



Don Burton

DON BURTON:

New PLCAA president views present, future of lawn care industry

Ask an associate to describe Don Burton, president of Lawn Medic, in 25 words or less and he can't do it. No way. Burton, who was recently elected president of the Professional Lawn Care Association of America, is just too complicated to be categorized or easily described.

Over a cold beer, he can be the down-homiest, folksiest, most laid-back person in the world. You can almost imagine him tilting a Stetson back off his forehead as the jukebox plays a Willie Nelson tune.

Or, under more formal circumstances, he can be the consummate

businessman: articulate, knowledgeable and inciteful.

Burton can talk at length about his days playing college football, about his family's skiing trips to New England — or about the problems facing the lawn care industry.

Burton, who claims dual residence in Rochester, N.Y. and Manchester, N.H. with his wife Kathy and three children, graciously met a magazine editor in Buffalo recently to discuss the PLCAA and its future.

What he said wasn't at all folksy. But it was interesting. And here are excerpts from that conversation.

LCI: If you had to isolate your No. 1 goal as president of the PLCAA, what would it be? Why?

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MARCH 1983

LAWN CARE INDUSTRY

Serving lawn maintenance and chemical lawn care professionals

Negative option

Minneapolis lawn care pro has referee rule against procedure

Way back in June of 1980, the negative option issue was termed "potentially volatile" in a LAWN CARE INDUSTRY front-page story.

Based on what has happened in Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn., the issue has finally reached its potential: nearly 60 cases brought against customers who hadn't paid bills by Fertilawn, Inc. were recently judged in the defendant's favor by a Minneapolis Conciliation Court referee.

"Negative option" relates to the understanding between a lawn care company and its customer that service will continue until the customer specifically requests termination. The understanding is strictly a vocal contract, bound when the customer originally hires the lawn care company, and is common practice in the industry.

Fertilawn, which is owned by Leonard Anderson, has been operating under this policy. When

the company called those customers to court to collect unpaid bills, they all complained that they had not been notified of the continuing service.

Referee Michael Scherschligt ruled against the negative option concept in every case (even in instances when the defendant did not appear in court), and added that some of the customers might be entitled to sue Fertilawn.

"In view of the pattern estab-

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Backups needed

What other pros think

The Minneapolis court ruling against Fertilawn's "negative option" policy has had little effect on other policy users, according to several lawn care professionals.

Those who use the policy do so with backup features to insure customer satisfaction and decrease misunderstandings.

Ralph White of All-Season Maintenance Co., LaGrange, Ill., said his company goes door knocking to make sure custom-

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New management

PLCAA, ALCA to change execs

With an eye to the future, the Professional Lawn Care Association of America and the Associated Landscape Contractors of America recently announced major personnel changes.

The PLCAA Board of Directors released the Bostrom Management Corporation of Chicago, whose

services had been utilized since the PLCAA's inception in 1979.

"The PLCAA Board has the highest regard for the Bostrom Management Corporation," said one Board member. "We wouldn't be where we are without Glenn Bostrom. But we feel the PLCAA is at the stage where having our own

full-time person would be more advantageous."

The PLCAA hopes to open its own offices near Washington, D.C., to facilitate its relationship with the national government. The new executive director will be chosen as soon as possible, perhaps as soon as next month, say sources.

The Bostrom Management contract expires April 30.

Meanwhile, the ALCA accepted the resignation of executive director Alan A. Smith Jr. during its annual convention Jan. 20.

According to what Smith told the Board, he will be "pursuing



Bostrom



Pincus

other interests."

Gail Morgan, who had previously been ALCA Director of Programs, has been named acting executive director by the ALCA Board.

"She's been with us for a while, so we'll be able to maintain our consistency," noted ALCA president Dave Pincus of North Haven Gardens, Inc., in Dallas, Texas.

"Sometime this summer, we'll begin the search," Pincus said. "We hope to have a new executive director by fall."

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UPFRONT

So, after a hiatus of nearly three years, the problem of negative option arises again in the lawn care industry, as you know by now if you've read the story which begins on Page 1.

The last time this magazine carried a story of this nature was in the spring of 1980, when Landmark Associates' Marty Erbaugh had some observations. But the case in Minnesota involving Fertilawn brought the issue to a head — again.

It would seem that the answer to this problem might be eliminating the customer's alternative to claim ignorance (that the lawn care

company would return with continuing service from year to year) — simply by making the customer sign a bilateral agreement (contract). That is, a written document which would contain a statement of exactly what the lawn care company intends to do to the customer's lawn, and for how long they intend to do it.

I know that, if I were a customer who was going to sink \$150 or \$200 into my lawn, I would like something substantial ON PAPER, to guarantee the proper service. I would not hesitate to sign such a contract.

Many companies now do this,

including in the contract the fact that the customer must notify the company if he wants the service discontinued.

Sources at Fertilawn say that they stand to lose about \$30 per case, or almost \$1800 in uncollectible bills. They, in addition, have lost about 60 prospective customers; at about \$200 each, that's \$12,000 income for the year.

There are lawn care professionals who might say that the additional paperwork effectuated by having customers sign contracts is not worth the hassle. But can they take issue with \$12,000 per year? Food for thought.

Jerry Roche

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John Cruse stands between two of the 13 trucks which his company, Easy Lawn, saw destroyed in a fire this last winter. Cruse says, however, that he has high hopes for this year's business, and that 20 of 23 trucks will be back on the road.

Fire!

Thirteen trucks lost in flames

Thirteen of 23 trucks owned by Easy Lawn, one of the nation's "Million Dollar Lawn Care Companies" which operates out of Piqua, Ohio, were damaged by a fire that gutted the company's headquarters last winter.

More than \$300,000 damage was done to the vehicles and building, according to company president John Cruse. But lawn care crews worked throughout the winter trying to salvage six of the 13 damaged vehicles.

Fortunately, company ledgers were saved, Cruse said. Firemen with air packs entered the building to bring the ledgers and corporate documents out.

"My first thought was that a lot of time and years were going down the drain," Cruse admitted.

Easy Lawn serves the metropolitan Dayton, Cincinnati and Columbus areas.

Cruse said that 20 trucks will be on the road this summer. The company is currently renting a small space elsewhere in Piqua out of which to work.

"We have plans to build a new building by May," Cruse noted. "We're also planning on increasing our customer accounts by five or ten percent this summer."

Easy Lawn employs 30-35 men during the peak season to service about 10,000 accounts.

Resolved:

Fertilizer group asks uniform laws

The Fertilizer Organizations Council of the United States (FOCUS) has passed a resolution urging state control officials to adopt the uniform reporting of fertilizer by class.

This action followed an announcement by the Department of Agriculture that it would discontinue the annual report "Commercial Fertilizers, Consumption by Class."

The National Fertilizer Solutions Association has been working diligently to obtain adoption of the Uniform Fertilizer Tonnage Reporting System by all states.

Jeff Boese of the Indiana Plant Food and Agricultural Chemicals Association has been elected FOCUS chairman, and John Foltz of the Ohio Fertilizer and Pesticide Association was chosen vice-president.

Health tip

ChemLawn keeps clinical laboratory

Though the ChemLawn Corp. has sold the assets and business of the rest of CLC Laboratories, it will keep the cholinesterase clinical laboratory.

As in the past, ChemLawn will provide cholinesterase assays for members of the lawn care industry who wish to monitor the health of employees exposed to cholinesterase inhibiting pesticides.

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George P. Toma



George Toma is a turf grass consultant. He is groundskeeper for the Kansas City Royals and the Chiefs, and has been in charge of preparing the playing fields for

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The control of broadleaf weeds in turf.

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MARKETING IDEA FILE

How about cable TV ads?

Looking for a new way to advertise? Why not try local cable television?

The benefits of cable television advertising are clear to those retailers who have already experimented with it: low-cost image-building, a variety of programming, affordable frequency, flexibility, market targeting, and the opportunity to be part of an industry that will in time change our lifestyles. Major advertising agencies are beginning to consider local cable TV as a viable advertising medium.

Why? Here are some good reasons:

- As of July, 1982, 27.9 million television

households, or more than one-third of the nation's homes, had cable;

- Cable television subscribers are projected to represent more than 60 percent of all television households by the end of the decade;

- Cable can provide, as do Yellow Pages and local radio, a geographical focus on the retailer's best market, because it is community-based;

- Cable subscribers tend to be more upscale: better educated, higher-level occupations and age-grouped between 18 and 49;

- Production costs for a commercial can be as little as \$150 for a 30-second spot; and

- Advertising in cable program guides, a growing medium, is another option.

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NEWS from page 7

Price of each assay is \$10.50 for either plasma or red blood cell cholinesterase.

ChemLawn has performed more cholinesterase assays for the turf industry than any other laboratory in the country. For more information, contact laboratory supervisor Jan Singell at the ChemLawn Corp. Clinical Laboratory, 1046 Crupper Ave., Columbus, OH 43229. The phone number there is (614) 431-9101.

Poll results

Chemical industry slightly optimistic

The nation's chemical industry is optimistic that there will be a strong recovery in 1983, according to a survey conducted by the Chemical Manufacturer's Association.

Industry spokesmen said that chemical sales for 1982 were about \$172 billion, but that CMA members responding to the survey predict about \$191 billion in sales in 1983.

To support this optimism, the industry's spending on research and development in 1982 reached about \$5.7 billion.

Freebie

Instant guide to lawns available

Pacific Green/Nunes has published an "Instant Lawn Guide," which will be made available free of charge to interested parties.

The illustrated brochure describes the nine major varieties of sod in California with easy to understand directions on watering, fertilizing and mowing. It was edited by general sales manager Bill Tavener, wholesale marketing director John Culbertson, retail marketing manager Peggy Gribben and production manager John Rector, and illustrated by Richard Wallace.

Copies are available from any Pacific Green/Nunes sales representative, or by calling (800) 762-3027 in southern California and (800) 692-8690 in northern California.

Depression figures

Business failures average 532/week

Business failures averaged 532 per week during the latter portion of 1982, a 70.5 percent increase over 1981 and the highest in 50 years.

The failure rate, in another context, was 80 per 10,000 companies listed by Dun & Bradstreet. Most often-cited reasons for the failures are high interest rates, length of the current recession, over-expansion, and lack of entrepreneurial experience.

Interest on some loans was as much as 25 percent.

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Results due

Urban Pesticide survey undertaken

A final report and user data file was released last month on the National Urban Pesticide Applicator Survey, a cooperative effort by the Professional Lawn Care Association of America, the National Pest Control Association, the National Arborist's Association, the American Association of Pest Control Officials and the EPA.

NUPAS, as the survey is known, was designed to obtain quantitative pesticide usage data and industry profile data so as to permit statistically valid estimates to be made concerning the risks and benefits of pesticide use.

The survey was conducted by the Research Triangle Institute under EPA funding. Results are also expected to be used for regulatory impact analyses affecting, among others, the lawn care industry.

Good news

Housing market may be expanding

Good news for the lawn care industry comes from the McGraw-Hill Information Systems Company, which recently forecast residential construction to reach \$80.1 billion in 1983, an increase of 38 percent over the \$58 billion of 1982.

The company predicts an increase of 12 percent in the overall housing market with construction of \$167.5 billion.

The first signs of the upturn in housing came last September from the U.S. Department of Commerce, whose statistics indicated a 14.4 percent increase in housing starts that month, spurred by a flood of 30,000 federally subsidized housing units.

Contest winners

11 firms named for their safety

Eleven landscape contracting firms have been named recipients of 1982 Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA) safety awards for accident prevention.

Winners were: Theodore Brickman Industries, Inc., Long Grove, Ill.; SaBell's, Inc., Lakewood, Col.; Jack Mattingly Associates, Inc., Charlotte, N.C.; Brazos Valley Nursery, Bryan, Tex.; Nelson Landscape Service Inc., Spokane, Wash.; Southern Seeding Service, Inc., Greensboro, N.C.; BECO Corp., Idaho Falls, Ida.; Aristocrat Landscaping, Inc., Plymouth, Mich.; Village Landscaping, Centerville, Ohio; and Mavroff, Inc., Waukesha, Wisc.

Circle No. 120 on Reader Inquiry Card

TOOLS, TIPS, TECHNIQUES

Steps to creative organization

"Every firm must have a sense of purpose, mold a unique character that communicates that purpose, decide what needs to be done and mobilize resources," said Dr. William Franklin, associate professor of management at Georgia State University during a recent ALCA Management conference.

Franklin recognized what he called the 10 steps to creative organization:

- 1) Commit yourself to recruit and hire the best personnel;
- 2) Recognize that personnel development and training is a never-ending aspect of work itself;
- 3) Establish a genuine commitment to the

economic and psychological growth of all your employees;

4) Permit a wide tolerance for results-oriented creative individualism;

5) Identify how much (not how little) every employee has the right to know;

6) Release the natural creative power in people;

7) Encourage participation in shaping the view of your firm's future;

8) Never cease the search for a better way to do everything;

9) Recognize that productive and innovative firms are as much or more the results of the right chemistry as they are of capital or competence;

10) Never underestimate the power of your presence.

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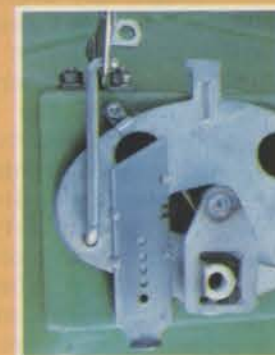
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Financial survival in the industry

Last month, freelance writer Chris Murray began a two-part series on how lawn care professionals deal with financing their businesses. He continues with his appraisal of the situation in this article, which picks up where the last left off: with a statement by Joe Carpenter of Gastonia, N.C.

Others cited in the first installment, and also mentioned this month, are Jack Mattingly of Charlotte, N.C.; Duane Nelson of Spokane, Wash.; John Sherrill of Steamboat Springs, Col.; Jim McCurdy of Belleville, Ill.; Stephen Corrigan of Holyoke, Mass and Gordon Whitten of Hastings, Neb.

Carpenter's first observation in this month's follow-up concerns the impression bankers have of the lawn care industry:

Another handicap lawn care and landscape businessmen have to contend with in applying for loans is the perception by bankers that their industry is a prime example of the kind that "burns banks."

"Bankers read reports on the lawn care industry and see that turnover is big," explained Carpenter. However, all of them eventually overcame these obstacles and were willing to share some hard-earned homespun advice on how to finance growth and deal with bankers.

Mattingly urges the newcomer to "start out small, stay within your means, but buy the biggest piece of machinery you can afford. If you do, the better are your chances for survival and the faster things will change."

Nelson's business followed a slow pyramid-type growth in which all his money was invested back into it. Sherrill remembers that it wasn't until after his first year that he figured out whether he was doing things right. "Until your knowledge grows, don't take any chances," he noted. "There is no quick fix."

On dealing with bankers, Nelson advises patience. "My relationship with the local banker developed over a number of years," he said. "Now my banker doesn't deny me anything, but I had to work closely with him."

Be honest

All businessmen interviewed mentioned the importance of keeping the banker current and being completely honest with him. "Tell them the truth because they're going to find out anyway," warned McCurdy.

Other advice focused on approaching the banker as if "he is a client and you are trying to sell him" and going in "with a visually appealing package like you would a client."

"Look like a professional and know what you want to say," urges Mattingly. "Too many just go in and stop after the first sentence." Mattingly also thinks wearing a

coat and tie into the loan interview wouldn't hurt.

Specific advice on what to prepare and present to the banker centered on budget forecasts, cash flow needs, and current and projected client figures.

Whitten said, "Show that you are planning your business and can manage your resources." Nelson observed: "Bankers are going to ask for this information so why not do the work ahead of time. It's a good business practice."

Corrigan said: "Letting the banker know your cash flow problems is nothing to be embar-

rassed about. He'll see them, and he'll see the seasonal nature of the business, but don't take the attitude that they are a liability. Any business can have cash-flow problems."

Cash flow

Cash flow is of a particular concern for landscaping companies, which must be bonded before they can bid for government contracts. To get bonded a company must have a certain amount of cash on hand throughout the year. The technical term for available cash is "net quick." The

bonding rate, the amount by which you can be insured, is then 10 times net quick.

"In order to insure good cash flow, you have to plan for down time in the winter and set prices to level out the humps and valleys of the season," said Carpenter. "When planning for the season, a guy is a fool to think he can work the entire time. You have to account for the unpredictability of the weather."

One landscaper admitted that a colleague of his gets around the cash flow problem each year by borrowing \$100,000 just before the end of the year "just to raise his net quick for the following season."

After establishing a good working relationship with a banker, it is advisable to borrow as much as

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White grubs used to laugh at insecticides...



possible as soon as possible to establish a good credit rating.

"Four years after I started, I took out a \$10,000 cash loan even though I didn't need it. I then paid it back on time and established our credit rating," noted Nelson.

From the standpoint of creating a good credit rating, Nelson also thinks it is helpful to do as much discount buying as possible. "If you constantly demonstrate that you can pay your bills promptly, bankers will be more inclined to take a chance on you."

Businessmen were divided over whether to assume long or short term debts, but many acknowledged that it is difficult to stay in business these days without carrying more debt. Many reach a

compromise on this question by renegotiating the terms of their loans as often as they can.

On the question of the number of banks to deal with, respondents were divided over simplifying the process and staying with one banker, or seeking as many sources of capital as possible. Corrigan, falling into the latter camp, believes it is good to go to another source to keep credit lines open with the original bank.

Bigger is better

"Banks are usually limiting in their commitment and like to see other banks taking a chance on you," he said. A drawback to this arrangement is the necessity of more collateral, but in the words of Jim McCurdy, "The bigger you get, the friendlier bankers get."

Most businessmen had advice for those interested in breaking into the lawn care and landscaping business — don't!

Sources of capital if banks have turned you down are government-insured Small Business Administration (SBA) loans. The federal government insures the loan, allowing the local bank to grant it. "However," warns McCurdy, "the government will want to know everything about you, and they will own you. They will own your stock and the braces on your kid's teeth."

Government-insured loans specifically designed for businesses involved in crop and plant

production are production credit loans (PCA).

Plants are considered too volatile as collateral and bankers regard investing in something that "eats and lives" as too risky. Consequently, the federal government fills the gap. They are a major source of capital for farmers but many landscapers aren't aware they qualify for them.

John Klooster found out about them after doing a landscaping job for the local farm credit union. "I didn't know we qualified for them until I did that job," he said. "I got a loan at one percent under prime."

For Jepson, obtaining a loan is much more difficult "because there aren't as many banks in Canada and the charter bank system is very conservative, especially when dealing with small business." But, like the U.S. government, the Canadian government offers government-insured loans to businesses that have been turned down by charter banks.

SBA loans?

Jepson also considered taking advantage of the Small Business Loans Act which allows the government to co-sponsor loans with private banks. Unfortunately, the legality of the arrangement is in question right now because it has been discovered that private banks are unwilling to share any of the prosperous loans granted under this act with the government. Another drawback is that all loans must be used for capital improvements or some kind of equity purchase, not cash flow or operating costs.

For those who have found dealing with banks a nightmare, there is always the option of improving one's own business skills.

Whitten finally decided to correct his annual cash flow problems by doing more financial planning and offering pre-payment discounts to his customers. The result: "We've had to do less borrowing to get us from one season to the next."

One way of cutting overhead and improving control over financial resources is investing in a computer. Said Jepson: "We invested in it three years ago, and it's paying off right now. Through it, we've managed to run a tight ship and cut down on our need."

Most businessmen interviewed had some parting advice for those interested in breaking into the lawn care and landscaping business right now — don't!

Even after solving the problem of financing, your task is not completed either. Concluded Whitten:

"Because people are so cynical about service these days, you have to be prepared to go all out to provide better service for the customer." — Chris Murray

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Turf insects:

1982 review, 1983 update

Insects and their control remain important factors in achieving the desired end product of the lawn care industry—an attractive green lawn. Insect pests which can limit achievement of this objective are: 1) chinchbug, 2) bluegrass billbug, 3) grubs, 4) sod webworm & cutworm and 5) greenbug.

Excluding the influence of chemical controls, the amount of damage these insects cause is largely dependent upon rainfall. While one location received moisture adequate for good turf growth, another in the same market area experienced varying degrees of deficiency. These periods of moisture abundance and deficiency, occurring during key times in the life cycle of pest insects, determine in large measure the extent of population build-up and damage seen.

Chinchbug

Turfgrass areas with moisture deficiency occurring during development of first generation chinchbugs from late June through early August often had high populations and damage in 1982. Damage was accentuated by chinchbugs feeding on the moisture stressed turf. Areas receiving rainfall or irrigation sufficient for good turf growth had low levels of infestation and little, if any, damage.

Early April applications of chlorpyrifos (Dursban) at 1 lb AI/acre, diazinon at 2.5 lb AI/acre, or isofenphos (Oftanol) at 2 lb AI/acre, aimed at overwintering adults, successfully prevented development of infestations during summer. Treatment of existing infestations using diazinon, propyl thiopyrophosphate (Aspen), bendiocarb (Turcam) and trichlorfon (Proxol) at labeled rates gave good control. However, areas damaged before treatment was applied still showed the same damaged areas in September.

Bluegrass billbug

The bluegrass billbug still ranks a close second among the list of insect pests causing visible damage to turfgrasses in 1982. Though Kentucky bluegrass is the primary host, fine fescue can also be damaged.

Injury from billbug remains the damage condition most frequently misdiagnosed. Symptoms seen are often attributed to the fungus disease, dollar spot, *Fusarium*, localized or general moisture stress and — most common of all — sod webworm injury. Damage by billbug is easily distinguishable from all of the types of injury by the fact that stems break off easily at the crown, and both crown and stems show evidence of larval tunneling. No other insect, disease or turfgrass disorder causes this condition.

Moisture stress seems to increase the severity of injury from billbug. The crown of plants weakened by moisture stress and damaged by larval feeding die readily during the heat of July and August. Furthermore, larvae move deeper into the root zone when the soil becomes dry, thus making them an even more difficult target to reach with insecticides.

The preventive programs applied during April for control of chinchbug were also successful in removing overwintering billbug adults, thus preventing development of damaging larval populations from June through July. Labeled rates of diazinon were generally effective against existing larval infestations, if applied in June while the larvae were in the stems or feeding at the crown.



Evidence is seen here of billbug tunneling in grass stems.



Eggs of the green bug in the stem of a typical plant.

by Dr. Harry Niemczyk, OARDC



Such treatments were generally unsuccessful when made after the larvae moved to the root zone. Applications of isofenphos (Oftanol) made during June or July to prevent grub infestations also provided control of existing larval infestations.

Grubs

Soil moisture or the lack of it during the time of Japanese beetle, masked chafer and European chafer egg deposition and incubation (July and August), has a major influence on the level of grub infestation the following fall. If eggs are deposited in soil containing moisture adequate for good turf growth, high levels of

infestation can be expected. A dry soil condition during this period means many eggs will die, resulting in lower levels of infestation.

Apparently conditions in 1982 were optimal because grub infestations were high in most mid-western, north central and eastern states. Infestation levels of 30 grubs per square foot were common. Damage from skunks, racoons and moles searching the turf for grubs was also extensive.

The new grub insecticide, isofenphos (Oftanol) provided effective season-long control when applied as early as April. A small percentage of the early April applications resulted in poor control. These cases and associated circumstances are being investigated by turfgrass researchers and the manufacturer. Applications made from May to mid-August were also successful in preventing infestations. The 30 to 40 day delayed action characteristic of Oftanol made application after August a questionable decision in terms of stopping damage during September and October. While some evidence suggests grubs stop feeding 14 or so days after treatment, this theory has not been confirmed by research.

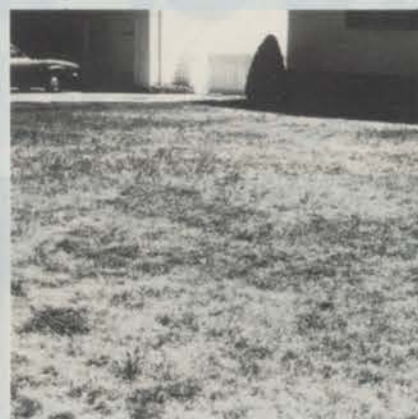
Treatment of existing grub infestations using labeled rates of diazinon, trichlorfon (Proxol) and bendiocarb (Turcam) were most successful when followed by 0.5 to 1 inch of irrigation.

Sod webworm, cutworm

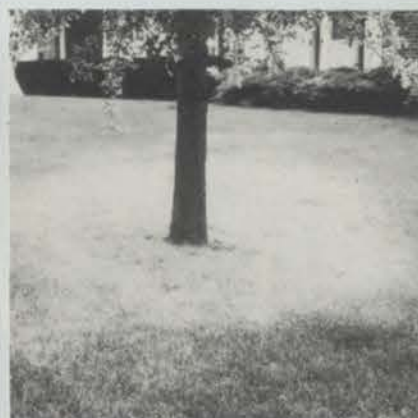
The incidence of sod webworm and cutworm infestations appears less related to soil moisture conditions than with other pests. Damage can be more severe when the turfgrass is under moisture stress because the plants recover more slowly.

While some infestations of sod webworm occur each year, this writer is still of the opinion that

to page 15



Billbug damage to the home lawn is plain to see here.



Greenbug-applied damage to a home lawn shows up easily.

Ciba-Geigy**New insecticide called 'Triumph'**

After seven years of testing, federal label approval for a new organophosphate insecticide manufactured by Ciba Geigy Corporation was submitted to the EPA in 1982. Previously known only as CGA-12223, the new product will bear the trade name "Triumph." Three formulations will be made available: a 4E (emulsifiable) liquid for professional use by golf courses and the lawn care industry; and 1% granular and 1% emulsifiable formulations for home and garden use. Requests for

approval of the 1G and 1E formulations were submitted June 1982 and November 1982 for the 4E. Approval is expected this year. If registration is granted, the product should be available in late 1983 or early 1984.

The toxicology of technical grade Triumph shows it has an acute oral LD₅₀ (rat) of 100 mg/kg, acute dermal LD₅₀ (rat) of 700 mg/kg and an acute inhalation LC₅₀ (rat) of 1,500 mg/m³. These characteristics place the insecticide in the moderately toxic

category.

Research data on the effectiveness of Triumph shows it to be very effective against a broad range of turfgrass pests, including: grubs, chinchbugs, billbugs, sod webworms and cutworms. The label rate for grubs is expected to be 2 lb AI/acre, and 1 lb AI/acre for surface insects. Rapid effectiveness against grubs and the fact that the material moves through thatch readily, are two of its advantageous characteristics.

— Dr. Harry Niemczyk

Be careful of questions asked on employment applications

We are frequently asked which questions are legal or illegal for a lawn care employer to ask on an employment application or during a job interview. The next few columns will be devoted to reviewing the most frequent questions asked during the hiring process, and the legal implications of each question.

At the outset, no question is *per se* illegal. There is no law that prohibits an employer from asking an individual his age, marital status, etc. Problems arise when the answers to these questions are acted upon in a discriminatory manner. For example, asking the question of marital status is not illegal, but it frequently discriminates against single or divorced women, because of the stereotype that those women, once they are married, will want to stop working. Rarely does a marital status question discriminate against a man.

With that example, the following are typical questions and the legal implications of each:

Age

It is not illegal to ask an applicant for his age. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has said that asking the question of age may be a surface indication of underlying age discrimination, but it is not in and of itself discriminatory. Furthermore, whenever a lawn care employer can demonstrate a business necessity or job-related purpose for asking the question, then the discrimination aspect begins to fade away. For example, many lawn care employers want to ask the date of birth because they need that in order to check the applicant's history. The driving record is essential for most lawn care technicians, therefore the question is justified by an over-riding business purpose.

If a long-term employer wants to determine an applicant's age, but does not have the business necessity for doing so, rather than asking the question, there is another approach. Assume that an applicant graduates from high school at age 18. Add the number of years since the date of graduation, and the lawn care employer will then be within a year of determining the applicant's age.

Marital status

As mentioned above, marital status frequently leads to decisions excluding single or divorced women from employment opportunities. If there is no pattern whereby this question is asked and single or divorced women are not excluded for employment at a substantially higher comparative rate than single or divorced men,

then the question would probably be harmless.

Arrest and conviction records

Conviction is a much sounder basis for inquiry than arrest, since an arrested individual is presumed innocent until proven guilty, while a conviction comes because, presumably, the individual is guilty. Avoid arrest records, and focus on conviction records within

the past seven years on matters that could be job-related.

Perhaps the most important area where the lawn care employer should focus involves an applicant's driving record, including convictions that vary from traffic violations to driving under the influence of alcohol.

Race

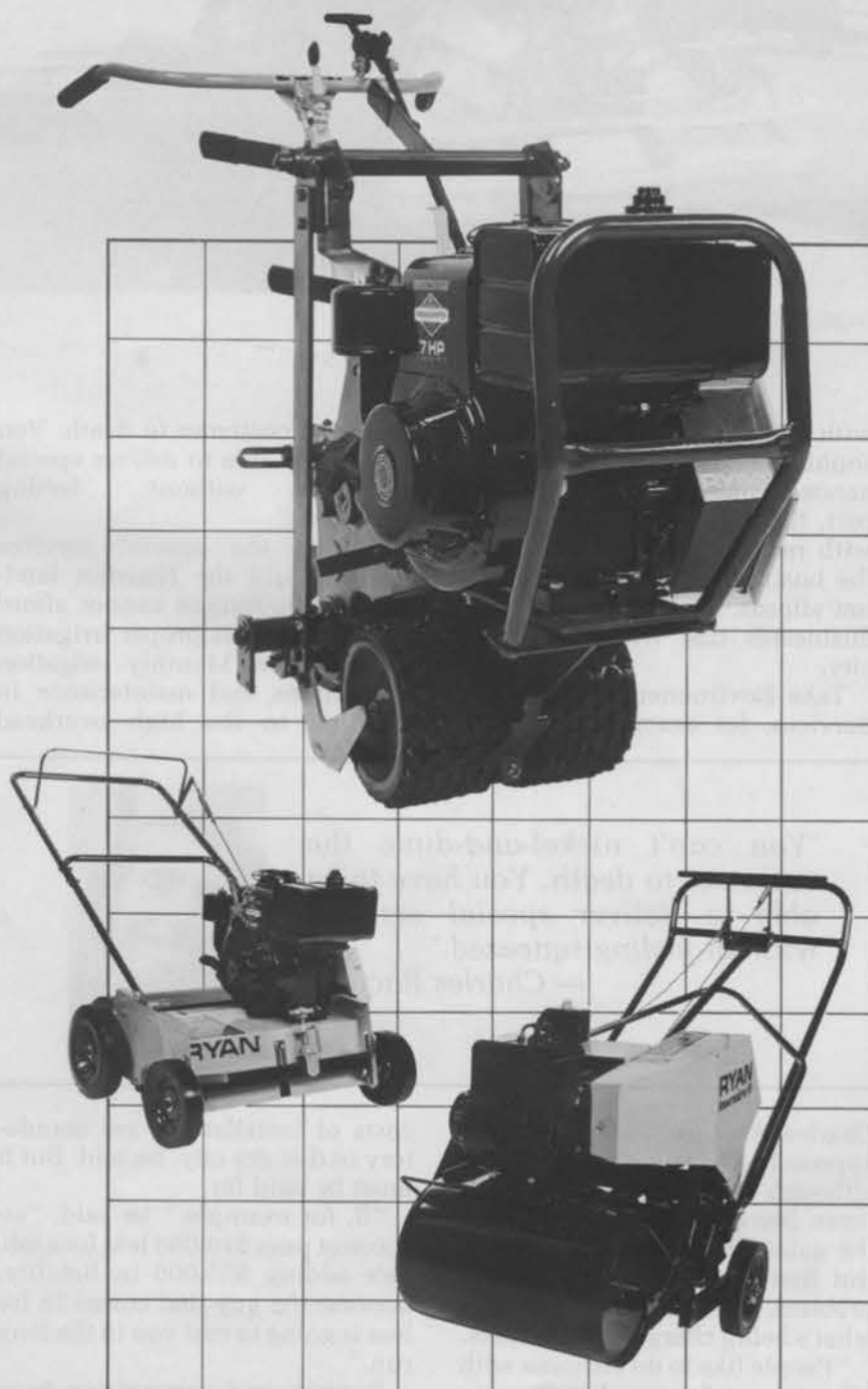
This is viewed in the same manner by the Equal Employment

Opportunity Commission as age. Frequently, employers want to keep a record of the applicant flow data by race, and will mark the applicant's race somewhere on the application. Though it is obviously unnecessary to ask a question about race, we think employers should keep a separate record of applicant flow data by race and sex.

Education

Education is a permissible question, depending on the extent to which it is job related. That is, determine the amount of education necessary to complete the job satisfactorily. At that time, education is a permissible, relevant factor. If requiring more education is imposed on job applicants, that may have a discriminatory impact.

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MOWING/MAINTENANCE MARKETPLACE

Houston: Exciting business opportunities



... but no shortage of 'mow-and-go' freelancers.

In Houston — sprawling metropolis of the New South — natural landscapes compete with concrete skyscrapers for the city's eye. So it is that when Houston mowing and maintenance businessmen spot undeveloped areas, they move quickly to pitch them. In Houston, mowing and maintenance businessmen and oilmen understand each other.

But the market is not without its headaches, as any of the principal mowing and maintenance businessmen will tell you. As the accompanying photo demonstrates, Houston has no shortage of "mow-and-go" freelancers, ready to lowball choice intermediate accounts. These jobs nurse the bottom line—and Houston's maintenance businessmen want them.

However, since Houston is a bustling maintenance marketplace, with a few zoning laws to pre-empt building development of any kind, most businessmen agree that there is plenty of work to go around, both within the opulent Galaria neighborhood and the outlying suburbs as well. But the proof's in the portfolio, they'll say.

LAWN CARE INDUSTRY visited Houston recently and talked

with five of the area's more sophisticated landscape maintenance businessmen. For the most part, they are bold entrepreneurs with reasons to be excited about the business opportunities Houston affords. They are the kind of businesses that will change the city.

Take Environmental Landscape Services, for example. President

dime the customer to death. You have to be able to deliver special services without feeling squeezed."

Among the special services Racusin said the Houston landscape environment cannot afford to do without is proper irrigation maintenance. Monthly irrigation inspections and maintenance in addition to the high overhead

'You can't nickel-and-dime the customer to death. You have to be able to deliver special services without feeling squeezed.'

— Charles Racusin



Charles Racusin has a realistic approach to his industry, which although not without its frustrations, leaves him confident about the gains his business will make. But first, he's fighting an image problem. And it has to do with what's being charged for business.

"People like to do business with other successful people," Racusin said. "But you can't nickel-and-

costs of installations are mandatory in this dry city, he said. But it must be paid for.

"If, for example," he said, "an account pays \$10,000 less for a job, he's adding \$35,000 in liability, because the guy that comes in for less is going to cost you in the long run."

Racusin said competition from those undercharging for jobs tends

to create a negative image of the industry in Houston. Moreover, it "stifles the degree of service we can offer," he said. "We shouldn't be intimidated by the client who asks for the best possible price. But if we all make our prices as tightly as we can, we are not going to get the revenue it takes to ensure the survival of the landscapes. We can't be afraid to turn down business, if that's what it takes."

Those services he claimed as mandatory were regular irrigation maintenance and comprehensive weed control, all of which require top-notch personnel. "And many of the major institutional clients feel the aesthetics of curb-appeal is important," he said. "These are the clients who are confident enough to make substantial investments in order to get comprehensive grounds management packages."

One comprehensive landscape maintenance businessman who agrees with Racusin's philosophy is Landscape Management Inc.'s Carl Froberg, who noted that the Houston maintenance marketplace "is in the dark ages as far as verticutting and aerating are concerned." In addition, Froberg said that drought conditions in

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Froberg



Sanker



Spencer



Walker

HOUSTON:

Irrigation maintenance a 'must'

from page 16

Houston mandate the need for customer awareness to the problems of maintenance businessmen.

"And you can't always run this kind of business on your bank account," he said. "We don't usually get up-front money. We can only bill at the end of the month. As a result, we're getting very particular about who we accept maintenance jobs from."

Froberg said that in order to make his customers more aware of the costs and some of the more unknown secrets to keep landscapes healthy, he publishes a

monthly newsletter that goes to all his clients. "It's my own way of telling people about Houston," he said. "We'll have rain here all year, but it will stop for three days and then we'll have drought — the clients have to be informed."

Froberg also echoed Racusin's warning about proper irrigation for landscape accounts. If irrigation is not provided on the job, he said any guarantee he provides is void.

However, he said that many irrigation contractors do not plan far enough in advance. "Many of them are more interested in selling

their jobs than in what's going to happen to the plant material down the road," he said. "All they do is guarantee the hardware. That's why irrigation maintenance is a must."

Froberg said that while his company has a few large maintenance accounts, they don't instinctively seek the huge jobs. He feels that profit margins are not as big on the larger jobs, because the real money is to be made on the "extras — such as irrigation."

Too much to handle

Len Spencer of The Spencer Company said that in Houston, many mowing and maintenance businessmen seem to be taking on more business than they can handle: "I've seen a lot of people get into this business and then fold at the snap of a finger."

Many maintenance businessmen, Spencer said, do not adequately plan for the hidden overhead costs. They are the ones who will fold up first. For instance, he said, "Our largest problem is travel time. It takes up a terrific percentage of the day. As a result, you have to operate with astute crew supervisors."

In order to cut down on overhead costs, Spencer said that mowing and maintenance businesses must be aware of the latest in labor-saving innovations: "The key is to use the latest equipment available." Because man labor is so costly and difficult to condense, Spencer added, labor saving devices are paramount.

"It's not the cost of the machine that bothers you. It's the machine not being used that bothers you. That's why without preventive maintenance, your overhead charges are likely to kill you."

For instance, Spencer thinks that chemical maintenance is an absolute must. "The time savings are fantastic," he said, adding that his company uses chemicals a great deal and employs a full time maintenance staff. "In the long run the real cost of the landscape job is going to be maintenance."

Crowded market

Paul Sanker of Growth Systems Inc. agrees that the Houston marketplace has become "crowded" in the last two years. "It is the easiest business in the world to get into," he said. "In the last two years the new companies in this area have driven competitive prices way down."

Many of the more unsophisticated companies, according to Sanker, don't realize the need for those often-mentioned "extras" that can keep mowing and maintenance businesses and the landscapes they manage thriving.

For example, he noted, Houston is fraught with both insect and soil problems. "Most of the soil here is what we call 'black gumbo,'" he said. "Beyond the two inches of coring, the ground does not percolate. And this has got to be the bug capital of the world."

Sanker said that his company concentrates on commercial jobs and that the primary work is

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HOUSTON: Needs strategic crew dispatching

from page 18

industrial parks as opposed to smaller institutional or residential landscapes. In addition, he uses the largest possible mower — the 48-inch is the smallest in the company's inventory — in order to save time and money. "The only time a 36-inch would be useful is if we had to go through a three-foot gate," he said.

Sanker said his company does not presently use computers, but is satisfied "with the way the Romans did it," adding that his estimators can estimate a \$100,000 job in half an hour. The basic criterion, he said, is establishing a man-hour charge, which has been placed at \$70 per hour for a four-man crew.

In addition, Sanker observed that he saves the company about \$10,000 a job by relegating jobs from satellite offices. "We send four crews from each quadrant of the city," he said. "That way the first job in the morning is no more than five minutes away."

Qualified personnel

Owen Walker of Walker Landscape Industries concurs with the need for strategic crew dispatching, noting that his company makes an effort to schedule crews around traffic peaks. In addition, Walker said the use of trailers adds to the full time production of mowing equipment. "It's silly to have a \$9,000 machine working eight hours when you can use it for 40 hours," he said.

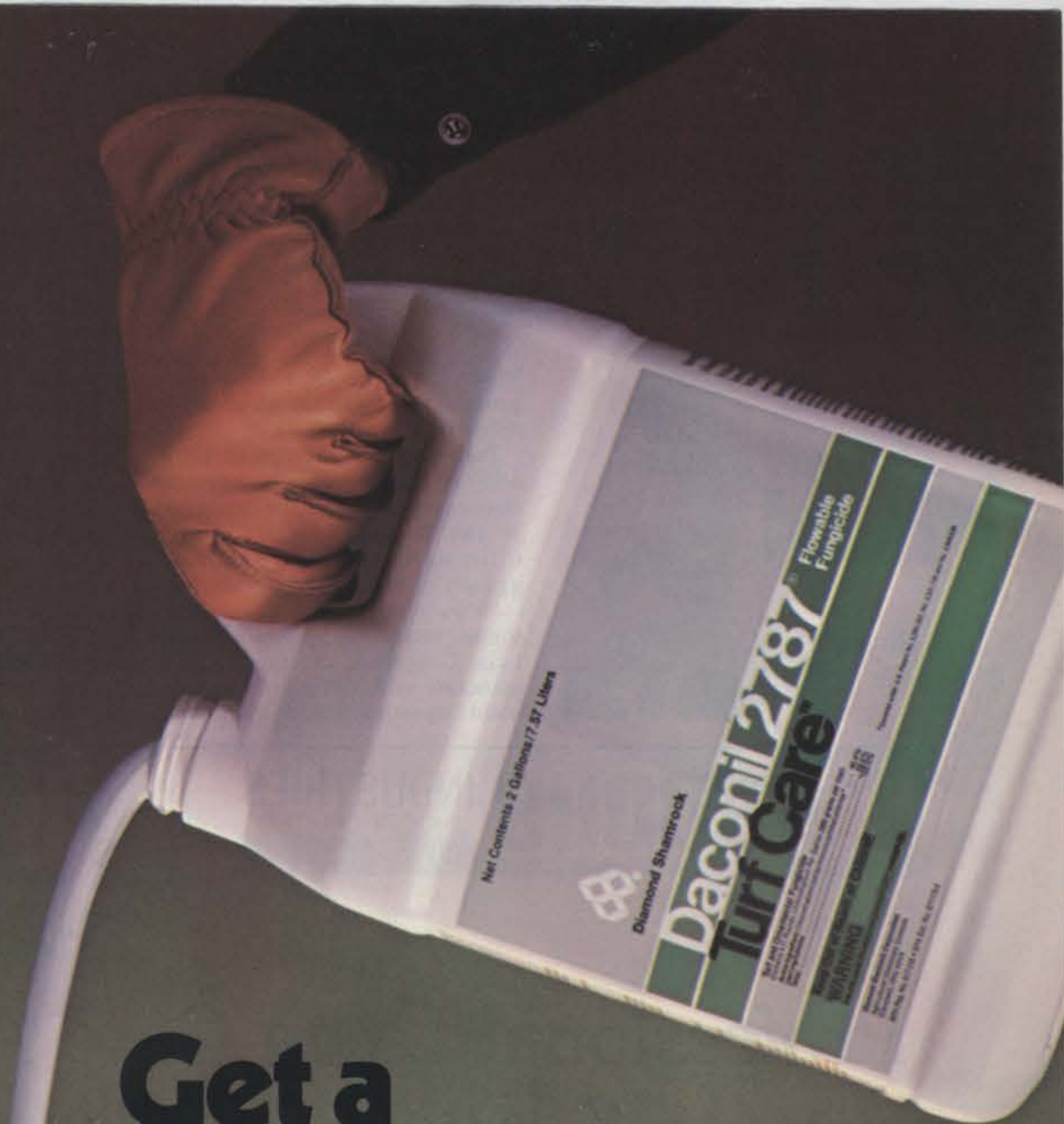
Walker said among the problems he sees contracting maintenance jobs in Houston is the prevalence of small building management companies that don't understand the need for landscape management and therefore don't work with contractors adequately. "They don't keep an account very long because they are primarily leasing and brokerage agencies," he said.

Moreover, Walker pointed to the fastest growing part of the business, but one rife with headaches: the lack of qualified maintenance personnel.

Walker said his company's maintenance inventory includes the Hustler Excel, which although he thinks it is the "finest machine to come along in years," will discontinue it because it "can't stand the heat;" the Sensation trim mower with a Honda engine; the Cushman 72 inch riding mower; and Stihl trimmers.

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Feature report

Customer must want to renovate

Lyle
GingerichArt
Wick

When do you, as a lawn care professional, give the go-ahead to renovate a lawn?

Perhaps never, if you've properly educated your prospective customers. Because the customer is the person who makes the ultimate decision to renovate, usually at your recommendation.

"You renovate when the customer wants to renovate," says Lyle Gingerich, a development associate in the Product Development Department of Monsanto. "In

the homeowner's situation, he's not really keeping a balance sheet of how numerous the weeds and pests get. It comes down to pride in the lawn."

So it is up to the lawn care professional to recognize the symptoms that might suggest renovation.

Art Wick, an agronomist who is product manager at Lakeshore Equipment and Supply of Elyria, Ohio, further adds:

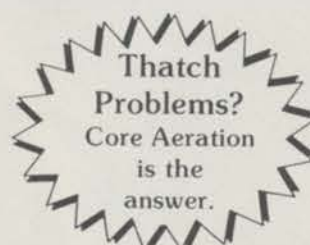
"Renovation frequently sal-

vages a dissatisfied customer. It can also create new customers once you've renovated. Or it may be a one-shot thing. But you renovate when the owner or person responsible is dissatisfied with the turf that is there."

Monsanto, makers of the popular herbicide called Roundup, lists six major occasions on which to consider renovation: (1) when excessive amounts of thatch have built up; (2) when turf imbalance exists (too much of one species and too little of others); (3) when there is an improper turf variety; (4) when weed infestation threatens the lawn; (5) when damage has been done by disease or insect infestation; and — most importantly — (6) when the lawn has been damaged by neglect and/or abuse.

"It's much cheaper to introduce new grass types than to maintain weak, susceptible ones," Wick admits.

Though several chemicals can be used for renovation (including methyl bromide, Vapam, MSMA, Dalapon, Amitrole, paraquat and



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Be sure to discuss problems with the customer.

Diquat), Roundup has in the last five years made the procedure relatively inexpensive and convenient, and it controls roots as well as top growth.

"With Roundup, it makes sense to the homeowner to solve the problem in one fell swoop, rather than piecemeal," Gingerich says. "They can choose to deal with the problems over the course of many years, or to solve everything in 45 days."

"But applicators have to weigh in their mind doing renovation mechanically or with herbicides. If they're comfortable using Roundup, the comparison between a mechanical or chemical means is all in favor of the latter."

Best time to commence renovation is in the autumn for cool-season turfgrasses and in the spring for warm-season turfgrasses. Renovating cool-season grasses in the spring can create problems with the onslaught of the dry, hot summer months. And

to page 21

warm-season grasses can be injured by winter weather if renovated in the fall.

Even before the decision is made to renovate, the insightful lawn care pro should take the customer to the site and discuss the problems with him.

After it has been determined that renovation (as opposed to maintaining the existing vegetation with a regular lawn care program) is the correct process, the actual procedure is fairly cut-and-dried.

First, a complete evaluation of the thatch layer, weed problems and possible underlying soil conditions should be made to determine the original problem(s). Then, using that information, you'll want to determine as accurately as possible the square footage of the project, and to formulate your seed mixture and starter fertilizer needs.

Warn customer

Then, discuss timing and costs with the customer. Also, make sure that he knows the procedure itself, so he and his family will not be surprised when his existing lawn begins to brown out. Many—in fact, most—lawn care companies provide the renovation customer with a convenient brochure explaining the process and what to expect.

"Tell the customer that the lawn won't be very attractive for two to three weeks," Gingerich exhorts. "It's going to be dead and brown, and the neighbors may make fun of it. It's sometimes a fairly emotional period for the customer, so the stage should be set by the applicator."

Consulting the weather forecast, choose a good day to spray Roundup. Do not spray when rainfall is expected within six hours, when there is a growth stress, when heavy dust exists on the area to be sprayed, or when winds exceed five miles per hour.

Spray carefully, making sure not to track any of the chemical from the target area.

Then wait seven to ten days while the chemical translocates from the leaves to the root system, and kills the existing turfgrasses from the bottom up. Remember that there will be a differential dying rate on different species under different stress conditions. If you have sprayed properly the first time, and were careful to read the label for application rates, no subsequent sprayings will be needed.

Slice, seed

Though the next necessary step is slicing and seeding, it helps to first scalp the dead grass with a rotary mower and bagger to remove most of the existing debris, usually two bushels (compacted) per 1,000 square feet.

Another pass with the rotary bagger-mower or a vacuum to remove debris raised by the vertical slicer should then be made.

Thatch, according to Wick, will pose no problem if less than 1½ inches thick. Vertical slicing will

open the thatch layer up to moisture and air, and thus decomposition, if done properly.

Next step is application of a starter fertilizer, perhaps an 18-24-6 50 percent sulfur-coated product for nutrients during this critical growth stage.

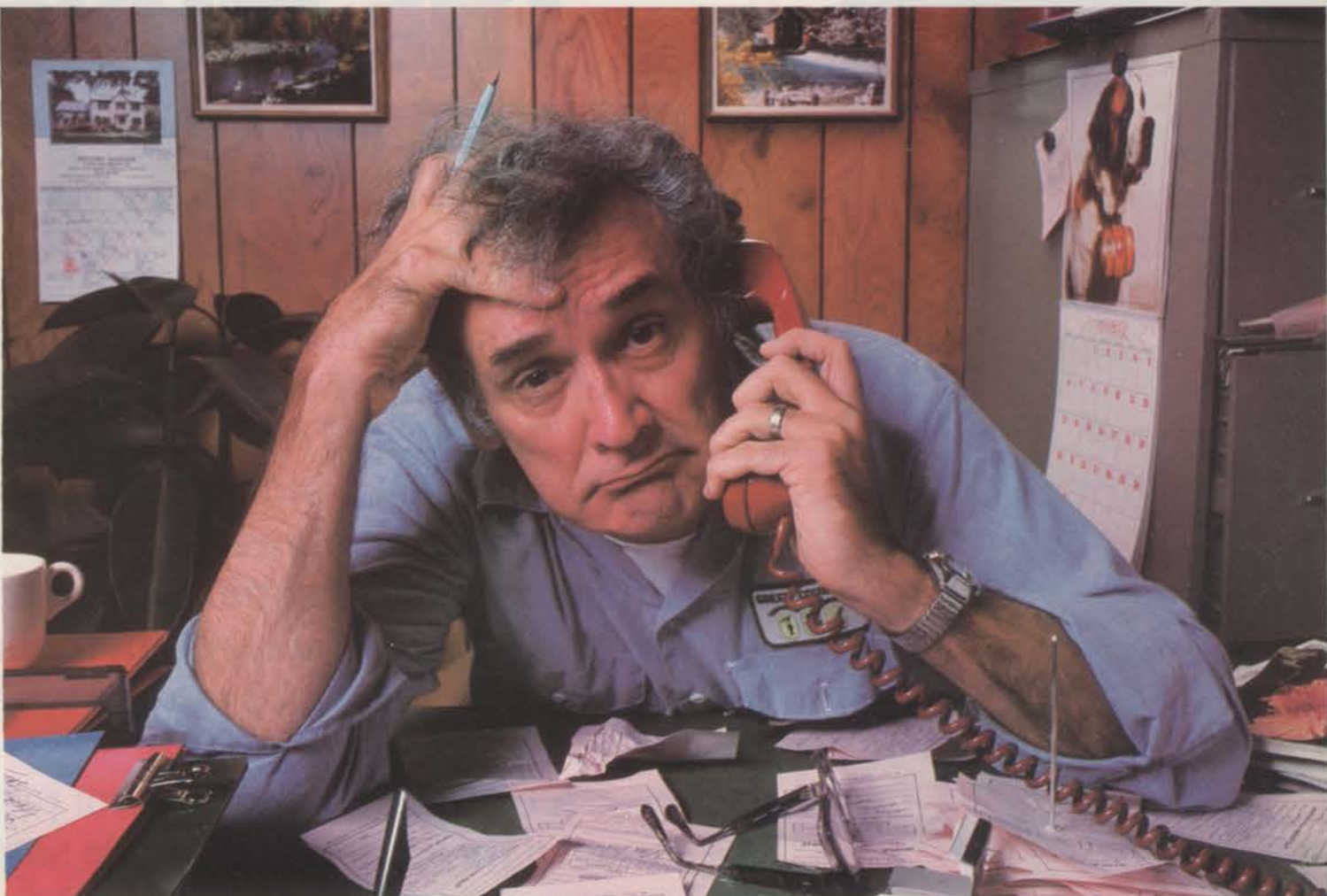
Most important is the final step: proper mowing and maintenance. The new lawn should be watered to keep the soil moist: usually light daily waterings for two to three weeks.

"Watering is often up to the homeowner, and that's a weak link," Gingerich says. "They shouldn't ignore watering because it's a critical thing."

"Using Roundup is almost fool-proof," Gingerich concludes, "if it's watered, and if the applicator has done a good job of spraying."



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NEWSMAKERS

Thomas J. Walsh has joined the advertising firm of **Eatough Associates**, which handles the PBI/Gordon Corp., as an associate partner.

Walsh will assist with current accounts and concentrate on the development of new business. Prior to joining Eatough, Walsh had worked extensively in the marketing of agricultural and industrial products.

He is a graduate of Notre Dame University and is a Vietnam veteran.

The **New York State Turfgrass Association** has presented its

highest honor, the Citation of Merit, to Robert A. Russell, vice president of J&L Adikes, Jamaica, N.Y. The award was presented at the Association's recent Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show held in Rochester. Russell is responsible for the introduction of NK 100, the first fine-leaved permanent turf-producing ryegrass. He selected and introduced the first "man-made" hybrid Kentucky bluegrass, Adelphi. In conjunction with the award, Russell was given a lifetime membership in the association.

Charles P. Watkins is president

of **All-Green, Inc.**, Zionsville, Ind. The company offers chemical lawn care application services and tree care.

Steve Jungten is president of **Emerald Green, Inc.**, Fort Wayne, Ind. The company offers liquid chemical lawn care services. Bruce Jungten is vice president and Cathy J. Jungten is secretary-treasurer.

James R. Chapman is owner of **LawnAid**, Bellevue, Wash., which offers both liquid and granular chemical lawn services, as do Jeff Anthony and Mike Rakowski, who are vice presidents of **Lawn 'N**

Tree, Inc., Westhampton Beach, N.Y.

Chuck Dunbar is vice president of **Westside Services, Inc.**, Houston, Texas. The company offers both liquid and granular chemical lawn care and mowing/maintenance services.



McKaig

Buehler

F. D. Kees Manufacturing Co. has announced the addition of sales representative Bert McKaig and a new distributor.

McKaig is sales rep for Warren Fleming & Associates, which handles the southeastern part of the country. The new distributor is D. J. Mytelka & Associates of Union, N.J. Mytelka, with Marvin Friedman as president and Robert Mytelka as vice president, will distribute Kees lawn maintenance equipment in New England and the eastern part of the country.

Tom Buehler has joined **PeCo, Inc.**, one of the nation's leading manufacturers of lawn and garden care products, as marketing manager. He will be responsible for coordinating all marketing activities for the company.

Buehler has been in the lawn and garden product field for 12 years with the Toro Company and Wheel Horse Products.

Aquatrols Corporation of America, a chemical products manufacturing company, has selected RM&D Associates of Philadelphia to develop and implement a total communications program.

Garfield Williamson, Inc. of Jersey City, N.J., has been awarded the 1981 BOLI award for package design. The winning box, for Eclipse Omega Lawn Seed Mixture, was designed by Costich & McConnell, Inc.

Bob Throckmorton has joined the **W. A. Cleary Chemical Corp.** as technical sales representative for Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan.

Prior to joining Cleary, Throckmorton was an agriculture territory manager for Estech General Chemicals Corp. He received his undergraduate degree in ornamental horticulture and has more than 10 years experience in the field.

Ronald L. Dezember has been named vice president and general manager of the Agricultural Chemicals Division of **Diamond Shamrock Corp.** Dezember moves up from head of the company's Animal Health Division.

Dezember has been with Diamond Shamrock since 1962 in



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Best of all, the powerful combination of the Wheel Horse C-195 and PeCo Model 6516 Lawn Vac picks up grass clippings and leaves on the first pass to save you time.

Isn't it time you made your grounds keeping easier? For more information call Wheel Horse Products at **1-800-348-2424** or PeCo at **1-800-438-5823**.

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Dezember



Burkland

various positions. In his new job, he will oversee all administrative, marketing, research and manufacturing functions of the division.

Dezember is a graduate of Arizona State University with a degree in agronomy.

Aquatrols Corp. of America has announced the addition of Andy Moore as Aqua-GRO sales representative for the territory of Long Island to Washington, D.C. to Harrisburg, Pa. He will be working with distributors, extension personnel and turf managers. He received his bachelor's degree in agronomy/plant pathology from Virginia Tech.

Judson Drewry, chairman of the Board of Directors of **The Fertilizer Institute**, announced recently that the Executive Committee has accepted the early retirement request of Edwin M. Wheeler.

Drewry said that a growing difference of opinion between the Board and Wheeler on the management, philosophy and style led to Wheeler's decision.

An announcement will be made soon concerning the election of a successor.

Ronald E. Burkland has been transferred by **OMC Lincoln** from Lincoln, Neb. to Sacramento, Cal., where he will serve as the West Coast district sales manager for the firm's Cushman Turf, Industrial and Commercial vehicles, along with the Ryan and Front Line dealer networks.

Burkland is a 10-year veteran with the OMC organization, having served in sales order and dealer-liaison roles. In his new role, he will report to Dan Hedglin, Cushman national sales manager.

Ralph White is owner of **All Seasons Maintenance Co.**, La Grange, Ill. The company offers liquid chemical lawn care, mowing/maintenance and aerifying and slit-seeding lawn care services.

Jim Walter is president/owner of **LawnAlive**, Elyria, Ohio, which offers both liquid and granular chemical lawn care services.

Carl Clifton is president of **Lawnscape Systems**, Claremont, Calif. Wayne Odgen and Mike Brotherton are branch managers.

Peter Dietrick and Carl Huwe are owners of **One Way Landscape**, North Hampton, N.H., which offers both liquid and granular chemical lawn care services.

Kurt Kohlbrecher is president of **Perm-A-Green Lawns, Inc.**, Trenton, Ill. The company offers both liquid and granular chemical lawn care, and tree and shrub spraying services.

Bart Sheeler is manager and

to page 26

Mower safety

Dennis C. Dix, left, executive director of the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute, is shown with New York Jets football star Joe Klecko on location during the filming of a public service announcement for television on lawn mower safety. In the spot, Klecko warns consumers not to bypass new safety controls mandated by the Consumer Product Safety Commission on 1983 walk-behind rotary power lawn mowers. The film, which will be aired this spring, was produced by the OPEI with funding from the American Hardware Manufacturers Association.



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NEWSMAKERS from page 25

partner of **Prolawn**, Blue Ash, Ohio. The company offers granular chemical lawn care, mowing/maintenance and landscaping services. Other partners are Clayton Sheeler, Scott Sheeler and Kent Sheeler.

Super Green Lawn Service, Inc.'s president is Ken Mock. The Warren, Ohio company offers both liquid and granular chemical lawn care services, and Marti Mock is vice-president.

Steve Phillips is president of **Tar-Heel Natural Turf Co., Inc.**, Charlotte, N.C. Pete Delaney is also associated with the company, which offers chemical lawn care and mowing/maintenance services.

President of **Turf-Glo Lawn**

Care Co., Dolton, Ill. is C. David Decker. Thomas Decker is vice-president of the company, which offers liquid chemical lawn care services.

Carl Rew is owner of **Emerald Green**, West Lafayette, Ind. The company offers both liquid and granular chemical lawn care, mowing/maintenance and landscaping services.

Edward W. Stroube, an agronomist at The Ohio State University, was recently honored with the 1982 Educator Award at the **Midwest Agricultural Chemicals Association's** annual meeting in Lake Ozark, MO.

Stroube is a professor and assistant department chairman who has taught at OSU since 1960. He received his bachelor's degree in general agriculture in 1951 and his

master's in weed science in 1959 from the University of Kentucky. In 1961, he earned his doctorate in weed science from OSU.

The Fertilizer Institute has a new director of conventions and conferences, Pamela W. Lucas.

Lucas served as conference coordinator and registrar for the International Management and Development Institute and as program associate for the American Association of State Colleges and Universities before joining the American Society of Association Executives as a registrar and meeting manager.

M. C. Landscape Care of Reseda, Cal. won the **California Landscape Contractors Association** Ben Slade Memorial Award for best overall landscape maintenance recently.

Other CLCA landscape maintenance award-winners were: Stay-Green Inc. of North Hollywood for small and large residential and large commercial; Cagwin & Dorward of San Rafael for small commercial achievement; Lancaster Enterprises of Costa Mesa for small commercial; Brooker Associates of Placentia for medium and large commercial achievement; and Mission Landscape Services of Costa Mesa for medium commercial.

The **National Fertilizer Solutions Association (NFSA)** has chosen Ken Johns as Man of the Year for 1982. Johns, of the **Johns Chemical Company** in Hillsboro, Ohio, has served on 10 NFSA committees over the past six years, and has been secretary and a member of the Board of Directors.

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Cutting your telephone bills

Lauren R. Januz, publisher of the Telephone Marketing Report, has assembled a 20-point program that might help your business cut excessive phone spending and make more effective use of your telephone budget.

Some of the points he makes are:

- Make sure all calls are answered, reducing call-backs and providing better service;
- Train your staff to create greater effectiveness in making sales and taking orders;
- Limit person-to-person calls to three minutes; and
- Use ITT, MCI, SPC for greatly reduced long distance rates.

For more suggestions, write Januz Marketing Communications at P.O. Box 1000, Lake Forest, IL 60045, for their booklet "101 Ways to Cut 20 Percent Off Your Monthly Phone Bill."

MONEYWISE

Maybe second mortgage is right

Having trouble financing your small business? Why not try taking a second mortgage on your personal property?

The volume of second mortgages on real estate personally owned by small businessmen has risen 200 percent over the last five years, an indication of the popularity of this financing ploy.

Sometimes, it is near impossible to float a loan if you are a small businessman; and even if you get one, the terms are often prohibitive. But since mortgages are secured loans, financing can sometimes be done at lower interest rates on more flexible repayment terms.

Many business experts feel that loans on personal property to finance business ventures will become more common in the future. One might be right for you.

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Make your job easier and cut maintenance costs. Renovate and plant a mixture of improved turfgrass varieties like Touchdown and America Kentucky bluegrass and Fiesta Perennial ryegrass. All these have the ability to establish quickly, and produce a dense weed resisting turf. They will stand up to wear, turf diseases, and seasonal stress. Professional testing proves it.

University of Illinois - Touchdown was **outstanding** in its ability to out compete Poa annua.

Ohio State University - America **ranked first** out of 30 commercial bluegrass varieties in incidence of Sclerotinia Dollar Spot. (At low, medium, & high fertilization levels.)

Ohio State University - Fiesta **ranked number 1** out of 22 commercially available perennial ryegrasses in overall turf quality for entire season.

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Burton hopes for growth of PLCAA

from page 1

BURTON: I would like the PLCAA to gain many, many more members. That would give us the leverage we need to put across the basic ideas that we think are very important to us. It is difficult in talking about pesticides and certain regulatory matters which we are very concerned about, when we do not have sufficient numbers to lend the kind of credibility we think we need in dealing with the public and the adversaries we have to face in regard to these matters.

I think there is some strength in numbers.

LCI: The PLCAA has a new rate

system for members. Being the former secretary and treasurer, do you have any projections of how the new system can help gain members?

BURTON: The whole idea of the new rate system is to make it more financially attractive for the smaller firm to want to become a member and to continue to make that payment year after year.

We have found that something on the order of more than 50 percent of our members are doing under \$300,000 a year in business. That is still a good-size business, but those figures suggest that we

have a large number of companies which are not members, since there are 6,000 owner-operated or small lawn care firms out there, both chemical and lawn maintenance.

As a matter of fact, lawn maintenance firms do some chemical treatments, so why can't we have those as members? Why can't they be part of our group? We do have some already, but why not a lot more?

LCI: In the past, do you think members of the PLCAA have proven to be both competitive and cooperative with each other?

BURTON: Without a question, I think we are rather a homogeneous gang. We've gotten along exceedingly well, and even in my own town of Rochester we are not at sword points at all.

We are kind of public-oriented and market-oriented. It would not be good for any one of us to have an adverse effect on the rest of the group. If anything, there has been a great deal of exchange of information that normally you would not give to your competitor. There are certain areas, certain situations where competitors have problems, but I am talking in general.

LCI: Is there any way of determining how the lawn care industry is perceived by the public?

BURTON: This is a difficult question. I think the public, through the advertising methods we use, has an image of us. The kind of information we are trying to communicate as a whole basically plays upon this ideal of professionalism, of getting a product or service as good as what the homeowner can do at an attractive price.

Overall advertising — our marketing mechanism — first plants a seed in the homeowner's mind, particularly those who have not been involved or introduced previously to lawn care.

A final note on that is the negative attitude: promising results or services not delivered but perceived as part of the deal by the customer. Customers would then become very negative, thinking other lawn care companies are guilty as well. Unfortunately, numerous firms don't follow through on service, or they are not communicating what they really can do for the customer.

LCI: Where do you think the lawn care industry is going, in terms of direction, and why? Is it a good or bad direction?

BURTON: We face a number of problems.

One is, because we are involved in pesticides, we find a determinant that will directly affect how successful we are in capturing more of the market. If our use of pesticides and the training of the people involved are not construed as being all that professional, it could present a problem as to how much more of the market we can penetrate.

The reason for this is that we have a number of so-called environmentalists who are determined to restrict the use of pesticides in general.

We are going to be in the front lines. I would not be surprised if, in the next several years, some folks don't zero in on us because of our visibility and because we are first-hand in awareness by the public. This is a problem.

If the people doing our service are not that well versed in pesticides, or cannot handle discussions relative to a customer's in-

to page 29



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Tough enough ... to handle your most demanding jobs! No other broadcast spreader incorporates such rugged construction features as does the famous T-7. For example: the heart of any spreader is its drive mechanism. Our exclusive worm gear direct drive system is fully enclosed in a heavy duty metal casing to prevent annoying jams and assure years of smooth, trouble-free operation.



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nitrogen (slow release)
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Circle No. 107 on Reader Inquiry Card

quity or does things in a slipshod manner, that could spell a lot of trouble for the rest of us, and obviously hamper our ability to expand.

From the positive side, we haven't captured, around most of the metropolitan areas, a significant portion of the market yet. I see by default that our competitors, the industry, most everyone, are picking up more business at a faster rate.

But I do promise this: there are pitfalls along the way, and if we are not professional, if we make mistakes, we leave ourselves open to charges. We leave ourselves open to innuendoes and sensationalism on an issue that is very inflammatory already, and that is the pesticide issue.

So I say, yes, there is a good long term future here, provided we are professional in the eyes of the public. If we have their trust, we're sailing. If we don't have it, we have problems.

LCI: Talking about customer relations, hasn't there been a tendency for a customer to stay with lawn care for about five years, and then ditch it? Does this present a problem?

BURTON: Part of that decline is really attributed to the homeowner because of poor communications. The two biggest problems in dealing with homeowners is the fact that most people who have our service are rather too quick and imprecise in honoring their maintenance responsibility. To try to keep them on a schedule to maintain proper management practices is very difficult. It is a service because they don't want to do it themselves. Many of the customers want to rip through with the lawnmower as fast as they can; the blades aren't sharp, they do it at the wrong time, there is too much traffic.

Customers' role

They come back to us and say, "Look, I pay you to do my lawn." What they don't realize — and what we are a little weak in communicating to them — is that they are the other part of our mix. We are delivering something to their lawn, but the follow-through is that they are absolutely critical. It is very much a cooperative venture.

In our company, we spend a great deal of time communicating to our customers the single biggest thing to be done correctly to the lawn: mowing practices.

LCI: Please address the pesticide issue — again.

BURTON: This is probably my biggest concern, and it also gets around to membership, in the cloud that we can deliver relative to our livelihood.

What we have to do is develop an oversight committee in every state where we have PLCAA members. One of the charges of a state committee would be simply to develop an awareness and have contacts — state regulatory agencies and state legislators — to handle these matters of concern to

our industry. We must be kept alert as to what is going on.

This is the first step. No. 2, we need a mechanism with which to respond. If there is incorrect information out, we need to bring out the facts, to offer another side. We need an organizational set-up in the various states. They need to be staffed and functioning in a smooth manner.

The thing that grinds me more than anything else is the lack of technical information expertise on the part of those folks who are proclaiming the evils of certain pesticides.

I don't know of anyone in our industry who would handle something with a questionable safety factor. We would be the first ones who would want to get rid of it.

But the 2,4-D thing, there isn't one ounce of evidence to suggest any validity to claims of harmful effects as alleged by certain so-called environmentalists. This one is so clean in our favor, it's amazing.

Other issues

LCI: Are there any other issues that appear to be on the horizon that lawn care businessmen would be well advised to monitor?

BURTON: Yes, there are several.

One is workman's compensation insurance. Rates and determination of classification vary from state to state. And rates are wild: all the way from 2.7 cents on the dollar in some states to anywhere from 11 to 12 cents per dollar in others. We need some common or

generic definition as to what our work is. This is one that needs to be settled.

Another matter, of course, is encouraging our members to adhere to our code of ethics and fair play as we compete with one another. To quote "The American Way," it is letting the consumer be the judge. Under-sticking a lawn or not offering fully what you said doesn't help our cause. And, really, in the long run, it is not going to work for those people who engage in it.

We have to be professional, and be professional at all times. This is all-important, and that is one thing in our association that we must enforce. When a person sees that little symbol on a truck —

to page 31

KEES

Better lawn care products to do the job easier & faster



This powerful 21" mower with heavy gauge steel deck and frame is built to stand up under tough use and keep on working year after year.

- Powered by a 4 cycle, 4 h.p. Briggs & Stratton engine with flywheel brake.
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Circle No. 117 on Reader Inquiry Card

Basic security measures should be taken care of

Many operators in the lawn care business work out of home-based offices and employ only a handful of workers during the peak of their season. Their clients are usually located in the upper or middle-class, well-to-do, suburban neighborhoods. As a result, vandalism and theft do not pose any serious threat to lawn care businesses. This does not, however, detract from the need for those in the industry to take

preventative security measures to protect their investments.

A recent incident involving the theft and destruction of a piece of equipment belonging to Arrington Grounds Maintenance Inc., St. Petersburg, Fla., should serve to bring this point home.

Jack Arrington operates his company from a building located on a 3/4-acre plot of land. The facility is surrounded by a six-foot chain link fence topped with

barbed wire. Arrington has also posted warning signs around his compound. Though he has had guard dogs in the past, they recently ran off.

Despite these precautionary measures, someone cut through Arrington's fence not long ago and drove off with a two-ton truck and attached 20-foot trailer. The truck was later found stuck in the sand and abandoned. The cab had been torched with gasoline taken from the trailer. Extensive damage to the truck totaled around \$5,500, according to Arrington.

Isolated incident

Though this was an isolated incident and one Arrington believes was committed by a disgruntled former employee, smart

lawn care operators do take precautionary security measures to protect their trucks and other equipment.

Arrington plans on replacing his guard dogs in the near future as well as installing a "shaker" alarm system on his existing fence. With the shaker system, the entire fence is wired to sensor boxes attached to every other post. If the fence is shaken three times (for example, if someone were to grab the fence with both hands and place a foot on it to scale the fence), an alarm would be triggered. Arrington expects the cost of this system to run about \$1800.

Lloyd R. Kuhn of Tulsa Lawn Care, Inc., Tulsa, Okla., suggests locking trucks and trailers at all times, keeping a watchful eye on equipment and working crews of two or three men so that equipment is not left unattended in the front of a house while workers are laboring in the backyard.

Fences help

Others in the industry, such as Jeff Anthony of Lawn 'N Tree Inc., Westhampton Beach, N.Y., and Terry Trout of Turf Doctor Inc., Walled Lake, Mich., agree that equipment that must be stored outdoors should be kept in an enclosed, fenced-in yard. Six- or ten-foot chain link fences topped with barbed wire are common types of barriers.

Tim Barrett of Lawn Groomers, Eureka, Mo., has only a lighted lot for equipment. While he has experienced battery thefts and siphoned-off gasoline, he has made an arrangement with the local police department for frequent patrols of his facility during non-working hours.

James R. Chapman, LawnAid, Bellevue, Wash., utilizes not only a 10-foot fence with barbed wire as well as guard dogs, but also has a live-in couple at his facility. He says that this arrangement has proven to be very effective.

Obviously, a few simple and relatively inexpensive measures can be taken to insure the safety of lawn care equipment. Trucks and trailers should be kept locked at all times. Keep trailer gates up and padlock equipment with chains if it must remain in open trucks or trailers. When not in use, equipment should be stored indoors if possible. Otherwise, equipment should be kept in a well-lighted, fenced-in compound. Keep a watchful eye on equipment while on the job and make arrangements with the local police department for frequent patrols during non-working hours.

Small problem

Procedures such as these have been very effective in the past and should continue to work in the future to keep vandalism and theft from becoming a problem in the lawn care industry. As Glenn Bostrom, executive director of PLCAA, said, "A good measure of the industry is the topics discussed at the national convention. Security and vandalism simply have not come up as topics for discussion."

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Heat up your business this year with small engine spark plugs from the world's leader in advanced spark plug technology—Nippondenso.

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Circle No. 125 on Reader Inquiry Card

BURTON from page 29

"PLCAA" — it automatically denotes trust and confidence. And to be honest, in the long run we may have to have that little symbol to be in business: like the American Medical Association or American Bar Association.

LCI: Is that diametrically opposed to what (former PLCAA president) Marty Erbaugh thought?

BURTON: Not really. You know that there are two concerns here: one, a company's professional and business relationship with customers; and two, allegations of one company against another for unfair competition or violations to good business conduct and a code of ethics.

I think Marty's concern was primarily directed at the second, where opposing lawn care firms square off against each other under the pretext of violations to the code of ethics and they want the PLCAA to settle the matter.

Touchy situation

Well, this situation is very touchy, with possible legal implications. The PLCAA is a new association, and I think it is in our best interests to try and get disputing parties to amicably resolve their differences. Other than the most clear and flagrant violations to the code, the PLCAA might consider assisting conflicting parties to establish local mediation, or arbitration to settle disputes. The BBB Business Arbitration Board might be one approach, as might designating a locally-respected attorney, businessman or minister.

In the future, I suppose we are going to have to set up machinery to formalize an approach to help solve member differences. As for the first concern—our business conduct and ethics with the public: for the first time via our association, we are attempting to bring some order to how the industry is run in the eyes of the consumer. We hope through gentle persuasion to try and enlist by good example member firms who want to live by the rules.

As time goes on, I'm willing to bet the influence of member firms who use that symbol of good practice and abide by its principles is going to be overwhelming. They are going to demand enforcement, otherwise you have a sham. They'll demand that our symbol mean something.

As we grow and have more influence, I think other firms who are not members are going to realize that if they don't get into line with this concept, they hinder their ability to capture part of the market and thus jeopardize their livelihood.

LCI: On a final note, do you have to be a member of the PLCAA to go to the PLCAA convention and trade show?

BURTON: No. Non-members are obliged to pay a few dollars more, but everybody is invited to come and enjoy. If we can entice you to become a member too, please feel free to be a part of the organization.

LCI: Would it be correct to say that if you go to the PLCAA

convention, you would want to become a member?

BURTON: Yes. I think what you are going to see is the most professional group anywhere: the high degree of esteem and professionalism which our show has brought about, quality exhibits, the very high caliber seminars, the discussion periods. It's great to rub elbows with your compatriots and exchange views. Furthermore, you're not under pressure from anyone. We have an easy atmosphere. What more could you ask for at this state of development of our industry?

If you are interested and want to enlighten your career, and also want to check into what is going on in the industry in more depth, be at our convention.

— Jerry Roche



Research money

The Georgia Golf Superintendents Association recently donated more than \$4,000 to three members of the University of Georgia College of Agriculture faculty. Charlie Underwood, right, of the GGSA presents a check to Dr. William L. Vovill, head of the UG agronomy department, on behalf of Dr. Keith Karnock. Looking on is Professor B.J. Johnson, left, and Assistant Professor Dr. Gil Landry. The money was given in support of turf management projects.

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PRODUCTS

Walk-behind aerator is very lightweight



An effective, completely portable and extremely maneuverable walk-behind lawn aerator has been introduced to the professional lawn care industry by Feldmann Engineering and Manufacturing Co.

The lightweight aerator features a choice of two different styles of aerating tines in the 25-inch aerating swath, Model 1700 and Model 1800. The 102-pound unit is powered by a two or three horsepower Briggs & Stratton engine. It has a fold-down handle for

automobile truck transport and compact storage.

The 1700 and 1800 is ideal for preparing lawn areas for spot over-seeding. Each has chain drive, automatic single lever hand safety release clutch for forward and neutral.

Circle no. 150 on Reader Inquiry Card

Two new products proven effective

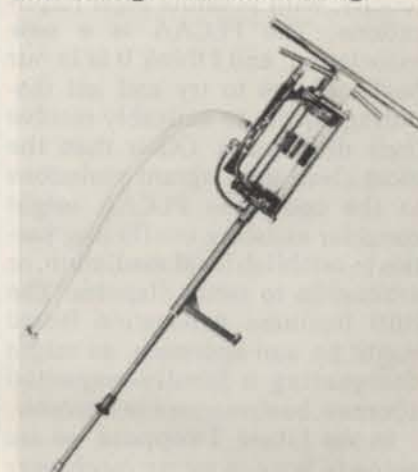
Mallinckrodt, Inc. has introduced two new products, one a fungicide (Vorlan) and the other an insecticide (Dymet).

Vorlan is for control of dollar spot and fusarium patch. It is safe on all common turfgrasses. Vorlan has a European performance record of long standing, and is awaiting further approval in the U.S. for leaf spot, red thread and brown patch.

Dymet is for immediate and residual control of turf insects such as cutworms, chinchbugs and sod webworms, and ornamental pests such as aphids, mealy bugs, army worms, sawflies and bagworms. It contains two proven ingredients for broader control and reduced resistance potential. Dymet is economical to use, low in mammalian toxicity and can be used on all types of turfgrasses, as well as trees and ornamentals.

Circle no. 151 on Reader Inquiry Card

Precision device for deep-root feeding



Greenbelt Systems has introduced the Accu-Root 500, a precision metering device for deep-root feeding trees and shrubs. Its positive displacement principle allows the operator to inject an exact quantity of fertilizer into the soil. The Accu-Root attaches simply to any pressure system and dispenses exactly 16 ounces per stroke.

Circle no. 152 on Reader Inquiry Card

Fertilizer, herbicide are new to market

Lebanon Chemical Corp. has introduced two new products to the lawn care market.

Lebanon 22-4-10 DCD is being produced by Lebanon and SKW Trostberg. It is a fertilizer plus controlled release nitrogen granular product which can provide deep green turf without an excess production of top growth and reduce costly nitrogen loss from the nitrate form caused by leaching and bacterial action.

Green Gold Garden Weed Preventer, which contains trifluralin, is also new to the market. The herbicide controls crabgrasses, goosegrass, foxtails and other weeds in annual grasses, and pigweeds, carpetweed, chickweed and others in annual broadleaves. It can also be used on vegetables, ornamental shrubs, trees and flowers.

Circle no. 153 on Reader Inquiry Card

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You're looking at the biggest success story in mowing history. The Cushman Front Line.™

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choice of 60" or 72" decks, side or rear discharge. And a full range of accessories for year 'round maintenance work.

For a free demonstration on your grounds, contact your Cushman dealer or call us toll-free at 1-800-228-4444.

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Mower optimized for landscape areas

The Walker Mower makes mowing of landscaped areas and handling grass clippings easy with a built-in Grass Handling System (GHS), which includes a rear discharge 36-inch cutting deck, internal 9-inch blower and either 3.2 or 6.7 bushel grass catcher. The mower is powered by an 11-hp Briggs & Stratton engine and features zero turning radius.

Designed for commercial landscape maintenance use, the Walker will mow and trim landscaped areas quickly and easily in comparison to commercial walk-behind mowers, lawn tractors or large rider units.

Circle no. 154 on Reader Inquiry Card

Tall-tree sprayer goes 65 feet up



A new sprayer manufactured by Agrotec, Inc. will reach the tops of trees 65 feet high. It has the features needed for directional spray patterns.

The Model 501 ES4515D has a 42.8 GPM-700 PSI diaphragm piston pump, a 42 HP Onan engine and a 500-gallon fiberglass tank with a powerful hydraulic jet agitator. Several hose reels and hand gun options are available.

Circle no. 155 on Reader Inquiry Card

Five-ton dumper's capacity three yards

A new five-ton dump trailer with a three-cubic yard capacity is available now from the Axis Corporation.

Called the Axis Ezee-Dump, the trailer has a hydraulic lift below the bed, powered by the existing hydraulics on the tractor, or by a self-contained 12-volt D.C. hydraulic package, which is optional.

Maximum dumping elevation is 50 degrees. The bed itself measures eight-by-four feet with 20-inch sides. The top rail is angle-iron reinforced to withstand the dumping force from a backhoe.

Circle no. 156 on Reader Inquiry Card

Non-volatile 2,4-D product low-odor

A 2,4-D herbicide called Demise is so different that it has been patented by its maker, Kalo Agricultural Chemicals, Inc.

Demise is non-volatile and virtually odorless after application. There are no vapors which might drift and damage susceptible plants nearby, and there is no offensive tell-tale odor which might linger in treated areas.

Demise is packaged in dry crystal form in one-pound bags. It is recommended by Kalo for knock-down and control of susceptible broadleaf weeds in grass turf and lawns.

Circle no. 157 on Reader Inquiry Card

Aerator comes from Australia

A new turf aerator developed in Australia is now available throughout most of the United States.

The manufacturer, S. J. Banks & Son Pty. Ltd., of Fairfield, Victoria,



has named San Diego Toro Distributors Inc. as its sole distributor here. The latter has already appointed 23 agents across the country.

According to company sources, the machine is economically competitive and maintenance is considerably lower than other equipment. The unit is also simple to operate, aerating about 4,500 square feet in one hour.

The mini-tine provides a spacing of 0.9 inches with 98 holes for each square foot while the standard tine gives 49 holes for each square foot and a spacing of 1.625 inches. Total aeration width is 16 inches.

Circle no. 158 on Reader Inquiry Card

Using DYRENE for fungus disease control is the smartest thing you've always done.



You know ®DYRENE Turf Fungicide gives you effective control of the various species of Helminthosporium which cause diseases known as melting-out, going-out, and leaf spot.

You know DYRENE also controls dollar spot, copper spot, snow mold (typhula), and rust.

You know DYRENE can be mixed and applied easily with standard equipment, plus it's compatible with other turf fungicides.

You know using DYRENE for fungus disease control is smart. That's why you've always used it. DYRENE Turf Fungicide.



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DY83682

Circle No. 122 on Reader Inquiry Card

Anti-scalp rollers on mid-mount unit

A new mid-mount mower, equipped with three blades and capable of cutting a 60-inch swath, is available from Kubota Tractor Corp. The RCB60-1 mower is designed for use with Kubota's B-8200 tractor.

It features three adjustable anti-scalp rollers, one in the front and two in the rear. It also comes with a gauge wheel for adjusting cutting height at one-half inch increments



from 1½ to 4 inches.

The RCB60-1's lift device allows use of the tractor's three-point hitch when the mower is locked up in transport position.

Circle no. 159 on Reader Inquiry Card

Hustler has scoop

A utility scoop attachment for Hustler grounds maintenance tractors from Excel Industries adds snow removal capability and year-round versatility.

The scoop is 60 inches wide with a 3/16-inch steel scraper blade that can be easily replaced. Volume of the scoop is 11.2 cubic feet, and it can carry up to 600 pounds with most Hustler tractors.

Circle no. 160 on Reader Inquiry Card

New ignition is added to blower

Solo, Inc. has added the latest technology in electronic ignition systems to the portable knapsack mistblower Model Junior 410, which is widely used for agricultural and industrial chemical application.

The Model 410's relatively low-rpm level cuts annoying whine and provides longer engine life expectancy. It has a fuel tank capacity of one quart and a formula tank capacity of 2.9 gallons. Applications of the Model 410 include plant protection, vegetation control, sanitation and pest control. It can also be converted for dusting, granule spreading, seeding and used for blowing of refuse.

Circle no. 161 on Reader Inquiry Card



Six tillers are new

The Toro Company has expanded its line of tillers for 1983. Three front-line and three rear-line models are included.

The rear-line line features an eight horsepower, 24-position swing handle, five ground speed model with 20-inch tilling width. Two five horsepower, 18-inch tilling width models come in either a 24-position swing or fixed handle.

The front-line line consists of three horsepower and five horsepower chain drive models and a five horsepower gear drive model.

All have accessory items available.

Circle no. 162 on Reader Inquiry Card

Trailer package new on the market

A newly designed and introduced trailer package consisting of a 1982 aerator and hydraulic dump box is now being produced by grounds maintenance equipment supplier Dedoes Industries, Inc.

The interchangeable duo can be pulled by most tractors in use today, including International, Toro, Ford, Massey-Ferguson, Yanmar, Kubota, John Deere, E-Z-Fo and Cushman.

The Dedoes trailer will attach to the hitch on the tractor or cart. Remote control hydraulics are new for ease in operating, helping personnel to save time, and the unit is manufactured for low maintenance.

The new trailer aerator is produced in a variety of tine styles. The dump box gives 1000-pound lift capacity and uses the same hydraulics as the aerator.

Circle no. 163 on Reader Inquiry Card

Hose is warrenteed

A new high pressure Durotec hose, manufactured from a new material, is being introduced by Agrotec, Inc. The thermoplastic hose is covered with a high abrasion-resistant urethane, bonded to a braid of synthetic fiber. It provides 1,000 PSI working pressure.

Size ranges are from ¼-inch inside diameter through ¾-inch inside diameter, with a 4:1 safety factor, meaning that the hose has withstood a burst pressure of 4,000 pounds in tests.

The rubber hose provides resistance to a wide range of chemicals, herbicides, insecticides and hot water.

Circle no. 164 on Reader Inquiry Card

Liquid Fertilizer Products

...for the professional turf manager

Here are 5 good reasons to use our liquid fertilizer products

- 1 NON-PHYTOTOXIC.** Minimal to no burn even during high summer temperature.
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- 4 UNIFORM COVERAGE.** Maximum distribution, without the overlap and turnaround problems associated with granulars.
- 5 AGRONOMIC ADVANTAGES.** Continuous release. Compatible tank mix with most pesticides and other liquid fertilizers, which will provide for individual specifications.

AVAILABLE FERTILIZER PRODUCTS

FLUF

A nonburning, slow release, flowable ureaform which is ideal for summer temperature fertilization of lawns and fine turf. Has tank mix compatibility with most pesticides. FLUF contains 1.7 lbs. N per gallon and provides up to an average of 90 days sustained release.

FAN

A low burn potential clear aqueous solution, which provides a quick greenup and moderate release. FAN contains 1.9 lbs. N per gallon and has tank mix compatibility with most pesticides.

N-P-K

A complete line of liquid N-P-K fertilizer blends which are balanced for lawn use. Most of the nitrogen is derived either from FLUF, for continuous non-burning feeding, or from FAN for a quicker response with lowburn potential. These varied formulations are designed to meet the local agronomic objectives.

TRUGREEN

A liquid, chelated combination of iron, magnesium, potash, and trace elements which aid in promoting chlorophyll production, imparting a rich green color to lawn and turf. TRUGREEN is both foliar and root feeding, and is non-phytotoxic.

LIMESTONE-F

A micronized, flowable, liquid dispersion of dolomitic limestone which insures an ideal distribution of a safe alkalizing agent. Eliminates the problem of wind blown dust associated with powdered forms. It is tank mix compatible with most pesticides.

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Circle No. 106 on Reader Inquiry Card

Mower deck allows wide cutting range

Heckendorn Manufacturing Co., Inc. has a new 91/55 hydrostatic lawn mower with an optional center-mounted vacuum.

The hinged sidemount deck units allow for alternating between a 91-inch cut and a 55-inch cut without interruption of mowing operation.

Other features include a zero turning radius, counter-rotating blades, easy serviceability and a safety interlock system.

The 91/55 cuts from one to four inches in height and will mow approximately five acres per hour at a speed of four miles per hour.

Circle no. 165 on Reader Inquiry Card

Recycled rubber is used for solid tire

Ace-Tuf, a solid non-inflatable tire from Amerace, is a breakthrough in the polymerization of recycled ground rubber from feedstocks of discarded tires.

The economical Ace-Tuf line eliminates problems of small pneumatic and semi-pneumatic

tires, and will withstand heavier loads and speeds. It is also puncture-proof.

With a load rating of up to 900 pounds, the new tire has better bounce characteristics, won't develop flat spots and cannot deflate.

Circle no. 166 on Reader Inquiry Card

Mid-size mower has new design

As part of an on-going program to further increase product performance and life and to simplify maintenance, Jacobsen Division of Textron Inc. has extensively redesigned its popular mid-sized three-reel riding mower.

Available in either 76-inch or 84-inch cutting widths, the new Turf King II is designed to mow up to 33 acres in one shift.

Improvements made include:

Larger air filter with a pre-cleaner to extend engine life;

Hydrostatic transmission that is now separate from the fluid reservoir;

A sturdier main frame to which the operator sulky with seat is now

fixed for greater comfort and handling ease; and

An adjustable triangular steering wheel and a single foot treadle to control forward and reverse gears.

A variety of optional equipment is available for the Turf King II.

Circle no. 167 on Reader Inquiry Card

Hitch options for tractors

Ryan Lawnaire is available with both tow-type and a new three-point hitch for aerating smaller grounds and turf areas.

Either can be pulled by most riding mowers or tractors with a category "0" or "1" three-point hitch capable of lifting 500 pounds.

Circle no. 168 on Reader Inquiry Card

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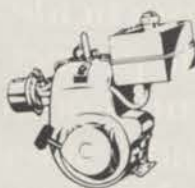


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Two commercial power mowers out

Exmark Manufacturing Company, Inc. is producing a new line of professional lawn and turf care products, featuring the Ranger commercial power mower, which comes in 36 and 48 inch widths and features fingertip operation.

The Ranger achieves optimum maneuverability with tight-radius power turning and excellent stability on hills and slopes. The Exmark Riding Sulky and Grass Catcher are available for both Ranger models.

Exmark also offers a power Turf Rake with 28 hardened steel cutting fingers which, with an interchangeable slicer assembly, becomes an aerator.

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Rear-bagger is top of the line

The Yardman Model 12374E rear-bagger rotary mower has numerous exclusive time- and energy-saving features.

It is powered by a quiet four horsepower engine, has a rear-baffled heavy cast deck with vacuum-lift precision blade; rear drive; Multi-Matic height adjustment; deluxe controls; a "Sentinel" blade brake clutch and convenient 3.12-bushel clipping/leaf catcher.

The unit also has the exclusive Yard-Man two-year limited warranty.

Circle no. 170 on Reader Inquiry Card

Blades are handy

Leeco Manufacturing, Inc. introduces three steel brush cutting blades that come in sizes to fit most gas-powered trimmers.

All three are constructed of heat-treated alloy steel, and are

finished with a durable black painted surface. Each of the three is eight inches in diameter.

The four-tooth blade is ideal for weeds and grass, the eight-tooth for brush-cutting and the 80-tooth for pruning and trimming.

Circle no. 171 on Reader Inquiry Card

Addition to line of polyethylene sprayers

An addition to the Industro line of polyethylene sprayers will facilitate long, reliable service in demanding industrial situations. The new sprayer has been introduced by the H. D. Hudson Manufacturing Co.

Available in three or four gallon capacities, the new Industro sprayer features a tough, polyethylene tank which is corrosion-

Cultivars complete seven-year trials

A blend of 38 Kentucky bluegrass cultivars and selections was planted at the Cook College Campus at Rutgers University in 1972, and a recent inspection found that Touchdown was the leading sur-

vivor.

All of the 38 components were mixed in equal quantities by seed weight and were also planted individually for further comparisons. At the end of the seven years, Touchdown comprised 23.8 percent of all the grass plants present. The only other cultivar to have a higher percentage was Brunswick, which is not commercially available.

All of the other cultivars combined only comprised 8.2 percent of the final turf blend. Touchdown was able to persist and become more dominant because of its ability to withstand diseases and to compete with *Poa annua*.

Circle no. 173 on Reader Inquiry Card

resistant, light and easy to carry. Other features include a large funnel opening, a polyolefin pump and a maleable steel handle.

Good for all types of industrial application jobs, the sprayer can be used for construction jobs, sanitation and grounds maintenance.

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How many turf in this

Here's a clue. D-z-n® Diazinon® controls every insect you see here, from the root-eating white grub to the juice-sucking chinch bug. In fact, D-z-n Diazinon has the biggest label of any turf

insecticide. And that makes it the perfect choice for broad spectrum control in both commercial and residential turf.

Need another clue? D-z-n controls damaging worms including

Other lawn care pros have fewer negative option woes

from page 1

ers want continued service. But this is done for first-time customers only. "It works out real well," White said. "In our business, the first-year business is usually the hardest to keep."

Customers of Custom Lawn & Landscape, Olathe, Kans., are called every year for verification of service. Reg Robertson of Custom Lawn & Landscape said this is one way of dealing with potential misunderstandings between customers and the company.

"If you keep the lines of communication open, it's your best

policy," Robertson said.

Turf-Glo Lawn Care Co., Dolton, Ill., sends customers several notifications that their lawn care service will continue unless they notify the company.

David Decker of Turf-Glo said his company has had few problems with "negative option" because of these notifications, which are sent in the fall and spring and sometimes in December. "If we give them plenty of notification we have far, far fewer problems," Decker said.

"There's a few people who say,

'You can't just come out and put down an application without our permission,'" Decker said. "If you handle them properly on the phone, you can get a lot of them back."

Another way Turf-Glo handles potential misunderstandings is to request payment on the first spraying before a second one is applied. "We don't (apply) the second application unless we get paid for the first one," Decker said.

Decker has used the policy for six years with less than one percent of his customers canceling service.

J. Mark Nuzum of Turf Wiz, Chesapeake, Va., said his company encounters minor problems with "negative option" because customers don't understand the policy.

"We calculate the problems," he said. "Up to five percent of the people after the first service will question 'negative option' and we lose their service."

Nuzum, who has been in business for about five years, said his customers must prepay so "they know that I'm coming."

Although Nuzum has had relatively few problems, he said "negative option" needs more attention. "I think it needs to be addressed," he said. "I hear a lot of problems with 'negative option.' If there's a better way when my company grows, I'd sure like to know what the answer is."

"My customers generally like 'negative option,'" Robert Haney Jr., of Duncan Lawn Care Inc., Vienna, Ohio, said. "It takes everything off their shoulders. They want you to come back without being told. Most of your lawn care services are doing this and it's becoming the norm."

Haney said, however, he has had a few problems. "There's a half-dozen customers in early spring who say that they had no idea service was continuing," he said.

Bold print

To alleviate this problem, Duncan's invoices are inscribed with a bold-print reminder that service will continue unless the company is notified.

Hutchison's Lawn Green of Saginaw, Mich., has been using the "negative option" policy for three years with few problems. Grace Hutchison said problems exist because customers misunderstand the policy or don't read it.

This spring the company will send customers letters telling them to notify the company if they don't want the service. Hutchison said there should be no more misunderstandings because the "negative option" policy will be in bold red print.

Carl Rew of Emerald Green, West Lafayette, Ind., decided to use the policy when he recently opened his business.

"I don't anticipate any problems," he said. "We have a very good relationship with the customers we are getting."

Emerald Green's policy is to discontinue service if a customer has not paid for the first spraying.

Although Rew has not formally drafted an annual newsletter to send to his customers, he said it's probably a good idea to include: "Service will continue. Please call us if you have any questions," in bold letters.

Ray McIntosh of Green Grow Inc., Ft. Wayne, Ind., said he has experienced no problems with the "negative option" policy because he takes his customers to small claims court if they refuse to pay.

Every year Green Grow sends its customers letters notifying them to call if they want the service discontinued.

Vince Flecker of Shur Spray Lawn Care in Indiana said his company counters problems with the "negative option" policy by stamping the last bill with a reminder notice.



insects are hiding picture?

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CIBA-GEIGY

Fertilawn hands tied

from page 1

lished here, I am ruling that even the defaulted claims are not due," Scherschligt said.

Anderson found his hands tied. "It's going to cost us about \$1,000 to appeal, so I don't think we will," he told LCI. "We write them down as bad debt right now. We're going to have to accept our losses, and then collect what we can."

Added Craig Anderson, the owner's son and office manager: "There's nothing we can do about it. The cases average about \$30 apiece, but in some instances the people had received as many as

three applications (without paying)."

The entire story was related in a Page Two item in the Minneapolis Star and Tribune, but the negative publicity apparently had little effect on Fertilawn's business.

"We've had a few people cancel," Craig noted, "but nothing drastic. We also had a few customers call and tell us that they agreed with us."

Fertilawn services about 5,000 lawns in the Twin Cities area, sending each a first-class letter about two months prior to any application. Each letter, Craig

says, is addressed to the homeowner himself.

"Without the continuation-of-service policy, we would wind up with only about 1,000 customers," Craig said. "If we don't get the letter back in 7 to 10 days, we consider it a 'yes.'"

The Andersons hope to eliminate some of the problem — and some of the financial loss — by using their new computer system to monitor unpaid bills. If a customer has not paid after one application, the service will not continue, Leonard says.

Expanding

Plant care lab moves operation

Plant Marvel Laboratories, Inc., manufacturer of Nitriculture water soluble fertilizer and other plant care products, has moved to expanded facilities in Chicago Heights, IL.

The company's new address is 371 E. 16th St., Chicago Heights, IL 60411. Its new telephone number is (312) 757-7500.

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Cutworms easily controlled, but lawns suffer new infestations of green bugs

from page 1
damage to northern turfgrasses from this pest is far less common than damage from the bluegrass billbug. Some damage from overwintered larvae was seen in Ohio during April and May. One burrowing species that occurs in September and October and feeds in the root zone, continues to be troublesome in the Chicago area.

Treatable infestations of cutworms were likewise uncommon during 1982. One species, the bronzed cutworm, which occurs in

May and June, occasionally damages home lawns. Infestations requiring treatment were reported from Maryland and Des Moines, Ia.

When necessary, infestations of sod webworms and cutworms were easily controlled with preventive or curative application of insecticides such as diazinon, bendiocarb (Turcam), chlorpyrifos (Dursban), trichlorfon (Proxol) and other labeled products. Irrigation is advisable following granular applications but not after liquid treatments.

Greenbug

New infestations of the greenbug continued appearing at new locations during 1982. Infestations were seen in Kentucky bluegrass, fine and tall fescues. Ryegrasses are not infested.

Reasons for the continued appearance of new infestations remain unknown. Efforts to identify factor(s) which could indicate the conditions under which infestations may be expected have been unsuccessful. No association be-

tween infestations and soil moisture has been seen. The aphid seems to thrive as well on moisture stressed turf as it does on that which is actively growing. During periods of moisture stress the insect simply remains inside the curled grass blade.

Ohio surveys conducted in December showed shiny-black eggs were again found on lawns infested last fall. Eggs were most commonly laid on tree leaves that had fallen on the lawn. (No! — the eggs were not laid in the trees.) Based on the fact that greenbug eggs in Dayton, Ohio, survived the winter of 1981-82, eggs deposited during the fall of 1982 are expected to hatch in the spring of 1983.

Generally, one application of either diazinon or chlorpyrifos (Dursban) provided good control. However, resistance to these two insecticides has developed in some market areas. In such cases, one liquid application of acephate (Orthene Insect Spray) provided excellent control.

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