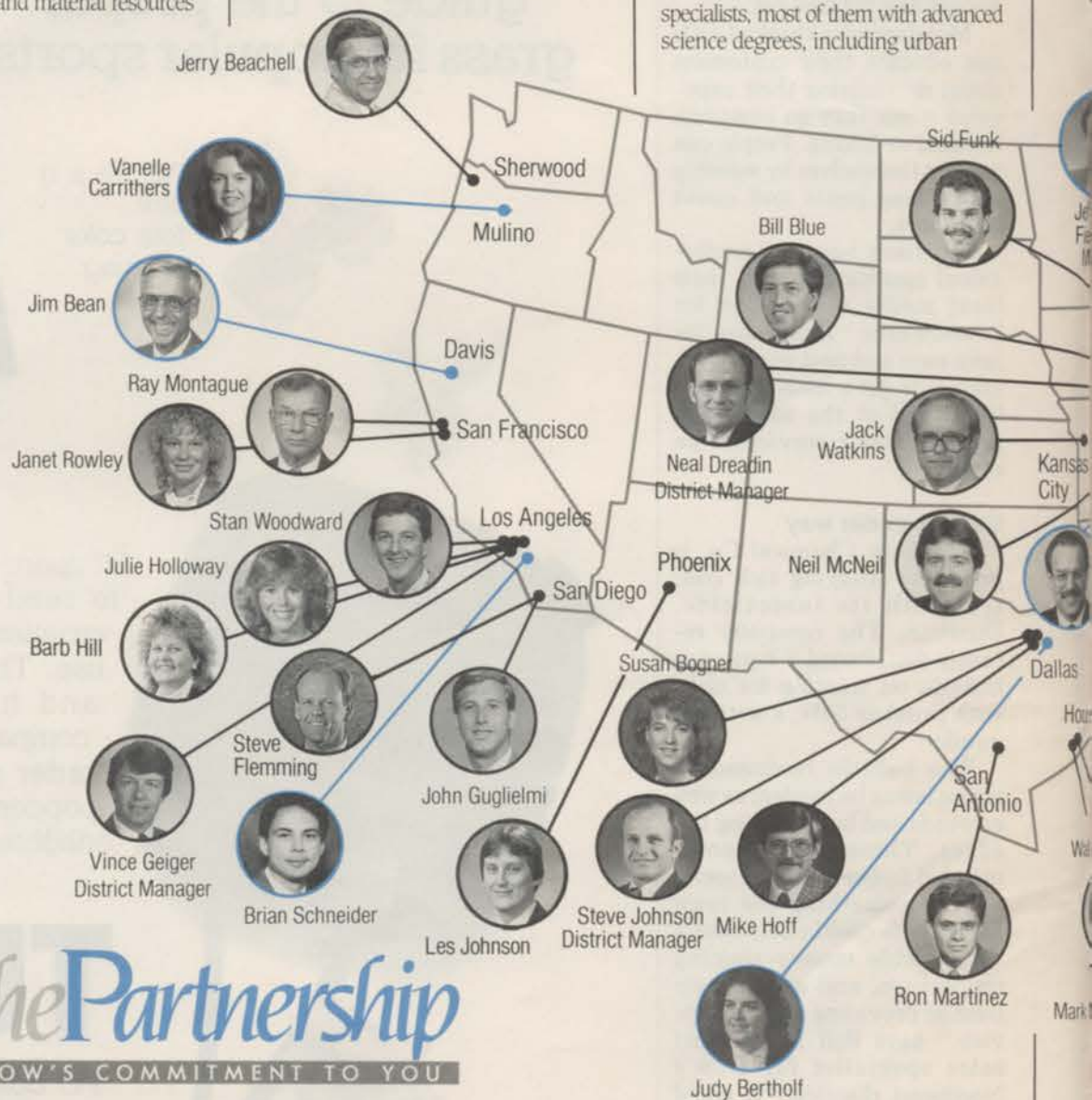
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Witzig: Disdains trim mower.



Bird: The Pro Star zero-turn radius mower scores points with him.

"I started using zero-turn radius machines back in 1982," reports Sam S. Russo, owner of Sam S. Russo, Inc. in Bayville, N.J. "They were much more efficient than the regular riders," although the devices still had bugs to be worked out.

Russo owns 64 Walker mowers and one Grasshopper.

He tends entire retirement villages, and the trustees at one complex insisted that no riders be used. They hired Russo because his bid said he uses Walkers, which the trustees believed were push mowers.

"When I showed up with riders they were furious,"

Russo recalls with a laugh. "These people were upset, but at the same time they were getting compliments in the clubhouse."

Now a lot of retirement villages specify "Walker-type mowers" (zero-turn radius). "It was the biggest breakthrough in South Jersey commercial mowing."

Russo previously used walk-behind mowers. A two-man crew could mow 40 lawns a day. But if four zero-turn radius mowers are used along with a roving person manning a string trimmer, that crew can do 300 lawns a day.

An operator can really move. "He (or she) can just

keep buzzing around the houses. A Walker (or other zero-turn radius machine) just doesn't leave much to trim," Russo notes.

Like Witzig at Tidy Turf, Russo likes the Walker vacuum clipping collection system, and so do his clients. "Maybe the housewife just got done vacuuming her house, and now her landscaper is vacuuming her yard."

Customers can be told, "We're not only cutting your grass—we're vacuuming up all your clippings."

The use of a zero-turn radius mower can improve a firm's turnover rate. "You're going to keep your help longer," Russo points out. "It took the operator off his feet."

Because the operator sits down, during the work day "he's resting up to go out" that evening.

Russo explains what can happen if he were to operate a zero-turn radius mower alongside an operator with a walk-behind: "At 3 p.m. his tongue is hanging out (from exhaustion) and I'm still sitting there wiggling my fingers."

That's true, agrees John P. Mowder, marketing manager at Dixon Industries, Inc. "This machine is designed for operator comfort."

The Dixon line of zero-turn radius mowers includes a 30-inch model to fit through gates and other tight spots.

Grasshopper makes a 35-inch, and LESCO, Inc. is looking into plans to market a 36-inch model in the spring.

LESCO currently has a 52-inch that features separate hydraulic pumps and wheel motors instead of hydrostats, which can be difficult to repair and expensive to replace, according to Pete Thompson, an equipment service manager.

That cost can be reduced by as much as one-third, Thompson says. "The biggest thing is that it runs cooler." He expects other manufacturers to follow suit with that concept.

The owner of a typical zero-turn radius mower has to pay attention to the hydraulics, Consultant Christian points out. "The whole hydraulic system has to be maintained. You have to change the oil; you have to keep the filters clean."

Getting the hang of operating a zero-turn radius mower can be a challenge, but opinions vary on how long it takes.

"Maybe for the first hour or two the machine might feel too aggressive and too temperamental," says Russo. "Within two weeks you can be just as good as anyone out there."

"I was discouraged the first five days I used it, then it got better and better," says Witzig. "You know the work it

50 partners in the field.

entomology. One of their major functions is to conduct continuing studies on Dow products and how they work in actual practice. They relay their findings to you and other operators so you will have the most up-to-date technical information. As experts on insects, weeds, and their control, they conduct training seminars in the areas of chemistry, botany and entomology, among others. Located at key points

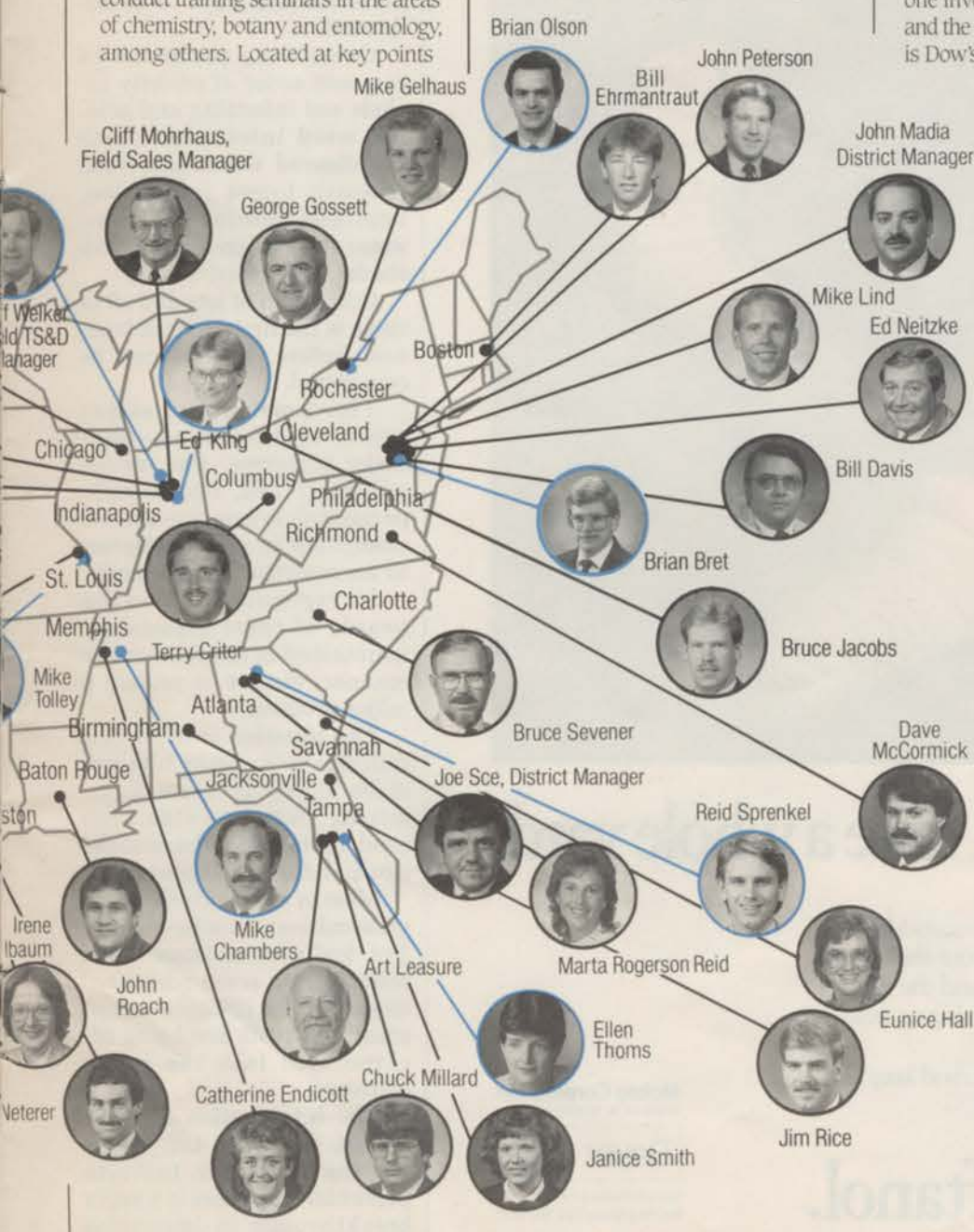
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8207

Cultural, chemical methods needed to control fungi

By NOEL JACKSON

Fungi comprise a diverse, very successful and extremely prolific group of organisms that are ubiquitous in their distribution in turf.

Natural and managed turfs harbor a large number of fungi species, including many that are involved in the breakdown of dead, organic material, but also some that invade living plants to cause disease.

In spite of many management practices directed towards their elimination,

residual populations of these fungal pathogens invariably persist in turf.

Every year, therefore, the potential exists for a succession of turf diseases. This happens as the resisting structures of disease-causing fungi surviving in previously infected plants, in the thatch layer, or in the soil resume active growth.

The pathogenic fungi respond to specific environmental conditions that are conducive to the renewal of their activity. But even if con-

ditions are less than optimum, sufficient vegetative growth and/or sporulation occurs to ensure survival and carryover of each species.

Given optimum conditions, however, the large numbers of fungal propagules (spores) are generated to serve as disease inoculum (material that incites disease).

Many factors involved

A large amount of inoculum in a susceptible turf does not inevitably mean widespread disease. Specific environ-

mental conditions (not necessarily the same as those favoring inoculum buildup) are needed for infection to occur and the consequent disease symptoms to develop.

Thus, a complex set of interactions involving grass host, fungal pathogens and environmental conditions ultimately determines whether a pathogen is favored sufficiently to take advantage of the host and initiate a disease outbreak.

Knowing which factors influence the development and

severity of particular diseases, coupled with the ability to recognize their early symptoms, allows management practices to be employed that may minimize damage by fungal pathogens.

These cultural measures include judicious changes in irrigation and fertilizer practice; modification of soil pH; improvement of soil aeration and drainage; improved light interception and air flow; thatch removal; adjustment of mowing height and frequency; restraints on the amount of wear; insect control; and the use of disease resistant cultivars.

However, even the most adroit turf manager cannot rely entirely on cultural tactics to avoid all disease problems. In some situations, supplemental chemical control with fungicides may be needed.

Fungicides needed?

Do fungal diseases play such an important part in the home lawn environment that fungicide use is warranted?

With some exceptions, the answer is generally no. In lawns composed of cool season grasses, for most situations, diseases rank low on the list of problems that need to be addressed.

Overriding problems in common order of priority include soil infertility and acidity; weed infestation (both broadleaved weeds and weed grasses); insect infestation; improper mowing practices; water mismanagement; heavy shade; and excessive wear.

Correction of any and all of these is the first order of business before diseases can be considered.

The common cool season grasses used for lawns—Kentucky bluegrass, fine fescue, tall fescue and, increasingly, perennial ryegrass—are all susceptible in varying degrees to an assortment of diseases.

If vigorously growing swards of these grasses are maintained in the appropriate manner, disease is seldom a major problem.

The situation is improving continually as plant breeders make steady progress in selecting cultivars with both good agronomic characteristics and disease resistance.

Most of the Kentucky bluegrass cultivars now have excellent leaf spot resistance and resistance to some additional diseases. For instance, stripe smut and rusts are being incorporated into the newer cultivars.

The introduction of finer-leaved, turf-type tall fescue and the cold-hardy, turf-type perennial ryegrasses is a major breakthrough in improving the turf quality and extending the use of these two grasses.

But deficiencies in the re-



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sistance of one or both of these grasses to brown patch, red thread and pink patch, rusts and snow molds all need to be addressed.

Expectations vary

If the well-maintained, vigorous lawn is relatively disease free, where do the exceptions occur?

The answer lies in the interpretation of what constitutes a well-maintained vigorous lawn. Quality of turf to the homeowner is very subjective, and acceptable standards differ enormously.

Management options range from "masterly inactive" where the lawn receives nothing more than a few desultory mowings to the other extreme of constant attention.

Neglected or minimal maintenance lawns may well support outbreaks of those diseases encouraged by low soil fertility—red thread, dollar spot, and various leaf spots.

But because of the diverse botanical makeup and the open nature of the turf, damage by fungi when it occurs often passes unnoticed.

In contrast, there are many homeowners who invest considerable time, effort and cash in striving for the perfect lawn.

Much to their chagrin, these intensively managed lawns seem to suffer greater depredation from disease.

The reason is twofold: lush, high density swards of uniform composition are more vulnerable to some diseases—brown patch and pythium blight are two good examples.

Secondly, even the most minor blemish in the pristine turf attracts attention. In effect, the ultimate in lawn perfection can be realized, but often at the risk of increased disease susceptibility.

Like an intensively managed sports turf, routine applications of preventative fungicides may be needed to maintain these lawns free from disease.

Restricting nitrogen

So, what are the options for disease management in the home lawn?

Nitrogen fertilizers play the major role in determining sward color and density (key factors in perceived quality), but these also markedly influence disease susceptibility.

If expectations are lowered a little, then a sound cultural program will provide good turf with a minimum of disease problems.

Such a program includes the following steps:

- Restrict nitrogen use to 3 to 3½ lbs. of actual nitrogen per thousand square feet, and include iron with each fertilizer application.

izer application.

- Blend insect and disease resistant cultivars where possible to form the sward, mow it regularly at the appropriate height, dethatch periodically, and lime only when needed.

Keep soil moist

Soil moisture availability also plays an important role in turf quality and a vital role in fungal disease incidence.

Ideally, the soil should be always moist and the leaf surfaces dry. The latter is an impossible goal, but one to be strived for.

Water early in the morning so the leaves dry early in the day and are not wet overnight.

Such a regimen may, however, be impractical. Water at night if necessary, but water adequately (1 to 1½ inches per week) in two or three waterings.

It is critical to water early—before the soil dries out. Once dry, soil and overlying thatch are extremely difficult to rewet uniformly.

In addition, the foundation is laid for heat and drought stresses which predispose turf to infection by some high temperature tolerant pathogens.

Biological control strategies that utilize antagonistic microorganisms to alleviate turf diseases are being ex-

plored.

Some antagonists may be introduced directly into turf, or natural populations may be encouraged to increase by the provision of additional substrate.

Various organic amendments applied in solution or as a topdressing serve in this function and some formulations are being claimed as effective treatments against the more intractable patch diseases like necrotic ring spot.

Preventative application

Situations occur when chemical disease control measures are the only recourse. What are the implications?


There is no universal fungicide for turf diseases. Therefore, accurate diagnosis is essential so that the appropriate, registered fungicide can be used—and used according to the manufacturers' recommendations.


Indiscriminate or excessive use of even the correct fungicide can be used—and used according to the manufacturer's recommendations.


Indiscriminate or excessive use of even the correct fungicide is a waste of resources, and may affect desirable soil microflora and fauna adversely, particularly those involved in recycling organic matter.


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About the Author

Noel Jackson, Ph.D., is a professor of plant pathology at the University of Rhode Island in Kingston.

Perfecting your employee evaluations

Every employee is interested in how he/she is performing. The formal evaluation is one way of giving them this information.

The formal evaluation is useful to both employer and employee. It is done in writing and kept on file for future review.

The evaluation process doesn't start with an evaluation form—it starts with an understanding of the job position. If you can't explain the position, you can't evaluate it.

The first item on the evaluation form is the job description. Job descriptions vary considerably in detail.

As companies mature, job descriptions tend to become more detailed. But in the beginning, you should concentrate on making the job description as clear and concise as possible.

It should include the background needed for the job, the particular skills needed for the job, the tasks/functions of the job, the responsibilities of the job, and the reporting lines the employee will follow.

Descriptions of the tasks/functions and the responsibilities are important parts of the evaluation. Too often, small companies ignore these descriptions.

The evaluation form also lists areas to be discussed between employer and employee. These areas vary according to the employer's needs.

For example, in some organizations it is very important to have good relations between employees. In others, it isn't as important.

The manager chooses the areas to be discussed based on the organization's interests. The owner/operator states to the employee what is important in his/her particular organization.

The employee is then told that something in his/her work habits is going to be watched.

Take for example the way in which employees treat customers.

Everyone would agree that it is important for employees

to treat customers well, yet very few companies evaluate how well employees do it. This happens for a very simple reason.

Most companies can't put into writing, or describe verbally, what "treating customers well," means.

There is no one correct explanation of the phrase, "treat customers well," just as there is no one correct explanation of the phrase, "handles chemicals safely."

There have to be definitions for these phrases, and if

you want to evaluate these areas, you must be willing to explain what is expected in a simple manner.

Once you have defined the different areas to be evaluated, you should consider the way in which you are going to evaluate.

A suggested way is a scale rather than simple "yes" or "no" responses. This means that instead of listing "treats customer well" and checking off yes or no, you give a rating of one to 10.

When using such a scale,

some explanation is needed.

After an employee has been evaluated, make sure you have suggestions for improvement. It is very poor management to make negative comments or give a negative rating without providing suggestions for improvement.

One technique which works well is sometimes called the "sandwich" technique. If you have areas in which your evaluation is negative, you can sandwich in positive comments about other areas of an employee's performance. Give

a positive, go to the negative, and then give a positive.

This makes the evaluation process more comfortable.

When should the evaluation be done? Most companies do formal interviews once a year. Remember that you are giving feedback on performance almost every day and that the formal evaluation is a continuation of the process.

It is useful to conduct the performance review close to the actual performance of duties.

It does little good to evaluate performance of duties three months after the fact.

The employee evaluation

These we waste.



About the Author

Rudd McGary, Ph.D., is a consultant with All Green Management Associates, Columbus, Ohio.

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MAINTENANCE METHODS

Cost and price analysis by hours worked

should fit your company, not the calendar on your wall.

The employee evaluation needs to be understood as a part of total management responsibilities. While companies in the green industries have a tendency to evaluate performance on an informal basis, this won't work on a long-term basis.

Employees want to know how they're doing, and they want to know on a regular basis. They want concrete ideas about the areas that the company considers important so they can work on those particular areas.

An evaluation program meets these concerns. **LCI**

Landscape maintenance estimating is the skill of accurately projecting the cost of a series of activities prior to their performance.

In "Estimating Landscape Maintenance Costs", parts I and II, we developed the formula (shown in figure A) for converting quantities to hours required per year (shown in column 5).

To calculate the total price for performing the maintenance services, we multiply hours required per year by an hourly sales price.

To determine this sale price we must analyze all of our costs, overhead and profit by the hour.

Pricing services by the hour, or time-based pricing, is most often used in the service industries where service is the product. The absence of a tangible product eliminates the basis for a uniform pricing structure.

Our product is manufactured, delivered and consumed while we are on the property. There is no inventory remaining.

The delivery of landscape maintenance services is people-intensive, and people work by the hour. By structuring all other costs, including overhead and profit, to be calculated by the hour, we can simulate the actual cost flow.

Unit prices and lump sum prices often evolve from time-based pricing. Example: Your attorney may charge a set fee, or unit price, for the legal work required to form a small corporation. He or she calculated the unit price from their experience with time-based pricing

because they could accurately project the hours required to form the small corporation.

Look at figure B, Price Analysis by the Hour. This is a hypothetical example of the revenues and costs associated with a two-person maintenance crew. The example is an oversimplification of a very complex issue. It is given only to illustrate the theory of cost flow by the hour.

Cost analysis by the hour must focus on the individual crew or work unit. One unit consists of the people, equipment and overhead support required to deliver the services to the customer's property.

The work unit is a mobile, self-contained, service delivery unit that generates revenue and incurs costs continuously as time passes each day.

The good news is that the value of these services is set by a relatively low industry standard. Work that delivers the services efficiently can substantially increase profits.

The time-base in the example is 1,760 projected billing hours per year. The crew chief is full-time (2,080 hours per year), and his or her off-mowing season activities generate a cushion to counter-balance any shortfall in billing hours accumulated during the season.

Material is not included in cost analysis by the hour because it is not necessarily time-related. Material is calculated separately with the appropriate markups, and is added to the total.

The hourly sale price may vary from line to line on the estimating form, reflecting cost and crew differences. The formula in figure A uses \$20 per hour for travel time because all of the equipment is not in use during travel. You may elect to reduce hourly sales prices for activities such as pruning because they re-

These we don't.



area frequently used by people and animals.

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About the Author

Philip D. Christian III is a business consultant based in Alpharetta, Ga. He was chief of ChemLawn Services Corp.'s maintenance division in the 1970s.

quire less equipment, or in some cases, separate crews.

Pricing services by the hour is a flexible and fast method of quoting prices to prospective customers. Any activity that can be reduced to time and material can be accurately estimated.

If the activity is not time-related, or if the time cannot be accurately projected, you may quote the customer on a "time plus material" basis. Unusual, one-time, extra work activities, such as landscape repair, may be easily and fairly priced to the customer using this method.

Figure C is an example of an annual equipment cost spread sheet. Column 10 is the total equipment cost for one two-person work unit for the year. All of the columns on the annual equipment cost spreadsheet may be changed to fit your company's geographic area, purchasing

power, equipment selection and equipment maintenance procedures. The columns would also change as the size of the crew gets smaller or larger than the two-person crew shown in the example.

The overhead shown in the example is the cost of the support system for one work unit. This cost was calculated from a model company set up to manage five work units. The overhead total per work unit also includes the sales commission or direct cost of sales associated with acquiring the work.

The profit is also calculated from the five-work unit model company, and it reflects a fair return on investment.

The growth of landscape maintenance service in the next few years is a solid trend in the industry. Meeting that growth and profit opportunity will require that we accurately estimate.

LCI

MAINTENANCE METHODS COST & PRICE ANALYSIS BY THE HOUR						
(Figure A) MAINTENANCE LABOR ESTIMATING FORM						
PROJECT:	DATE:		ESTIMATOR:			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
QUANTITIES	FACTOR	HOURS	FREQUENCY	HOURS	HOURLY PRICE	\$/YEAR
TIRE:						
LARGE MOWER: 250,000SF	÷ 30,000SF/HR	= 8.33HRS	× 20FREQ	= 167HRS	× 25/MH	= 4175
TRAVEL:						
		2 HRS	× 20FREQ	= 40HRS	× 20/MH	= 800
						4975

Figure B:

PRICE ANALYSIS BY THE HOUR FOR A TWO PERSON CREW

DESCRIPTION	1 HR/YR	2 PRICE/HR	3 ANNUAL PRICE	4 PERCENT
LABOR:				
CREW CHIEF	FULL TIME	12.71	22,377.00	
CREW MEMBER	1,760	6.24	10,982.00	
SUBTOTAL:	1,760	18.95	33,359.00	38%
EQUIPMENT:	1,760	8.22	14,467.00	16%
OVERHEAD:	1,760	12.83	22,581.00	26%
PROFIT:	1,760	10.00	17,600.00	20%
TOTAL	1,760	50.00	88,000.00	100%

NOTE: THE MAN-HOUR SALE PRICE IS CALCULATED BY DIVIDING THE CREW PRICE PER HOUR (\$50.00), BY THE 2 PEOPLE ON THE CREW EQUALING \$25.00 PER-MAN HOUR.

Figure C

Annual Equipment Cost

1 Description:	2 Size	3 Type	4 Capital Cost	5 Usable Life in Hrs	6 Capital Cost Per Hour	7 Operation Cost Per Hr	8 Total Cost Per Hr.	9 Est. Hrs Use Per Year	10 Annual Cost	11 Expected Life in Years
Push Mower	21"	Rotary 2 Cycle	420	1,200	0.35	0.93	1.28	600	768	2.00
Front Deck Walk Behind	36"	Rotary 4 Cycle	2,600	2,500	1.04	1.20	2.24	750	1,680	3.33
Riding Mower	60"	Rotary Hydrostatic Drive	6,000	3,000	2.00	2.50	4.50	750	3,375	4.00
Backpack Blower	Commercial Model	2 Cycle	350	800	0.44	1.12	1.56	400	623	2.00
Nylon Cord Trimmer	Commercial Model	2 Cycle	325	300	1.08	1.50	2.58	300	775	1.00
Edger	Commercial Model	4 Cycle	380	500	0.76	1.82	2.58	300	774	1.67
Equipment Trailer	8" X 16"	Open w/Brakes	2,600	4,800	0.54	0.21	0.75	1,200	902	4.00
Truck	3/4 Ton	Pickup	10,000	2,000	5	6.12	11.12	500	5,560	4.00
									14,457	

Illinois ponders posting

SPRINGFIELD, ILL.—Illinois lawmakers are considering a sign posting bill that would eventually require tank-washing water to be recycled.

The bill would require sign posting, pre-notification for those who request it, and by 1991 cleaning water would have to be routed through a collection system.

The proposal entails doing "basically what we've been doing now," says Robert F. Parmley, general manager of the Chicago region at Barefoot Grass Lawn Service, Inc.

"I'm not sure how many (LCOs) are aware of it," notes Parmley, who adds that industry representatives had a hand in preparing the legislation.

"We know that we are facing posting," reports Patricia Cassidy, executive director of the Illinois Landscape Contractors Association. "We're not endorsing it; we're not necessarily fighting it."

Cassidy says that the bill, as written, creates confusion over some of the requirements.

"Are you going to have to post when you use a squirt of Roundup? I think we have to be a little more realistic. We're trying to address that now."

Cassidy says the measure is more appealing than previous proposals.

Posting will require extra work and expense, she says, adding, though, that "we recognize the concern out there. We're citizens, too."

William J. Davids, vice president of Clarence Davids & Sons, Inc. in Blue Island, says he has little problem with the bill.

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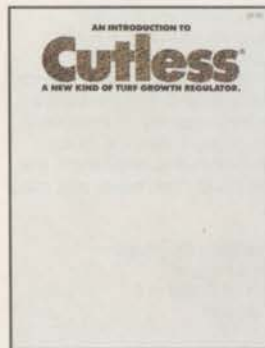
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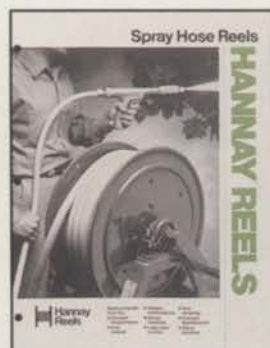
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Hannay Reels has released a spray hose reel catalog for their customers and dealers. It describes hose and cable reels for a variety of applications; washdown, grounds and vehicle maintenance, pest control, steam cleaning, lawn care service, tree spraying, spray painting, and general maintenance.

Hannay Reels
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 518/797-3791.

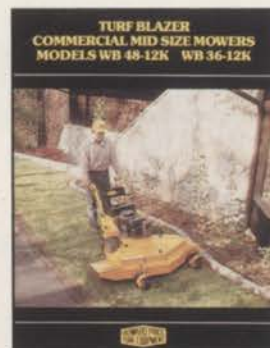
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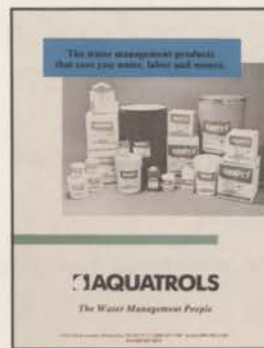
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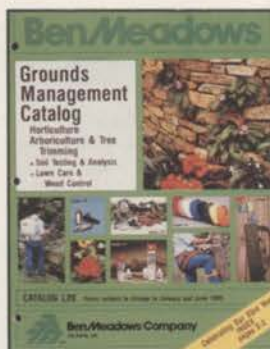
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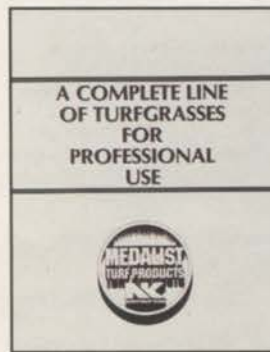
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As a service to the industry, NOR-AM has developed this handy Field Guide to Effective Turf Management. This guide provides the professional with references and application schedules to anticipate and prevent seasonal problems from insects, weeds and diseases.

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Fax 302-575-2013

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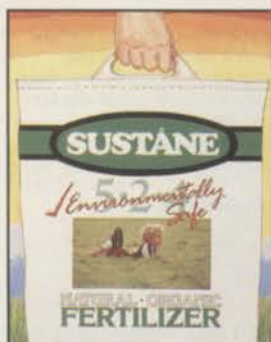
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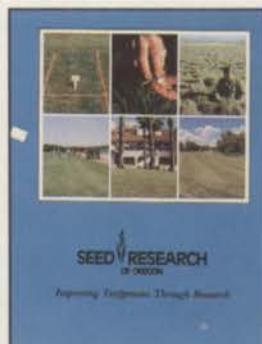
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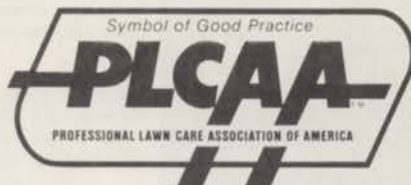
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KANSAS

from Page 1

cusing finger at their colleagues and competitors, but privately, several companies were cited as being engaged in lowballing.

Yet several of the alleged lowballers quote fees that are higher than the person making the accusations.

One vocal turf manager maintains that a certain company is lowballing. He charges \$18.75 to mow a 7,500 square-foot yard. The alleged lowballer charges \$34 for the same fictional property.

A number of turf managers, even those who have been beaten by low bids, consider lowballing to be the same as offering a loss-leader.

Whatever you call it, the quality of work—and reputations—is taking a beating in the process, says Reg Robertson, owner of Custom Lawn and Landscape, Inc. in Olathe, Kan.

Competitors have made bids that are 30 percent lower than his, a situation that Robertson attributes to inexperience more than intent.

"It's an easy business to get into, and when you're starting out you need business—and you bid too low. You can always have people who have it priced wrong—priced below their costs. You have to base your price on what your costs are."

Because some business owners fail to see this fact, it makes it hard for the established firms to justify their higher rates to bargain-conscious customers, Robertson says.

"The guy who's underpriced is hurting himself; he can't do things right, and that reflects poorly on the entire industry."

Too many new companies "are starting up on a string" with no licenses and no insurance, says David S. Murphy, president of PLCAMA.

Murphy, who owns Green Valley Co. in Shawnee Mission, Kan., recounts coming across a two-man crew spraying trees for \$15 a house. They were clad only in boots and shorts.

Murphy telephoned the company's owner to discuss the situation in a friendly way, and the boss "didn't show any shame. He didn't seem to be too upset about it."

In addition to being illegal,



Murphy: Too many discounts.

'Some of the companies that are honestly making an effort to provide good services to their customers are getting pummeled about the head and shoulders.'—Tuggle

what the tree sprayers were doing was a health hazard, Murphy says.

"Is that The American Way? I don't think so. He's undercutting me and I'm upset about it."

That's right, says Dan Tuggle, ecological specialist/investigator for the Kansas State Board of Agriculture. "Some of the companies that are honestly making an effort to provide good services to their customers are getting pummeled about the head and shoulders."

Kansas City's metro area, which encompasses two states, lends itself to an influx of unlicensed operators, Tuggle points out. "The population is heavier on one side of the line (Missouri), and the money is heavier on one side of the line (Kansas)," he says, noting that this invites unlicensed Missouri contractors to practice business illegally in Kansas.

Operators can offer bargain rates through "volume purchasing (of materials) or control of overhead by legitimate or other means," he says.

Tuggle comes across some of these "other means" when he inspects the trucks of LCOs who have monkeyed around with the product. "Sometimes they do show that the tank mix is not what it should be."

The industry needs to step up efforts to police itself by

turning in more business owners who are failing to follow the regulations, Tuggle believes.

Mowing fees in the Kansas City area are estimated to range between \$18 and \$28 an hour. A chemical application for a 7,500 square-foot yard costs about \$36 to \$55.

Of course, the prices can vary widely.

The hottest competition is for commercial accounts of 20,000 square feet and up, reports Robertson at Custom Lawn and Landscape.

Schelhammer of Grass-Roots fears that Kansas City may be faced with a situation like St. Louis, which Schelhammer says had a price war about a decade ago. He says the professionalism of the work suffered during that time.

"Mowing prices are at an all-time low," he laments. "Your quality has got to go down."

He tells of one commercial property that he mowed for \$95.

The property manager asked him if he could beat a competitor's bid of \$45. "I told him, 'Sure, I'll match it if I only cut half of the property.'"

He adds, "That's below what a high school student would charge."

With commercial accounts, Schelhammer says, a property manager may become sus-

picious of a firm that charges too little.

Schelhammer tells of an account he retained despite a shockingly low bid from a competitor.

The property manager said that "common sense dictates that it cannot be done properly at that price."

Bryan Shelton, president of Shelton & Son, Inc. in Kansas City, Mo., has been up against bids that were as low as half of what he charges.

He feels that will take its toll on his competitors.

"They don't find out until a year or two down the road. They find out later that this doesn't work so good—but in the meantime we've lost accounts from them," Shelton



Keller: Don't worry about it.

says.

"Those who are undercutting their prices probably don't intend to stay in business," says Murphy at PLCAMA.

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pricing? Some believe that fees should be set in accordance with the overhead—not the competition.

"You can't let that stuff bother you—it'll drive you nuts," says Don Keller, owner of Keller Tree and Shrub Care in Independence, Mo.

He adds that "I no longer shop my competitors. There's a lot of people working for less. There's a lot of people working for more. I have to base my charges on my costs."

Keller says he runs into people all the time who plead, "I'm a widow, can you cut my lawn for \$10 or \$15?"

For that kind of money Keller says he can't afford to drive

his truck to the property, yet "there are people out there who are going to cut it for that. There are people out there who continue to keep their costs lower than I do. Who am I to say they're wrong?"

Charges made by Keller's colleagues regarding large firms that charge too little for certain jobs do not disturb Keller.

"I don't call that a lowball. I call that a loss-leader."

Keller is no stranger to bidding wars. On one job he bid \$56, and "someone wanted to do it for \$31—I don't know what they're offering for \$31, and I imagine the customer doesn't either."

Still, companies will use that technique to get a foothold in the market with the hope of raising prices later, and Keller views that as an acceptable, if risky, business tactic.

"That's the free enterprise system. When the free enterprise system is biting you on the butt you don't like it," Keller comments.

After a 20-year absence, The Davey Tree Expert Co. has established a branch in Kansas City.

Geoff Cowan, the district manager, says the company studied the local marketplace

for six years before making the move.

"We've already tripled (the business) in just two years," Cowan reports.

"Some of the small people will think we're undercharging," he says.

The company gets about \$23 an hour for the mowing services it offers.

Cowan admits, though, that bargains can be had by people seeking tree care.

"I'm definitely below the average," he says, noting that fees are set according to the job at hand.

Selling tree care in Kansas City is difficult, Cowan says, hence the lower prices.

"Last year it was hard to break into the market with trees," he recalls.

"People here aren't very tree conscious," Cowan observes.

"They're worried about insects (on the trees) and that's about all."

The demand is small for specialized care. "There's not a lot of varieties to play with," he explains.

Cowan is not concerned about companies undercharging Davey.

"It doesn't bother me. You're always going to have these Mom and Pop operators—and they're always going to be cheaper." **LCI**

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SLOCUM

from Page 1

acquisitions in the 1970s.

Tru Green, with approximately \$100 million in revenues gained largely through acquisition, naturally invites comparisons with ChemLawn Services Corp., the industry leader.

• Both were acquired by a larger company in 1987 and saw major management overhauls in 1988.

• Both have identified better customer service as a major challenge facing the industry.

• Both see non-chemical alternatives as paramount to the industry's future and are ac-

'It's our responsibility as one of the industry leaders to find solutions to any valid concerns these people may have.'

tively researching these alternatives.

Then there are differences:

- Application responsibilities are largely determined at the district level for Tru Green service technicians.

- Tru Green does not yet have nationwide name recognition.

- Waste Management

brings to Tru Green a working relationship with some environmental organizations.

Four months into his new job in April, Slocum gave an exclusive interview with **LAWN CARE INDUSTRY**. Following are excerpts.

- **How do the environmental pressures facing the lawn care industry compare with those you**

experienced in the waste disposal business?

They're similar. Any industry that has environmental aspects to it is going to have outside groups trying to pull coals. We're not going to get into a press debate over these things (environmental issues).

It's our responsibility as one of the industry leaders to find solutions to any valid concerns these people may have. We've worked with them in the past—we're not fighting them all the time.

Waste Management had a joint recycling project with the Sierra Club and conservation groups. Our philosophy is to try to work with these groups.

We intend to develop good, sound, environmentally solid policies and procedures in all our operations. In time, we hope to be able to forego the use of chemicals in a lot of our operations. We'll just reduce the chemicals as much as possible.

- **Are you presently researching non-chemical alternatives?**

We're working on biological insecticides. We also want to expand our use of sludges for fertilizer. There are also other projects that are in their infancy.

- **How extensive are your research facilities?**

We have Waste Management's corporate R & D in the Chicago area and then there's Tru Green's R & D in Fremont, Ind.

The Tru Green lab has six full-time professional researchers. The Waste Management lab is larger. It is involved in research relating to lawn care, solid waste, hazardous waste and pest control.

Our goal is to be an industry leader in research related to products that are less controversial. But we feel the chemicals we use today are safe or we wouldn't use them.

- **How will the mergers affect the lawn care industry, long-term?**

Consolidation is helping to fund new research and development, which ultimately will benefit the industry. That's what happened in solid waste disposal.

I don't see Tru Green or ChemLawn gobbling everybody up. The small companies will benefit from the technological improvements the big companies make.

The solid waste disposal business was at this point (in terms of consolidation) in the late 1970s.

- **Tru Green has been at the forefront of acquisition activity. Will the acquisitions continue at the same pace as they have in the past?**

The tax changes that took effect in January have made it more difficult. Acquisition activity will slow down.

- **What sort of lawn care company do you look to acquire?**

We look at companies of all ages and sizes. If we have an existing operation in a given market, and another company can be incorporated into that operation, that makes for an attractive acquisition candidate.

A big consideration in acquisitions is people. We want people with experience.

Another consideration is market opportunity.

- **What sorts of changes do you make in a company after you acquire it?**

We don't change the management. Every market is different, so we leave operations and marketing up to the individual managers. They have a

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Nassau is a hybrid variety (P-59 X Baron) developed by Dr. C. Reed Funk of Rutgers University.

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lot of autonomy.

We offer the branch management purchasing benefits, technical support, data processing, regulatory support and financial support.

• **What do you see as the major challenge facing the lawn care industry?**

I see two challenges: customer retention and employee stability.

In the past, customer turnover has been an acceptable part of the business, as much as 90 to 100 percent in one year. We would like to see it below 30 percent.

In order to accomplish this, we need a more stable employee base.

• **How will this be accomplished?**

We need to treat the specialists as professionals. We have to make them feel proud of their jobs and we must develop incentive programs.

I have been out meeting employees and asking for input, face to face.

• **Customer growth has levelled off, industry-wide, in the last two years. Are there any new markets left?**

There is still a lot of new customer potential in all the markets. More and more people are going to look to us to provide them with environmentally sound programs. There's a tremendous future in lawn care.

Lawn care is something people don't want to bother with (doing themselves). Regulatory concerns will also be affecting the do-it-yourselfers more, too.

• **One geographic market the industry hasn't grown a lot in is the West—Tru Green is not in that region. Do you see potential there?**

We intend to be out west. We must establish a marketing strategy.

People there tend to want full (landscape maintenance) service. That's why a lot of the small, full-service companies are dominating that market.

In the Northwest, the customers are more like they are in the other parts of the country, but you don't have major population centers.

• **Speaking of full service, Tru Green is the only major lawn care firm that has acquired several mowing/management firms. Will these acquisitions continue?**

We will acquire those firms to support our lawn care operations, but I don't see them as a major acquisition leaning.

• **When Waste Management first bought Tru Green, officials said Waste offered Tru Green a ready supply of commercial customers. Has this "cross marketing" begun?**

No. I would assume that at some point in the future we would want to take advantage of that synergy that's avail-

'Lawn care is something people don't want to bother with. Regulatory concerns will also be affecting the do-it-yourselfers more, too.'

able.

However, we at Waste Management are still in the learning process with lawn care.

• **Tru Green is the only major lawn care firm that owns an equipment manufacturer, Professional Tree & Turf Equipment. Will that operation be expanded?**

We don't intend to expand on it. We're not in the equipment manufacturing business, per se.

• **How good is Tru Green's public visibility at the present time?**

Right now, our name recognition is not that good. We intend to develop public relations efforts to make Tru Green a household word. LCI

Investors buy Triazone

PARSIPPANY, N.J.—Triazone Corp., manufacturer of liquid, slow-release lawn care fertilizers, and its parent company, Arcadian Corp. will be bought by private investors.

The two companies will be bought by a newly-formed holding company, Fertilizer Industries, Inc. The sale is subject to shareholder approval.

Sterling Group of Houston, Tex. and Unicorn Ventures Fund of Cranford, N.J. will both hold equity ownership in Fertilizer Industries. Investment amounts were not revealed.

Arcadian and Triazone were previously owned by AAC Holdings, Inc., says Paul DeBartolo, Triazone president.

Under the new arrangement, Triazone will be a subsidiary of Arcadian, says DeBartolo.

He says the officers of both Triazone and Arcadian will remain the same. LCI



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OHIO

from Page 1

pre-notified if they request.

Safety cautions, as listed on the product's label, need to be issued to the customers. This can be done via an invoice left at the property after the application.

"We supported the rule, as did the Sierra Club," reports Jim Betts, executive director of the Ohio Pesticide Applicators for Responsible Regulation.

OPARR officials took an active role in formulating the regulations. Betts, who previously was a state legislator and candidate for governor, says



Betts: A reasonable rule.

OPARR testified at public hearings and met with state officials.

The process has resulted in increased prestige and clout for the organization. "The department (of agriculture) has accepted OPARR as a responsible spokesman for the indus-

try," Betts adds.

"It shows that the industry acts responsibly," says Lauren S. Lanphear, vice president of the Forest City Tree Protection Co. in South Euclid. Lanphear was OPARR's chairman since its inception in 1985 until April of last year. He remains on the board of trustees.

"I think we showed that we were willing to work with the legislative body," Lanphear notes.

The green industry's visible stance helped ensure that radical environmentalists did not cloud the judgment of state officials, says Lanphear.

"We wound up with a law that was ironed out through

rational thinking," he points out.

Lanphear is particularly pleased that the posting does not have an air of panic or fear about it. "It's a right-to-know issue, not a safety issue," he explains.

"We feel that this is a reasonable rule and that the lawn care industry should support it," says Betts.

An informal survey indicates that Ohio LCOs support OPARR's action.

"I think it's a good law compared to some of the others that I've read about in New York," says Jeff Bisker, president of Your Lawn, Inc. in Ashville.

Keith Waller, president of Perfecturf, Inc. in Mentor, says the regulations will promote "a more professional image for the industry and keep some of the non-professionals out."

The Ohio Landscapers Association supports the measure, says Tom Emmett, the president. "I've heard no complaints. We knew this was coming. It seems like the responsible thing to do."

Smaller outfits will be compelled to comply with the voluntary posting currently done by larger firms, Emmett points out. "I don't think they've asked us to do anything that's out of the ordinary or hard to do."

Emmett reports that already he's been solicited by two companies who make the signs. "They're right on top of it."

It took several years of negotiations between the industry, the state and environmentalists to hammer out the regulations.

The bill in its original form was acceptable to the industry, but the Sierra Club objected.

State officials came up with another version, but that was turned down by both the industry and the environmentalists.

According to Lanphear, OPARR then suggested that the state start over with the original proposal—since at least one group, the industry, supported it—and work from there.

The Sierra Club negotiators favored posting real estate sign-sized warnings at several locations on the property, they wanted the signs to contain more detail and more fearsome warnings, and they wanted the signs to remain up for a longer period of time.

Lanphear recalls that it soon became apparent to all the parties involved that the original less-restrictive proposal—with some modifications—would be the one to get the nod from the legislators.

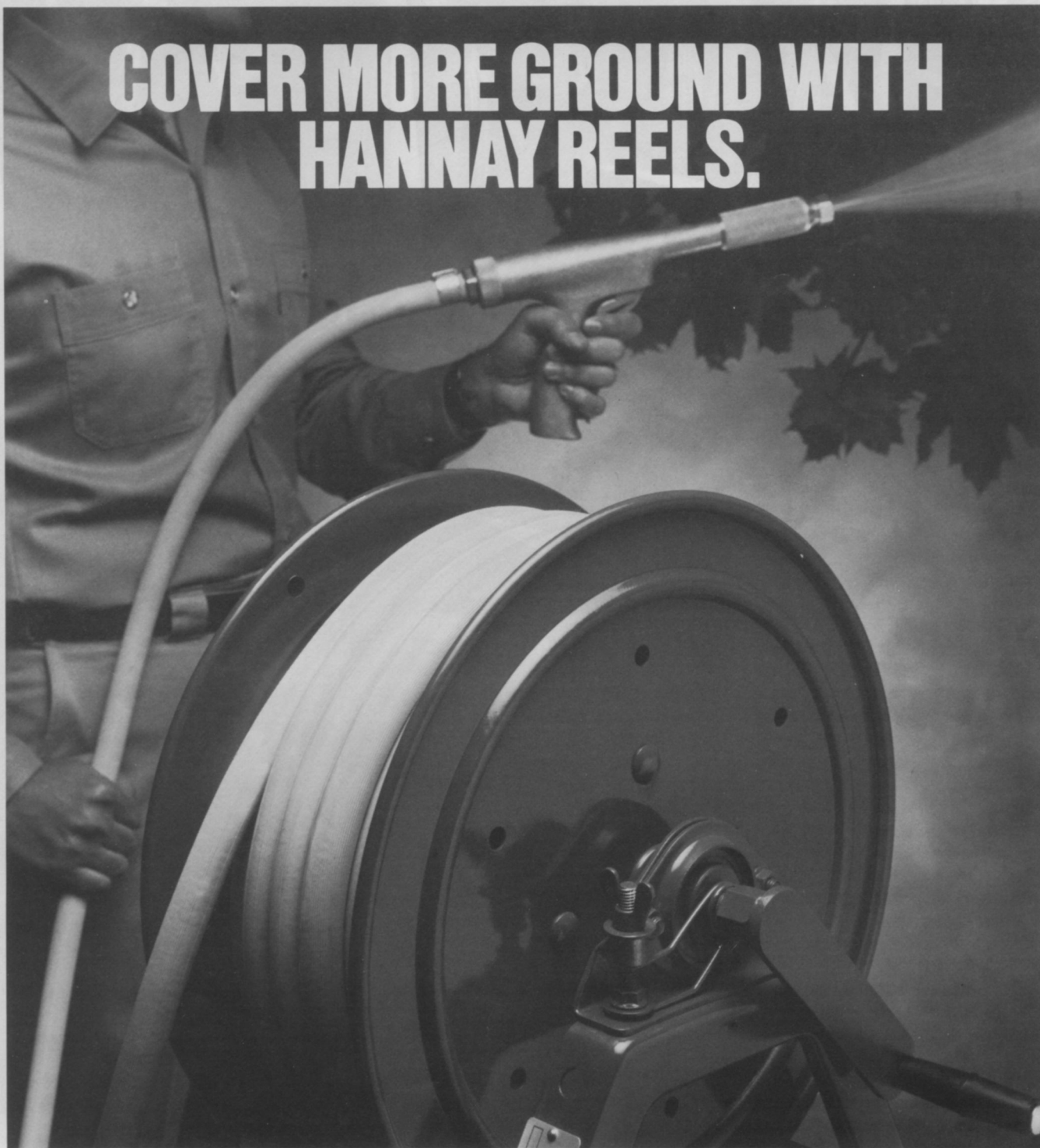
"I think the Sierra Club realized that they could get either some things or nothing at all," Lanphear observes.

Lanphear adds that some of the more radical environmentalists in the Cleveland area were displeased with their negotiating team, but the Sierra Club officials in Columbus (the state capital) had already given their word that the proposal would be acceptable as presented. "They agreed not to oppose it."

However, the environmentalists who are unhappy with the compromise are getting a good amount of press in the Cleveland area. A number of articles have been written about the recent turn of events.

Betts urges Ohio LCOs to do everything possible to cooperate with neighbors who wish to be notified. **LCI**

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RULINGS

from Page 1

ment of Environmental Conservation does not have the authority to make regulations that go beyond the scope of state law.

However, in the second case, United States Court of Appeals Circuit Judge Irving R. Kaufman ruled that the state is allowed to make such laws regulating pesticide use notification, including the requiring of customer contracts.

A coalition of industry groups unsuccessfully maintained that these laws constitute "labeling," and that the authority to make such laws belongs only to the U.S. Congress under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act.

"FIFRA 'labeling' is designed to be read and followed by the end user. Generally, it is conceived as being attached to the immediate container of the product in such a way that it can be expected to remain affixed during the period of use," writes Kaufman in the federal ruling.

"By contrast," he continues, "the target audience of the New York notification program is those innocent members of the general public who may happen upon an area where strong poisons are present as well as those who contract to have pesticides applied. The mere proximity of the warning, for example, notices posted around an enclosed field or copies of the EPA's labeling information provided to the contracting parties, does not transform the admonition into 'labeling' within the meaning of FIFRA."

Kaufman adds, "Notification requirements such as cover sheets, signs, and newspaper advertisements do not impair the integrity of the FIFRA label. Rather, they serve to further the purpose of the statute by enlisting state aid to prevent 'unreasonable adverse effects (of pesticide use) on the environment.'"

Kaufman's ruling, if upheld on appeal, means that each state could set up different standards for pesticide notification, says Elizabeth Seme, executive secretary of the New York State Green Council.

"There will be no conformity between states on any of these issues—all for the same chemical," Seme explains.

"The federal appeal is not only a disappointment, but may be a future problem," Seme observes.

However, Seme comments that the organization is pleased with the decision that declared certain state Department of Environmental Conservation regulations "null and void."

The New York Supreme Court ruled that DEC Commissioner Thomas C. Jorling

was, in effect, making laws with his restrictive regulations, and that those regulations go beyond the scope of what the legislature intended.

Jorling "has promulgated an administrative rule which is not consistent with the policies expressed in the statute but is 'out of harmony' with those policies," Cheeseman writes.

He goes on to say that Jorling "deviated from applying his technical expertise and ventured into a broader area of public interest," which is not permitted under the law. He notes that the legislature had made its intent known by previously rejecting several pro-



Burton: Wait and see.

posed laws containing Jorling's regulations.

The requirements in Jorling's regulations included a pre-notification plan that would have to specify in writing the exact day of an application. If it rained that day the process would have to begin all

over again. A number of signs would also have to be posted on a property.

Seme says it was fortunate that the regulations were turned down. "They would have been a nightmare for lawn care (professionals) to implement."

"We're thrilled that we won't have to contend with those regulations," reports Laurie Broccoli, manager of plant health operations for Ted Collins Associates, Ltd. in Victor.

"We're hoping that it won't be overturned on appeal."

Broccoli notes that "the DEC will have to go back to the drawing board," and that

she is concerned over what the agency will come up with next.

Her company has posted signs and provided pre-notification for a number of years, she adds.

At Lawn Medic, Inc. in Bergen, "We're posting, we have contracts, and we're giving pre-notification," says Don Burton, president.

The company has decided to "wait and see and do basically what we've done over the last few years."

Burton says that Lawn Medic is following a few of the now-voided DEC regulations. He uses 5-by-8-inch yellow signs with black type and some of the required wording. LCI

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ZERO

from Page 11

can do, but you have to learn how to use it—practice!”

“I’ve never lost a sale because someone couldn’t drive it—never!” says Evans at Dixie Chopper.

An operator can become “extremely good” in half a day, says LESCO’s Thompson.

“They’ll be mowing with it in 30 minutes,” says Ron Hayden, new products manager at Pro Star.

His company boasts of the most famous zero-turn radius mower user: Boston Celtics basketball star Larry Bird. “He mows with it all the time,” Hayden reports. “He’s got the roughest yard I’ve ever seen in my life.”

Bird’s spread in French Lick, Ind. is built on old farm land, and the Pro Star provides a good cut, Hayden explains.

Bird feels as comfortable steering the mower as he does making jump shots on the parquet basketball court at Boston Garden. “He’s said that one of his favorite pastimes is mowing grass.”

Zero-turn radius mowers are relatively new as far as the technology goes, but industry experts say the bugs in the machines that may have turned people off in the past have been eliminated.

In the early days of the zero-turn concept, “There were a lot of flower beds that went under the mower deck,” recalls Jack Steinhour as he discusses the now-defunct Hesston Front Run-

ner of the 1970s.

Steinhour is advertising manager at Woods, which markets the Mow’n Machine. The company is owned by Hesston.

Although the Front Runner was costly and hard to get used to, it was an innovative design. “Like the Lincoln Zephyr, the machine was a little too advanced for the market,” Steinhour says.

Newer zero-turning radius models have larger engines and beefed-up cooling systems. These are needed because the engine is running all the time, and it doesn’t get a chance to “rest” like a tractor engine would between swaths, says Evans.

The first zero-turn radius mower was built in 1955. “We’re the original,” says Max Swisher, president of the Swisher Mower and Machine Co., Inc.

The Ride King mower does not have hydrostatic steering. Instead it has a single drive wheel in front that can pivot 180 degrees. Reversing the wheel reverses the mower.

John Regier is generally credited with inventing the traditional zero-turn radius mower in 1964. He got the idea from a combine-like swather that was used to cut alfalfa.

“John Regier said, ‘Hey, that’d be perfect for a lawnmower,’” according to Ken Raney, advertising manager at Excel Industries, Inc., makers of Hustler mowers.

“He went home and built one in his garage.” The 36-inch mower “had belts everywhere, but it worked.”

Regier devised the first offset mower

deck because it was needed to ensure that the belts all matched up. He later discovered that the offset deck made it easier to trim up close.

At the time, Excel made only tractor cabs, which were strictly an after-market add-on. As the tractor makers decided to include cabs with the finished product, Excel “was looking for something else” to make.

Enter Mr. Regier and his unique mower.

Excel’s Ray Rilling, who worked in the maintenance department, created a hydraulic drive unit in his garage at home—and the Hustler mower line was born.

“The cab industry took a downturn for us, and the mowers took an upturn for us,” Raney says.

Zero-turn radius mowers tend to cost more. But, they also tend to hold up longer, according to industry experts.

The machines can also be used for snow plowing during the winter. A number of brands, such as Snapper, offer a complete line of snow removal accessories.

The Commercial Clipper, a new zero-turn radius mower made by Shivers, Inc., comes with a 4-year/4,000 commercial service limited warranty.

With most mowers, “By the time it mows enough to pay for itself all you have left is junk,” says Evans at Dixie Chopper.

With his brand, “It’s not a throw-away lawnmower. It’s not cheap.” Prices for the 11 models range from \$4995 to \$8995.

The single-front-wheel Ride King sells for under \$1,000.

The Exmark Explorer retails for \$6,799.

Walker mowers sell for \$4,500 to \$7,000, but contractor Russo is not concerned. “The cost is over double, but the performance is over triple,” he says. “When I first started my business I tried all the mowers—and I still do,” he concludes. **LCI**

EPA

from Page 1

cial turf and golf course uses due to concern about runoff into lakes, ponds and streams, says Hal Paul, marketing manager for Mobay’s specialty products group. Runoff tests are presently under way at Pennsylvania State University.

Mobay will promote Tempo this summer for tick control in response to public concern about Lyme disease, Paul says.

He says Mobay expects approval for commercial turf and golf course uses by next season.

Confront is composed of an amine salt formation containing one part clopyralid to three parts triclopyr per gallon. Both active ingredients act as a plant hormone mimic, disrupting plant cell growth.

Initial control results are noticed four to six days after treatment, according to Rob Peterson, Dow’s turf marketing manager. Triclopyr controls ground ivy, oxalis, spurge, violets, chickweed and speedwell, among others, while clopyralid controls such weeds as musk thistle, clover, dandelion and plantain.

“Together, these two active ingredients that form our herbicide give lawn care firms excellent broad spectrum weed control,” says Peterson. **LCI**

State affairs director hired by PLCAA

MARIETTA, GA.—The Professional Lawn Care Association of America has hired Thomas Delaney as its director of state government affairs, a newly-created position. He assumed his new role on June 1.

Delaney worked for the Georgia Department of Agriculture’s pesticide division for 15 years, most recently as agriculture manager. **LCI**



Tom Delaney

EPA seeks diazinon data

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Concern about toxicity to birds has prompted the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to gather data on diazinon use on home lawns. Regulatory action could be taken, pending review of the data.

The agency yanked diazinon from use on golf courses and sod farms because of bird kills, in April of 1988.

“We are reviewing it and we will make a decision after the data is reviewed,” says Spencer Duffy, the EPA’s review manager for diazinon. He says the product is still registered for use on home lawns. LCOs and homeowners use diazinon to control grubs.

Ed Brandt, an economist with the agency’s benefits and economic analysis division, has been put in charge of assessing the product’s benefits for home lawn use. He says the agency is concerned about toxicity to birds.

Officials for Ciba Geigy Corp., a major supplier of diazinon based in Greensboro, N.C., have been meeting with EPA officials since late last summer on the matter. **LCI**

St. Paul examines lawn chemicals

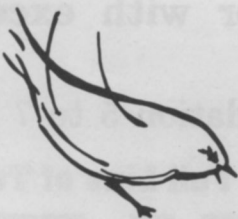
ST. PAUL, MINN.—The city of St. Paul has decided to set up a task force to examine lawn pesticides as they relate to groundwater contamination. The resolution states the city needs a plan to phase out detrimental practices.

The Toxic Chemical Task Force will hold public hearings and make recommendations to the city council regarding new rules “and the possible banning of non-organic chemical fertilizers and pesticides.”

The resolution calls for the task force to consist of two representatives from environmental groups, two lawn care industry representatives, one solid and water conservation district person, one agricultural education representative, a person involved in a recycling program, and two youths. **LCI**

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106	121	136	151	166	181	196	211	226	241	256	271	286	301	316	331	346
107	122	137	152	167	182	197	212	227	242	257	272	287	302	317	332	347
108	123	138	153	168	183	198	213	228	243	258	273	288	303	318	333	348
109	124	139	154	169	184	199	214	229	244	259	274	289	304	319	334	349
110	125	140	155	170	185	200	215	230	245	260	275	290	305	320	335	350
111	126	141	156	171	186	201	216	231	246	261	276	291	306	321	336	351
112	127	142	157	172	187	202	217	232	247	262	277	292	307	322	337	352
113	128	143	158	173	188	203	218	233	248	263	278	293	308	323	338	353
114	129	144	159	174	189	204	219	234	249	264	279	294	309	324	339	354
115	130	145	160	175	190	205	220	235	250	265	280	295	310	325	340	355

LAWN CARE INDUSTRY

JULY 1989

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1. CHECK BELOW YOUR PRIMARY BUSINESS AT THIS LOCATION:

A. LAWN CARE COMPANY: Read each choice before answering.

- 10** ☐ Chemical lawn care company
20 ☐ Mowing/management lawn care company and/or landscape contractor
30 ☐ Both chemical lawn care company and mowing/management lawn care company and/or landscape contractor

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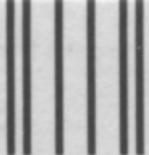
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C. OTHER (specify) _____

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NEW PRODUCTS



New Billy Goat blower has higher horsepower
Billy Goat Industries, Inc., Lee's Summit, Mo., has added an 11 horsepower blower to its line of Quiet Blow leaf and debris blowers.

The QB-1100 features a lightweight 14-blade fan that runs 400 to 500 rpms faster than 8 horsepower blowers.

The machine is able to offer quieter performance and better cleaning power than other brands on the market, according to the company.

The QB-1100 has a vibration-reducing dampening system for the handlebars, and it is designed to be well-balanced and easy to operate, according to the company. **LCI**

Circle No. 130 on service card.



Grow Gun injects material into plants, turf
Grow Gun Corp., Arvada, Colo., introduces a new product called the Grow Gun Probe.

It comes in three sizes.

The probes inject fertilizers, water and air into the root systems of plants.

The device can be used on trees, shrubs and lawns in tight places. It can help treat fairy ring, according to the company.

The three probes can operate via pneumatic pruning equipment. An air compressor of 15 CFM will work the mini-probe model. **LCI**

Circle No. 131 on service card.

Husqvarna trimmer stays close, balanced

A new string trimmer designed for easy access to hard-to-reach places and reduced user fatigue is now available from Husqvarna Forest & Garden Co.

The Husqvarna Model 26RLC features a 48-inch-



long curved shaft for use around shrubs, flower beds, walls and corners.

According to the company, the well-balanced trimmer weighs 11.8 pounds and features a narrow engine housing for operation close to the body. The result is less strain on the operator's shoulders and back.

It has a 26 cc engine. **LCI**
Circle No. 132 on service card.

Restore fading mulch with LESCO product

A new spray-on product that restores color to old, faded mulch is now available from LESCO, Inc. in Rocky River,



Ohio.

One application of LESCO Nu-Mulch keeps old mulch looking fresh and new for at least two months, according to the company.

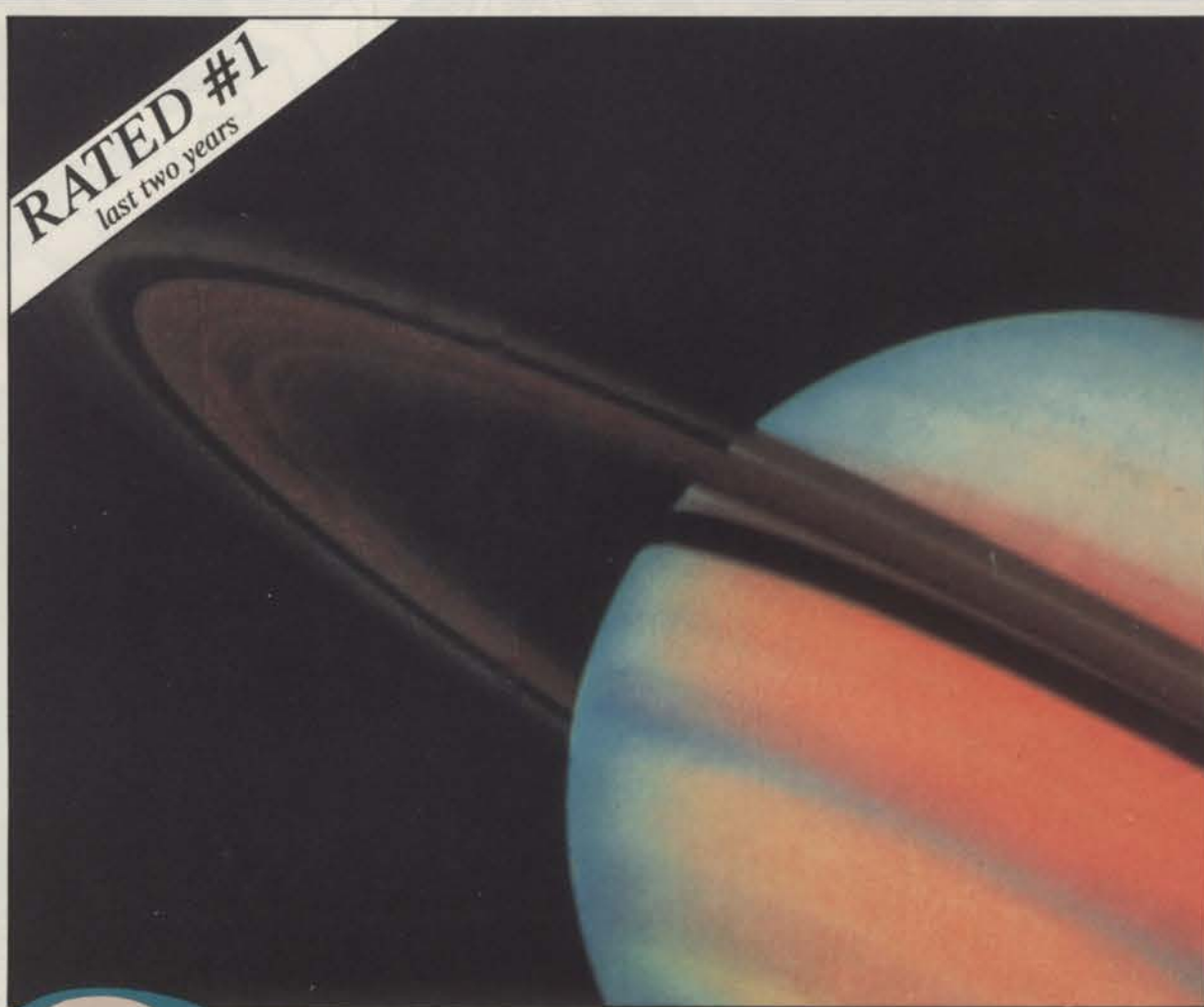
The colorant is environmentally safe, inert and non-toxic to plants.

The material is applied with a hand-held or larger sprayer after being mixed with water.

According to LESCO, the cost of spraying with Nu-Mulch is 50 to 60 percent less than the labor and materials needed to topdress beds with new mulch. **LCI**

Circle No. 133 on service card.

New frontiers in turf technology



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Circle No. 125 on Reader Inquiry Card

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CURB KING: Curbing machine that lays continuous concrete landscape borders. Low investment, high returns. For information call 303-434-5337 or write PO Box 40567, Grand Junction, CO 81504. 9/89

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HANNAY HOSE REELS: New in the box. E1526's and E1530's - \$349.00 We will ship and pay freight anywhere in the U.S.A. and Canada. Immediate delivery. Other size reels and parts available at fabulous savings! Call 313-543-2200, in Michigan. Outside Michigan - 1-800-843-LAWN. TF

ROYER DIRT SHREDDER Model 182. In Excellent Condition. \$9,000 or B/O. 313-243-3382 or 313-243-8522 Evenings. Jack's Lawn Service, Monroe, Mich. 7/89

USED CHIPPERS, BUCKET TRUCKS, BOOM TRUCKS: Stump grinders, stake bodies, tree trucks and dumps. New Morbark and Woodchuck Chippers. Rayco stump grinders at discount prices. We also buy trucks and equipment. Opdyke, Inc., Hatfield, PA (Phil. area) 215-721-4444. 7/89

Bowie Hydromulcher 1100: Trailer mounted with extra duty suspension and extra wide tires. Kubota Diesel powered with heavy duty clutches and powertrain, centrifugal pump and electric hose reel with hose. Well maintained. No rust. \$11,900. Call Gary at (317)873-5231. 7/89

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Excellent positions in the irrigation & landscape industry are available now. Call **Florapersonnel**, the international employee search firm for the ornamental horticulture industry. Completely confidential. Employer pays fee. **Florapersonnel, P.O. Box 1732, 1450 S. Woodland Blvd., Suite 201, Deland, FL 32721-1732. (904)738-5151.** Jim Bambrick, Jeff Brower, David Shaw, CPC, Bob Zahra, CPC. TF

MAJOR LAWN CARE COMPANY needs to fill middle management field staff position in the Dallas area. Related degree preferred, but must have hands-on experience in lawn and ornamental care. Must have strong communications skills and be willing to travel. Good benefits. Resume and salary history to LCI Box 210. TF

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THE LAST WORD

Publications cut down diseases, injuries

Nipping tree diseases in the bud and cutting down on worker injuries may be a little easier for contractors following the release of two new publications.

Husqvarna Forest & Garden Co. of Itasca, Ill. has issued a free, 32-page booklet that extensively covers several main subjects regarding chain saw use, including safety, directional felling, sweep limbing and cross-cutting.

The *Husqvarna Work*

Technique for Limbing and Felling features color photographs of sawyers in action, and it has clear drawings to illustrate the methods.

The booklet is written in a bright, understandable style.

The company can be contacted at 907 Irving Park Road, Itasca, Ill. 60143; (312) 773-2777.

No urban forester should be without the latest book by Alex L. Shigo, Ph.D.

Entitled, *Tree Pruning: A Worldwide Photo Guide*, the



JAMES E. GUYETTE
MANAGING
EDITOR

186-page project, printed on glossy paper, is crammed full of beautiful color shots.

This tome would be equally at home on your coffee table or on the dashboard of your pickup.

Some of the photos are

stunning in their stark depictions of tree care gone bad.

And Alex's clear text explains fully the proper techniques and attitudes needed to avoid those unfortunate examples.

The book is being translated into Italian and German, and plans are in the making to possibly publish a Spanish-language edition.

Alex, who is currently a noted consultant in the green industry, spent 26 years working as chief scientist for

a division of the United States Forest Service.

He has dissected more than 15,000 trees with a chain saw, and his worldwide research has resulted in 270 publications.

(A number of cutaway color photos of these chain saw dissections are included in the book.)

"A major problem throughout the history of tree pruning has been the scant attention given to pruning as it affects the health of trees, while great attention has been given to pruning as it affects the desires of man," he writes in the preface.

"In this guide I discuss pruning for the desires of man, but also for the health of trees and their associates."

In urban settings a fallen tree limb that results in property damage, injury or death is often dismissed as a tragic Act of God.

Alex makes the point that many times these unfortunate accidents are not really accidents, but events that can be predicted—and avoided—through proper tree care.

Among other things, pruning practices are discussed at length as Alex details some common blunders associated with tree damage:

✗ The wrong tree can be planted in the wrong place, leading to mutilation to make it fit.

✗ Flush cuts can destroy the tree's defense system.

✗ Ditto for stub cuts.

✗ Topping often creates a weakened, hazardous tree.

Alex believes that if you have to top a tree it's time to replace that tree. And don't plant trees under powerlines.

✗ Overpruning causes a number of unhealthy and dangerous results.

✗ Allowing "included bark" branches to continue growth can lead to branch failure. Included bark happens when two smaller branches form one big one, resulting in cracks along the old bark line.

✗ And wound dressings are inappropriate. They do not stop rot, and some dressings actually stimulate it.

Readers with a philosophical bent will enjoy Alex's musings along with the technical advice. Urban foresters will appreciate the biology behind tree care.

Some may feel that they're, uh, out on a limb without this fascinating book.

To obtain *Tree Pruning: A Worldwide Photo Guide* contact Shigo and Trees, Associates, 4 Denbow Road, Durham, N.H., 03824-3105; (603) 868-7459.

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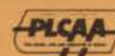
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