

Task force clarifies 2,4-D/dioxin controversy

Restrictions imposed against 2,4-D products by Agriculture Canada because of the presence of some chlorodibenzo-p-dioxins (dioxins) in certain 2,4-D herbicide formulations are an unwarranted regulatory action from a hazard assessment perspective, said the Industry Task Force on 2,4-D Research Data.

The herbicide 2,4-D is com-

monly used by lawn care businessmen in the United States in customer weed control programs.

Canadian scientists analyzing 2,4-D did not find any 2,3,7,8-TCDD, the most toxic of the dioxin compounds based on laboratory animal studies. Using a newly developed and yet unvalidated analytical technique, Canadian

to page 29

Equipment	% readers owning	number per owner	projection to LCI readership
Spray tanks			
Less than 500 gallons	71.8%	2.3	15,000
500-1,200 gallons	20.5	2.7	5,200
More than 1,200 gallons	3.4	7.4	2,300
Granular applicators	86.0	4.2	34,000
Seeders	67.9	2.3	15,000
Dethatchers	56.5	1.6	8,700
Aerators	46.6	1.4	6,300
Pickup trucks	93.1	3.8	34,000

Source: LCI Survey

See story, page 7.

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AUGUST 1981

LAWN CARE INDUSTRY

Serving lawn maintenance and chemical lawn care professionals



EXECUTIVE SUITE

Jacobsen names Dwyer president

John R. Dwyer, Jr., has been appointed president of the Jacobsen Div. of Textron, Inc., according to Egil G. Rudd, Textron group vice president. Jacobsen is based in Racine, Wis.

Rudd said Dwyer will immediately resume responsibility for all management phases of the

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COMPETITIVE PRICING?

Lowballers give industry black eye, lawn care businessmen say

You've gone into a lawn care market and are doing just fine. Although the economy is strapped, money is found for property improvements and your accounts are building. There are a few competitors, but they're good sorts. And besides, competition is good for business, you say — an action marketplace.

But then suddenly things start going haywire. You go out and measure a job only to be told that your quote is a little too much higher than your competitor's. He can do the job for \$30 less, they say. And that's when it dawns on you that the first punch has been thrown in a sometimes grizzly duel known as "lowballing."

What is lowballing? It's not just the price damping that occurs

when the supply of a service exceeds the demand. That's bound to happen when markets become crowded. Lowballing occurs when a company sets a price on their service that cannot reasonably

cover the cost of labor and materials.

"It's terrible out there," says David Lyons of J & L Landscaping in Derwood, Maryland. "You go out and bid a job and then find that someone else has placed a bid that is in no way based on the price of materials. They just can't do this and come out ahead."

Now, most businessmen can arrange to pick up inexpensive material at one time or another. That's in the nature of doing business and can help bidding competition. But when cheaper products are used consistently to help lower job costs, someone has to suffer, whether it's the customer, the workers, or the business community in general.

While Lyons is primarily a landscape contractor, and does lawn maintenance as a sideline, he is concerned over the effects of price undercutting. "The economy has a lot to do with it," he said. "People are frightened of the future, and when a job comes along, they drive for it, no matter what the means."

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Larry Brandt of Spray-A-Lawn, Cincinnati, Ohio: "It is usually done by those companies that hire a guy on straight commissions. Then he'll sometimes undermeasure just to keep his quota up."

QUICK STARTS

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MOWING/MAINTENANCE

Condo work calls for comprehensive contracts

Most mowing/maintenance businessmen will tell you about the law of diminishing returns that operates in their work. It goes something like this: For every extra square foot they maintain, they face a greater chance of running into mowing obstacles. Bricks, gardens, slopes, steps, fences and tree-wells are the bugbears of volume business.

That's why big commercial lots are choice accounts. It's good

flat-out cutting without having to dice around too many corners.

And then there's a kind of job that combines the volume of commercial work with the detail of residential — the apartment or condominium job. Some companies go for it in a big way. Others won't touch it. The question is why?

LAWN CARE INDUSTRY asked a number of mowing/maintenance companies owners around the

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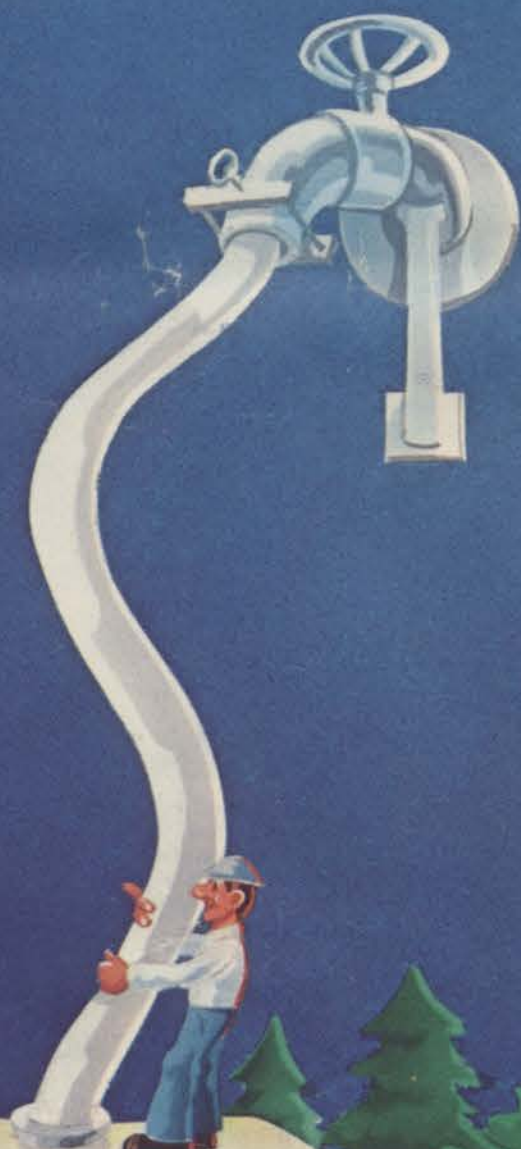
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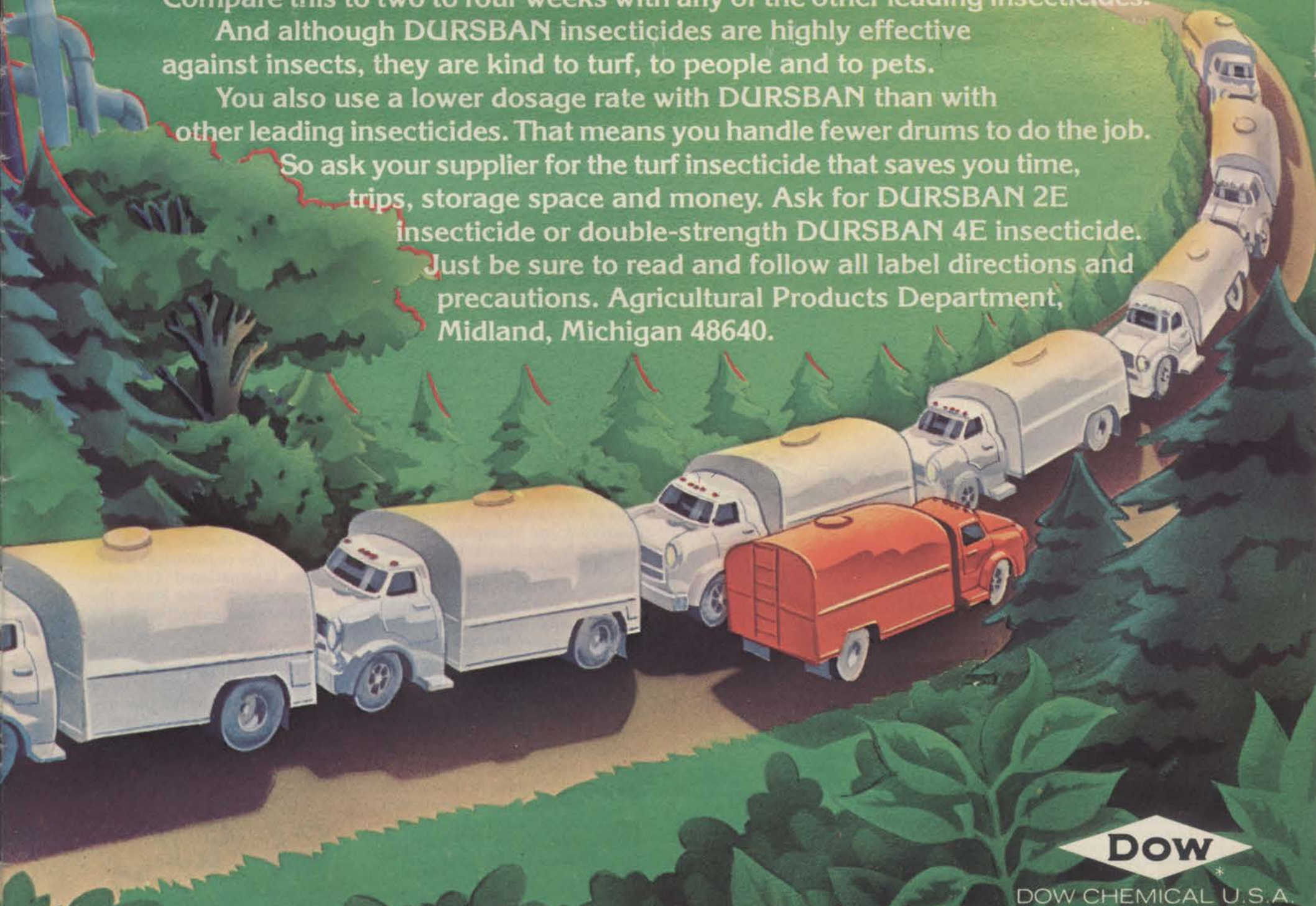
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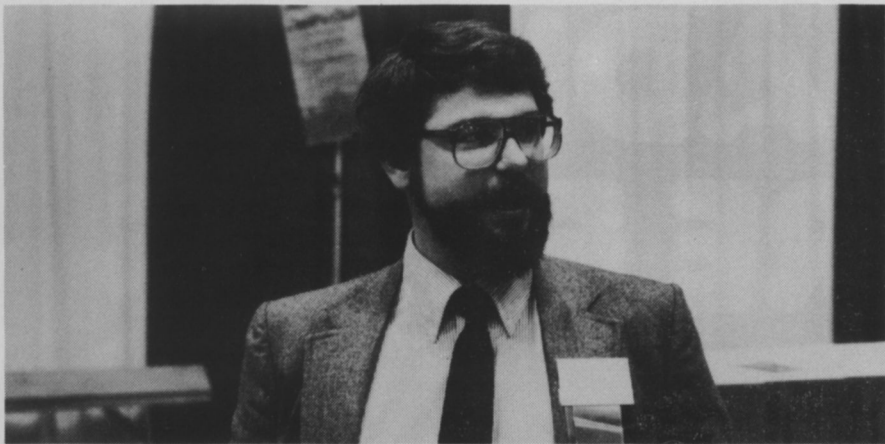
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Who's in the second 50?

If you as a **chemical lawn care or mowing/maintenance** businessman could pull up stakes and start your business over in any city in the country, where would you do it?

You might start by thumbing a few pages back in this issue to our "Inside the Industry" feature on the **top 50 lawn care markets**. You might take the easy route and choose one of the cities that is sure to move up in the rankings when complete single-family housing and population statistics from the

1980 Census are available. A list of these cities would include: St. Louis, Dallas, Houston, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, Atlanta, Denver, Louisville, Hartford, Conn., Albany, N.Y., Oklahoma City or Memphis.

And if you were a good businessman you could probably give it a pretty good go in any of these cities. As has been pointed out in earlier issues of **LAWN CARE INDUSTRY**, **less than 10 percent** of single-family homes in the United States are presently

being serviced by a lawn care company. And where there is the population that can support a goodly number of single-family homes, there are the commercial/industrial properties and apartment/condominium complexes, which means plenty of work for the mowing/maintenance businessman.

In fact, if you are a good businessman, you can probably take your business anywhere and make money. But if you had your choice to **start all over again**, would you really want to open up shop in Cleveland, where there are at least five companies doing television advertising? Or in Dayton, Ohio, where it has been reported that 60 percent of the homes are receiving lawn care services?

Many lawn care businessmen that I have spoken with continue to talk about the non-major metropolitan area lawn care market potential. We gave you the top 50 cities in our "Inside the Industry" this month, now what about **the second 50**? I am sitting here in my office in New York with enough files and paper full of statistics to choke a horse. And I'd be remiss if I didn't give you a few tips based on these statistics. **Free of charge**, of course, and in no particular order.

I'll start with some cities that have higher-than-average **per household income**. **Toledo, Ohio** is one of them. The per household income is a \$24,474, with a population of 780,000. **Grand Rapids, Mich.** is another (once the auto industry gets back on its feet) with a per household income of \$26,104 and a population of 614,000. Another area that sticks out like a sore thumb in the statistics is the area that includes the New Jersey cities of **New Brunswick, Perth Amboy and Sayreville**. Per household income there is \$28,821 with population of more than 584,000.

There are more. **Wilmington, Del.**, the home of many major chemical companies like Du Pont and BFC Chemicals, has a per household income of \$22,508, and a population of 523,000. The North Carolina area that includes **Raleigh and Durham** has a per household income of \$23,738 and a population in excess of 494,000. **Knoxville, Tenn.** has a per household income of \$23,671 and a population of 469,000.

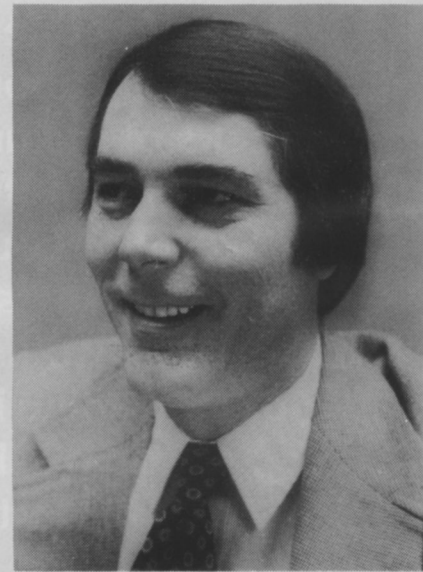
Tennessee seems to be a ripe area of the country. In addition to **Knoxville and Memphis**, there is also the **Nashville-Davidson** area, which boasts a per household income of \$22,401 and a population of 804,000. And while **Chatanooga and the Johnson City-Kingsport-Bristol** areas of Tennessee do not have as high per household income averages as other parts of the country, it would still seem that there is the population there that might support a substantial lawn care industry.

As a kicker to my hot tips, here are the last 10 cities in the top 100 that have not been mentioned previously: **Tacoma, Wash., Mobile, Ala., Harrisburg, Pa.** (with a per household income of \$26,617), **Albuquerque, N.M., Canton, Ohio, Las Vegas, Charleston, S.C., Wichita, Kans., Fort**

Wayne, Ind., and Columbia, S.C.

Assistant editor Paul McCloskey has two major features that start on page one of this issue. The first is on the topic of "**lowballing**." Just about every lawn care businessman I know keeps two files. One is a clip file of his competitor's ads. The other is his "lowball" file, where he keeps track of how he has been **undercut** on a residential chemical lawn care job by under-measuring or other means, or how he has been **underbid** on a commercial mowing/maintenance job by a price he knows his competitor cannot make money on. Paul has more to say on the issue in his "Memos" column in the back of the book.

His other major feature is based on interviews he conducted with mowing/maintenance businessmen across the country on how they handle **apartment/condominium jobs**. As he says in his story, you have to have a comprehensive contract to protect yourself from criticism of both management firms and owner/renter boards. But it is steady work if you can get it, and it keeps cash flow up.



Brooks

Finally, I am very pleased to announce a major addition to the **LAWN CARE INDUSTRY** team. Effective with this issue, **Jim Brooks** has been named **national sales manager** of our magazine. He has been involved in the turf industry for the past eight years. Most recently he was publisher of **GOLF BUSINESS** magazine, which has been merged with our sister publication — **WEEDS TREES & TURF**. Prior to that, Jim was director of marketing with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, where he headed up the organization's prestigious international Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show, the largest turfgrass exhibition in the world.

Jim brings experience and knowledge to **LAWN CARE INDUSTRY**. And besides that, there is nobody I know in the industry that is willing to stay up as late at turfgrass conferences talking turf more than Jim. He'll fit right in around here.

Bob Earley

LAWN CARE INDUSTRY

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FACTS**

28-day label to 26019 fungicide

Rhone-Poulenc Chemical Co.'s Agrochemical Division has announced that Chipco 26019 fungicide has been registered by the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to control turf diseases on lawns for up to 28 days.

The up-to-28 days registration is for preventive control of the important spring and summer turf

diseases: dollar spot (including benomyl-resistant strains), brown patch and *Helminthosporium* leaf spot and melting out.

With Chipco 26019, the lawn care businessman now has the means to include disease control in his lawn care program, the company said. The fungicide's long-lasting control fits well with the lawn care businessman's schedule and the effective control should not require callbacks.

For more information, contact: Rhone Poulenc Chemical Co., Agrochemical Div., P.O. Box 125, Monmouth Junction, NJ 08852.

MOWING/MAINTENANCE

OPEI expands scope; includes commercial turf care products

The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI) board has expanded the association's membership scope to include commercial turf care equipment.

Howard Price Turf Equipment, Chesterfield, Mo., is the first all-commercial manufacturing company to join OPEI under the new expansion.

OPEI represents a majority of commercial turf care manufacturers due to the fact that several of its existing members manufacture commercial as well as consumer products.

Last year the industry shipped more than 85,000 commercial walk-behind mowers valued at more than \$25 million, and more than 18,000 riding rotary turf mowers valued in excess of \$56 million.

A voluntary safety standard for commercial turf care equipment (ANSI 871.4) was drafted through OPEI and approved by the American National Standards Institute in March 1980.

An OPEI safety seal program, calling for certification by an independent testing laboratory, will be created for commercial turf care equipment.

Before the program is started, however, OPEI will complete revisions of the ANSI B71.4-1980 standard to resolve any unintentional ambiguities in the document.

The safety seal program will be similar to the one already in place for the ANSI power mower and snow thrower standards. The OPEI

board of directors voted in January that safety seals indicating compliance with the standard as determined by an independent lab shall be available for all OPEI-represented products covered by a voluntary standard.

LCI SURVEY

70% of readers own 500 gal. spray tanks, 20% own 500-1,200 gal. tanks

A recent survey conducted by **LAWN CARE INDUSTRY** magazine showed that 72 percent of its readers own a spray tank of less than 500 gallon capacity, 21 percent own a spray tank of between 500 and 1,200 gallon capacity and three percent own a spray tank of more than 1,200 gallon capacity.

Specific figures showed that 71.8 percent of the magazine's readers own an average of 2.3 spray tanks of less than 500 gallon capacity. For spray tanks of between 500 and 1,200 gallon capacity, 20.5 percent of the readers said they own an average of 2.7 units. For spray tanks of more than 1,200 gallon capacity, 3.4 percent

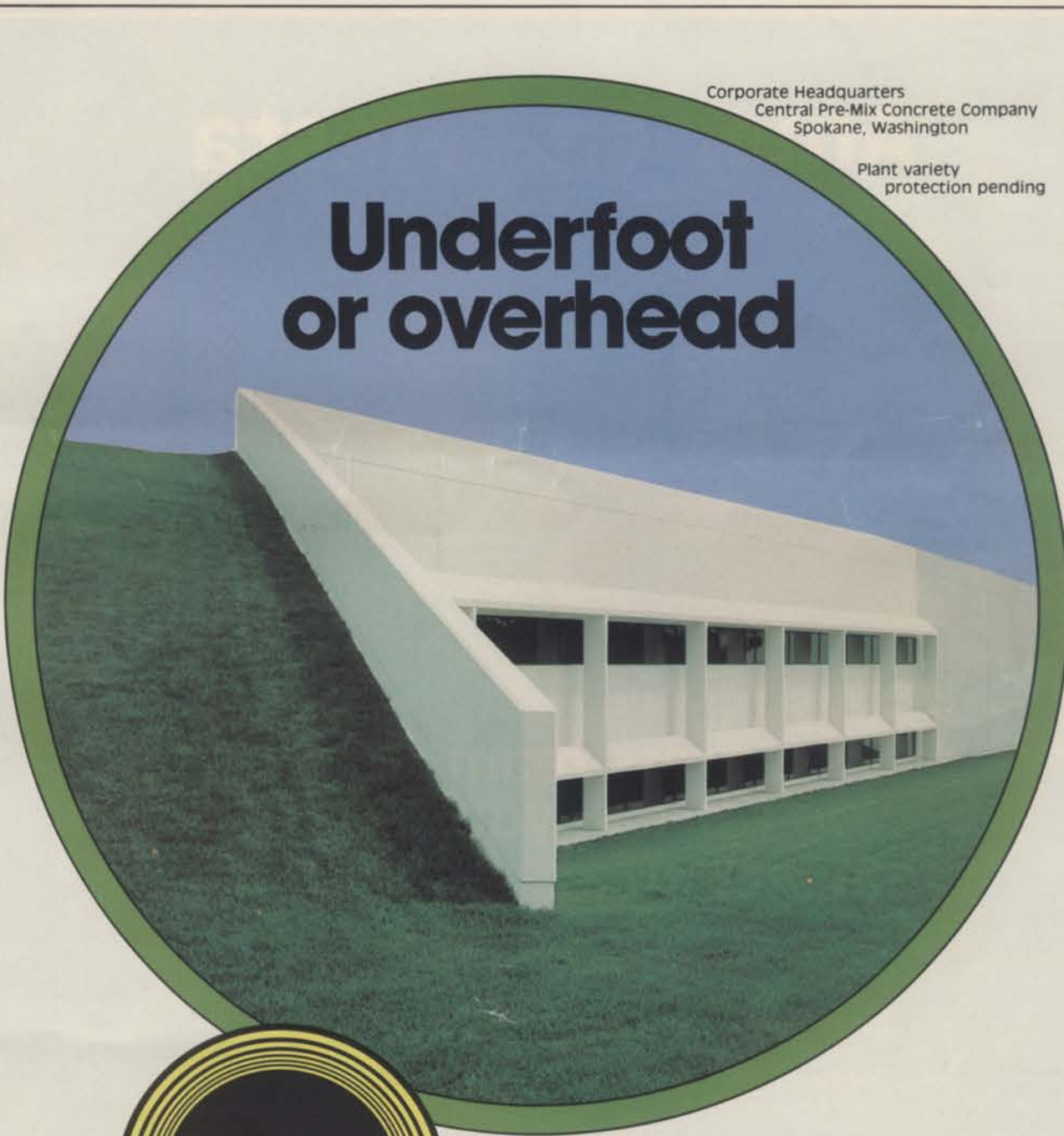
of the readers said they own an average of 7.4 units.

For granular applicators, 86 percent of the readers said they own an average of 4.2 units. For seeders, 67.9 percent of the readers said

Equipment chart, p. 1

they own an average of 2.3 units. For aerators, 46.6 percent of the readers said they own an average of 1.4 units. And for pickup trucks, 93.1 percent of the readers said they own an average of 3.8 units.

For a complete copy of the survey, contact: Bob Earley, Editor/Publisher, **LAWN CARE INDUSTRY**, 757 Third Ave., New York, NY 10017.



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- TWIN CITY SEED COMPANY**, 500 30th Ave., N.E., Minneapolis, Minn.
- ROTHWELL SEEDS (IN CANADA)**, P.O. Box 511, Lindsay, Ontario



"Just tell him it's Otis Phipps. He'll remember me from the last batch of seed I sold him."

Three's a crowd: Some tips on foiling the unions

by Richard I. Lehr

Few legal problems have as profound an impact on the future of a business as an attempt by a labor organization to represent an employer's business. A typical lawn care employer has built his business alone, and prides himself on his ability to work with employes for a more successful lawn care company.

One factor contributing to the lawn care employer's success has been his ability to make decisions promptly while in full control of his business.

A union is in the business of interposing itself between the employer and his employes. Thus,

instead of the lawn care employer retaining his freedom to make decisions as he chooses, a union would require the employer to consult with it before implementing certain business decisions.

The expression, "two's company, three's a crowd," succinctly describes how a union affects the employer-employee relationship. An employer has a greater likelihood of continued prosperity and smooth functioning when he and the employes are the "two." But add a union to the situation, and then the lawn care employer is faced with a "crowd" which promises to be cumbersome and

potentially unmanageable.

In other articles, I discussed why employes unionize, and how a lawn care employer and his supervisors can prevent employes from seeking or joining labor organizations (see LAWN CARE INDUSTRY, October and December, 1980). In this article, assume that a lawn care employer's preventive activities have not worked, or that he does not have a union prevention program, and a union begins to organize his employes. How should the lawn care employer respond?

Are you a "target?"

Though we read about unions choosing certain employers or industries for organizing attempts, the majority of employers are organized because their current employes initiate the contact with the union.

Typically, and particularly when a business employs less than

50 employes, union infiltration begins when an employe or employes who are dissatisfied with a particular area, supervisor or issue at work believe that seeking a union to represent them will improve their working conditions.

Once the employes walk into a union organizer's office, the organizer elicits as much information from those employes about the company as possible, including finances, personalities, physical layout, working hours and locations, and the issues which disturb employes.

The union organizer, who is a professional at this task, then either investigates further and turns the employes away, or decides that the lawn care employer could be a "target" for unionization.

The organizer works through employes, seeking a "leader" among the employes who will "talk union" during working time. The organizer will distribute literature and talk to employes about the advantages of unionization and how his union can improve those issues which disturb employes by gaining concessions from the lawn care employer at the bargaining table. The organizer may meet in employes' homes, in local bars, or at union offices.

50% of employe signatures

The union will attempt to get employes to sign union "authorization cards." These cards will include an employe's address and phone number, and an employe's signature will authorize the union to request the National Labor Relations Board to conduct an election or also designate the union as that employe's exclusive bargaining agent.

When the union obtains the signatures of at least 50 percent of the employes in the working unit, the union may present the cards to the employer and ask that he recognize the union as the collective bargaining representative of the employes.

At no time should the lawn care employer count these authorization cards or verify the names on a petition requesting recognition. The employer is entitled to a secret ballot election conducted by the National Labor Relations Board for employes to decide whether or not they wish to be represented by the union.

Petition for election

If the employer counts the names or the authorization cards, he may have voluntarily recognized the union and thereby may have precluded himself from seeking a secret ballot election. If a union representative or an employe hands those materials to the employer, the employer should tell the individual to take the materials and leave his office immediately.

If the union or an employe does not present authorization cards to the employer, he probably will take the cards to the National Labor Relations Board and file a petition for election. The National Labor Relations Board may authorize conducting an election if a collective bargaining representative obtains at least 30 percent of the eligible employes' signatures

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on a petition or authorization cards.

As a practical matter, unions rarely ask for an election unless they have the signatures of considerably more than 50 percent of the employees.

Frequently, the first time an employer learns about a union campaign is when he receives a petition from the National Labor Relations Board requesting an election. His initial reactions range from wanting to fire those employees who support a union to feeling betrayed by his employees, who he may feel are attempting to destroy the "family" atmosphere of the company. It is essential that the employer not panic. The employees have only heard the union's side of the story up to this point, and the lawn care employer should remember that unions are notorious front runners who lose more elections than they win.

Employees have the right to join or refrain from joining labor organizations. They have the right to discuss union matters without a threat of changes in financial or working conditions or promise of benefits, and without the employer's surveillance.

Employers may not ask employees about their union preferences, but employers should listen to employees if employees volunteer their opinions. The employer and his supervisors are the eyes, ears, and mouths of the company.

If the employer or his supervisors say or do the wrong things once a union is attempting to organize, it may cause serious legal problems, such as an order from the National Labor Relations Board that the employer bargain with the union without even holding a secret ballot election.

Though frequently an employer is the last individual to know about a union organizing effort, there is certain employee behavior which may signal that there is an undercurrent of trouble. For example, when management and supervisory decisions are questioned as they have not been before, it may be because the employees are starting to become confident from the group activities.

If employees spend more time in groups on their breaks and lunch hours, and stop talking when a supervisor or the owner appears, it is possible that the discussion involves union matters.

Frequently, the employee union leader will coordinate activities and question employer decisions. The leader is rarely a poor employee. Rather, he is an individual whom other employees respect, either because of his work performance, personality, or seniority.

Remember that if anything unusual is taking place at the shop in employee behavior or work performance, it may be because of union activity. Finally, union literature at the work place is a clear signal that there is an undercurrent of union activity which requires prompt action. The literature usually appears in parking lots, break rooms, and restrooms.

Because of what an employer or his supervisors say may have legal significance, it is important that the employer remain levelheaded when he is first aware of union activity. It is also important that

the employer and his supervisors speak out early and often in favor of the company, against the need for a union, and explain why employees would be better off without choosing a collective bargaining representative.

Remember that employers and supervisors cannot promise benefits or threaten to close the business or reduce benefits if employees support the union. Nor may employers spy on employees, such as following their cars to union meetings.

Finally, employers and supervisors may not interrogate employees about their union beliefs, however innocuous the interrogation appears. There are other situations where the employer will produce a response from employees, without asking for it.

Richard I. Lehr is an attorney with the Birmingham law firm of Sirote, Permutt, Friend, Friedman, Held & Apolinsky and a frequent contributor to Lawn Care Industry.

SEED

Falcon tall fescue released

The announcement of Falcon tall fescue release has been made by Bob Peterson, vice president, E. F. Burlingham & Sons, Forest Grove, Ore. The company has the exclusive world-wide rights for production and marketing.

Falcon tall fescue, a leafy, moderately low-growing, turf-type variety, was developed from germplasm originating from the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station. The first seed of this new variety became available after the 1980 harvest.

Falcon has the advantage of attractive appearance, soft leaf, freedom from disease and the ability to resist leaf roll during hot weather. It has the ability to produce an attractive, more persistent turf with finer texture and higher

density than currently available varieties such as Kentucky 31, Alta and Fawn tall fescues.

Plant variety protection application for Falcon has been filed. For additional information on Falcon tall fescue contact: E. F. Burlingham & Sons, P.O. Box 217, Forest Grove, OR 97116, 503-357-2141.

GOVERNMENT

Anne Gorsuch cleared by Senate to head EPA

The U.S. Senate recently confirmed former Colorado state legislator Anne Gorsuch as head of the federal Environmental Protection Agency. Mrs. Gorsuch was approved by voice vote without dissent.

The Senate also confirmed John Hernandez, a New Mexico engineering professor, as deputy administrator of the agency.

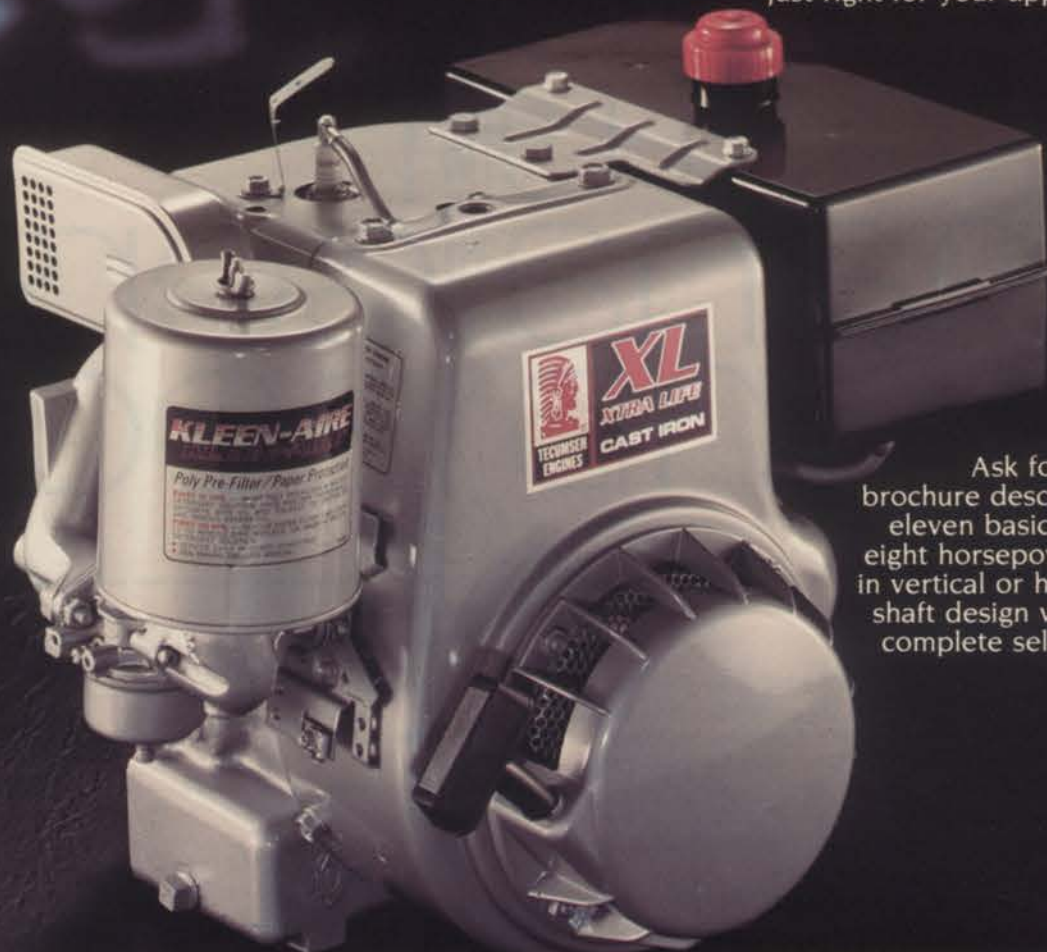
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Throughout the world the familiar indianhead trademark has come to mean engineering excellence, product reliability and responsible business conduct.

Where rugged endurance and dependable performance make all the difference, tough Tecumseh XL CAST IRON engines are proving their worth. From dusty construction projects to rain soaked tropical plantations, the XL line is gaining the reputation as a thoroughly reliable low-maintenance engine.

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TECUMSEH PRODUCTS COMPANY — ENGINE DIVISIONS
GRAFTON and NEW HOLSTEIN, WISCONSIN

Banol available to combat Pythium blight

Banol turf fungicide, which has shown highly effective *Pythium* blight control when tested on turfgrass, is now available for professional use by lawn care businessmen as the result of an Experimental Use Permit (EUP) approved by the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Marketed by TUCO Agricultural Chemicals, Division of The Upjohn Co., Kalamazoo, Mich., Banol is a water-soluble liquid concentrate with propamocarb hydrochloride as its active ingredient.

Approved label use includes application of 1.3 to 4 ounces of Banol to two to five gallons of water per 1,000 square feet as a preventative treatment when

weather conditions favor development of *Pythium* blight. A repeat application may be made in seven to 21 days if weather conditions remain favorable for disease development.

According to researchers, disease development appears most favorable when the maximum daily temperature is 86°F. or higher followed by 15 or more consecutive days with relative humidity at 90 percent and above while temperature remains 68°F. or warmer.

Laboratory and field research indicates that Banol provides long residual protection against this turfgrass disease, which can damage turfgrass within 24 hours with these environmental conditions.

A university test showed that Banol, when applied to turfgrass 14 days prior to inoculation with *Pythium aphanidermatum*, provided better than 95 percent control when applied at two ounces of active ingredient per 1,000 square feet and provided complete con-

trol when applied at four ounces of active ingredient per 1,000 square feet.

In another university test, turfgrass was inoculated with *Pythium* 21 days after treatment with Banol at 1.875 and 3.75 ounces of active ingredient per 1,000 square feet. Plots rated seven days later were found to be relatively free of *Pythium* blight when compared to control plots and those treated with another *Pythium* fungicide. Both studies involved treatment under artificially high temperature and humidity conditions which favor fungi growth.

Laboratory tests at two universities also confirmed that rainfall immediately after treatment had little or no effect on Banol's efficacy. In addition, tests indicate that when applied at proper rates, Banol has no phytotoxicity on most turfgrass varieties.

The approved EUP allows use of Banol in Alabama, Arizona, Ar-

kansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

SEED

Pickseed's America receives plant variety protection

Pickseed West, Inc., Tangent, Ore., has announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has issued plant variety protection on America Kentucky bluegrass.

According to Mike Robinson, company vice president, America is a low-growing, fine-textured, turf-type bluegrass with excellent density and dark green color. It performs well in both full sun and in moderate shade.

In preliminary testing throughout the U.S. and Canada, America has shown good resistance to common turf diseases. America is being marketed through Pickseed's distributors along with Touchdown Kentucky bluegrass, their other well-known bluegrass variety.

The company also announced that it recently received marketing rights to Agram chewing fescue, which also recently received plant variety protection. Robinson said that Agram is an improved chewing fescue with excellent turf quality and medium dark green color. Its disease-resistance is rated above average throughout most of the country. He said that Agram will make an excellent component in lawn shade mixtures.

The company is also marketing Exeter colonial bentgrass, which has been out of production for several years. Additional information on these varieties is available by writing Pickseed West, Inc., P.O. Box 888, Tangent, OR 97389.

INSECTICIDES

New Sevin formulation is now available to lawn businessmen

A flowable insecticide carrying one of the broadest labels of any insecticide on the market — Sevin SL carbaryl insecticide — now is available to the lawn care industry. It is marketed by Union Carbide Agricultural Products Co., Inc., Jacksonville, Fla.

The water-based flowable compound contains four pounds of active carbaryl insecticide per gallon. The new Sevin SL formulation is marketed in a 2½-gallon plastic jug for convenience in handling and storage.

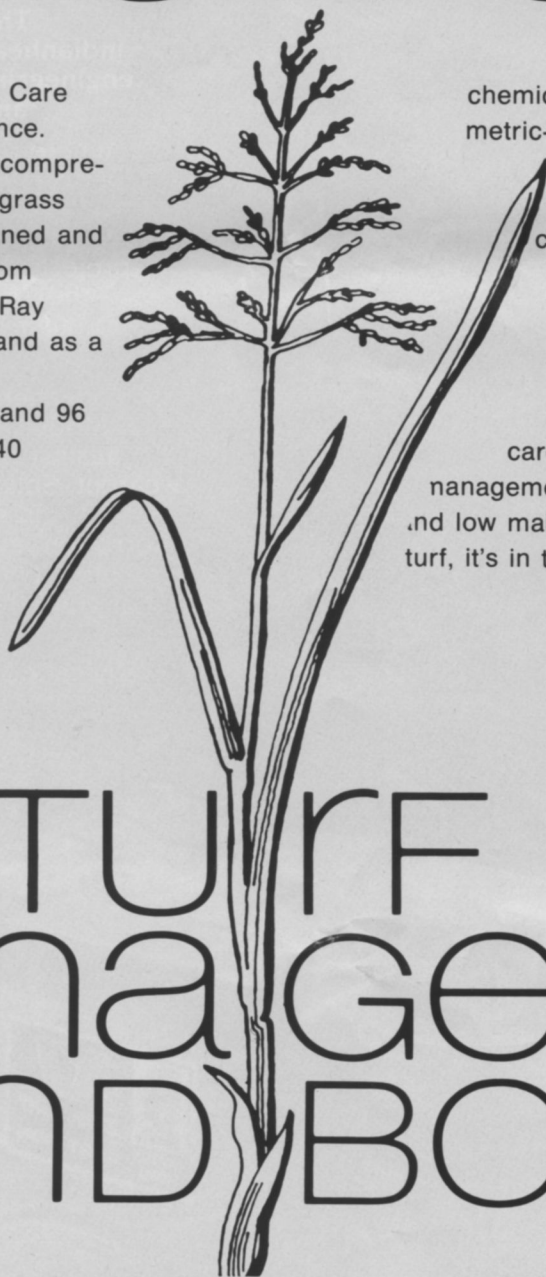
It provides control of a wide variety of insects that attack lawns, trees, ornamentals and areas in and around buildings — including chinch bugs, ants, millipedes, fleas, ticks, sod webworms,

Finally, An Aid For Teaching Turfgrass

Superintendents, Contractors, Lawn Care Managers, New, On-the-Job Reference. The Turf Managers' Handbook is a comprehensive, organized approach to turfgrass science and care. It has been designed and written by leading turf specialists from Purdue, Dr. William Daniel and Dr. Ray Freeborg, for on-the-job reference and as a text for students.

The book contains 150 illustrations and 96 color photographs. Data includes 240 tables and forms. Included are specifications for rootzones, employment, calculations for

chemical applications, and extensive metric-imperial conversion. Business and technical aspects of turfgrass management are covered in this 424-page book. Planning, purchasing, hiring, construction, and plant selection are put together for easy on-the-job reference. Markets covered include lawn care, sod production, golf course management, cemeteries, athletic fields, and low maintenance areas. If it concerns turf, it's in the Turf Managers' Handbook.



TURF managers' Handbook

Ordering Information

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cankerworms, gypsy moth and some species of cockroaches.

Available to all lawn care businessmen and structural pest control operators, the new Sevin SL ranks low in toxicity to people, birds, animals and fish. This makes it an easier product for professionals to handle. And since Sevin SL has such a broad registration, there are many opportunities to utilize one pesticide for pest control needs.

For more information on the new formulation Sevin SL carbaryl insecticide, contact your local Union Carbide representative, or write: Union Carbide Agricultural Products Co., Inc., Box 12014, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709.

INDUSTRY LIAISON

PLCAA sets up advisory committee

The Professional Lawn Care Association of America, in addition to serving as a forum for the discussion of ideas within the lawn care industry, has set up a committee of manufacturer's reps to strengthen ties between the industry's manufacturers, suppliers and users.

Called the Industry Advisory Committee and sponsored by the PLCAA, the group will meet twice a year to discuss ways manufacturers can more effectively respond to problems and business trends arising within the lawn care industry.

At the last meeting, held in Chicago on March 16, the following Committee members were present: Ron Giffen of Lakeshore Equipment and Supply, Bill Stinson of O. M. Scott & Sons, Wendall Moss of Torco Equipment, Jon Davidson of Dow Chemical USA, Frank Gasperini of Dupont Chicago, Jerry Faulring of Professional Turf Corp/Hydro Lawn and President of the PLCAA, Glenn Bostrom of Bostrom Management Corporation, and Jane Stecker, administrative director of the PLCAA.

Jerry Faulring opened the meeting by suggesting it be a "brain storm session" and posed the question as to how the Committee felt it could serve the lawn care industry and how the lawn care industry could reciprocate.

Ron Giffen said he thought the regional seminars should be expanded and experts brought in as speakers. Although honorariums would be involved, it was believed that experts in various fields would be a draw to expanding PLCAA membership.

Wendall Moss felt that suppliers could use the PLCAA logo in their national advertising, citing that costs were minimal. Examples would be on their newsletters, bulletins, invoices, and everyday correspondence.

Frank Gasperini agreed that the Committee should help promote the Association, although he felt it could be done by focusing on the needs of the typical lawn care company.

In the area of labelling came the question of how the lawn care industry should be approached by suppliers. Gasperini stated that suppliers are flexible in the labelling of their products but needed more input from the industry.

Jon Davidson thought it was important to disseminate information to the applicator stating that he is the one who needs to be able to respond to the consumer's questions. Davidson gave a brief recap of 2,4-D news to the Committee members and concluded with the EPA statement that at the present time no evidence of problems with U.S. produced 2,4-D has been found.

He also discussed a report on "The Phenoxy Herbicides" put together by herbicide specialists and stated that this publication could be made available to Association members. It was decided to include this report in the mailing of the Technical Resource Manual.

Davidson stressed the increasing importance of response to consumer's questions regarding 2,4-D and encouraged local PLCAA members to testify in favor of products which contained the chemical whenever hearings are held.

COMPANIES

Mobay announces new specialty chemicals group

A new Specialty Chemicals Group has been formed by the Agricultural Chemicals Division of Mobay Chemical Corp. to represent the firm's expanding line of pesticides to the lawn care industry, other professional turf markets, nurserymen, pest control operators and other specialty chemical markets. Mobay is based in Kansas City, Kans.

Heading the newly formed marketing group is Allen Haws as national sales manager. Haws, who joined Mobay in 1968, moves from the Agricultural Chemicals Division as sales control manager where he was responsible for the company's Northeast and North Central regions.

According to Haws, the Specialty Chemicals Group will market a number of insecticides, fungicides and nematocides, including Bayleton, a fungicide which was recently registered for the control of a wide variety of turf diseases.

In addition to Bayleton, the Group will also represent several other well-known pesticides, including Baygon, Baytex and Dylox insecticides, Dyrene and Lesan fungicides, Nematicur nematocides and Sencor herbicide. Other new turf protection chemicals are presently undergoing research, and are expected to be registered soon for commercial usage.

FALCON

PVP applied for



New turf-type tall fescue of the 80's

You'll like this new, fine-textured variety with higher density than most of the currently available tall fescues. Falcon is a leafy, moderately low growing turf-type variety with pleasing green color and tolerance to heat and drought. It's a good performer under minimum maintenance programs, too. Throughout its area of adaptation, mature stands of Falcon have shown tolerance to wear and moderate shade which makes it useful for home lawns and play areas such as athletic fields and parks.

Contact us for more information.



E. F. BURLINGHAM & SONS
P.O. Box 217 • Forest Grove, OR 97116
(503) 357-2141 • Telex: 36-0274
Cable: Burlingham

INSIDE THE INDUSTRY

The top 50 lawn care markets

Single-family homes are the name of the game when lawn care businessmen rate the market potential of any given metropolitan area.

Based on that criteria, the top 10 lawn care markets in the country are the metropolitan areas of New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, San Francisco, Boston, Pittsburgh, St. Louis and Dallas-Forth Worth.

Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSA) are determined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. The listings in the chart below are based on 1970 figures, the latest year for which comprehensive housing statistics are available for the country. When 1980 Census figures are published later this year, it is expected that

the following metropolitan areas will move up in single-family home rankings: St. Louis, Dallas-Forth Worth, Washington, Houston, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Baltimore, Anaheim-Santa Ana-Garden-Grove, Calif., Milwaukee, Atlanta, Denver, San Diego, Phoenix, San Jose, Calif., Louisville, Columbus, Ohio, New Orleans, Hartford, Conn., Sacramento, Calif., San Antonio, Texas, Albany, N.Y., Oklahoma City, Salt Lake City and Memphis.

Population figures in the chart below are based on recently released 1980 Census information. Per household income is based on 1979 figures. Household income includes all households, including rented homes, apartments,

condominiums and cooperatives, but is a good indicator of general wealth in any given metropolitan area.

The listing of the top 50 residential lawn care markets takes into consideration only number of single-family homes in any given SMSA, not size of average lawns in the area, commercial/industrial potential for the mowing/maintenance businessman or number of competing lawn care companies already operating in an area. Most of all, it does not take into consideration the growing small-town lawn care markets that should continue to grow in the 1980's. — Bob Earley

SMSA	Owner occupied homes	Population	Per household income	SMSA	Owner occupied homes	Population	Per household income	SMSA	Owner occupied homes	Population	Per household income
1 New York, N.Y.	1,427,388	11,829,700	23,234	18 Anaheim-Santa Ana-Garden Grove Calif.	281,825	1,844,800	30,628	35 Louisville, Ky.-Ohio	170,024	885,300	19,448
2 Los Angeles-Long Beach, Calif.	1,179,943	7,206,800	18,685	19 Tampa-St. Petersburg, Fla.	275,779	1,482,900	16,327	36 Providence-Pawtucket-Warwick R.I.-Mass.	167,595	855,800	19,023
3 Chicago, Ill.	1,155,097	6,989,400	23,507	20 Kansas City, Kans.-Mo.	269,014	1,316,500	22,360	37 Columbus, Ohio	167,104	1,080,000	23,224
4 Philadelphia, Pa.-N.J.	993,156	4,733,200	21,688	21 Buffalo, N.Y.	262,238	1,290,800	17,172	38 New Orleans La.	163,545	1,143,100	21,557
5 Detroit, Mich.	913,267	4,400,000	23,612	22 Cincinnati, Ohio-Ky.-Ind.	262,709	1,395,700	24,836	39 Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood, Fla.	161,899	923,400	22,232
6 San Francisco-Oakland, Calif.	560,729	3,178,400	23,357	23 Milwaukee, Wis.	258,827	1,409,700	22,452	40 Hartford-New Britain-Bristol, Conn.	161,779	1,067,200	22,908
7 Boston-Lowell-Brockton-Lawrence-Haverhill, Mass.	532,254	3,874,900	21,696	24 Atlanta, Ga.	246,876	1,873,300	20,400	41 Sacramento, Calif.	157,700	989,500	27,229
8 Pittsburgh, Pa.	514,503	2,277,800	20,925	25 Denver-Boulder, Colo.	241,010	1,535,100	22,983	42 Bridgeport-Stamford-Norwalk-Danbury, Conn.	156,855	834,800	28,380
9 St. Louis, Mo.-Ill.	475,592	2,310,800	21,407	26 San Diego, Calif.	238,887	1,773,900	20,542	43 San Antonio, Texas	155,817	1,046,100	19,461
10 Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas	455,844	2,740,400	22,556	27 Miami, Fla.	231,529	1,475,700	19,501	44 Birmingham, Ala.	154,305	833,400	18,418
11 Washington, D.C.-Va.-Md.	412,973	2,900,900	33,104	28 San Bernardino-Riverside-Ontario, Calif.	231,529	1,450,500	20,469	45 Toledo, Ohio-Mich.	150,454	781,100	24,474
12 Cleveland, Ohio	405,710	1,915,400	21,349	29 Indianapolis, Ind.	226,909	1,163,300	21,907	46 Akron, Ohio	147,612	656,700	19,516
13 Houston, Texas	366,762	2,677,600	28,446	30 Portland, Ore.-Wash.	221,860	1,192,500	20,940	47 Albany-Schenectady-Troy, N.Y.	146,681	795,200	17,356
14 Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn.	363,295	2,084,100	23,965	31 Phoenix, Ariz.	200,716	1,384,500	20,275	48 Oklahoma City, Okla.	142,242	793,700	21,920
15 Baltimore, Md.	363,136	2,124,100	15,821	32 San Jose, Calif.	199,360	1,236,900	29,989	49 Salt Lake City-Ogden, Utah	132,885	861,700	19,805
16 Newark, N.J.	311,546	1,944,200	23,307	33 Rochester, N.Y.	180,627	959,500	20,057	50 Memphis, Tenn.-Ark.	129,930	883,500	19,652
17 Seattle-Everett, Wash.	306,903	1,491,900	22,150	34 Dayton, Ohio	174,780	832,500	19,228				

MERIT

*If they held
an Olympics
for Bluegrass,
Merit would
win the Gold*

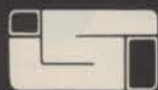
That's because this low maintenance variety so often outperforms the biggest names in Kentucky Bluegrass.

The record shows that Merit is consistently rated high in turf quality and color as well as disease-resistance, including good resistance to leaf and dollar spot.

A variety that is praised for its excellent spring color, Merit also holds its own when subjected to minimum irrigation and fertilization.

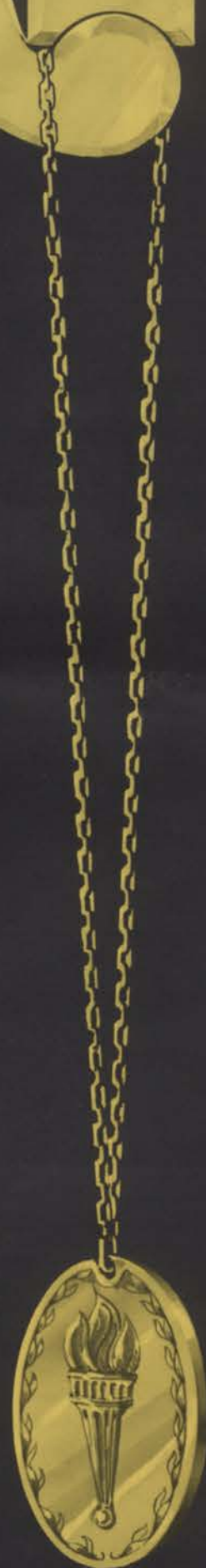
Look at the record. In 1972 NE-57 trials, in a five-year New Jersey test, in a New York trial, at an eight-year Purdue study, a three-year Ohio trial and in a four-year Missouri test, Merit often outperformed such bluegrasses as Baron, Nugget, Fylking, Adelphi, Glade and Bonnieblue.

Merit . . . it's a Kentucky Bluegrass worth looking into.



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PRODUCTS

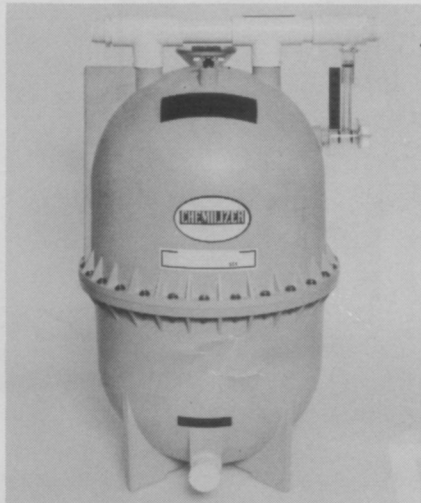
Slip fertilizer into the irrigation system

A totally redesigned version of the Chemilizer, a lawn fertilizing device that virtually renders the hand-pushed spreader obsolete, has been introduced by Chemilizer Products, Inc.

The Chemilizer is a liquid injector which can be connected to a water supply for underground or above-ground hose sprinklers. A small round container with standard hose fittings, it can be easily moved to different job locations.

The new Chemilizer was completely engineered and computer-designed with the assistance of General Electric. All parts, including the bladder, are replaceable, and the new model

can now be serviced by the owner. It has a low center of gravity and greatly increases stress and pressure tolerance.



Liquid fertilizer is poured into the Chemilizer and is distributed as needed through a calibrated injector. The system needs replenishing with liquid only occasionally because the average lawn requires about one gallon of fertilizer a month for each 3,000 square feet of turf.

Circle No. 150 on Reader Inquiry Card

Tough cutter for the lawn care pro

A new side discharge rotary mower, intended primarily for use by the professional lawn care industry, has been introduced by the Yard-Man Company.

Model 11610 is a push-type rotary with a cast deck, and features a five horsepower Briggs & Stratton I/C engine. It provides a 20 inch cut and a "vacu-vent" deck containing a steel blade with shaved cutting edge and eight inch anti-scalp disc.

Easy control and maneuverabil-

ity provided by steel handles with steel strut supports; handle-mounted throttle; five-position fingertip cutting height adjustment; eight inch steel wheels with

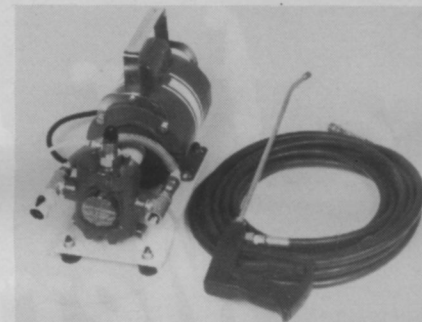


sealed ball bearings. Engine mounted one-half gallon fuel tank are standard. Optional 1.2 gallon fuel tank available, as is an extra-capacity grass catcher.

Circle No. 151 on Reader Inquiry Card

Knock off grease with pressure washer

Handi-Wash is an industrial strength water brush capable of knocking off caked-on grease, dirt and grime from your heavy equipment. Available from Spe-



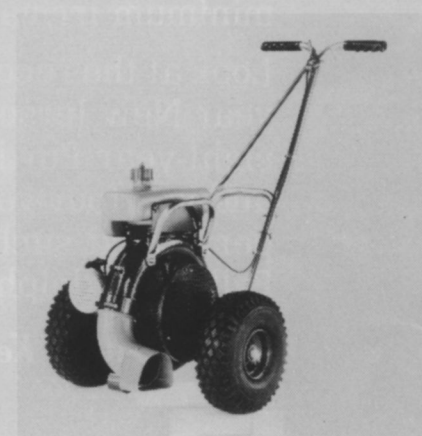
cialty Equipment Company, Handi-Wash is an adjustable chemical injection system with a water pressure of 500 psi which enables the user to use detergents and solvents to accomplish jobs ranging from cleaning and disinfecting to paint removal.

Attaching quickly to a standard garden hose, the Handi-Wash is compact and portable, weighing only 40 pounds.

Circle No. 152 on Reader Inquiry Card

Blast out debris with Wind Mill blower

The Vandermolten Corporation announces the addition of two new convenience features to its Windmill 5-11 Wheeled Blower. The new features are: a cross bar on



the push handle for easy lifting on and off lawn care trucks, and a throttle control placed at the operator's fingertips right next to

Circle No. 110 on Reader Inquiry Card →

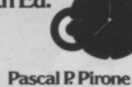
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one-shot
white grub control.**



New



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One application controls white grubs from season-to-season.

There's only one insecticide that controls white grubs from season-to-season.

New OFTANOL insecticide from Mobay.

OFTANOL delivers unparalleled residual control of white grubs. In fact, you can expect one application of OFTANOL at the highest recommended rate to control white grubs until about the same time next year.

OFTANOL also offers these additional advantages compared to present white grub materials:

- OFTANOL does not require watering-in.
- OFTANOL does not tie-up in thatch.
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One application. Once a year. That's the OFTANOL one-shot advantage.



Mobay Chemical Corporation
Agricultural Chemicals Division
Specialty Chemicals Group
Box 4913, Kansas City, MO 64120



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one-shot
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control.**

OFTANOL also controls these major turf insects.

OFTANOL has been proven effective for control of sod webworm, Hyperodes weevil, billbugs and chinch bugs. Consult the product label for the proper timing for control of these pests.

New OFTANOL. For one-shot white grub control and in-season control of other pests. Available from many leading turf chemical suppliers.

The use of OFTANOL for turf pest control is registered in many states. Check with your state extension office for details.



Mobay Chemical Corporation
Agricultural Chemicals Division
Specialty Chemicals Group
Box 4913, Kansas City, MO 64120

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MEETING DATES

Ohio State Research Field Day, Ohio State University Turfgrass Research Field Facility, Columbus, OH, August 4. Contact: Dr. Keith J. Karnok, 1827 Neil Avenue, Columbus, OH 43210, 614-422-2591.

University of Missouri Turf Field Day, University of Missouri South Farms, August 4. Contact: John H. Dunn, Horticulture Department, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211

University of Nebraska Turf Field Day and Equipment Show, Mead, August 4. Contact: Dr. Robert Shearman, University of Nebraska, 377 Plant Science Building, Lincoln, NE 68503, 402-472-1143.

Central Plains Turf Foundation/Kansas State University Turf Field Day, Manhattan, August 12. Contact: Dr. Robert Carrow, Kansas State University, Dept. of Horticulture, Waters Hall, Manhattan, KS 66506, 913-532-6170.

Garden and Outdoor Living Division of the 1981 National Hardware Show, McCormick Place, Chicago, IL, August 17-20. Contact: Samuel Black, Ted Black, Inc., 535 N. Fifth Street, Reading, PA 19601, 215-373-4267.

University of Rhode Island Turfgrass Field Day, Kingston, August 26. Contact: Dr. C. Richard Skogley, Agronomy Dept., University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI 02881.

1981 Garden Industry of America Conference and Trade Show, Sept. 10-11-12, Pittsburgh Convention Center, Pittsburgh, PA.

Annual Alabama Turfgrass Conference, Auburn, AL, September 14, 15. Contact: K. M. Sheffer, Extension Hall, Auburn University, AL 36849, 205-826-4985.

Virginia Tech Turfgrass Field Days, Blacksburg, Sept. 15-17. Contact: Dr. John R. Hall, 421 Smyth Hall, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA 24061, 703-961-5797.

National Lawn and Garden Distributors Association Annual Conference, Opryland Hotel, Nashville, Tenn., Sept. 15-18. Contact: Nancy S. Irving, NLGDA, 1900 Arch St., Philadelphia, PA 19103, 215-564-3484.

Pacific Horticultural Trade Show, sponsored by the California Association of Nurserymen, September 23-25, Long Beach Convention Center, Long Beach, CA; Contact: Richard Staples, manager, Pacific Horticultural Trade Show, 1419 21st Street, Sacramento, CA 94814, (916) 443-7373.

Symposium on Turfgrass Weeds — 1981, Sheraton-Columbus Hotel, Columbus, OH, October 14, 15. Contact: Dr. B. G. Joyner, Plant Diagnostic Labs, ChemLawn Corp., 6969 Worthington-Galena Rd., Suite L, Worthington, OH 43085, 614-885-9588.

1981 Chemlawn Turf Symposium, Oct. 14-15; Contact: Dr. B. G. Joyner, Plant Diagnostic Lab, Chemlawn Corporation, 6969 Worthington-Galena Road, Suite L, Worthington, Ohio 43085.

Florida Turf-Grass Association Conference and Show, Orlando, Oct. 18-21. Contact: Nona Murphy, Florida Turf-Grass Association, 1520 Edgewater Dr., Suite E, Orlando, FL 32804, 305-425-1581.

Professional Grounds Management Society Annual Conference and Trade Show, Portland Marriott Hotel, Portland, OR, November 3, 4. Contact: Allan Shulder, Executive Director, PGMS, 7 Church Lane, Pikesville, MD 21208, 301-653-2742.

21st Annual Missouri Lawn and Turf Conference, Ramada Inn, Columbia, Missouri, November 3, 4. Contact: Nicholas Palo or Cathy Martin, Conference and Short Courses, 344 Hearnes Bldg., University of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211.

National Institute on Park and Grounds Management Educational Conference and Trade Show, Muehlebach Hotel and Convention Center, Kansas City, MO. Contact: National Institute on Park and Grounds Management, P.O. Box 1936, Appleton, WI 54913, 414-733-2301.

Atlantic Seedsmen's Association Convention, Biltmore Plaza, Providence, R.I., November 4, 5, 6. Contact: Margaret Herbst, Executive Secretary, ASA, 230 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017.

New York Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show, Empire State Plaza, Albany, N.Y., Nov. 16-19. Contact: Ann Reilly, 210 Cartwright Blvd., Massapequa Park, NY 11762, 516-541-6902.

Professional Lawn Care Association of America Conference and Trade Show, Commonwealth Convention Center, Louisville, Ky., Nov. 18-20. Contact: Jane Stecker, PLCAA, Suite 1717, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611, 312-644-0828.

Ohio Turfgrass Conference and Show, Columbus Hyatt House, Dec. 1-3. Contact: Dr. John Street, 1827 Neil Ave., Columbus, OH 43210, 614-422-2592.

Texas Turfgrass Conference, College Station, Texas, Dec. 7-9. Contact: Dr. Richard L. Doble, 349 Soil & Crop Science Center, Texas A & M University, College Station, TX 77843, 713-845-4826.

Nebraska Turfgrass Foundation Conference & Trade Show, Holiday Inn Convention Center, Omaha, January 12-14, 1982. Contact: Paul Bergman, 2428 W. 11th, Hastings, Nebraska 68901; (402) 463-5055.

1982 A.L.C.A. Trade Exhibit, Riviera Hotel, Palm Springs, CA, Jan. 26, 1982. Contact ALCA Exhibit Manager, 1750 Old Meadow Road, McLean, VA 22102.

PRODUCTS from page 14

the handlebar grips.

Powered by a two cycle engine that revs up to 7,000 rpms, the Windmill 5-11 Wheeled Blower generates a powerful, high pressure air-blast of 225 mph. This blast comes in a package that weighs only 36 pounds thanks to the use of a 40 cc engine.

Without effort, the operator can tilt the 5-11 on one wheel and point the full force of the high pressure air blast to dislodge hard-to-move debris, to scatter water, or to clean out potholes and cracks on driveways.

Circle No. 153 on Reader Inquiry Card

New edger sends you back to basics

The basic design and quality construction of the new Pro T-181 gas powered edger from Pro/Inc. makes it a single purpose tool for



the lawn care businessman.

The unit features an easy-starting, reliable two horsepower Briggs & Stratton rewind engine, sealed ball bearings at both ends of the cutting head, fingertip controls, and a handy foot rest for safer starting. There is also an optional curb wheel kit available.

Circle No. 154 on Reader Inquiry Card

Prevent water loss with soil additive

Despite water shortages and water-use restrictions being imposed in many areas, flourishing turf can be established with the use

to page 20

BUILT STRONGER TO LAST LONGER.

A chain saw that won't start, or cuts out in the middle of a job is no good to anybody. Job after job, year after year, you need a saw that will last. Whether you want a small saw that's super efficient or a big saw that can take the roughest handling, you need a Stihl.® Because Stihl saws are built stronger to last longer.

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They're tested for more endurance than anything else. They'll last longer than anything else.

When you rely on a saw counts for a lot. So count on it's the strongest saw you can buy.

you'll ever demand, so no matter what job you'll ever take on, to help you make a living, that's a Stihl. Because in the long run,



The World's Largest Selling Chain Saw.

See Stihl's complete line of commercial power tools including brushcutters, hedge trimmers, earth augers, sprayer/blowers, and Cutquiks.® For sales and service, see Yellow Pages under "saws." For your local dealer's name, call toll-free 1-800-528-6050, Extension 1430. In Arizona call 1-800-352-0458, Extension 1430.

Circle No. 115 on Reader Inquiry Card

of the Hydrosan Super Slurper from Edison Hydrocontrol Chemicals, Inc.

Hydrosan Super Slurper is the USDA formula soil additive which absorbs hundreds of times its own weight in water and which, when added to soil, literally sucks up water in minutes and then holds it in a plant-available gel form. Small quantities of Hydrosan implanted or raked into the soil, mixed in mulches, or coated on roots or seeds before planting, catch and hold water in large amounts.

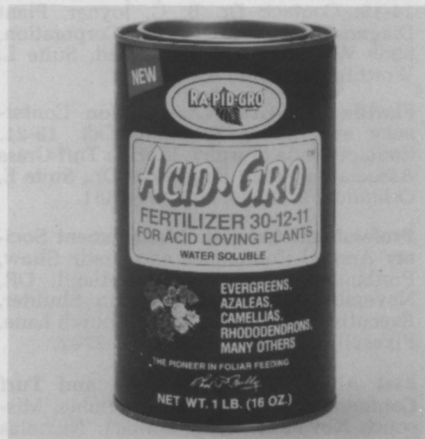
Circle No. 155 on Reader Inquiry Card

Give acid lovers a boost

Acid loving plants will drink up Acid-Gro Fertilizer from the Ra-Pid-Gro Corporation. A 30-12-11 water soluble concentrate, it's specially formulated for evergreens,

broad-leaf evergreens, citrus, oak trees and all other plants that require acid soil conditions.

Acid-Gro Fertilizer contains chelated copper, iron and zinc, as



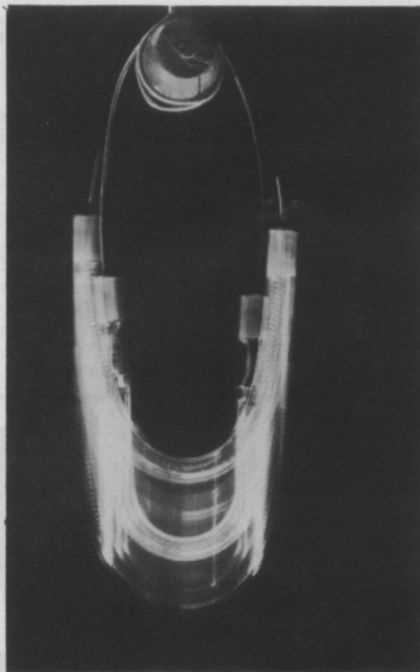
well as manganese and sulfate and boron. When mixed with water, Acid-Gro Fertilizer may be applied to plants through the foliage or through the roots.

Circle No. 156 on Reader Inquiry Card

Tree Tie places no restrictions

Alden Enterprises has introduced a new tree tie that they claim will save purchasers trees and money. The new Wonder Tree-Tie has a patented spring action that allows the tree to grow naturally without restriction that may kill or permanently damage a tree.

Trees are allowed to sway with a breeze and then to retract to their original position with normal pressure on the tree stake. Wonder



Tree-Ties have been field tested for three years and have demonstrated an ability to completely eliminate girdling and allow trees to self-adjust. This freedom of growth allows for a much stronger root system.

Wonder Tree-Ties do not require attention throughout the period the tree will require a tie, because of its ability to expand with the growth of a tree. Alden Enterprises says labor saving and tree replacement cost saving have been substantial.

Circle No. 157 on Reader Inquiry Card

Fight the drought with new bluegrass

Aboretum Kentucky Bluegrass Seed is a fine bladed, low-maintenance turf grass especially

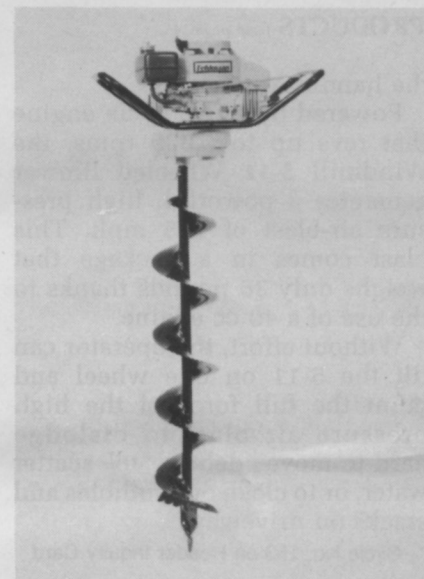
adapted to dry areas of high humidity, high temperatures and periods of drought.

The original discovery of the parent grasses was made in the Aboretum of the Missouri Botanical Gardens at Gray Summit, Missouri. On virgin land, this bluegrass, by self-selection, had survived heat, cold, humidity and the diseases peculiar to its native area. Seeds from the original plot were replanted and placed under observation for years and now this hardy seed is producing beautiful, long-lasting, low-maintenance lawns under some very adverse conditions.

Circle No. 158 on Reader Inquiry Card

Post and plant with portable earth auger

The portable earth auger from Feldman Engineering & Manufacturing can always be an aid to the lawn care businessman who is involved in landscaping jobs. Use it for placing fence posts, tree and shrub planting, sign erection, soil



testing and doing dozens of other construction jobs.

The three horsepower gasoline engine powers the auger for quick and easy hole drilling in the ground. Centrifugal clutch, low gear ratio and sturdy construction assure efficient and effective operation. Weighs only two pounds.

Circle No. 159 on Reader Inquiry Card

MARKETING IDEA FILE

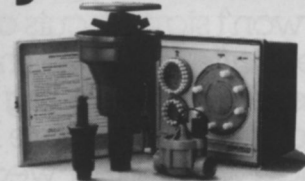
Time for the mid-season brain storm

Now that the spring rush has subsided for many lawn businessmen, and before the autumn rush begins, it might be a good idea to start thinking about next year's ad strategy. Will you try some new ideas? Will you stick with direct mail? Is it time for the big push?

One lawn care businessman who has begun to plan is James Walter, president of Specialty Spraying, Inc. in Latrobe, Pa. He's had it with the standard approach — the typical direct mailer with the old lawn care truck and the lush green acres. Walter's mailers will no longer feature these old stand-bys, but instead will be direct and to the point. "I wanted to tell the customers that our company is something a little different that would make them more responsive to the piece," he said. "I want to go into a little bit of the theory about lawn care rather than just having the lush lawn look."

Walter plans to emphasize in his mailers how his program will meet directly the needs of homeowners. He plans to tell them about the advancement of lawn science, and will stress the labor-saving aspects of his service. "Let's make them realize how valuable their time really is," he said. Another new tack will be billboard advertisement for the first time — the cross media plug. But the main thing is the fresh approach — leaving the old stand-bys in the dust.

To improve your lawn care business, just add water.



You've got a growing business, we've got a growing business. Why not combine them?

Installing underground automatic sprinkler systems is easy and profitable.

And with quality controllers, heads and valves from Rain Bird, rainmakers to the world since 1933, your customer is assured the best system available. His lawn stays healthier and so do you.

For more information on this money-making opportunity, contact your nearest Rain Bird distributor. Or write to us at the address below.

We'll show you how easy it is to make more green while you make more green.

RAIN BIRD
Bringing new ideas to life.

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Circle No. 114 on Reader Inquiry Card

FELDMANN COMBINATION TILLER—AERATOR

• 18" rotary garden tiller digs deep for a finely tilled seed bed • 15½" power lawn aerator penetrates turf, promotes thatch deterioration, allows water, air and fertilizer to reach grass roots for lush, green lawn • Dependable chain drive powered by rugged, reliable 2-hp Briggs & Stratton engine • Lightweight, easy handling; fold-down handle for compact storage and transportation

Write for information on other Models

Model 1815



Feldmann

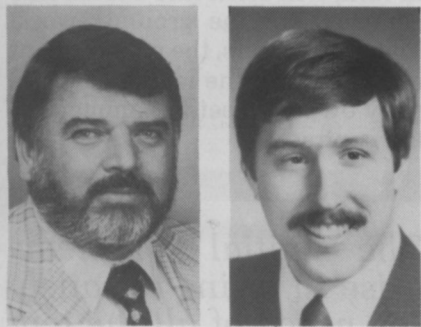
Engineering and Mfg. Co., Inc.
Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085
414/467-6167

Circle No. 103 on Reader Inquiry Card

NEWSMAKERS

Bob Guadagni was recently appointed western regional sales manager for the **Rain Bird Sprinkler Mfg. Corp.**, according to Rex Dixon, turf marketing manager.

In his new role, Guadagni is responsible for sales of Rain Bird turf irrigation equipment in 11 western states.



Guadagni

Paul

The Agricultural Chemicals Division of **Diamond Shamrock Corporation** announced that Hal H. Paul has been appointed as a sales representative in its northeast region. Paul will be representing Diamond Shamrock in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.

Gravely Division of McGraw-Edison has announced the appointment of two new Hahn Distributors to market their line of new Hahn rear engine riders.

Edney Distributing Company, Inc. of Huron, SD has been appointed to distribute Hahn riders and parts in North Dakota, South Dakota and Minnesota. Mr. Milton Edney, president of Edney Distributing has five salesmen and additional warehouse locations in Bismark, ND and Lakeville, MN.

Mity Mite Motors, Inc., Fort Smith, AR will distribute the new Hahn riders and service parts in most of Arkansas. Bernard Brockman, president of Mity Mite Motors has been associated with the outdoor power equipment industry for more than twenty years.

Stephen A. Chont and Lawrence D. Kren, seniors in Turf Management at Michigan State University, have each received a **TUCO Turf Scholarship** for 1981.

The awards were recently presented at the 51st Annual **Michigan Turfgrass Conference** by Russ Tiller, TUCO representative.

Other recipients of the 1981 TUCO Turf Scholarships were Marlin L. Wian, a senior in Turf Management at The Pennsylvania State University; Chester Fields, a senior in Turf Management, and Andrew Pearson, a junior in Turf Management at Texas A&M University; Michael Johnson, a senior in Turf Management at Ohio State University; Kyle Miller, a senior in Turf Management at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University; and finally, Nathaniel W. Binns and Jan Paul Kasyjanski, seniors in Turf Management at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. The annual scholarships are sponsored by TUCO, a division of **The Upjohn Company**.

Larry Worn has been honored by **The Upjohn Company** for outstanding achievement in sales for 1980. He is one of the 10 sales representatives named as repeat

winners to the company's Agricultural Division Sales Academy.

Worn, an agricultural chemicals sales rep for TUCO, joined the company in 1968. His sales territory includes Georgia, Alabama and northern Florida.

John Thompson and Jim Morgan have been named coordinators for **Chem-Care Lawn Service** of Birmingham, AL, it was announced by company president Ronnie L. Zwiebel. Thompson holds a forestry management degree from Auburn University.

American Honda, Power Products Division, recently added three dealers to its nationwide dealer network. These dealers are **Blythe Honda #2** in Quartzsite, Arizona; **Pioneer Security Products**, in

Anaheim, California and **The Wheelrite** in Pratt, Kansas.

Greenway Equipment Company, Inc., of Tacoma, Washington, recently joined American Honda, Power Products Division as an engine distributor. This new company now distributes Honda's full line of engines including the new two horsepower G-100, general purpose engine.

Edward B. Sabish, Waukesha, Wisconsin, has been appointed as regional sales manager for the **Outdoor Power Equipment Division of J I Case**, Winneconne, according to Mike Hirschman, sales manager.

As regional sales manager, Sabish will be responsible for the marketing objectives of Case lawn and garden tractors and attachments through the field sales force in the western region.

Manny J. Paros is owner of **Sunrise Lawn Care**, Somerset, N.J. The company provides chemical

lawn care and rototilling, thatching and clean-up services.

Keith Shepersky has been named manager of training and marketing services for the Turf Division of the **Rain Bird Sprinkler Mfg. Corp.**

Mallinckrodt, Inc., says it has increased the operational responsibilities of two of its managers. Effective immediately, Mack G. Nichols will have responsibility for operations of the St. Louis, MO, chemical manufacturing plant as well as continuing his duties as vice president and general manager of the company's specialty chemicals division.

Edward F. Take, who will report to Nichols, will assume new responsibilities for Mallinckrodt's Jersey City plant operations in addition to continuing as plant manager for the St. Louis plant.

Herb Cole, a veteran salesman and sales manager for **Lakeshore Equipment & Supply Co.**, has been named vice president of marketing.

"ALL YOU NEED FOR SUMMER FEED"

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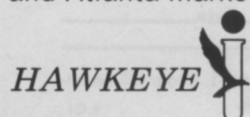
30-0-2 LIQUID LOW-BURN FERTILIZER FOR LAWN CARE PROFESSIONALS

FORMOLENE Clear Liquid Fertilizer contains a high proportion of low-burn Methylene and Methylol Ureas plus low salt index Potassium—Your safest source of liquid N & K for hot weather lawn applications. Proven through intensive evaluation at leading Turfgrass Research Institutions. Just add 1 part FORMOLENE to 3 to 10 parts water—and put it on!

Order FORMOLENE Fertilizer from these authorized dealers:

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Niles, MI 49120
(616) 683-7463 | GROWER'S AG SERVICE
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(308) 234-2124 | MORRAL CHEMICAL COMPANY
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| MOYER AND SON INCORPORATED
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West Alton, MO 63386
(314) 899-0933 | VOGEL SEED AND FERTILIZER
Jackson, WI 53037
(414) 677-2273 | |

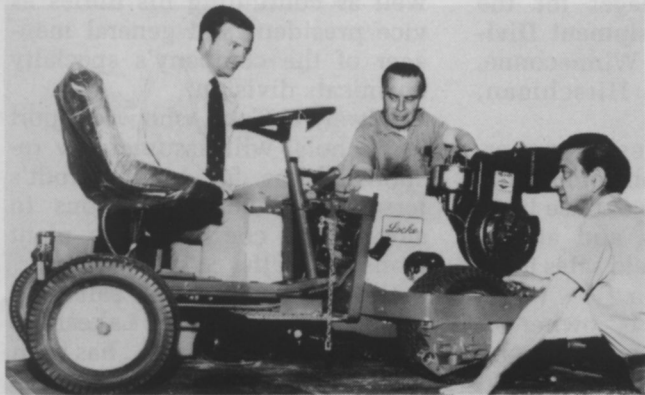
NOTE: Inquiries invited from Dealers to supply FORMOLENE to the Minneapolis - St. Paul, Kansas City and Atlanta markets.



HAWKEYE CHEMICAL COMPANY

Clinton, Iowa 52732

(319) 243-5800



Locke Mfg., Inc., a producer of professional, reel-type mowers for 50 years, recently officially opened its new million-dollar facility in the Boston Avenue Industrial Park in Bridgeport, Conn. The company's new facility is pictured upper left. At upper right, is the final inspection of a No. 10 Locke mower and a No. 45 Maxi Locke mower. Rudy Zaleta is at left and Pat Rupe at right. At left, the first Locke mower to come off the assembly line at the new Locke facilities. Sales manager Kevin McGrath is at left, Rudy Zaleta is in the middle, and Pat Rupe is at right. Among speakers addressing the 300 guests at the grand opening were the Deputy Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Economic Development, bringing the greetings of Connecticut Governor O'Neill, and the mayor of Bridgeport. The event was covered by local and regional radio stations as well as by several newspapers and trade publications.

Northrup King turf gets trampled, torn, squashed, and scuffed and it still looks great.

But that's not news to you.

The days when turf just laid around looking pretty are long gone. Now your turf has to be pretty—and pretty tough, too. Tough enough to take all kinds of wear and still go on looking terrific.

That's just why so many pros like you specify turf seed from Northrup King. For years, Northrup King has given pros all they need—low maintenance varieties, winter hardy blends, special mixes for specific geographic problems, and expert help in selecting the right one.

And no matter what Northrup King turf seed the pros use, they get turf that's good looking and hard working.

Find out more about quality turf seed from Northrup King. Talk to your Northrup King representative or distributor.

Or talk to someone with great looking turf.

Northrup King Co., P.O. Box 959
Minneapolis, MN 55440



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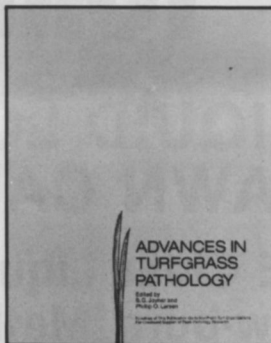
Advances in Turfgrass Pathology

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Scheduled for publication January 30, 1981. Order will be fulfilled within 60 days of the date of order. LC1

CONDOS from page 1

country. For the most part, their responses are candid and reveal a sound understanding of the problems associated with year-round apartment maintenance.

Surprisingly enough, the most commonly-voiced complaint about the work is not the maintenance itself, but setting up a comprehensive contract. Most apartment complexes hire a maintenance firm to handle all phases of apartment or condominium upkeep. The company, in turn, will often hire a lawn care company for the grounds work. Then the owners, the management company, and the lawn care company owners meet to hammer out the contract.

The initial problems arise in trying to satisfy the needs of all the tenants or owners under the terms of one inclusive contract.

The initial problems arise in trying to satisfy the needs of all the tenants or owners under the terms of one inclusive contract. "Management by committee is a very slow business," says Keith Maurer of Maurer Enterprises, Inc. in Horshan, Pa. "And even then, the individual home owner may not know where the contractor's responsibility ends and his own begins."

Even with a sound contract, the lawn care company may run up against an individual homeowner with plans of his own. The result may be a conflict of interest—with a price tag. "One person may put up a fence after the contract has been signed," says Maurer. "And you'll have to make a lot more turns which can end up costing you."

Once a conflict like this arises, it may be difficult to make an appeal to the management company to change contract terms. "It's almost impossible to get the committee to spend more dollars," says Maurer. "Once the deal is made, it's pretty final."

A rigid contract

Maurer is emphatic about having a specific, detailed maintenance contract when he handles this kind of job. That way, if additional or costly demands are made on your crews during the course of the year, you can stick by the terms. "It may be over-detailed," he said, "but in the long run it will save you a lot of aggravation."

Another problem Maurer finds in the apartment or condominium job is more general in nature: "A lot of these places are not designed with maintenance in mind. They're designed for quick plantings and may be gorgeous to look at, but when you try to maintain them, forget it."

Along with a rigid contract, however, this kind of work requires a certain amount of flexibility on the part of the contractor. It may not always be possible to get the terms of the contract changed. And it may be even more difficult to get the apartment owner to keep

to page 24

Low Calorie Special



If you watch figures a lot, when it comes to the bottom line, Fylking keeps costs under control two ways. First, it's priced lower than most elite bluegrass seed. Second, it's an inexpensive beauty to maintain — a diet delight compared to other bluegrass needs for water and fertilizer. It's low growing, can be mowed as low as one-half inch and has the great body you want for seed mixtures. Fylking. A very nice spread with very appealing figures. Ask for Fylking Kentucky bluegrass at your local wholesale seed or sod distributor.

FYLKING **KENTUCKY BLUEGRASS**

U.S. Plant Patent 2887

Another fine, quality-controlled product of Jacklin Seed Company.

up his end of the agreement. So, Maurer advises, if you have to have it your way, it may be wise to reconsider that type of work.

Others are more bullish on handling the apartment/condo job. They say it is a volume business that can be very lucrative if it's handled with responsive public relations. "You have to keep open-minded communication between the owners and the management for this to work," says Mike Didomenico of S & M Landscaping Construction in Bedford Heights, Ohio. "That way you're on top of it before any monumental problem arises."

Understand your capabilities

And public relations is a big part of this type of work. Didomenico suggests that the lawn care contractor stop by periodically if for nothing else than to just say hello.

Banvel® + 2,4-D = Turf (minus 29 of the toughest kinds of weeds)

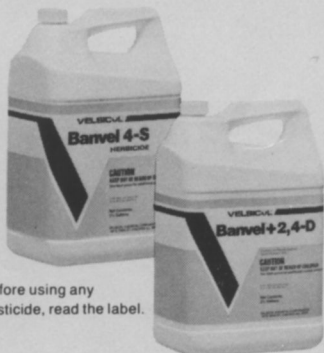


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BANVEL plus 2, 4-D is a versatile combination you use anytime from early spring to late fall. It kills by penetrating both leaves and roots, so weeds can't come back.

Mixes quickly, stores well. Use it according to directions, and your weed worries are over for the year.

Ask your Velsicol distributor about BANVEL 4S, too. Or write Velsicol Chemical Corporation, 341 E. Ohio Street, Chicago, IL 60611.



Before using any pesticide, read the label.

Velsicol

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Circle No. 117 on Reader Inquiry Card

"The key to our success," he says, "is improvement of the complex. We advise them of specific problems and in turn they can create more work for us."

Didomenico says that the job is a natural for most mowing and maintenance businessmen. If an apartment complex manager starts to do the work on his own, he quickly realizes that he's biting off more than he can chew. "The management companies don't want the headaches that accompany grounds upkeep," he said. "We can save them money by going in there with a competitive price."

If a company is geared toward maintaining apartment complexes, it makes it all the more easier for them to handle other commercial and industrial work as well. Didomenico says that you must have a complete understanding of your capabilities. "It's very difficult for a small operator to do that kind of work," he said. "He will be forced to change his equipment to do both kinds of work."

On the other hand, a big commercial operator has to adapt his techniques very little in order to handle apartment grounds. "It's not a cut and dried deal," says Didomenico. "You have to have the right kind of equipment to do that type of work."

Lead development

Diversity is another added incentive. A company must keep up a variety of jobs in order to stay in business these days and the apartment/condominium jobs afford them the opportunity for change. Whether you're dealing with a management company or with a committee of tenant/owners, a big contract can result in a variety of both commercial and residential leads.

Apartment and condominium work also affords the mowing/maintenance business the opportunity to branch out. Most complexes require light landscaping and experience with such jobs can garner your company good references. One such operator is Ray McMullen of Ray's Landscaping &

Nursery in Walled Lake, Michigan. "You can double your production with commercial jobs," he said.

McMullen does installation work for commercial jobs like these and will only maintain them through the first cut. He emphasizes the need for specialization when it comes to the apartment job. "You've got to be specialized," he said. "For one

"If you've got 250 units, that's the number of bosses you've got. In a condominium, everybody's got their own viewpoint," says Ray McMullen, Ray's Landscaping & Nursery, Walled Lake, Mich.

thing, because of all the angles, you have to have both small and large equipment — walk-behind and riding mowers, for instance.

250 bosses

But he, for one, would rather not get into the maintenance side of it, preferring, he says, to be dealing with just one person. "If you've got 250 units, that's the number of bosses you've got," he said. "In a condominium, everybody's got their own viewpoint."

The people that are most successful at apartment/condo work are those who can dovetail the work into other parallel jobs. That way, equipment changes and general overhead can be kept to a minimum. "We do it in conjunction with other jobs," says James Bradley of Oak Brook Landscape Co. in Oak Brook, Illinois. "We'll send in a crew for two days a week and then the same crew can work with an adjacent small park district."

Customer contact

The apartment job is very similar to park and commercial maintenance, says Bradley, whose company offers both turf and tree care. "Our guys can handle both types of work," he says, "whereas a residential crew could not."

Bradley says that there are three cardinal rules that must be followed in order to ensure the right

working relationship on an apartment job. "The first is that you have to treat each unit of the complex as a single family residence." Those that are unwilling to look at it that way, he says, may run into management problems.

The second rule is that supervision on the job is critical. Unless your crews are supervised by a good manager, job specifications may tend to be ignored and rela-

tions with the management company may suffer. "And contact with the committee head is the third critical thing. He's your conduit to each homeowner and unless he knows exactly what you're doing, you have no way of protecting yourself against any friction on the job."

Make your contracts specific, warns Bradley. Generally, there's a common area or 'green-belt' that's easy to agree upon. But the entranceways are the major portion of work because they require a lot of attention and may differ with each unit. "Make sure the committee agrees on all the details," he said.

No short contract

In selling your service, Bradley advises to get a one-year contract first and then try to extend it the second year to two years. Generally, the fee breaks down to a per-unit cost, which is usually based on a longer seven month pay-out and another five month charge during the winter. "You never want to get a three-month contract," says Bradley. "Because before you know it, the board will change and you'll be faced with having to renegotiate the whole contract over again."

Obviously, Bradley is sold on the apartment/condominium job. He says that it not only provides a solid long-term income, but helps the employes as well. "It works out well for everybody involved," says Bradley. "It's good for the worker because he can get involved in a long term contract."

Production all the way

But the most important aspect of the work is public relations, Bradley says. "The biggest asset you can have in this kind of business is communications — good supervision and communications."

Robert Taylor of Herb Taylor and Son Landscaping is also high on the apartment job. While he says that they have always started with residential work on a customized basis, "condos are production all the way. They want to look decent, but they want it done as cheap as possible."

Taylor employs four men and says that they can do the commercial job the same day as they do their residential work. "We do our commercial jobs at the beginning of the week and spend the rest of the time on the residential. The commercial jobs should be done first because of the business week."

Taylor says that he tries to make

TOOLS, TIPS, TECHNIQUES

Trees need extra care in summer

Don't let the summer go by without fertilizing your customer's trees, say many arborists. If you haven't been feeding customer trees for the last year or two, it might be time you started.

We haven't seen the full effects of drought this year and last, warn tree experts. Trees should be fertilized to help withstand summer's baking sun and hot, dry winds. Dry summer winds steal the life blood from trees and evergreens, say many authorities, because they remove moisture that cannot be replaced by depleted water supplies.

After fertilization, water thoroughly and put down a three- to four-inch layer of some kind of organic mulch. A practical way to fertilize is with Jobe's Tree and Shrub Spikes, marketed by International Spike, Inc., Lexington, Ky. Five of these spikes driven into the ground around a 20-foot tree are enough for a complete season, the company said.

Last summer's drought, followed by a dry, cold winter as it was in many areas, was very damaging to most trees. But fertilization, using mulch and watering as much as local restrictions allow will certainly help your customer's trees through.

the contracts from one commercial job to the next differ as little as possible. "We want to know what they're going to spend for the year and then we make the contract around their budget," he said. "But when you're dealing with nature, sometimes you're going to have to adapt."

The last word on the apartment/condominium job is that it is not for everyone. If you're doing mainly residential work, it might be difficult to schedule your crews around the equipment changes that are necessary. And if you prefer to work for an individual rather than a committee represented by one, maybe you'd better think twice.

But as long as the contract is comprehensive and long-term, you shouldn't have too many disputes. However, everyone must agree to its terms. Because these are usually long-term contracts, there are bound to be uncertainties.

For the most part, all those interviewed agree that apartment or condominium work can ensure long-term volume business. As Robert Taylor said, "Apartments . . . and banks . . . that's where the money is." —Paul McCloskey

LOWBALL from page 1

And because the lawn care industry has a lot of self-starters, in period of high unemployment, the number of companies tends to grow. "We get a few people who want to get into the business fast," says Lyons. "And if they don't have the experience, they'll underbid not on purpose, but just out of ignorance."

Lyons does have a few suggestions on how lowballing might be stemmed. Original contracts should be carried through according to the exact specifications. "In many cases, there is not a check-back to see if the job was done as contracted." A check system might be useful, or some insurance of contract performance, he believes.

Lyons doesn't deny that some price cutting is natural, however, especially in periods of high unemployment. "When we're out of work, we all try to trim prices," he said. "When you have 10 or 15 men looking at you, you'll take a job at cost just to keep the organization together."

Making up the difference

But he believes the key to the problem is good management, without which, everybody's "just beatin' the wind." Another source of control is the industry associations which, in the interests of the whole, should warn and condemn price cutters. "They're just killing the trade," he says.

Lowballing is also on the rise in Louisville, Kentucky, where Sam Farison is president of Farison Lawn Care. "I'd say we're about the cheapest market in the country," he said. "And we lost quite a few accounts last year that were grossly underestimated by other companies."

Farison cites actual figures of a company applying one and a half rate of Betasan, when he had estimated the acreage to require an eight and a half per thousand rate. "We always talk about it," he says,

"but see no decision. It almost makes us look like we're crybabies, but we're really not. It's terrible for the industry."

Companies that have management and labor difficulties are the ones cited most often as contributing to the problem. And that's not difficult to understand. If costs are being cut on the job site, personnel may be the area in which the income is retrieved. "There's really no law being broken," said Farison. "It's just the integrity of the industry is suffering."

Or, to put it bluntly, when you cut the cost of labor or materials, you've got to make up the difference elsewhere. The result may often be disgruntled employees, angry customers, and an alienated business community.

Lowballers often try to get quick results from their applications, some say. This can be done by over-fertilizing turf in order to get maximum green-up. For a while, a

customer may be astonished at the results. The kicker comes, however, later on, when turf becomes burned-out from all that rich feeding. And by that time, the offender may be long gone.

Some say that lowballing is done by companies who may be ready to sell out and want to maximize their customer lists before offering their company for sale.

Cost cushion

But lowballing for fun and profit is bound to cause a company to deteriorate. "One of two things will happen to a company that intentionally under cuts," says Ronnie Zweibel, president of ChemCare Lawn Service in Birmingham, Alabama. "If you cut back on the required chemicals needed to do the job, the customer will either eventually cancel, or you'll run yourself ragged on service calls. And who can afford

to do that?"

Zweibel says he sets his prices slightly higher than normal in order to provide a cost cushion that enables him to give the customer that little extra. "People out there are price shopping," he said. "You want to make sure they're getting their money's worth."

An interesting corollary to the problem, Zweibel says, is "highballing," in which a guy might over price his service during a call in order to exaggerate the extent of a customer's turf problems. "They might use scare tactics," he said, "to get the customer into believing he's got a real problem, when in fact it's pretty easily controllable."

But in the long run price undercutting only hurts the integrity of the lawn care industry as a whole. "It creates turmoil in the industry," says Zweibel, "and throws doubt on all of us."

Some areas of the country seem less plagued by lowballing than others. In Cincinnati, Ohio, where

to page 26



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MONEYWISE

Cutting corners at the Post Office

The U.S. Postal Service has initiated its controversial system of nine-digit ZIP codes, after winning a fight with the White House.

The Office of Management and Budget dropped its objections that the Postal Service hasn't adequately proved that the new system's benefits would outweigh its costs. James Miller, the budget office's regulatory affairs man, told Post Master William Bolger that a revised cost-benefit study the Post Office submitted was "in accord with the President's regulatory principles . . ."

The budget office's action means major commercial mailers now can obtain computer tapes that list every domestic address with its nine-digit ZIP code. Businesses mailing at least 500 first-class letters would get a half-cent discount on each piece displaying the nine-digit zip code, in addition to that saved by those that pre-sort their mail for processing.

And in an unrelated, but nonetheless ironic, action, the Post Office is in court fighting for the right of carriers to take shortcuts across resident's lawns. If all carriers "square it," or stick to sidewalks, a study cited by the Justice Department says, the bill for mail delivery would run \$100 million more a year. — provided the lawn care industry doesn't come up with durable ZIP strips.

LOWBALL from page 25

Larry Brandt is president of Spray-A-Lawn, the problem seems less significant. "I really don't think it's on the rise," he said. "And when it happens, it's usually done by those companies that hire a guy on straight commissions. Then he'll sometimes undermeasure the job just to keep his quota up."

When asked if substantial price undercutting by one company has the power to ruin another company, Brandt says, "It's more of an irritant than anything else. They might get the business for a year or so, but in the long run it will not pay off."

Rise in competition

The key seems to be in avoiding the temptation and to just stand fast. "We won't lower our prices under any condition," says Brandt. "It doesn't pay in the long run, and besides, we have a reputation to protect."

There doesn't seem to be any one kind of company that may see fit to underbid consistently. Some managers say that it's the bigger companies that do it because they're the ones that can afford to and still keep afloat. Others say it's the smaller companies just starting up, who, out of either ignorance or aggressiveness, will lowball to break into a market quickly.

In Orchard Park, New York, a suburb of Buffalo, Dale Wagatha is a Perf-A-Lawn franchisee. Last year, he said, there were five lawn care companies in the Buffalo area. This year the number has risen to 12 — a rise in competition that can be considered a prime condition for lowballing.

Pushing others out

"With that kind of competition," he said, "the standard price is cheap enough." Wagatha says that there is "a hell of a lot of underbidding going on in the Buffalo area, usually split between major companies and upstarts."

"The larger companies can afford to," he said. He mentioned one large company that gives it's

customers a free application if they stick with them for the entire year. Under normal circumstances, such a policy may not be considered lowballing, unless it's done with the intention of pushing others out of a market.

On the other hand, a smaller company with low overhead, run out of a home or garage, may be able to go into a market with cheaper prices. Is this lowballing? Only if the company is willfully going in with an unreasonable

Most understand the fine line between competitive pricing and lowballing — between sales incentives and getting the job no matter what the cost.

price, says Wagatha. "There's a difference between underbidding and a sales incentive," he said.

He does make the point, however, that it's usually the middle sized companies that suffer the most in such a large market when a significant amount of lowballing is going on. These are the companies that are building, adding to their overhead, but who haven't the assets to protect them from undercutters.

Detroit market flat

When asked what can be done to solve the problem, Wagatha says that a lot of companies don't put down the square footage of a job they estimate. When a company lowballs, their rate per thousand square feet is usually standard and reasonable. The price gouging only becomes evident if the plot is underestimated.

But his market is booming, nevertheless. "I've got all the business I can handle," he says. "There's been a tremendous upsurge in the market despite the problem."

Another area which is very prone to lowballing tactics is the Michigan area where the depression in the auto industry has depressed the lawn care market for some time. "There's been at least a 25 percent reduction in the lawn care market here," says Donald

COST CUTTINGS

Small business cuts — scalpel or meat-ax?

Will Ronald Reagan's Washington really get out of the business of small business?

Not entirely, according to members of the administration. Senate Small Business Committee's Robert Dotchin told *Venture* magazine that he expects the surgery on small business programs to be accomplished "with a scalpel, not a meat ax."

This may be cold comfort to those faced with the prospects under way. Early indications are that the administration is serious about cutting the budgets of departments and programs that have supported new and small business. Indeed, the administration seems likely to slash direct loans to small businesses and halt the kind of favorable status that has given such businesses a leg up in competing for these loans.

And although the administration may not go that far, informed sources say Reagan will attempt to further reduce the attractiveness of lending programs by bringing interest rates on direct and special loans up to the level charge on loan guarantees. The SBA's direct loans have charged 9¼ percent interest since October, while guaranteed loans whose rates are set by banks, may be as high as 2½ percent over the prime. Looks like it's time to tighten the belts and keep those engines clean.

Metzger, president of Saginaw Valley Lawn Care. "We really feel it. People who normally take five applications are now taking four."

Metzger is very wary of those who would skimp on chemical maintenance in order to make their quotes more attractive to potential customers. "If you don't go all the way with disease control," he said, "you're going to have some very serious problems on down the road."

And that's the real cost of under-

"More than anything else, it's a nuisance. They don't really have the power to knock anybody else out of the market. But all in all it makes the legitimate companies look bad."

The quick buck

Legitimacy seems to be the key word in the dispute over lowballing. A small industry like the lawn care business is growing hand over fist. And as it's in its maximum growth years, there are all kinds of entrepreneurs who are interested in it. Some are solid businessmen — some are out to make a quick buck.

The difference lies in two areas: those who realize their individual potential as lawn care businessmen, and those who feel they belong to the community of the industry as a whole. Both viewpoints should be united so that sound business ethics can be handed down year by year.

If the lowballing problem continues to rise, whatever its real cause — because of the economy of just overzealous businessmen — the real victim is the stature of the industry.

Slow deterioration

But perhaps David Lyons said it best when he considered the problem as a democratic one. "If you don't make a profit in this democratic country, you're out of a job. But unless you can do it fairly, the whole industry will come to a screeching halt."

Lawn care businessmen all over the country see the problem of price gouging as a growing concern. Most understand the fine line between competitive pricing and lowballing — between sales incentives and getting the job no matter what the cost.

Since those who do it may not feel the effect for two or three years, the seriousness of the problem may not be apparent to them. But it's a creeping effect. It's slow deterioration. Although it may not have the power to buckle the industry, it can slow down the prosperity of those who can make the industry worthwhile. — Paul McCloskey

cutting, according to many. If you're going to charge at rates that are less than cost, you'll have to make it up in areas such as disease management. That can be very dangerous in a couple of year's time and may take a long time to correct.

Metzger is not optimistic when it comes to curtailing the rise of willful price undercutting. "There will always be some of it around," he said. "You'll never be able to cure those people that are doing it unscrupulously."

Robert D'Ginto, who operates Keystone Lawn Spray in Wayne, Pennsylvania, sees the lowballing problem as more a reflection of the kind of industry that the lawn care industry is. "Profits are the name of the game in lawn care," he said. "It's not the number of accounts. If you're doing it (lowballing) consistently, it's going to catch up with you."

Breaking in fast

Stressing that there's no excuse for lowballing in the lawn care industry, D'Ginto says that more of it is going on in his area than ever before. He doesn't believe that it's the well established companies that are making a practice of it. "They have a good understanding of the market," he said. "Rather, it's the smaller guys who want to break in fast."

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scientists identified the presence of certain dioxin isomers in 2,4-D which prompted the recent government action.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently analyzed 30 samples of 2,4-D products produced in the U.S. Twenty-seven of the samples were reported to be free of any dioxin using an analytical method sensitive to one part per billion (ppb).

Following is the thrust of the Agriculture Canada announcement which impacts 2,4-D production and use:

- An immediate ban halts the sale by basic manufacturers of 2,4-D technical esters that have been shown to contain dioxins.

- Insure that all 2,4-D material is free of dioxin contamination by next year (The Canadian registration of 2,4-D products reportedly requires that the herbicides be free of dioxins as demonstrated by valid analysis sensitive to one ppb).

Consistent production

"The Task Force is also uncertain whether 2,4-D manufacturers can consistently produce the herbicide to meet the newly established Canadian standards for dioxin content," Jack Davies, Task Force chairman, told LAWN CARE INDUSTRY.

Seventy-five possible isomers theoretically exist in the dioxin family. The dioxin compounds may occur as possible by-products in the manufacture of certain chlorinated phenols and as products of certain combustion processes.

"Evidence from scientific investigations in the U.S., Canada and Europe shows dioxins were found on particulate matter from the stacks of municipal and industrial incinerators, the chimneys of wood burning stoves and fireplaces, smoke from cigarettes, deposits in automobile mufflers and the emission stack of a fossil-fuel powerhouse," Davies said. He also noted that none of the 75 dioxins are produced commercially, nor do any have industrial applications.

Toxicity varies

The toxicity of the different dioxin isomers varies considerably. Among the dioxins discovered by Canadian scientists with techniques sensitive to one ppb, the acute toxicity ranges from one million to 15,000 times less toxic than 2,3,7,8-TCDD.

"While the Canadian study is of considerable interest to analytical chemists, the mere presence of specific dioxins found at the levels reported does not constitute a hazard to human health or the environment," Davies said. Agriculture Canada cited no incidents or studies demonstrating such a hazard.

Studies conducted in the U.S., New Zealand, Australia, Finland and the United Kingdom evaluating the effects of exposure to 2,4,5-T herbicide (which does contain 2,3,7,8-TCDD) report no adverse human health effects.

"2,4-D herbicides have been used widely throughout the world for over 30 years. The Industry

"2,4-D herbicides have been used widely throughout the world for over 30 years. The Industry Task Force is unaware of any studies linking 2,4-D to human health effects or undue damage to the environment. . . ."

Task Force is unaware of any studies linking 2,4-D to human health effects or undue damage to the environment when 2,4-D products are used in accordance with label directions," Davies said.

Since no viable health hazards exist with prescribed uses of 2,4-D, the Canadian regulatory action must be addressed purely from a process technology standpoint.

"Industry scientists believe it is not valid to conclude that 2,4-D can consistently be produced with a dioxin content of less than one ppb, utilizing current technology," Davies said.

Based on the absence of demonstrated health risks and the uncertainty of analytical methodology, the 2,4-D Industry Task Force concludes the Canadian actions are unnecessary to protect human health and the environment from unreasonable risks.

The Industry Task Force on 2,4-D Research Data is a consortium of chemical manufacturers and formulators organized to update and amend the health and environmental data on the herbicide. In addition to controlling broadleaf weeds in turf, 2,4-D is used in cereal grain crops, sugar cane, pastures and non-crop land.

61-year-old turf manufacturer of turf maintenance equipment.

Since 1974, Dwyer has been vice president of engineering of Textron's Polaris E-Z-GO Div., Minneapolis, where he was responsible for product development.

Prior to Polaris E-Z-GO, he held engineering management positions at Black & Decker Mfg. Co., Outboard Marine Corp.'s Lawn-Boy Div., and Tecumseh Product Co.'s Power Products Div.

Dwyer received a bachelors degree in mechanical engineering from Marquette University. He is also a registered professional engineer in Wisconsin, Illinois and Maryland, and holds several industrial patents.

Until the Dwyer appointment, H. G. Nordmann served as general manager of Jacobsen, replacing Thomas Bruns, who resigned the post in February.

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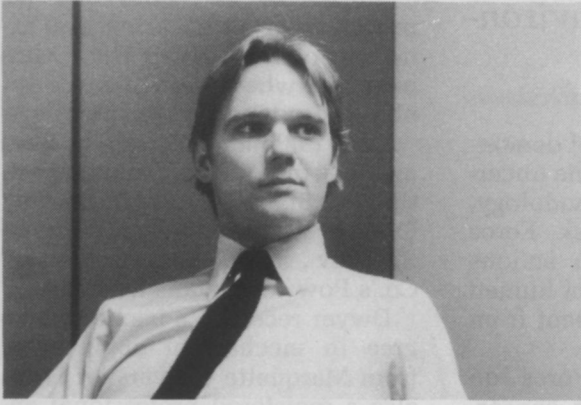
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MEMOS



Pulling the rug out

This month's issue contains an article on what has become a prickly subject in the lawn care industry. Consistent underbidding in order to win jobs — or lowballing as it's called — appears to be widespread in many lawn care markets. While most consider it a nuisance at

most, it does, like some kind of business virus, have the ability to sap a market of its competitive vitality.

But when does competitive bidding become fraudulent price cutting? The difference seems fairly clear-cut. Many companies have the resources and the capital to offer free-treatment incentives or discount plans without having to cut back on their fertilizer rates, their pesticide rates, or their employees' wages. This way they can slowly come to dominate a market. Is this lowballing? Most of you would probably agree that this, while a nuisance, is a plain fact of business life.

Underbidding, then, only becomes lowballing when a company cannot reasonably cover their service and overhead costs at their set price. And that's when market can turn foul. The difference has to be made up somewhere, whether by slackening spray rates or by holding back our employees' raises.

Lowballing can never be practiced for a very long time — it will always backfire. Employees

will be disgruntled if they have to bear the cost of bad business. Customers will complain soon after they realize they're getting mediocre results.

There's another cost, however, that cannot be assigned a numerical value. And that's the ethical cost to the industry as a whole. It's a little like inflation. Although people seem to have the same amount of cash in their pockets, their money is buying less and less. A creeping dissatisfaction sets in, they become vaguely frustrated, and finally angry.

And that's precisely what could happen to the lawn care industry if lowballing reaches epidemic proportions. Right now many lawn care businessmen are dissatisfied — soon the customers will recoil—and lawn care will have lost its lustre.

Paul She Closhy

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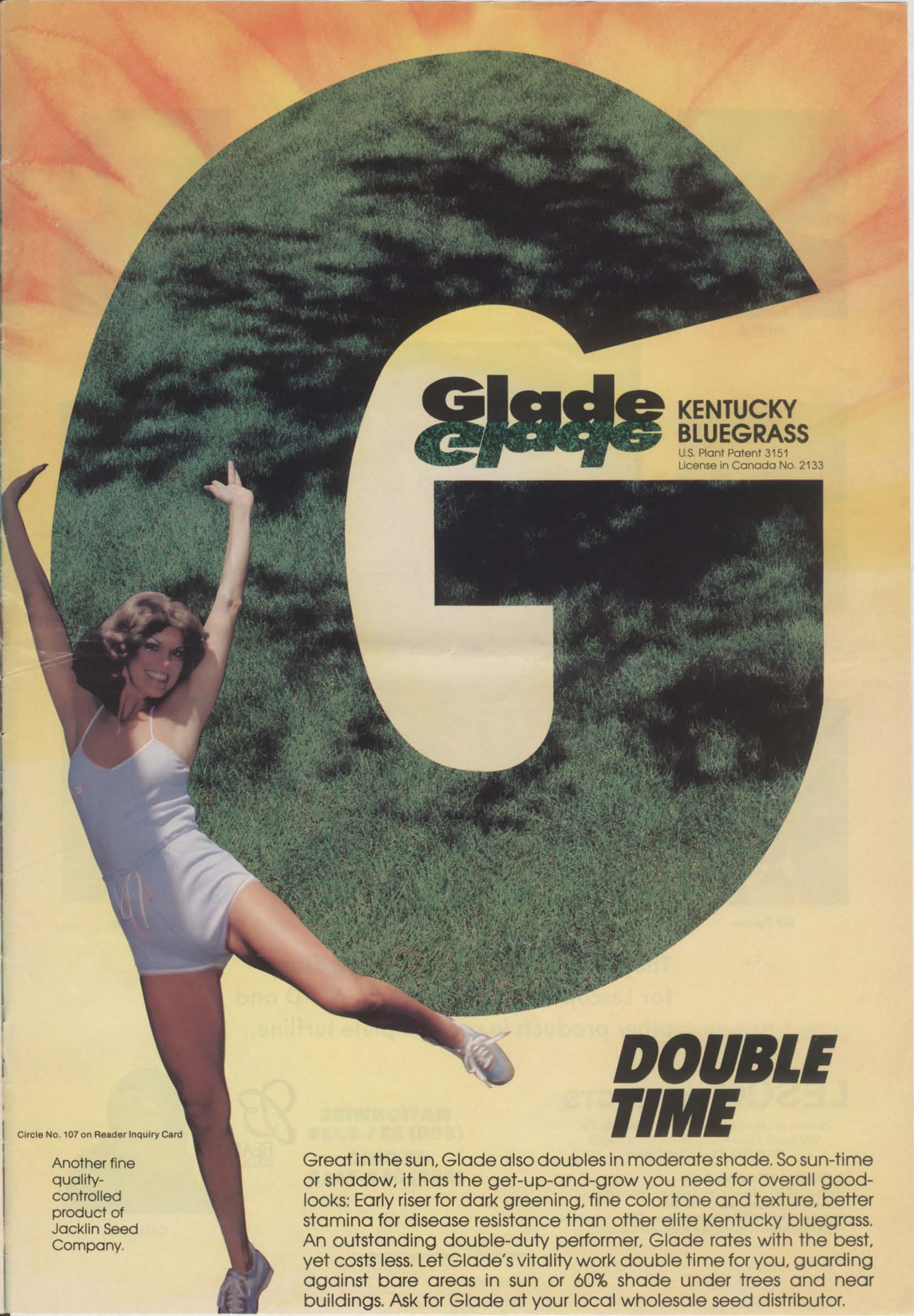
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