84% of readers said "up" an average of 31%. 9% of readers said "remain

Source: 1981 LCI Survey

7% of readers said "down" an average of 27%

"FRIED" LAWNS

Poor mix, big burn

One thing lawn care businessmen worry about is a bad fertilizer or chemical mix. It can come from a large company or a small supplier. but either way, the lawn care company ends up with the prob-

"You may think you are resourceful, tactful and have a silver tongue," Dennis Baker, Green Grow Lawn Care Service, Auburn, Ind., said, "but when you confront 41 customers on their lawns that

look like the Mojave Desert, and you find you are all alone in a hostile world."

"...customers on their lawns that look like the Mojave Desert..."

Baker discovered his problem of the bad mix on the evening of a night in early June, he told an

Volume 5, Number 11

**NOVEMBER 1981** 

professionals Serving lawn maintenance and chemical lawn care

SAVINGS UP TO 30% PLUS DIVIDEND PROJECTED

### PLCAA to introduce casualty insurance program in Louisville

At their final meeting before this month's Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) Conference and Trade Show in Louisville, the group's board of



directors gave final approval for the implementation of a casualty insurance program for PLCAA

It is expected that the average menber will be able to save between 10 and 30 percent compared to his present coverage, with the possibility of a dividend of up to 25 percent if the program's loss experience is favorable.

Doug Baker, Leisure Lawn, Dayton, Ohio, who is PLCAA's insurance committee chairman, said that arrangements have been made to have consultants in safety to page 49

OTHER SUPPLIERS RUSH IN, DIAMOND TO REBUILD

### Dacthal gap to be filled

It still remains to be seen if the lawn care industry will have enough pre-emergence herbicide to supply its needs this spring, but it won't be for lack of effort by manufacturers and suppliers.

In the wake of the recent news

that there will be no Dacthal this spring because of a plant explosion in Diamond Shamrock's Houston facilities, alternate suppliers - most notably Elanco Products Co., Indianapolis and Rhone-Poulenc, Inc., Monmouth

CHEMLAWN'S MILLER CHAIRS

### 2,4-D coalition effort launched

Users and producers of the herbicide 2,4-D from many segments of the industry - including the lawn care industry - have estab-

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## **QUICK STARTS**

Niemczyk on Oftanol ..... Act now on "lookback" lease ........ 10 New company serves bulk needs ..... 18 Workshop on employe management . . . . 24 Don't build, buy a service station . . . . . 35 Tools, Tips & Techniques ..... 36 Marketing Idea File . . . . . . . . . 10 Cost Cuttings ......35 Meeting Dates ..... 47

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### **UPFRONT**



### Big, big shoes to fill

By the time this issue of LAWN CARE INDUSTRY reaches your desk, many of you will be packed and ready to travel to Louisville to attend the Professional Lawn Care Association of America Conference and Trade Show.

It's going to be a great show and I can hardly wait. Last year there were 70 exhibit booths and more than 700 attendees. This year, about 140 booths have already been signed up, and attendance is expected to be more than 1,000.

Some impressive numbers for an organization holding only its second show. Plus, the PLCAA has only been operating since June of 1979, a little more than two years.

There have been a lot of people who have worked very hard to make PLCAA the success it is. But make no mistake about it, there probably would not be a PLCAA Conference and Trade Show this month in Louisville were it not for one person.

Jerry Faulring.

At the PCLAA's annual meeting during the show, Jerry will step down after two-and-a-half years of guiding the organization through its formative stages. I don't know who the new president is going to be, but I do know one thing — he has some very big shoes to fill.

Along with others in the industry, Jerry was instrumental in getting the PLCAA ball rolling late one January night in 1979 during the Maryland Turf Expo. I don't know who picked up all of the tabs, but there were numerous nightcaps consumed.

Outgoing PLCAA president Faulring

There was another larger meeting a few weeks later at the Virginia Turfgrass Conference. A lot of correspondence and phone calls later, a group of more than 40 lawn care businessmen from around the country met in Fort Mitchell, Kentucky in June 1979 to see if there was indeed enough interest to form an association.

There was. And there was such

very successful lawn care company - Hydro Lawn, based in Gaithersburg, Maryland.

He has had a lot of help, starting with vice president Doug Baker, Leisure Lawn, Inc., Dayton, Ohio, and secretary-treasurer John Latting of Normal, Ill. PLCAA board members include: Larry Brandt. Spray-A-Lawn, Cincinnati, Ohio; Don Burton, Lawn Medic, Inc., Rochester, N.Y.; Steve Derrick, Latick, Inc., Normal, Ill.; J. Martin Erbaugh, Lawnmark Div., Erbaugh Corp., Peninsula, Ohio.

Also: Dr. Robert Miller, Chem-Lawn Corp., Columbus, Ohio; Gordon Ober, Davey Lawnscape, Kent, Ohio; Dr. Paul Schnare, Accu-Spray, Cape Girardeau, Mo.; Rick White, Village Green Ltd., West Chicago, Ill., and Ronnie Zwiebel, Chem-Care Lawn Service of Alabama, Inc., Birmingham. **Executive director Glenn Bostrom** and administrative director Jane Stecker have handled all of the detail and planning work along the way.

Some of these people are stepping down from the board during the annual meeting, and they should be congratulated. They have put the good of the whole industry before themselves and their companies, and given generously of their time and money. They should all be congratulated.

Especially you, Jerry. Thank vou.

As I said before, I am really looking forward to the PLCAA Conference and Trade Show. If there is anybody at this late date reading this column who still needs information about attending, contact: Jane Stecker, PLCAA, Suite 1717, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611, 312-644-0828.

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ROBERT EARLEY, Editor/Publisher PAUL McCLOSKEY, Assistant Editor JOAN HOLMES, Production Manager MARILYN MacDONALD, Production Supervisor **DENISE JOHNSON**, Graphic Design JOAN SMITH, Circulation Supervisor **DAVID PETERSON**, Reader Service Manager JULIE LAITEN, Promotion Director

MARKETING/SALES

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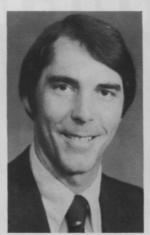
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McCloskey



**Brooks** 



Mierow

unanimity among the lawn care businessmen there, everybody had time to have a drink and catch their four o'clock planes after they formed PLCAA. No bashful people in that group, they were real chargers.

Jerry was elected pro tem president, and served in that capacity for one-and-a-half years until he was formerly elected as president by the total membership last year at the PLCAA show in November.

There have been many, many crises and near-crises along the way, and throughout, Jerry has helped lead the PLCAA board and membership through them. And it has been at no little expense to his

Along with myself, other members of the LAWN CARE INDUS-TRY team attending the PLCAA Conference and Trade Show will be assistant editor Paul McCloskey, national sales manager Jim Brooks, marketing representative Bob Mierow and group vice president (that's my boss) Tom Greney. Make it a point to stop by the

Feb Garley

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### Niemczyk speaks out on future of new pesticide

The pesticide, Oftanol, marketed by Mobay Chemical Corporation, Kansas City, Mo., has finally cleared the rough the critical hurdle of registration approval in some 12 states. Now comes the real

Following its release this summer, the organophosphate will be used by turfgrass managers throughout much of the industry. Its effectiveness will be determined on home lawns treated by lawn care professionals.

"And now you can tell us more about that than anybody," said Dr. Harry Nieczyk, professor of turfgrass entomology at the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center, addressing over 50 lawn care businessmen at the recent Professional Lawn Care Association of America seminar in Boston Heights, Ohio. "The lawn care operator's experience with this material will be very important to us."

### A year residual

Enough is currently known about the material to satisfy the local safety requirements in many states. An organophosphate with a "Caution" statement on the prod-uct label, Oftanol is residually active in the soil for over a year. Its recommended application rate is between one and two pounds of the granular product per acre.

Although application time is not specified, Niemczyk says that the material can be applied effectively anytime after the frost is off the

If it is applied in early spring, grubs that have overwintered will be effectively controlled. "If it's applied early enough," said Niemczyk, "we're going to get some fair-to-good control of grubs that have overwintered and returned to the surface to feed. And, it will control grubs through the summer and into the fall - with no problem at all."

Another time frame in which one would consider making an application for grubs would be late

summer to early fall.

Apparently, the extended action of the insecticide is primarily associated with the soil. Therefore, it only has a relatively short term residual in the thatch. It is safe with respect to earthworms. Spring applications may not curb a summertime cutworm or sod



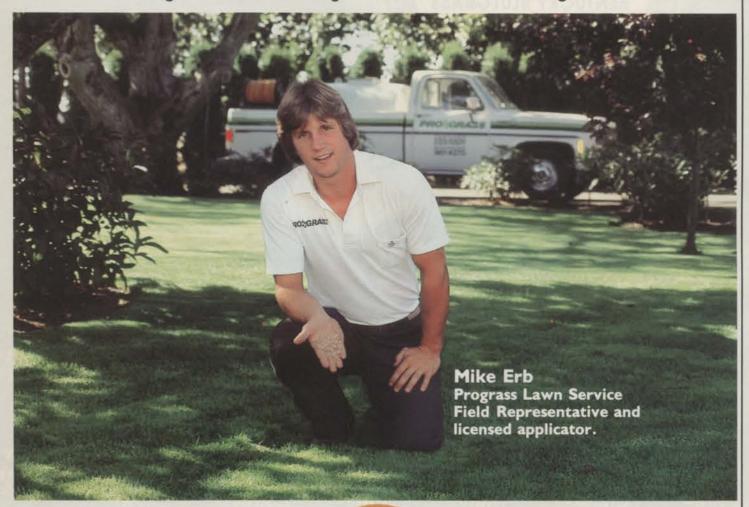
Dr. Harry Niemczyk: "The lawn care

### operator's experience with Oftanol will be very important to us."

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webworm infestation. "Generally, I think you will get through most of the summer without a major problem," said Niemczyk. "If there is an area in which you anticipate a grub problem, you could make your treatment as early as mid-July

### Into the real world

Based on his findings, Niemczyk says that Oftanol may deliver up to 50 percent control at the two pound rate the fall after an application made the previous July or August. "Now, whether that control is going to be good enough so you won't have to re-treat the lawn, is something only you can determine," he said.

Research investigations can only answer so many questions, says Niemczyk. "We'll know a lot more about it by the fall of 1982. However, the potential is there for extended control of the kind we never thought we'd have."

While the label for Oftanol does not require irrigation, it is still a good idea, said Niemczyk. But, from what he has seen, material left on the turf for quite a while before rainfall still did a good job when it did rain. "But again, research data can only show so much," he said. "It's got to get out into the real world for a real test of efficacy."

### Resistance potential

When asked about the potential for insect resistance to the pesticide, Niemczyk said, "The potential is always there. It's an organophosphate with a longer residual activity than other granular material we now have for grubs. The longer that lasts, the greater the chances of developing resistance problems. You must remember that an insect can develop resistance to any chemical and even to biological control agents such as parasites."

Over and over, Niemczyk emphasized the need for the lawn care industry to monitor the performance of this new insecticide. He, himself, will be studying the pesticide's effect on non-target organisms. "I will be very interested in knowing what you think of Oftanol after having used

it for one year."

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### MARKETING IDEA FILE

### Rebate program stimulates business

Most lawn care marketers know that the best way to sell their service is through the customer — the person who, if satisfied, can give the most effective sales testimonial. The problem often, however, is getting those people to speak out. What they need is a little encouragement in most cases — and at Prograss Liquidcare Lawn Service in Hubbard, Oregon, Mike Erb has found a way.

Erb has instituted a referral program at Prograss in which a customer can receive a rebate on their own lawn treatment in exchange for a referral to a new sales lead. Last year he sent out 2,000 brochures, with a dime enclosed, asking customers to call a friend about Prograss. "At first we were skeptical because we thought we'd run into bookkeeping problems," said Erb. "We didn't want to have people calling us three months after the referral had gone through to ask us for a rebate."

Those headaches turned out to be minimal. Instead, Erb said

to page 48

# Act now to cash in on 'lookback' leasing feature of new tax law

Lawn care businesses have until Nov. 13 to act on a feature of the new tax law that permits them to retroactively restructure as lease agreements purchases of qualified operating equipment bought and placed in service after Dec. 31, 1980, but before Aug. 13, 1981.

NOVEMBER 13 DEADLINE

This "lookback" feature of the tax law can greatly improve cash flow for certain businesses, Robert Greisman, tax manager for Alexander Grant & Co. told LAWN CARE INDUSTRY. The company is a national accounting firm based in Chicago.

Generally, leasing aids companies in money-losing or low tax positions. Such companies rent rather than buy equipment because the tax benefits of ownership
— depreciation and investment
tax credits (ITC's) — would be
wasted. Lessors of equipment are
permitted to realize the benefits of
depreciation and ITC's, which
they pass through in part to the
lessee as lower rent payments.

The new tax law not only greatly facilitates rental transactions, but says that even equipment bought after Dec. 31, 1980 and before Aug. 13, 1981 can be treated as leased if the transaction is restructured by Nov. 13

To take advantage of the "look-back" feature, the business has to contact the seller or a finance or leasing company and ask to restructure the original purchase agreement as a lease. A rental can be negotiated that in effect passes through, via lower rent payments, a portion of the depreciation and ITC to the business.

Until the new tax law was passed, there were no clear standards for deciding whether for tax purposes a lease was a lease or in substance a sale, Greisman said. This made many taxpayers hesitant to engage in anything but a clear-cut sale or a lease.

Without the tax law's new lease provisions, the problem would be aggravated for low tax posture companies because of new, more accelerated cost recovery rules and liberalized ITC's that these companies couldn't use.

### Rent to reap tax benefits

"Congress wanted to make it possible for loss companies to share in the benefits of the new cost recovery rules by allowing them to rent, rather than buy, equipment at a low rate, which would reflect the tax benefits of depreciation and ITC being realized by the lessor," Greisman

To qualify for lease treatment, the property must be new equipment, not real estate, that would qualify for investment tax credit if purchased. The lessor must also generally be a regular business corporation. Other limitations apply concerning the minimum investment in the property and the term of the lease.

If all of the above rules are satisfied, then the transaction is considered a lease for tax purposes and no other factors are considered, Greisman notes. It makes no difference that at the end of the lease term the property may be bought at nominal value; or that the lessee is the nominal owner of the property for state and local law purposes and retains the burdens. benefits and incidents of ownership such as tax payments and maintenance charges; or that the lessee has provided financing or guaranteed financing for the transaction, other than the lessor's required minimum 10 percent investment.

"The businessman should consult his accountant to determine if any equipment purchases made during the 'lookback' period can be restructured to take advantage of the new leasing provisions," Greisman said.

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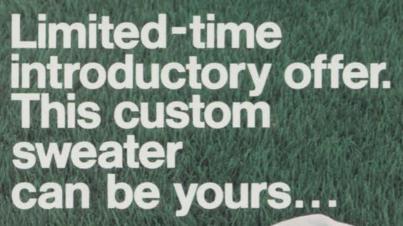
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# Do your employes take their jobs for granted?

According to the most recent statistics from the Department of Labor, unemployement in this country is well over seven percent. Do lawn care employers who are at full employment let employes know that they should be pleased to have a job with the lawn care employer when there are many other people unemployed who would like to have that job today?

Frequently, employes forget that the best job they can get is the one they have. It is the lawn care employer's responsibility to remind employes that he is a secure employer, has not laid off employes, and is optimistic about the future. Too often employes take job security for granted, but part of the blame for that rests with lawn care employers who do not remind their employes that many other working people do not have the same security.

### **Unemployment rates**

The following is a list of the unemployment rates on a state-by-state basis. If a lawn care enployer is at full employment and he is in a state that is suffering from high unemployment, perhaps reminding his employes of those two conditions would be worthwhile.

Alabama, 9.8 percent; Alaska, 9.0; Arizona, 6.4; Arkansas; 8.4; California, 6.7; Colorado, 6.0; Connecticut, 6.0; Delaware, 7.3; District of Columbia, 9.8; Florida, 6.3; Georgia, 6.2; Hawaii, 6.2; Idaho, 7.2; Illinois, 8.4; Indiana, 9.1; Iowa, 6.1; Kansas, 4.2; Kentucky, 7.5; Louisiana, 8.6; Maine, 7.7; Maryland, 7.1; Massachusetts, 6.4; Michigan, 11.1; Minnesota, 5.4; Mississippi, 8.6; Missouri, 7.4; Montana, 6.7; Nebraska, 4.0; Nevada, 6.7; New Hampshire, 4.8; New Jersey, 7.4; New Mexico, 8.1; New York, 7.6; North Carolina, 6.3; North Dakota, 5.2; Ohio, 8.4; Oklahoma, 3.3; Oregon, 9.4; Pennsylvania, 9.3; Rhode Island, 7.1; South Carolina, 7.9; South Dakota, 5.4; Tennessee, 8.6; Texas, 7.2; Utah, 6.3; Vermont, 5.6; Virginia, 6.0; Washington, 9.3; West Virginia; 10.3; Wisconsin, 7.2; Wyoming, 4.3.

According to information recently released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, fewer American workers belong to unions today than in the past two years, and union membership has declined generally since 1970. Of those employes in the labor force who were eligible, only 20.8 percent belonged to unions. In 1970, that figure was approximately 25 percent

Those unions which have experienced declines in membership during recent years include the machinists (19 percent), automobile workers (nine percent), paper workers (23 percent), rubber workers (24 percent), steel workers, clothing and textile workers, teamsters, oil, chemical and atomic workers, painters and ladies' garment workers.

On the other hand, a few unions have prospered during the recent hard times for labor organizations. For example, the Communications Workers of America in the past two years has increased its membership by 8.5 percent, or 43,000 members. Additionally, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Service Employe Union, United Food and Commercial Workers Union, and Carpenters have increased their membership lists substantially.

It is well established that among year-round full-time workers in the U.S., women earned on an average less than 60 percent than men earned, and black men earned 70 to 75 percent of the wages earned by white men. These differential wage patterns have existed for decades and are due to a number of complicated sources,

such as low-paying jobs which have historically been assumed by females and minorities prior to the enactment of equal employment legislation.

### Wage differentials

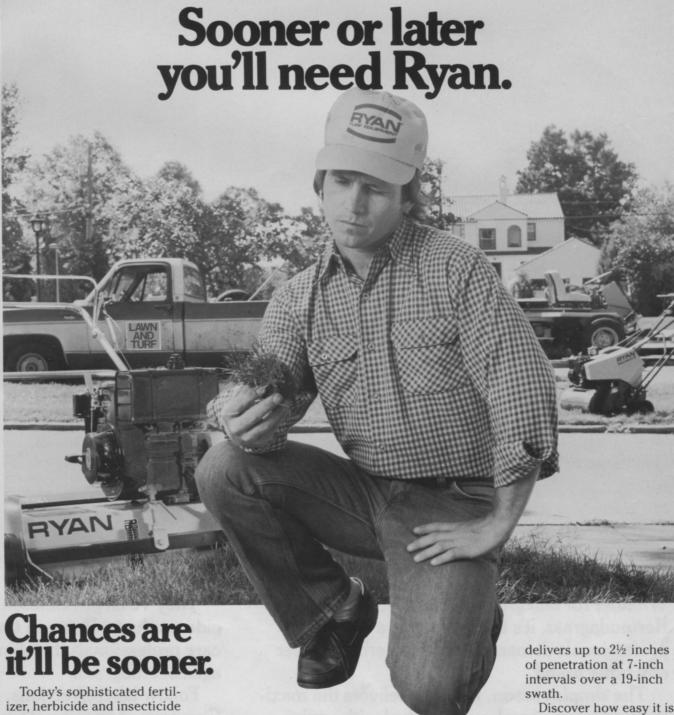
In response to these historical wage differentials, such as paying male custodians more than female housekeepers, pressure is building for equating the worth of a job traditionally held by females or minorities to a job held by men and non-minorities.

Recently, the National Academy of Sciences endorsed this comparable work approach by advocating that employers set the wage rate for jobs according to the worth of the job instead of perpetuating historical wage differences. Though the "comparable worth" theory represents a further intrusion into the private sector which Congress has not endorsed, courts have become more receptive to this theory of discrimination, and

we anticipate that a number of cases whereby an employe who has not been discriminated against by the employer will claim, nevertheless, that he has been discriminated against because his job has been historically lower paying due to discriminatory reasons.

I look forward to seeing many of you again at the Second PLCAA Convention in Louisville. I will be speaking on two issues which currently affect lawn care employers in particular: Wrongful termination of employes, and the complicated area of wage and hour compliance and problems. Furthermore, during the workshops, I will be glad to discuss any other questions that may be on your mind. See you then!

Richard I. Lehr is a lawyer in the offices of Sirote, Permutt, Friend, Friedman, Held & Apolinsky, Birmingham Ala., and a monthly contributor to LAWN CARE INDUSTRY. He is a scheduled speaker at the PLCAA Conference this month in Louisville, Ky.



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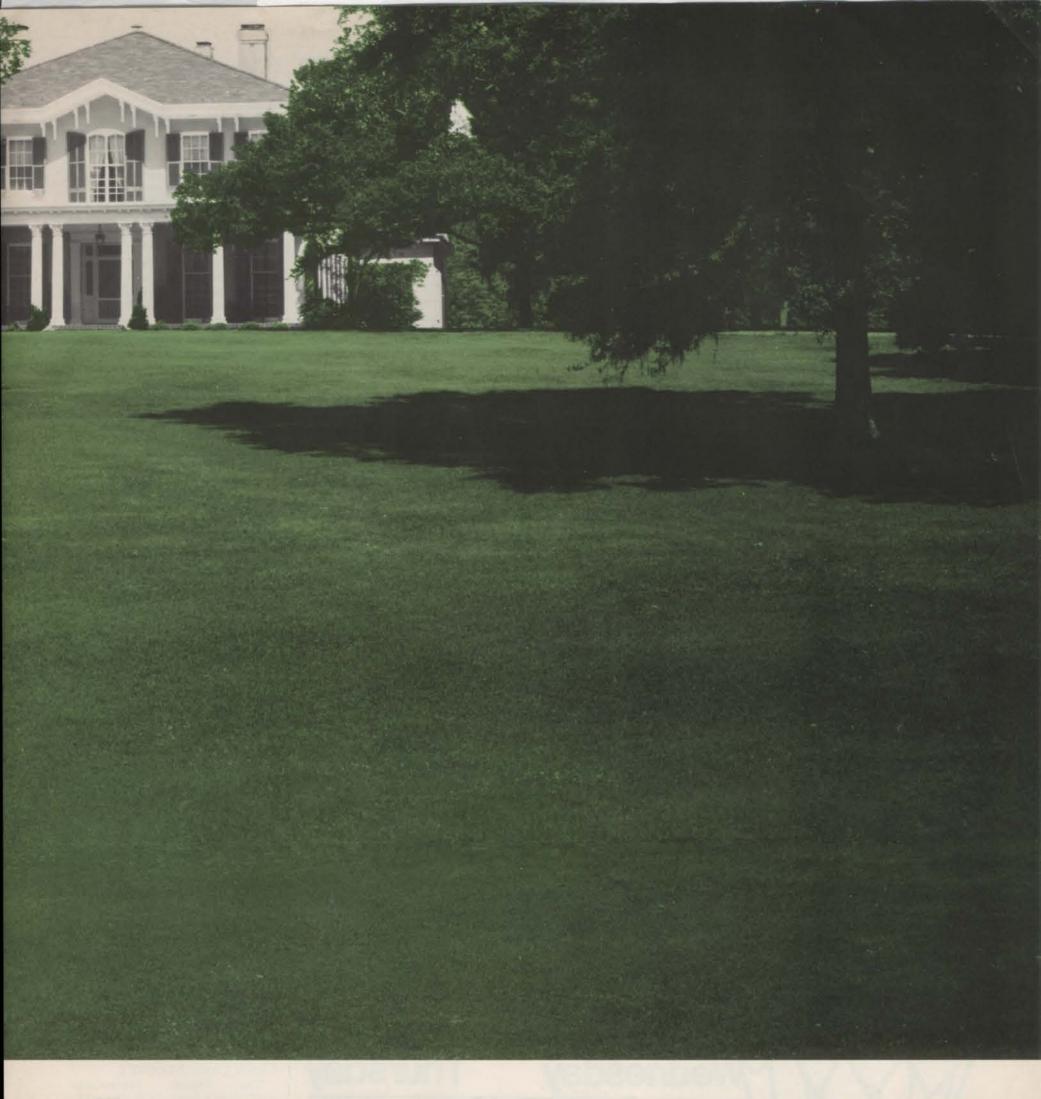
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MOWING/MAINTENANCE

### **PGMS** publishes estimating guide

Professional Maintenance Society (PGMS) has announced publication of the second edition of its Guide to Grounds Maintenance Estimating.

This 16-page guide has been enlarged to a convenient 81/2 by 11 inch size and includes maintenance estimating charts for lawns, shrub areas, trees, flower beds and paved areas, plus calculation sheets for labor costs, budgets and equipment, new job estimating worksheet and a sample maintenance contract.

The guide is available free to PGMS members and educational institutions. Non-members may order a copy of the guide for \$5, which includes postage and handling, from: PGMS, 7 Church Lane, Suite 13, Pikesville, MD 21208.

**COMPANIES** 

### New supplier serves industry with bulk prices

Bulkkem, Inc., a recently founded corporation with joint ownership by Lattick, Inc. and PBI/Gordon Corp., is now serving the lawn care industry with bulk prices on Trimec-R broadleaf herbicide, Betamec-4 pre-emergent herbicide, 2,4-D broadleaf herbicide, MCPP and Dursban.

The company said its bulk delivery is tailored to the lawn care businessman's individual needs.

Fifty-five gallon returnable drums, 250-gallon mini-bulk tanks and stationary systems of any capacity desired are available.

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Installations are supervised by the engineering staff of PBI/ Gordon to assure compliance with all government regulations, the company said.

Guaranteed delivery is available with the company's early-order bookings.

"Our customers can be assured of Betamec-4, which is Betasan, during 1982," a spokesman told LAWN CARE INDUSTRY.

Trimec professional applicator's formula is especially designed for the company by PBI/ Gordon to insure maximum effectiveness at the lowest possible price for lawn care applicators, the company said.

"The lawn care businessman gets the benefit of PBI/Gordon's volume use of 2,4-D, MCPP and Betasan and Dursban, all of which enables Bulkkem to serve the industry at the best possible prices," the spokesman said.

For further information, contact: Bulkkem, Inc., 400 Northtown Rd., Normal, IL 61761, or call collect at 309-454-2469.

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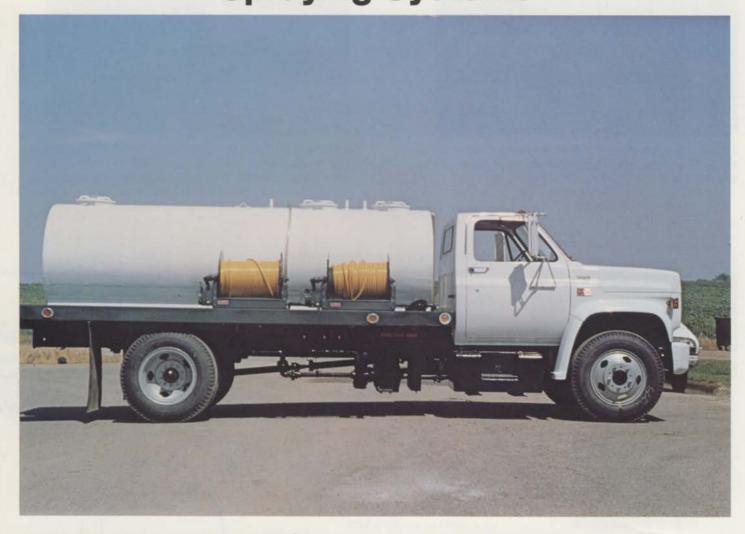
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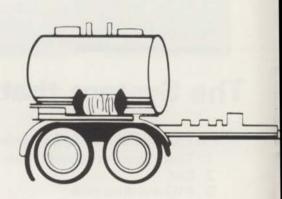


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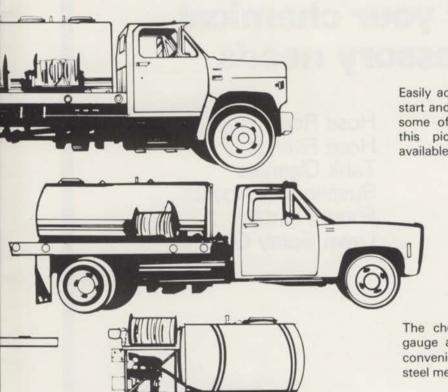
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### **INSIDE THE INDUSTRY**

# Your top employe just got a raise, is satisfied with his benefits and has the perfect route. He just gave his two-week notice.

# Why?

by Paul McCloskey, assistant editor

Every morning of the lawn care season Roy Johnson rises promptly at 6:00 a.m., checks into the office for his route schedule, and then hits the bricks. He's paid well, has an attractive benefits program, a paid vacation, and a bonus at the end of the year. The problem is,

he's bored with his job.

This is just one of the problems that afflicts lawn care employes nationwide. But it's one that seems to be at the root of most secondary personnel problems — tardiness, sloppiness, compensation, and Some turnover. lawn businessmen say there's no solution. Others find ways to address its symptoms. All agree that it's one of their most perplexing business problems.

"I could do this blindfolded," said Johnson, reeling up his spray lines. "That's the problem." His route seldom varies. His customers are affable, but he has little real contact with them. He may take a soil sample, or chat with a neighbor about having a sales person call. But then it's off to the

next lawn.

Johnson is representative of a number of lawn care technicians, ranging from those with education and experience to those with none. Some have titles to that bolster job satisfaction. Some are just members of the maintenance gang. All experience the fatigue that accompanies the stubborn regularity of

"I'd say it was the biggest problem with our employes," said Robert Loeb, president of Total Ground Care in Dallas, Texas. "And one of the hardest aspects of the job for the men to handle."

But it's not limited to those

workers ignorant of the challenges of the turf care field. Many of Loeb's men come equipped with what would seem an antidote to monotony — a university degree. Hired in cooperation with a Mississippi State University program in turf science, they have demonstrated previous enthusiasm for the job.

The root of the problem is not always the boredom for many lawn care workers, however, but public respect for their field. "Most people simply do not respect this profession," said Loeb, speaking of the lawn care technician. "The sad part of it is that a lot of these young men have spent three or four years studying for it."

The public is not aware of what goes into training a first rate lawn care worker, says Loeb. Far from being an unskilled profession, he says, it's an "art" that takes time to establish. "We have to get the

**Total** Robert Loeb, Ground Care. Dallas: "Most people simply do not respect this profession ... a lot of these men have spent three or four years preparing."

concept across that we are professionals," he said. "Not just people who dig in the dirt."

Public recognition will come in time according to most lawn care businessmen. But in the mean time there are steps that can be taken to prevent worker alienation. Promotions at regular intervals can give an employe new respect for his

for instance. Loeb's employes can advance through a number of title ranks, including assistant foreman, foreman, and finally property supervisor, each time taking responsibility for more aspects of the job.

Of course, in this case, lawn care company has to have room for labor mobility. A company that offers services requiring specific training — irrigation, installation, spraying, maintenance, landscaping, and tree care, for example can help offset the monotony of a never-changing schedule. Diversity can help stimulate an employe's desire to learn.

Stopping work completely is another method of solving the problem, said Daryle Huff, president of Turf Master Inc. in Lawrence, Kansas. "Sometimes we'll break off for a company activity, maybe a round of golf," he said. Although it means interrupting the work schedule, Huff says it's good for conpany morale and gives the employes a sense of company

But if boredom is one of the chief problems in the ranks, there are others that contribute just as much to employe inefficiency. A case in point is the problem of employes who lack public relations skills a problem that prevents many employes from being promotable even if a company is diverse enough.

And in many cases that problem stems from the quality of the personnel hired in the first place. "I'd say one of the biggest prob-lems facing us," said Don Koch of Green Thumb Custom Lawn Service in Cincinnati, Ohio, "is trying to find people who really

have a desire to learn the busi-

Koch says that an ideal employe would be someone who really took a vested interest in seeing the improvement of the property that they're working on. He believes too many of them don't take an interest beyond putting in their eight hours. "'I have my job and it

Daryle Huff, Turf Master, Inc., Lawrence, Kans.: "Sometimes we'll break off for a company activity, maybe a round of golf." It's good for company morale.

doesn't include public relations' is how they think," said Koch. "Many lack the desire to communicate beyond their own inter-

Employe apathy toward their jobs invariably brings up the money as a motivator. While many managers believe it can never serve as a sole incentive, most agree that earnings should represent the demands of the job.

"We're dealing with a job at the applicator level which is consistently physically demanding, and at the same time contains a high degree of customer interaction,' said Marty Erbaugh, president of the Lawnmark Corporation, Peninsula, Ohio. "An applicator in many cases has to be multitalented."

On one hand you ask him to be a producer from a billings standpoint, and on the other hand you ask him to be an equipment manager, an applicator with regard for each account, a sales person, and a public relations man. In other words, you're asking a hell of a lot. That guy is the back bone of the company and his earnings should reflect that."

At Lawnmark Corp., employes are paid according to a formula based on their base pay per hours worked, a dollar percentage of the weekly sales, and the billings they do. "It's a three-legged stool," said Erbaugh. "In other words, they have the potential to earn as much as a middle manager."

But Erbaugh sees the biggest personnel problem at his company stemming from new employes who are hired in the middle of the season. "How do you train someone in the heat of battle?" he said. "The people who do that best are already in the field. It's an ongoing training problem."

One method of easing the problem of mid-season turnover is to be discriminating in the hiring process, said Erbaugh. "If there isn't any reason to hire someone beyond the resume they present, then we don't want to do it. We look for affirmative reasons to hire him beyond the credentials he presents."

Making sure of the man you hire during the interview process will help avoid the problem of hiring someone, who, although a good worker, lacks those secondary traits that make workers reliable. Among these are promptness (both in meeting schedules and getting to work on time), personal appearance, truck maintenance, and public relations skills. In other words, that set of intangibles that makes an employe outstanding and cost-efficient.

While for most companies, tardiness if not a chronic problem, there is usually a system used to

Don Koch, Green Thumb Custom Lawn Service, Cincinnati, Ohio: "Many lack the desire to communicate beyond their own interests." Needed are people with desire.

root it out when it does occur. The most popular system throughout the industry seems to be the "three strikes and you're out" method of discouraging tardiness. At Lawnmark, an employe is allowed three episodes of tardiness without an excuse before dismissal.

Any employe with a consistent record of absenteeism or tardiness is probably not worth the company's time anyway. So most agree that a strict policy at the outset will select-out the unworthy as fast as possible. "Tardiness isn't really a significant problem for us," said Erbaugh. "That's the kind of problem you have to solve very quickly."

But is earnings potential a deterrent to an employe who consistently shows up late for work, is sloppy, or, in general, has a poor attitude to his job? Most lawn care businessmen interviewed say that money by itself can never act as a stimulus to improvement. Mike White, president of A-Perm-O-Green Lawn, Inc., in Shreveport,

Louisiana, says that in general, maintenance personnel are least affected by a dollar incentive.

At Perm-O-Green, he said, they tried to pay their maintenance people a little more in order to see if the tardiness problem would decline. "It still was a problem," he said. "Which points to the biggest problem we have — find-

Marty Erbaugh, Lawnmark Associates, Peninsula, Ohio: He says of his technicians — "They have the potential to earn as much as a middle manager."

ing good help who will stay with the job."

White said that recently he hired five men on Monday, and on Tuesday, only one of them turned up for work. Two of them, he said, left before lunch on the first day. "I think a lot of them show up just so they can tell the unemployment officer that they applied for a job and didn't get it. A lot of these people just don't want to work."

White realizes that lawn maintenance jobs may not have the appeal for some, but says that it's up to the company to show an employe otherwise. "We tell our people that they're not just yard boys, they're lawn technicians," he said.

White will promote his maintenance personnel fron a lawn technician to supervisor after a year or two if he thinks it's warranted. His lawn spray personnel have a longer term of stewardship before they can be promoted, usually after about three years. But, he says, if you have someone good, you had better pay them for it. "That's what the lawn care industry as a whole must learn," he said. "It shouldn't be that difficult to hold on to them if they're good."

In order to illustrate the point, White tells the story of one lawn technician who, he felt, deserved a promotion. He was promoted from lawn technician to assistant supervisor and placed on a salary. While up to that point he had been prompt, efficient, and reliable, after his promotion, his performance deteriorated rapidly.

"Soon after we put him on a salaried basis he started missing work and having problems," explained White. "We then put him back on an equivalent hourly wage, and then he quit. It taught us a lesson. Unless we're very sure of

Mike White, A-Permo-Green Lawn, Inc., Shreveport, La.: "Unless we're very sure of him, we no longer put a guy on a salary if we can pay an equivalent wage."

him, we no longer put a guy on salary if we can pay him an equivalent wage. Too many people take advantage of the salary system.

But if a company relies on an informal system of salary review, oftentimes an employe may feel insecure about his job. In other words, if he doesn't know when he'll be reviewed for promotion,

he may not feel the need to improve his performance on the job. That's why many companies have a formal schedule of promotion reviews.

At Specialty Spraying, Inc., in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, where Jim Walter is president, each employe receives a mid-season review. That's a company policy and is made known to the employe in the company statement each receives upon starting work. In addition, his employes receive cost of living raises when warranted. At the end of the year, after the bookkeeping is done, employes may also receive bonuses based on their volume and billing performances.

A policy of end of the year bonuses for an employe who has done an exceptional job with respect to either volume or billings can often solve the problem of the employe who complains that he has an inferior route. While in many companies, the best routes go to employes with seniority, a bonus system allows the junior employes to be competitive.

"One guy can pick up a bonus on production volume while the other guy can pick up one for billings volume," said Walter. "It's a kind of grey factor that prevents you from overlooking some of the guys."

The bonus system seems to work for overall company efficiency as well. If your labor is competitive, your route density is likely to

Jim Walter, Specialty Spraying, Inc., Latrobe, Pa.: "One guy can pick up a bonus on production volume, while the other guy can pick one up for billings volume."

increase, and can thus save the company overhead costs for fuel and driving time. Walter says that last year his accounts were up, but his route density had increased to a point at which he was able to drop a truck from the fleet. "And that's the name of the game," he said.

A bonus or credit system will also enable a company to employ what Walter called "Chinese overtime." That is, anything over eight hours is half time, and Saturday work pays time and a half only if the entire company is called to work. An employe therefore is not encouraged to work slowly to rack up overtime hours, but instead is encouraged to maximize his efficiency during his normal day

The method of giving an employe a salary combined with an incentive bonus is a way of rewarding him for his industriousness without having to promote him out of the labor force. Many lawn care companies are too small to advance an employe beyond the applicator level — there's just too little room at the top — even if he is a first-class worker.

An incentive program will therefore give an employe the opportunity to raise his income to management level, without necessarily having to bring him into the management team. If he takes advantage of the program, he may not feel restrained by any raise schedule and can do his own thing

This combination of corporate restraint and labor incentive gives the employe a maximum amount of flexibility. It may also help to make his work habits more efficient, get to work on time, and to train new employes faster.

Sometimes, of course, a worker will ignore all efforts to motivate him. These are those who feel job monotony first, are consistently tardy, and whose work appearance is often shabby. Most companies are forced to use the "guillotine method" if this kind of behavior occurs too often. Firing an employe is in many cases the best, and the least expensive way to correct his motivation problem.

An incentive program is often

Dave Shubert, D & J Lawn Co., Clarkston, Ill.: "If I paid their wages while they were in school, they'd probably fall asleep. On their own time, they make a personal investment in the learning."

one of the best ways of reducing tedium on the job. While most agree that it can never replace the need for variety in the workplace, the "almighty dollar" is for some the best morale booster there is.

Some companies offer to pay educational costs to their employes. Dave Shubert, president of D & J Lawn Company in Clarkston, Illinois, pays for his employes' textbooks and tuition if they want to take job-related courses after working hours. They must do it on their own time, he says, "Because if I paid their wages while they were in school, they'd probably fall asleep. On their own time, they make a personal investment in the learning."

Most of those interviewed agree that the life of a lawn care employe, especially below the supervisor level, is not all that glamorous. That's in the nature of the occupation. All agree that it is a problem. The problems — poor producers, less than desirable results, tardiness, lack of enthusiasm — will invariably occur in the lawn care business.

But there are ways of beating it, as some companies have demonstrated. The most effective way seems to be to give the employes a degree of freedom within the corporate structure. In many ways, it resembles a kind of informal franchising concept. Give the employes a percentage of the company's gross income - whether it's derived from volume or billings — and they too have a vested interest in seeing the company prosper. The system makes the employes competitive. After a while a pecking order will be established among employes who are the most successful, and employes will begin to feel less remote from management.

Of course, no system is foolproof. In many cases there is no system at all. Trust is probably the most important ingredient in any successful labor force. This can only be achieved over time. And then perhaps the Roy Johnsons of the lawn care industry will be glad they've got what they have.

# One-man business grows with low cost renovation program

In the Santa Clara Valley of California where chemical lawn care is still a brand new industry, Henry De La Rosa is making a name for himself with a residential lawn maintenance and renovation program that's making competitors and homeowners alike sit up and take notice.

Working on his own with the exception of an occasional hired hand, De La Rosa's Fairway Lawn Care business in San Jose has been growing at a 30-40 percent clip every year.

For the most part, this growth is due to a unique chemical renovation program and remarkable success in converting renovation customers to ongoing maintenance contracts. Even big firms like ChemScape, which competes with De La Rosa for lawn maintenance business, refer their renovation work to him in recognition of his expertise in that area.

### Worked for Green Valley

De La Rosa says he "kind of fell into" the lawn care business, a career direction he traces to running the plant and garden department at a local hardware store. "I started getting familiar with the products and gained a lot of knowledge by attending seminars," he said. Soon thereafter, he took a position with the Cambrian Nursery in San Jose, where he



De La Rosa inside his truck. He has increased his business 30 to 40 percent yearly.

spent two and a half years learning the landscape design business.

After moving to Green Valley landscape, the largest landscape maintenance firm in the San Francisco Bay area, for a one-year stint as a spray operator, Henry decided he had the horticultural and pesticide application experience to go it alone early in 1979. With no savings to fall back on, De La Rosa sold his car and motorcycle, and moved back into his parents' house in order to scrape up enough money to lease a truck.

He admits to doing a lot of landscape work to make his payments, but by the end of the first year he had 75-80 regular lawn care accounts. Today, he's running a thriving one-man business servicing over 200 satisfied custom-

ers.

### Four-application program

While renovation work has really made Henry De La Rosa stand out from the crowd of competitive lawn care services, the primary service Fairway Lawn Care sells to customers is a four-step maintenance program designed to take chemical work off the homeowner's hands while creating a beautiful lawn.

The first step, when needed, is to make a pre-emergent application of Ronstar granules with a rotary spreader at the rate of five pounds per 1,000 square feet of lawn area. This is followed by Best Turf Gold, a combination fertilizer that's essentially Turf Supreme with sulfur-coated urea, applied at the same five pound per thousand rate.

De La Rosa refers to these herbicide applications as the "chemspray" phase of the maintenance program. Using a 55-gallon Master PCO 55 spray tank with three-nozzle boom, De La Rosa applies three pints per acre of Trexan, a herbicide containing 2,4-D, MCPP and dicamba that does a good job on broadleaves like oxalis and dandelion.

### Renovation gives an edge

The final step is a clean-up of plant beds, cracks and crevices with a one and a half percent solution of Roundup herbicide in water applied with a small Chapin backpack sprayer. This is "a little extra service" for his customers that Henry feels gives him an edge on some competitors.

But, it's in lawn renovation that De La Rosa really gets a leg up on the competition. Faced with perennial infestations like bermuda or tall fescue, De La Rosa's first step is to make a careful evaluation of the situation and provide a free estimate to the customer, whether





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he requests it or not.

While he explains that spot renovation is an option in cases where some of the lawn care remains in relatively good shape, De La Rosa recommends a complete renovation on eight out of 10 lawns he evaluates due to the difficulty of dealing with fine fescue problems.

"I don't have much trouble getting customers to give me the go-ahead because I can give them a complete renovation for just about \$70 more than it would cost to re-seed into an existing lawn," he says. "That really differentiates my service from competitors who

have to be content working with

older lawns.'

In lawns where bermuda is the problem, the renovation process begins with an application of a two percent solution of Roundup. A second, spot application is sometimes made two weeks later to control areas inadvertently missed the first time around.

### Thatching and aerating

"This treatment insures that all vegetative growth in the lawn is destroyed right down to the roots," he says. "Since Roundup has no residual soil activity, we don't have to worry about chemical carryover when we start seeding just a couple of weeks later. We also don't have to be concerned about sprinkler system damage like we do with conventional lawn replacement that includes rototilling.

Seven days after the application of Roundup, De La Rosa begins the actual renovation work, confident the herbicide had adequate time to "translocate" down through emerged vegetation and into the underground roots. He makes one pass over the lawn with his thatcher, two criss-cross passes with the aerator, and a second pass with the thatcher. Next on the agenda is raking up the dead grass, and vacuuming the entire lawn

### Four-hour renovation

Before applying fertilizer or seed, De La Rosa will re-grade to smooth out uneven areas in the lawn by using a planter mix consisting of soil, redwood compost and sand spread 1/4- to 1/2-inch thick. He'll also repair any damage to the sprinkler system, making alterations or additions where necessary, as well as handling minor tree or shrub removal.

Best's Turf Gold Fertilizer is then applied, followed by crisscross seeding of the Scott's Play mixture of bluegrass and Loretta ryegrass at double the normal rate eight pounds per 2,000 square feet. "This grass has a very fine texture and yet can tolerate traffic as well as some drought and disease," he says in explaining his choice of seed mixture. "It also cuts very nicely."

The final task is top-dressing a cedar sawdust called Ceda-Soil to retain as much moisture as possible for seed germination. "I always ask the customer to run his sprinkler system for three to five minutes five times a day during the first two weeks to insure that the seed is getting adequate moisture," De La Rosa notes.

De La Rosa says he can do a

complete renovation in four hours at a cost of just \$350-400 for up to 1,500 square feet of lawn area, about one-third the cost of a conventional lawn replacement.

"My chemical renovation program saves me an awful lot of time," he says. "This is a savings I'm able to pass on to the customer, so obviously it helps me against the competition."

### Conversion to program

Six to eight weeks after the new lawn is completely seeded, De La Rosa likes to start renovation customers on his regular chem-spray program since the lawn is ready to be fertilizer and checked for weed control. "I rarely encounter resistance in trying to convert them to our maintenance program," he

"The key is communication letting them know in advance there could possibly be weeds and dry spots. I also provide a detailed



Henry De La Rosa, owner of Fairway Lawn Care, San Jose, Calif. spraying for weed control in shrub beds. He recommends a complete renovation on most lawns because of fine fescue problems. A complete renovation costs about \$70 more than reseeding into an existing lawn.

recommendation on how and when to water, usually suggesting they run their sprinkler system when the soil surface looks light and crusty."

While ChemScape is obviously stiff competition for De La Rosa and other small lawn maintenance operators, he says they're opening up the market in the Santa Clara

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So if you have a lawn-care company and desire to grow through increased efficiency,

Bulkkem is here to serve you. We can save you time, labor, space and money.

### What is BULKKEM?

Bulkkem is a joint venture of PBI/GORDON Corporation — the Trimec People — and Lattick Incorporated with headquarters in Normal, Illinois. The purpose of Bulkkem is to substantially reduce herbicide costs by delivery in bulk ... Betamec-4 (Betasan); Trimec; Amine 2,4-D; and MCPP.

It is doubtful that any organization is more aware of the problems of the lawn-care industry, and more capable of constructive help in solving lawn problems, than John Latting and Steve Derrick of Lattick Incorporated. They are totally immersed in the lawn-service business ... it's their life! And they are both now 100% involved in the day-to-day management of Bulkkem.

PBI/GORDON Corporation, on the other hand, is certainly the leading supplier of herbicides — like Trimec and Betamec-4 — to the turf industry. Gordon's experience in handling bulk is unmatched in the turf industry. Willis West, who has been in charge of lawncare sales for PBI/GORDON, will now devote full time to Bulkkem, seeing to it that all the technical know-how of PBI/GORDON is made available to customers of Bulkkem.

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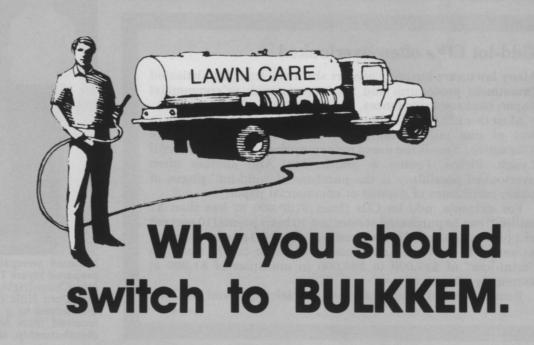
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### **MONEYWISE**

### Odd-lot CD's often overlooked

Many lawn care business owners shy away from sophisticated investment procedures and instruments such as commercial paper, bankers' acceptances, and certificates of deposit (CDs).

Most think that these short-term investments are sold only in lots of one million dollars or more. However, there are alternatives. One is the use of money-market funds, says Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith, Inc. And another often overlooked possibility is the purchase of "odd-lot" pieces of either certificates of deposit or commercial paper.

For example, odd-lot CDs (from \$100,000 to less than \$1 million) can be purchased at rates just 10 basis points (10 percent of a percentage point) lower than the posted CD rate for pieces in excess of \$1 million. And commercial paper can be found in "mini-lots" of \$25,000 to \$99,000 in multiples of \$1,000 at extremely attractive rates.

Remember, too, that when commercial paper and bankers'



National sweepstakes prize winner Bob Hubbard (center) accepts specially prepared Myers Turf Sprayer from George Carson (left) of W. F. Miller Co., and John Chiera (right), F. E. Myers sales manager. Hubbard is owner/general manager of Oxford Hills Golf & Country Club, Oxford, Mich. The award winner was determined by a sweepstakes drawing made in June. Over 2,000 entries were received from Myers ads in trade journals. W. F. Miller Co. is a Myers distributorship. Myers is based in Ashland, Ohio.

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### Pumping new life into an abandoned service station

Professional lawn care businessmen seeking locations for their offices and storage facilities for their lawn chemicals and equipment are usually faced with several major obstacles at the out-

First, the trend toward higher rentals in business centers due to rising costs, and the lack of convenient parking and storage facilities for their vehicles and mowing and lawn maintenance equipment.

Secondly, high construction costs associated with the erection of brand-new buildings.

And lastly, the shortage of new business properties at accessible locations near heavily-populated communities.

### Cheaper than building

One unique solution to these problems is the remodeling of abandoned gasoline service stations, located at convenient sites, for just a fraction of the cost of erecting a new building. Every major oil company, jobber, or independent owner has closed stations during the past few years, and these are immediately available at reasonable costs, or can be rented for a moderate fee.

Using an abandoned gasoline station and converting it into a modern business office and storage facility for both chemical lawn care and mowing and maintenance businesses offers the following advantages:

### Advantages

1). An existing building, generally located on a major thoroughfare (and near a heavily-populated community which requires lawn care services), that can be converted at one-half the cost of a brand new building.

2). Adequate entrance and exit ramps on primary and secondary streets affording excellent access to the building, and easy loading and unloading of lawn care chemicals, lawn mowers, and other maintenance equipment.

3). A generous parking area, already paved, which is ideal for the parking and storage of company-owned vehicles, and employe automobiles.

4). The ready availability of a business permit for a facility already zoned for business use.

5). The existence of utilities already installed on the property, such as electric service, water, sewers, telephone and alarm sys-

6). Remodeling can often be done in about 45 days compared to

### **COST CUTTINGS**

### The tactics of telephone collection

Collecting overdue bills over the phone is always tricky. But, says Jan Genja of Pacific Northwest Bell, it can be very effective if some professional techniques are taken into consideration.

For example, the pre-planning stage, often overlooked, is an integral part of the collection call. First look to see if your own company may be at fault. Perhaps payment has been credited elsewhere. Next, find out what previous collection steps have been taken. Records should be kept.

Another pre-call step is to determine the past payment record. "This will help you formulate in your mind whether there is a pattern," said Genja. After the preliminaries, the call itself can be made. Keep it simple and straightforward and remember that the first 15-20 seconds of the call are most important. "Even though you're making a collection call you've got to get that person willing to listen and hear what you've got to say," remarked Genja. He suggested a telephone manner that is confident and

many months for construction from the ground up.

7). The property surrounding the building and lot offers an opportunity for displaying landscaping and lawn care techniques to potential customers.

8). The possibility of leasing the property from the owner at a low price — due to the inability of the owner to sell the existing facility to a new owner for use as a service station.

During the past five years, approximately 50,000 service stations have been abandoned or sold. Changing market conditions

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have resulted in a shifting emphasis to gasoline-only sales, and self-service units which require less labor. The result has been a marked reduction in the number of active stations, and a blight of abandoned stations, resulting in their availability at very low prices.

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Jerry Faulring (left), Professional Lawn Care Association of America president, at Jerry Faulring (left), Professional Lawn Care Association of America president, at PLCAA'S final board of directors planning meeting before this month's conference in Louisville. At the meeting were (from left): John Latting, Lawn Groomer, Normal, Ill.; Bill Fischer, Spring-Green Lawn Care Corp., Plainfield, Ill.; Larry Brandt, Spray-A-Lawn, Cincinnati; Gordon Ober, Davey Lawnscape Service, Kent, Ohio; Don Burton, Lawn Medic, Inc., Bergen, N.Y.; Rick White, Village Green Lawn Spraying, West Chicago, Ill.; Marty Erbaugh, Lawnmark Associates, Peninsula, Ohio; Jim Brooks, national sales manager, LAWN CARE INDUSTRY; Steve Derrick, Latick, Inc., Normal, Ill. and Ronnie Zwiebel, Chem-Care Lawn Service of Alabama, Inc., Birmingham. Faulring is president of Hydro Lawn, Gaithersburg, Md. Hydro Lawn, Gaithersburg, Md.

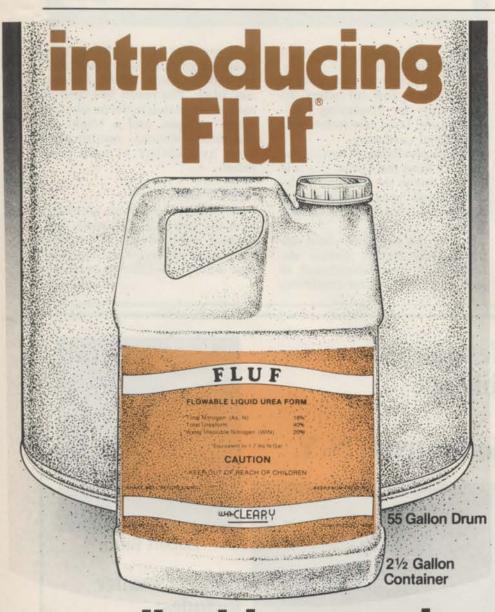
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### Choosing an accountant

One of the most important aspects of a lawn care business, or any small business, is its accounting procedures. But an even more important part of successful business operation is the relationship you will have with your accountant.

The term "accountant" is used to mean an individual who is skilled in, keeps or adjusts accounts. That person can be a bookkeeper, public accountant (PA) or a certified public accountant (CPA). Unfortunately, with today's complex and fluctuating financial system it may be possible that a bookkeeper is not experienced enough to give you what you need. Twenty years ago his

knowledge was sufficient, but perhaps not in today's everchanging business world.

### Fees vary

A CPA, on the other hand, is generally more experienced (through a four year college education, subsequent licensing procedures, and yearly mandatory updating seminars) to provide his client with the newest and most complete tax and business information. Your accountant should be providing you with the most recent information available. Even if you are selecting a CPA for the first time, you will want to check these guidelines.

Because fees vary tremendously from state to state and even from accountant to accountant, it is important to present any type of standard fee structure guideline. Also, every small business is different, which also requires a different fee. However, when you first contact an accountant to manage your affairs both of you should meet to discuss what fee he expects and what services you, in turn, will be getting. Also you'll need to establish the approximate times those fees and services should be rendered.

Both of you should sign an "engagement letter" which establishes in writing work to be performed for payment expected. Once each of you has a copy of that signed document in your files, there can be no misunderstandings later. If, at a later date, you feel you are paying for work

you don't receive, or on the other hand, if you are getting more work than what you are paying for, another meeting should be set up and the matter openly and freely discussed between you and your accountant.

### Financial reports

Once the fee has been taken care of, you can look forward to his services. Periodically (monthly or once every six months—depending upon the nature of your company and the time established at the onset of the contractural arrangement set up between you and your accountant) you should receive from your accountant a financial report that is prepared from your books and records.

It should show a listing of all expenses and income and reflect a balance for that period. To facili-

to page 38



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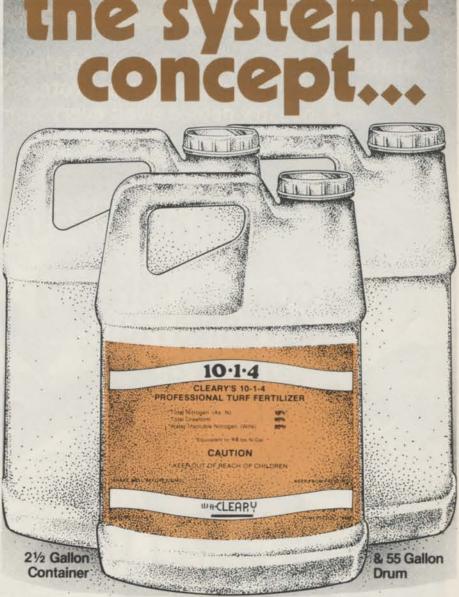
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tate prompt receipt of this financial report it is your responsibility to have your staff (or your own bookkeeper) have these figures and documentation ready for your accountant.

Sometimes even though you know what you do in your company, those figures on paper can look very confusing. As part of his service your accountant should discuss the figures presented with you and answer any questions you may have. Don't even think of dealing with a CPA who only mails the reports to you without taking the time to review them in detail with you.

What you hope to find in a financial report are the strong and weak areas of your business. The monetary change from report to report, however, is not as important as the percentage change from period to period. For example, if your income goes up by \$10,000 a

month, and the cost of your equipment goes up by \$2,000 a month, these figures may not be as important as finding out what percentage increase this represents. The \$10,000 increase in sales might represent a 10 percent income increase whereas a \$2,000 increase might present a 20 percent increase in equipment costs, which shows a potential problem.

### Paper profits

Receiving and understanding a concise financial report is very important. For example, a new business could triple his first year and wind up going bankrupt at the same time. That could happen if he does a lot of work with time payments, but has to pay for the equipment in advance. While waiting for collections he could hit rock bottom. An unobservant accountant who does not take the time to evaluate the situation could theoretically take the ac-

counts receivable into consideration and show a profitable situation, where in reality it might be only a paper profit.

In that case a sharp accountant could step in and do more than what is merely expected. By evaluating the downward trend he could assist the small business operator in several different ways. They are: professional financing through 1) bank loans; and 2) equipment loans. Here an accountant has usually spent a great deal of time building up his integrity with a system of banks that he deals with on a daily basis and that integrity could work for you in securing professional financing.

In today's modern age of creative accounting, the accountant should be aware of investment opportunities, and estate and retirement planning. Remember, however, he is not a lawyer (although there are some licensed attorney-CPAs) or an insurance

man and should not dispense legal advice. He is not expected to be an expert in those fields, but he should know and have a list available to you, of competent men (or women) in those fields that he deals with on a regular basis.

### Accounting methods

He then (along with a good lawyer too) can act as a member of a concerned, vibrant team helping you and your company to grow and stay healthy. While the referral list and the need for referrals should be included in your agreed-upon fees, optional meetings and time required of him in those areas would be on an extra basis too. Regardless of the fee involved, the accountant should be responsible for setting up a preliminary meeting with the owner and the insurance man or be of service to you when you interview your own insurance man or

Although there are several different accounting methods, there is no one method that works best for all companies. Your accountant, when he originally evalutes the type of company you maintain, establishes the system that is best suited to the complexities of that company. Generally, there are three basic systems: 1) Cash basis accounting, which recognizes income when received; 2) Accrual basis accounting, which recognizes income when bills are sent out; and 3) Modified cash or modified accrual, which is carefully constructed and is a combination of both cash and accrual.

### Tax returns

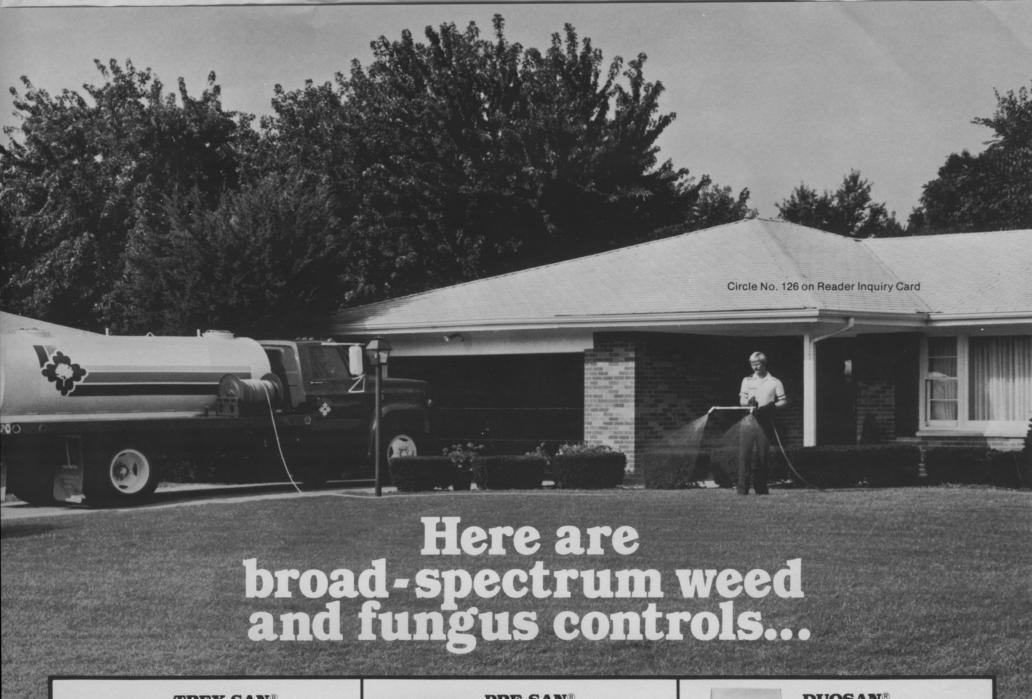
Once the method is selected by the accountant, it should be continually re-evaluated to make sure it best fits the company as it grows or slows. Unfortunately, you have no way of knowing if the method proves wrong, but if you ever feel it is wrong be sure to have your accountant show you. If you still have a doubt, feel free to have another independent accountant evaluate it, but be sure to pay him a fee

Your accountant should also provide you with a personal tax return and a corporate tax return (if you have a corporation) every year. Again, don't expect magic acts. Although the goal is to minimize your taxes and maximize your return on after-tax dollars, your accountant cannot make up numbers. The accountant bases his work on carefully constructed tax laws and specifically designed financial reporting criteria. Each company is different and requires a different set of rules. Be sure to ask why the method is used for you. If possible, ask your accountant to show you a comparison of two different methods using your figures to see which way you come out ahead.

Don't worry about taxes. After all, the job of an accountant is also to determine what the actual regular progress of your company is at all times. In that way you can be helped the most by having growth or stagnation indicated on paper.

At all times your accountant should maintain an open line of communication with you. Frequent meetings and phone conversations are vital in keeping tabs on







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# New and versatile Grasshopper mower

The all new 1820 Grasshopper riding mower is powered by an 18 horsepower Briggs and Stratton twin cylinder engine for smooth and dependable operations. All 12, 16, and 18 horsepower Grasshoppers utilize dual hydrostatic drives that eliminate forward/ reverse shifting and provide finger-tip steering control. Mower deck widths of 44, 52, and 61 inch feature quick discon-



nect of PTO drive for easy attachment of the following options: snowthrower, dozer blade and rotary broom. Two styles of optional grasscatchers mount on the mower offering either lever-actuated self-dumping or slide-out, mesh collection hoppers.

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# Heavy duty commercial mower

Bunton's 21 inch commercial push mower has been designed with longevity in mind. The 12 gauge steel deck with double thickness at mounting points for engine, wheels, and handles ensures long life for every day commercial use.

Rugged wheels on ball bearings with zerk fillings and a positive



height adjustment from one andone-quarter to three and-threequarter is standard on this mower.

A crankshaft protector, combination positive or slip type blade driver, enables the mower to cut in the heaviest grass. A side-mounted grass catcher is also available with an easy dump feature. Three engines are available on this mower. A 3.5 horsepower Briggs and Stratton commercial with a one quart fuel tank, a 3.5 horsepower Tecumseh with extra oil capacity, remote mounted air cleaner, and a six quart fuel tank, or a five horsepower Briggs and Stratton, I/C with a two quart fuel tank.

Circle No. 152 on Reader Inquiry Card

# New topdresser for large turf areas

The Mete-R-Matic II Top Dresser from Turfco is designed specifically for use on large turf areas and built to provide simple attachment, fast, efficient loading, extra large capacity and speed of turf coverage with maximum pre-

A simple pin hitch allows the unit to be hooked up to any turf truckster or medium size garden



tractor quickly and easily. A sixfoot wide hopper is quickly filled with a front-end loader, thus eliminating time consuming man-and-shovel loading operation. The hopper holds nearly three-quarters of a yard of top dressing material while the top dresser accomplishes a five-foot wide spread.

In spite of its large capacity, Turfco's Mete-R-Matic II overcomes the problems of marking and compaction. With its high flotation turf tires, and carrying nearly twice the load, the entire unit's pressure on turf is less than that of walking or truckstermounted top dressers.

Circle No. 153 on Reader Inquiry Card





# Advances in Turfgrass Pathology

published by HARCOURT BRACE JOVANOVICH PUBLICATIONS in cooperation with Dr. B. G. Joyner, Dr. P. O. Larsen and Chemlawn Corporation



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- snow molds of turfgrasses
- fairy rings
   leaf spot of Kentucky Bluegrass in Minnesota initial and filed fungicide screening
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### Versatile mist blower

SOLO Incorporated's new Model 410 "Junior" portable mist blower features improved operat-



ing efficiency due to larger fuel and formula tanks. Used for a wide variety of horticultural and industrial applications, the Model 410 is a compact, light-weight mist-blower, engineered for ease of operation and low operator fatigue. Its low-rpm engine, even at full power, cuts annoying whine typical of other backpack blowers.

Circle No. 154 on Reader Inquiry Card

# High agitation sprayer mulcher

Hydro-Turf's renewed model 1000 sprayer mulcher provides a 1000 gallon capacity, powered with a 37



horsepower Wisconsin engine, high pressure Hydro or mechanical agitation, direct and convenient loading from two vehicle, fold down spray turret, four wheel electric or hydraulic brakes, ground level controls and many other features found on their low cost models 300 and 600.

Circle No. 155 on Reader Inquiry Card

# Fight turf spots with new weed rig

Hopkin's Agricultural Chemicals Co. is marketing an economical, convenient hand applicator to apply its granular soil sterilant -Hopkins Urox 5.5. A handy way to treat small areas to achieve bare ground vegetation control, the applicator has a spreader head to give a uniform band of granular material 12 to 18 inches wide. The spreader has three different openings to adjust rates of application. Calibration information is on the applicator tank. Urox 5.5 is a free-flowing, uniformly granulated, ready-to-use product containing 5.5 percent monuron-TCA. It comes in a 10 pound bag for treating small areas around building perimeters, along fence lines and small parking areas. The best time to apply is just before plant growth begins when rain or thorough watering can move the material down toward the plant



root systems. Vegetation control usually lasts eight months or more. Urox soil sterilants are widely used on railroad right-of-way, along highways and in industrial parking lots to eliminate vegetation growth.

Circle No. 156 on Reader Inquiry Card

# Wipe out soil pesticide residues

Gro-Safe activated charcoal is now available from the Agricultural Chemicals Division of ICI Anericas Inc. for use in the lawn care industry. Gro-Safe is an excellent, proven product used to reduce the available level of most organic pesticide residues in the soil.

Biologically inactive, Gro-Safe is an effective tool for reducing contanination from spills and misapplications, for plant protection as a protective barrier or during transplanting, for enhancing germination and early growth of grass seed and for sodding. Because it is a soil amendment, EPA registration is not required.

Circle No. 157 on Reader Inquiry Card

# New dissolvable benefin pellets

Pel-Tech Benefin Concentrate 10, The Andersons' new dissolvable benefin pellets, is a new sprayable pre-emergence crabgrass herbicide. Pelletized for convenient, efficient turf maintenance, Benefin is field tested and will dissolve quickly with minimum tank agitation. It will not adhere to plant foliage and because it is dust free, the operator is protected from pesticide exposure. No special equipment required and compatible with standard fertilizers and pesticides.

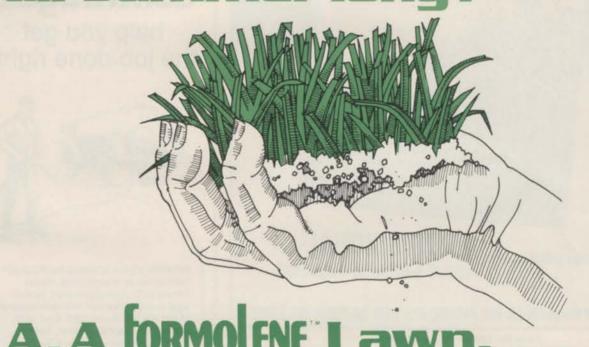
Circle No. 158 on Reader Inquiry Card

# Break hardpan soil, boost turf quality

Esi-Ator is a bio-catylitic ferment that is used to improve growth on hardpan, compacted and clay soils. When used on such soils, it provides better penetration and retention of moisture, opens and aerates the soil, and activates fertilizer, thereby facilitating new growth and revitalizing older vegetation. In addition, it improves the soil environment for the growth of beneficial microorganisms.

Circle No. 159 on Reader Inquiry Card

Q. What's green and keeps customers happy all summer long?



### 30-0-2 Low-Burn Liquid Fertilizer Proven Your Safest Source of Nitrogen and Potash.

Formolene is a concentrated N&K product with a high proportion of Methylene and Methylol Ureas to avoid burning. Slow release over the entire growing season promotes a green lawn that will keep customers happy with lawn care professionals all through the summer. Tested at leading Turfgrass Research Institutions, it's proven the safest source of liquid N&K for hot weather application.

## Simple To Use

Formolene blends easily with other nutrients, herbicides, insecticides and fungicides. And it is applicable on any kind of turf — just add one part Formolene to 3 to 10 parts water and put it on!

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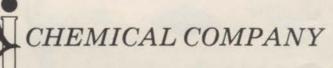
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HAWKEYE



# **NEWSMAKERS**

The Agricultural Chemicals Division of Diamond Shamrock Corp. announced that Dr. Gary Eilrich has been named divisional technical manager.

Dr. Eilrich replaces Dr. John T. Waddington who was recently named as director of Diamond Shamrock's research laboratories in Singapore.



Eilrich

Smith

The Agricultural Chemicals Division of Diamond Shamrock

**Corporation** announced that H. Ray Smith has been appointed to the position of manager of commercial development.

In his new position, Smith will implement divisional plans for testing its agricultural chemical products in order to obtain additional uses. He will also register new products while providing technical assistance to the division's marketing department.

Before being named as manager of commercial development, Smith held the position of senior technical field representative in Tennessee.

Paul D. Schnare is owner of Accu-Spray Lawn Care, Cape Giradeau, Mo. The company offers both liquid and granular chemical lawn care.

Darrell Freeman is owner and

COST CUTTINGS from page 35

relaxed. But by the same token, leave no doubt as to the reason for the call — it is about an overdue account.

After the identification portion of the call it is important to have what Genja calls a "strategic pause." The idea is to shift the burden of responsibility on to where it should be — the person who owes the bill.

After specifics of payment have been worked out, the collection call should be closed by summarizing the payment plan again and thanking the customer. But once the call is over that is not the end. The follow-up is important. Make notes, update records and take appropriate action.

George Faz is owner/partner of **Grass Roots**, Bakersfield, Calif. The company offers liquid chemical lawn care.

K. Dean Beckelheimer is president and Carol J. Beckelheimer is vice president of Kelly Green Lawn Spray Div. of Kelly's Greenery, Inc., Beckley, West Virginia. The company offers both liquid and granular chemical lawn care

application.

Mark Gilmet is owner and Georgianna Gilmet is secretary of Valley Lawns, Maumee, Ohio. The company offers granular chemical lawn care application.

The Parker Sweeper Company, Springfield, Ohio, has appointed Neil Sweeney as eastern district sales manager, according to Carlus L. Lovett, Parker general sales manager.

Sweeney will be responsible for both turf and industrial equipment sales to distributors in the eastern U.S. and Canada. He was formerly associated with the Bombardier Corp. as district sales manager, and has over 10 years experience in equipment sales to both dealers and distributors.

Porter Brothers, Inc. of Shelby, North Carolina has been named the "Outstanding Distributor of the Year" by HMC, Long Beach, Ca., manufacturer of the Green Machine String Trimmer.

Joe Porter, president of Porter Brothers, received the Green Machine Crystal Grass Award from Jesse Young, regional manager for the Green Machine, at the annual convention for Green Machine distributors aboard the Queen Mary ocean liner, now permanently located at the port of Long Beach.

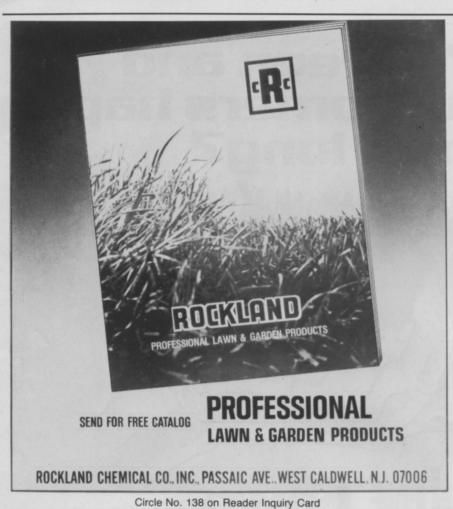
Ron Meier, Lawn Fertilizer Division Manager for **The Andersons**, an agri-business partnership headquartered in Maumee, Oh., has been appointed chairman of the Turf and Garden Committee of **The Fertilizer Institute**. He also serves on the Formulations Committee of the **National Agricultural Chemical Association**.

Meier, a resident of Bowling Green, Oh., has been associated with The Andersons since 1971. He had previously worked on the family farm and is a graduate of Ohio State University with a degree in agricultural economics.

The Andersons, one of the largest grain merchandisers in the Midwest, distributes more than 300 different lawn fertilizer products in 35 states. The company also operates a major agricultural fertilizer distribution business.

Brian T. Spears is president of Lawn Ranger, Inc., Finksburg, Missouri. The company offers both liquid and granular chemical lawn care application services to its customers. George W. Street, Jr. is vice president and Lisa J. Spears is corporate secretary.

Louis Cariello is president of **Pro-Grass Inc.**, Timonium, Md. The company offers both liquid and granular chemical lawn care services, core aeration, dethatching and seeding services to its customers. Thomas Balducci and Edward Mulgrew are vice presidents and Robert Hartranft is chief agronomist.





Circle No. 140 on Reader Inquiry Card

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# **FOUR POWER**

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# FOUR POWER DP

For Excellent post emergent control of oxalis (wood sorrell), spurge, ground ivy, and other broadleaf weeds in turf. For your hard to control weed problems use Four Power DP.

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Four Power Plus is the most effective, efficient and economical 2, 4-D, Dicamba combination broadleaf herbicide available. Control a wide spectrum of broadleaf weeds with only one application.

### BETASAN 4-E

Control crabgrass, annual bluegrass, barnyard grass, shepherdspurse and other grass weeds with Betasan 4-E. This economical pre-emergent herbicide is ideal for use on home lawns, parks, golf courses, ornamental plants and ground covers.

### **DURSBAN 4-E**

Formulated for the professional applicator, Dursban 4-E insecticide provides effective and economical control of sod web worms, chinch bugs, cutworms, ants, mosquitoes and a host of other insects found in households, turf and ornamental plants.

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Circle No. 105 on Reader Inquiry Card

TOOLS, TIPS & TECHNIQUES from page 36

upside down (temporarily) with herbicide in it. Some users find it convenient to mount broom holders on their vehicles to carry a loaded unit with them on their daily rounds.

If a spot of grassy weeds is seen, it can be immediately treated with little fuss or bother. It's very important that users fully understand the nature of the herbicide to be used. Be sure that hand-held wick applicators aren't used like machetes' to beat down weeds. This will only shorten the life of the applicator and

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Circle No. 112 on Reader Inquiry Card

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

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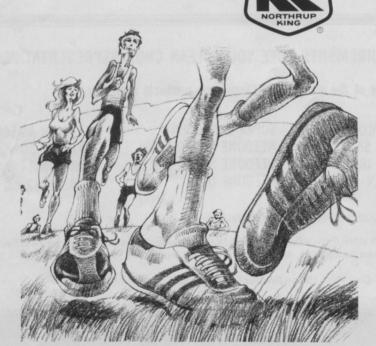
The days when turf just laid around looking pretty are long gone. Now your turf has to be pretty—and pretty tough, too. Tough enough to take all kinds of wear and still go on looking terrific.

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

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Minneapolis, MN 55440



Circle No. 129 on Reader Inquiry Card

certainly won't improve weed kill. It is also wise to wash out units from time to time to remove herbicide residues that eventually build up in them. Scrub the wick gently with a brush, and be sure that the rinse water doesn't get on desirable plants. Do not switch from one herbicide to another with a given unit.



Rope-wick applicator

Phenoxy materials are next to impossible to completely remove from the wick of a unit in which they have been completely used. Remember too, that liquid herbicides are made up in solvents that can range from water to any of several petroleum products.

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# **MEETING DATES**

Green Industry Seminar and Trade Show, Nov. 4-5, Michigan State Fairgrounds, Detroit, Mich. Contact: Mr. Gregory Patcham, Michigan State University, Cooperative Extension Service, North Office Bldg., Pontiac, Mich. 48053, [313] 858-0887.

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

Landscape Maintenance Symposium, sponsored by the Associated Landscape Contractors of America, Cherry Hill Inn, Philadelphia, Nov. 8-10. Contact: ALCA, 1750 Old Meadow Rd., McLean, VA 22102, 703-821-8611.

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

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

Dollar Management Seminar, sponsored by Associated Landscape Contractors of America, Ramada O'Hare Inn, Chicago, Nov. 20-21. Contact: ALCA, 1750 Old Meadow Rd., McLean, VA 22102, 703-821-8611.

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

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

New Jersey Turfgrass Expo '81, Dec. 7-10, Hyatt House, Cherry Hill, N.J. Contact: Ralph Engel, Research Professor of Turfgrass Management, Rutgers University, Box 231, New Brunswick, N.J. 08903, (201) 932-9771.

Management Information Systems Seminar, sponsored by Associated Landscape Contractors of America, Columbia Inn, Columbia, Md., Dec. 9-10. Contact: ALCA, 1750 Old Meadow Rd., McLean, VA 22102, 703-821-8611.

Twenty-second Annual Illinois Turfgrass Conference & Tradeshow, Dec. 15-17, Prairie Capital Convention Center, Springfield, Ill. Contact: Dr. Thomas Fermanian, 1707 Orchard St., Urbana, Ill. 61801, (217) 333-7847.

Maryland Turfgrass '82, Baltimore Convention Center, Jan. 4-6, 1982. Contact Dr. Thomas Turner, Dept. of Agronomy, University of Maryland, College Park, Md. 20742. (301) 454-3716.

20th Annual North Carolina Turfgrass Conference, Jan. 12-14, Eoyal Villa Inn. Raleigh, N.C. Contact: Dr. L. T. Lucas, program chairman, Plant Pathology Dept., North Carolina State University, Raleigh, N.C. 27650.

Nebraska Turfgrass Foundation Conference & Trade Show, Holiday Inn Convention Center, Omaha, January 19-21. Contact: Paul Bergman, 2428 W. 11th St., Hastings, NE 68901, (402) 463-5055.

### MEETINGS

### Illinois conference set

The 22nd Illinois Turfgrass Conference is set for Dec. 15-17 at the Prairie Capital Convention Center, Springfield, Ill.

As in the past, an extensive lawn care seminar program is planned.

For further information, contact: Thomas W. Fermanian, Extension Turfgrass Specialist, University of Illinois, 1707 S. Orchard St., 106D Hort Field Lab, Urbana, IL 61801. Associated Landscape Contractors of America Annual Meeting and Trade Exhibit, Hilton Riviera Hotel, Palm Springs, Calif., Jan. 24-29. Contact: ALCA, 1750 Old Meadow Rd., McLean, VA 22102, 703-821-8611.

The New York Turf and Landscape Association Annual Turf and Landscape Conference, Jan. 27, 1982, Tappan Zee Inn. New York Thruway, Exit 11. Contact: Frank Claps, 136 Laurel Avenue, Larchmont, N.Y. 10538 (914) 834-6846.

Golf Course Superintendent's Association of America International Turfgrass Conference & Show, Rivergate Exhibition Center, New Orleans, La. Jan. 31-Feb. 5. Contact: GCSAA, 1617 St. Andrews Dr., Lawrence, Ks. 66044. (913) 841-2240.

Pennsylvania Turfgrass Conference & Trade Show, March 1-4, 1982, Hershey Lodge and Convention Center, West Chocolate Ave. & University Dr. Contact: Christine E. King. Executive Secretary Treasurer, Fennsylvania Turfgrass Council, 412 Blanchard St., Bellefont, Pa. 16823.

### ACCOUNTANT from page 38

your office system. Your accountant should be someone you not only trust, but respect and like. Above all, don't select an accountant (or keep him) because his fee is the cheapest. Often you'll wind up with service that's exactly the

same—the cheapest. Accountants bid for jobs by the amount of time a comprehensive and thorough procedures takes.

Be informed, be knowledgeable and be careful about your books. A good accountant is there to help you.—by Elaine Waldorf Gerwirtz and Steven A. Gerwirtz, CPA

### COST CUTTINGS from page 30

acceptances are bought, they are purchased at a discount and the difference between the net cost to you and maturity value or par is interest. Thus, a \$50,000 commercial paper lot at 13 percent for six months will cost you just \$46,750. The calculation is as follows:  $$50,000 \times 13\% \times 180 = $3,250$ 

\$50,000 - \$3,250 = \$46,750

The information above was supplied by The Business Owner magazine. Those of you who would like subscription information should write then at 383 S. Broadway, Hicksville, N.Y.

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to stay ahead of
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# the professional's partner



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800-472-3220 Outside Ohio: 800-537-3370



properties, including lawn care centers and garden and nursery centers.

According to Kerth, "many stations have been erected in business areas, or along major boulevards, where traffic exposure is above average. The buildings range from 1200 to 1800 square feet in area, consisting of a sales room, two rest rooms, and a stor-

age and lubritory area. In addition the yard areas provide excellent off-street parking, and display areas for landscaping techniques and lawn care displays readily seen by potential customers."

### Space conversion

A remodeling of these buildings can, in most cases, be completed for less than half the cost of a new structure. Through the use of new, A remodeling of these buildings can, in most cases, be completed for less than half the cost of a new structure.

economical, pre-engineered components and materials which are now readily available, major changes in the facade can be performed inexpensively. Applying half-inch brick or stone veneer or aggregate panels over the block surface, along with a newly applied roof system, will create major changes in the appearance of the building at nominal cost. The introduction of landscaping provided by the new owner, together with indirect building and outdoor lighting, can all help to provide a major external transformation.

Very little additional expense need be incurred to convert the lubritory area into a storage area for lawn chemicals, seed, mowers, edgers, blowers, and other maintenance equipment. The owner's office, however, can be enhanced by the use of interior partitions, a new floor, and a suspended ceiling. It may also be wise to install a new heating and air conditioning system on the roof of the structure, properly screened from view.

### How to do it

Mr. Kerth's book, entitled "A New Life for the Abandoned Service Station" discusses preengineered components and materials that can create major changes in the facades and appearances, and includes working drawings, landscaping suggestions, and details for systems and components for over a hundred different business uses. It will be available for the fall of 1981 for \$30.00 plus applicable sales tax, and book orders may be mailed to A. L. Kerth, Dept. O, P.O. Box #213, Washington Crossing, Pa. 18977.

### Correction

In the September issue of LAWN CARE INDUSTRY, Mallinckrodt, Inc.'s Trexsan was referred to as a bensulide product (see "No Dacthal This Spring," page 1). Trexsan is a post-emergence broadleaf herbicide. Mallinckrodt's bensulide formulation is called Pre-San.

### FAIRWAY LAWN CARE from page 27

Valley and creating more business for everyone. "Since ChemScape is targeting the chem-spray customer, they're happy to have someone like me to refer renovations to. They know I'll keep the customer happy, and won't try to take away their business," he said.

"Since I don't pursue industrial or commercial accounts like they do, I'll turn over potential accounts with large land area to them and concentrate my efforts on smaller, more profitable accounts. I can handle three or four homeowner lawns in the same time it would take to do one larger commercial account, despite the increased travel time and extra material utilized."

With his one-man lawn care business flourishing in the Santa Clara Valley, Henry De La Rosa is planning now to handle the growth he feels is in store over the next few years. "Long term I see my role as a salesman and trouble-shooter. Eventually I'd like to have three or four vehicles working the chem-spray side of the business, and then I can make a judgement on further expansion from there," he says.

"But I'm still primarily concerned with quality of workmanship. I want to stay in control of the day-to-day operation of Fairway Lawn Care. So if growth interferes with that, we'll just have to stop growing."

### MARKETING IDEA FILE from page 10

that the program has done exceptionally well. "I'm surprised more companies haven't tried it," he said. "It's a way to stimulate business through the customers." The mailings were done in batches of 500 in order to make sure they "didn't burn out the customers." And Erb says that it had some unexpected results as well. "We got to communicate a lot more with customers over the phone." And that's just helped spread the word.



Junction, N.J. - have rushed in to fill the void. Diamond Shamrock manufactured the pre-emergence herbicide Dacthal at its Houston

facilities.

Dacthal, along with Stauffer Chemical Co.'s Betasan, were the backbone of the lawn care industry's pre-emergence herbicide supply prior to the explosion at Diamond's Greens Bayou plant in late July. Stauffer is based in Westport, Conn.

Stauffer's Herb Day told LAWN CARE INDUSTRY that Betasan production has been increased, but that the increases may not be enough to fulfill the anticipated demand by lawn care businessmen for this spring's use. He also indicated prices for Betasan will be increased 10 to 15 percent.

The opinion of many lawn care businessmen and other suppliers is that Stauffer will in no way be able to supply the industry's needs.

"Because of new production efficiencies, the average price of Ronstar-G has been reduced from 12 to 14 percent, allowing it to effectively compete in the lawn care industry," says Rhone-Poulenc's Gerry Quinn.

With that in mind, Rhone-Poulenc has announced a price reduction and an aggressive marketing program for its Ronstar-G, which previously has been marketed primarily for the ornamental market.

"In the past," product-manager Jerry Quinn told LAWN CARE INDUSTRY last month, "we have consciously priced Ronstar-G out of the lawn care market, and have positioned it as an ornamentals herbicide.'

Quinn quickly organized distributor meetings last month in Atlanta and Atlantic City, N.J. to get the word out, and to set up distributor programs. Ronstar-G

will be heavily promoted through trade magazine advertising, and through Rhone-Poulenc's booth at the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) Conference and Trade Show Nov. 18-20 at the Commonwealth Convention Center in Louisville.

Elanco manufactures Balan, which traditionally has run third behind Dacthal and Betasan in use by lawn care businessmen. Now the company's Dan Lynch says:

'Our position is that we plan to take up the slack and produce enough material to supply the entire market," he told LAWN CARE INDUSTRY last month. "We are actually already supplying a lot of the Dacthal 'switch-over' market now. This is a windfall for us, and we will be carrying several million dollars worth of inventory in the coming months.'

In mid-October, the board of directors of Diamond Shamrock Corp. approved funds for the reconstruction of the Agricultural Chemical Division's Dacthal plant in Houston.

Plant reconstruction will begin early next year with the project scheduled to be completed by next fall. The total cost will be more than \$20 million.

Company officials now expect Dacthal to be available for the 1983 lawn care season. "We are extremely pleased to make this announcement," George Lawrence, vice president and general manager of Diamond Shamrock's Agricultural Chemicals Division told LAWN CARE INDUSTRY.

Engineering work for the plant's reconstruction is already under-

### INSURANCE from page 1

engineering and loss control at the PLCAA Conference and Trade Show

"Preliminary indications," he said, "are that PLCAA members can improve their loss experience and reduce premiums by implementing a safety engineering and loss control program.'

PLCAA members desiring to review their current insurance coverage should bring copies of their policies to booth number 604 at the PLCAA Conference and Trade Show.

The new program will also enable the lawn care industry to develop a credible data base of premium and loss information, which will be of vital assistance in helping the industry to gain more favorable treatment from insurance underwriters.

With no such information currently available on an industrywide basis, it is difficult to prove the widely held belief that the lawn care industry is being overcharged for its casualty insurance

The program will be administered for the PLCAA by Marsh & McLennan, Inc. Members may apply either directly or through their present insurance broker.

Applications and brochures are currently being printed. However, inquiries about the progran can be directed to Steven W. Wilcox, vice president, Marsh & McLennan, Inc., 222 S. Riverside Plaza, Chicago, IL 60606, 312-648-6213.

### DIRECTORY

# The List of **Landscape Appraisers**

The American Association of Nurserymen has announced the availability of a directory of people who consider themselves qualified landscape appraisers. More than 135 names and addresses from all across the country are found on the list. The "List of Landscape Appraisers" is available for \$1.50 by writing the American Association of Nurserymen, 230 Southern Building, Washington,



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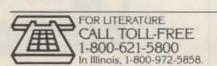
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LAWN CARE INDUSTRY

Statement required by the Act of October 23, 1962, Section 4369, Title 39, United States Code, showing the ownership, management, and circulation of LAWN CARE INDUSTRY, published monthly at One East First Street, Duluth, Minnesota 55802, as filed September 17, 1981

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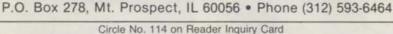
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I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete

> Joe Bilderbach, Vice President/Circulation

For information about the PLCAA Show, contact: Jane Stecker **PLCAA Suite 1717** 435 N. Michigan Ave. Chicago, IL 60611 312-644-0828









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104	111	118	125	132	139	146	153	160	167	174	181	188	195	202	209	216	223	230	237
105	112	119	126	133	140	147	154	161	168	175	182	189	196	203	210	217	224	231	238
106	113	120	127	134	141	148	155	162	169	176	183	190	197	204	211	218	225	232	239
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audience of lawn care businessmen earlier this year at the Midwest Turfgrass Conference at Purdue University, West Lafayette, Ind. There was about a 12-hour time period between nice, lush green grass and total aboveground desiccation.

He called on his supplier to help find the solution to the problem. The representative sampled the 2,4-D, and samples of the fertilizer from the truck and and large storage tank were sent to a laboratory.

"The tears in my eyes must have had an effect, because the lab technicians worked until 11 p.m. on the problem." Baker said.

on the problem," Baker said.

The next day as he and his representative were looking at the lawns and trying to find the answer, Baker left notes on the customers' doors asking them to begin watering immediately. "My wife was on the telephone calling accounts that were affected," he said. "We had no idea what was wrong, but at that point, watering couldn't hurt anything."

Later that night at 11 p.m., the answer came from the laboratory.

"We had sprayed 41 lawns out of a load of solution with an equivalent of 231 pounds of actual nitrogen as 28 percent nitrogen per acre, which equals 5.5 pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet — in June," Baker said.

"I had promised my customers that I would advise them of the cause as soon as I knew it," he said. "So the next day we called and left notes indicating the cause and advised them to keep watering,

# 5.5 lbs. of N/1,000 sq. ft. – in June.

and that we would pay the cost. We worked that day and the next starting sprinklers and moving them for our elderly customers and those away for the weekend.

For the next three Saturdays, Baker made the rounds of the affected accounts. He tried to make he talked to someone directly involved so they know he was sincere in his promise to do all he could for them.

When everything was over and calculated, Baker found that he had sprayed 420,000 square feet of lawns, spent over 180 hours in lawn inspection, overseeded 133,000 square feet of lawn, and paid more than \$500 in water bills.

"My advice to anyone involved in a similar situation is to be sure the insurance adjustor is involved from the start," he said, "because they do not have any concept of what you have to go through or spend on this kind of accident. The costs were supposed to be covered by the supplier's insurance, but be very sure you keep exact records of what, when and how you proceed."

Baker said that his customers were very understanding. He feels that since he was honest and sincere about what happened, he was not mistreated by anyone.

"I was ready to take a considerable amount of verbal abuse and a limited amount of physical abuse," he said, "but received more sympathy than abuse when I told a customer I had 40 more lawns that looked like his."

lished a national, single-issue coalition to safeguard 2,4-D fron irresponsible or regulatory action at the federal, state and local levels.

The National Coalition for a Reasonable 2,4-D Policy demonstrates a collective and concerted effort to confront unreasonable and ill-founded assaults on horticultural and agricultural chemical tools.

2,4-D is widely used by lawn care businessmen across the country, and ChemLawn Corp.'s Dr. Robert Miller is Coalition board chairman. Dr. Miller is also on the board of directors of the Professional Lawn Care Association of America.

Incorporated as a non-profit organization, the Coalition provides a clearinghouse for lawn care companies, farmers, foresters, chemical formulators, cooperative and all others concerned with 2,4-D to challenge unwarranted restrictions on the herbicide, while relating the socially redeeming contributions of safe herbicide use.

"Various social activist groups and certain state/local government regulatory agencies are resigned to restricting this herbicide which

2,4-D has been "widely studied and applied for over 37 years with an enviable safety record," says ChemLawn's Dr. Robert Miller.

has been widely studied and applied for over 37 years with an enviable safety record," Dr. Miller told LAWN CARE INDUSTRY.

"The National Coalition for Reasonable 2,4-D Policy recognizes that the availability and cost of food and fiber hinges on the safe and responsible use of herbicides.

Our efforts will constructively assist in managing the destiny of 2,4-D and related agri-chemical tools," he said.

The Coalition's by laws outline the following objectives:

- Insure that scientific facts and risk/benefit considerations are recognized in any 2,4-D regulatory action.
- Establish a network of propesticide coalitions at state and local levels.

Obtain congressional recognition of the benefits of 2,4-D to industry and the public.

While the Coalition will concentrate on the 2,4-D issue, involvement is anticipated in a number of generic pesticide issues such as aerial application and water quality standards.

For a copy of the Coalition's orientation brochure, contact: The National Coalition for a Reasonable 2,4-D Policy, Suite 1717, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611, 312-644-0828.

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# **MEMOS**



# Avoiding an employe rebellion

Some lawn care companies are run a little bit like a petty kingdom, with the president as king, his management as ministers, supervisors as the palace guard, and the applicators and technicians, his loyal subjects. They plow his fields. They toil in his market.

Lines of communication are vertical. The king is informed by his ministers of threats to his lands from without — interest rates, trade and distribution, income, outlay. Ministers are informed by the guard of threats from within embittered employes, falling production, sloppy habits, feuds, and slow downs. The subjects are just informed. Their petitions are

The system almost guarantees turnover. Without some way to participate in the government of the company, the worker will only feel the weight of discipline and the monotony of his job. His natural instincts will tell him he's being exploited and left out of both the company's policy making and its dividends. Isolated, he'll either find ways to work against the system, or

But if an employe is given an active voice in the company's nanagement, he may begin to feel

the value of his job. Given a portion of the wealth, he may begin to take responsibility for his work. Lines of communication will rotate.

Many lawn care companies have begun to respond in more effective ways to the problem of keeping employes satisfied and motivated. One of the best ways seems to be a bonus system that pays him according to his talents at different aspects of the job. Some employes are quicker than others. Some are better sales people. If they are awarded accordingly, they are less likely to start to rebel.

Paul Sho Closley

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Reader	Page No.
Inquiry No.	Page No.
102 American Pellitizing	18
103 Andersons (Regional)	
104 Andersons (Regional)	53
105 Balcom Special Products	
106 BFC Chemicals	
107 Bowie Industries	
108 Bulkkem	28-29
109 Cleary Corp., W. A	36
110 Cleary Corp., W. A	37
112 Continental Software	46
113 Dow Chemical U.S.A	2-3
114 Encap Products	
115 Grasshopper Co	
148 Grass Roots	35
The frame of the first of the	
117 HDN Book Sales	
Illinois Turfgrass Conference	e 30
119 Jacklin Seed Co	
120 Jacobsen, Div. of Textron	55
121 Jay-Lan	46
122 Kees Co., F. D	50
123 Lakeshore Equipment	Cv 4
124 Lawn Aids	18
125 Lebanon Chemical Corp	
126 Mallinkrodt	
127 Monsanto Co	49
128 Mobay Chemical Corp	
129 Northrup King Co	46
Ohio Turfgrass Foundation	18
130 PBI Gordon Corp	40-41
131 Patterson GREEN-UP Co.	
132 Perf-A-Lawn	42
134 Prentiss Drug & Chemical	Co 50
135 Professional Turf Specialitie	00 50
136 Pumping Systems	10
137 Rhone Poulenc Chemical .	
138 Rockland Chemical Co	
139 Ryan Equipment	
140 Sta-Green Plant Food	
141 Stauffer Chemical	16-17
142 TORCO Equipment Co	26
143 Tuflex Manufacturing Co	36
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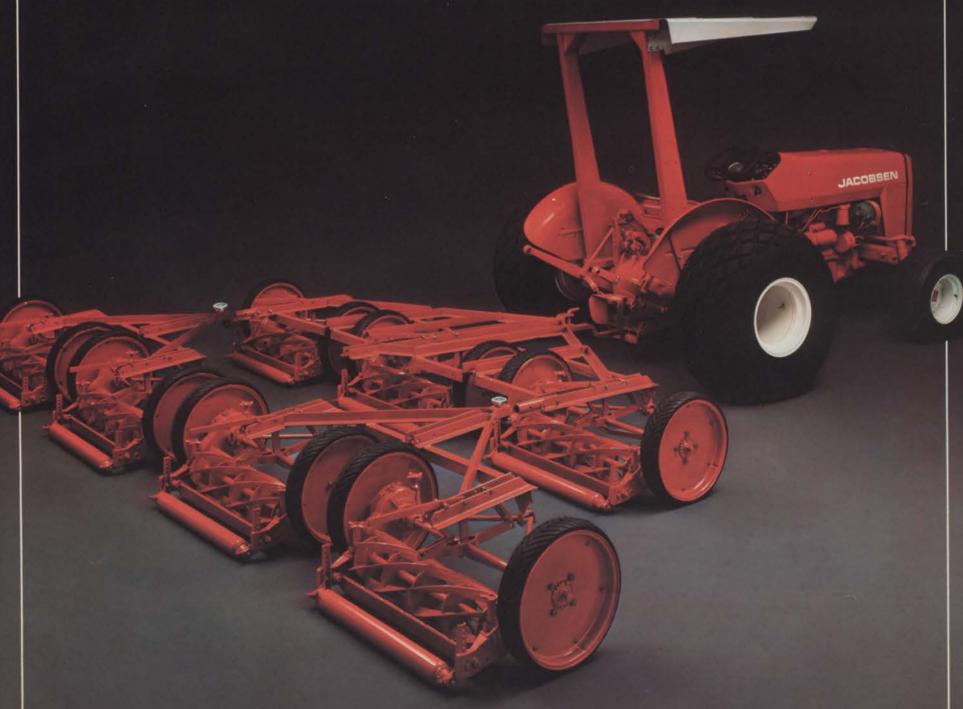
156 Fight turf spots with new weed rig

157 Wipe out soil pesticide residues 158 New dissolvable benefin pellets

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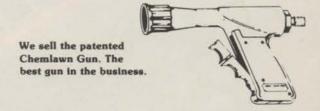


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