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Peaceful Assembly...

Perhaps in a way that our world hasn’t seen in 50 years, we are evaluating and questioning our lives, our lifestyles, what we stand for, and how we choose to spend our time. Our tradition calls for making New Year’s Resolutions, which most of us find difficult to maintain – unless perhaps we just haven’t been seeking to change things that really matter.

For those of us in the United States, and for so many of our friends in all corners of the world, we came together in an assembly of like minds during the last third of the year. Arborists from all over the world sent messages of sympathy and support through the NAA.

I have found myself thinking about something that we take for granted – the very existence of arboriculture organizations. It has been a long time since high school government class. Do you realize that in the United States this “peaceful assembly” or the “right to associate” is granted to you by your First Amendment?

I think we often forget how incredibly powerful our voices are – separately – and when joined together. When we rattle off our list of values and member benefits to potential new members, perhaps we don’t do an impressive enough job of getting the point across – this is a RIGHT, a privilege – to come together.

When volunteers and staff go to Washington to meet with government agencies or Congress on arboriculture’s behalf, it’s because our forefathers in 1789 gave us the right to do this. How can we walk away, individually or as a group, and not exercise this right?

The act of coming together is one of the most powerful messages you can send the world, proclaiming our determination to stand together as we enter another year together. If you are not within the community of arborists as a member of one an association, you are actively choosing not to exercise one of your rights in this country.

In 1831, Alex de Tocqueville, a 25-year-old French aristocrat, toured our country. He later wrote in Democracy in America about how incredible it was that in America, when people became aware of a need or something that should be changed, they came together in small groups and took care of it. This is one of the foundations of our country’s success.

We have been privileged to live in a land that guards freedom. We have fought wars with allies around the world to preserve civilization, and now we have come together again to do the same.

Let’s honor our past and invest in our future by coming together as a strong community of arboriculture. Start the year right. Join an association and exercise your freedom and your rights. God Bless America – and thanks to our friends around the world for standing with us.

Happy New Year!

Cynthia Mills, CAE
Publisher
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TCI's mission is to engage and enlighten readers with the latest industry news and information on regulations, standards, practices, safety, innovations, products and equipment. We strive to serve as the definitive resource for commercial, residential, municipal and utility arborists, as well as for others involved in the care and maintenance of trees. The official publication of the non-profit National Arborist Association, we vow to sustain the same uncompromising standards of excellence as our members in the field, who adhere to the highest professional practices worldwide.
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Introduction

It's an easy job for an experienced arborist: A quick and dirty Siberian elm (Ulmus pumila) removal. A power line is not too far away, but it is not going to be hard to avoid. There is no time to bother with roping and rigging; the arborist can handle it. He sets his rope, footlocks up, straps in, and starts racking it out. He gets to an 8-inch lead that could be a problem. He faces it off, throttles back his saw as he closes in on finishing his back cut, and watches closely as the lead falls. If he gets it just right, it will miss the line. It does not. The top of the lead strikes the line, arcs, and gets hung up. The butt end swings over and pins him against the tree. He shouts for help, but electricity does what it will naturally, and goes to the ground. The path travels from the powerline, through the branch, through the arborist's body and into the tree to ground. His groundworker frantically calls, "Are you all right?" But the arborist does not respond. He is already dead.

Accidents like this happen far too often, as electrical contact is one of the three big killers of arborists (along with falls and strikes from falling trees or tree parts). Moreover, tree/powerline conflicts create hazards that result every year in accidents that leave children and other innocent people disabled or dead. Arborists have a professional obligation to mitigate hazards caused by trees. So, for their own safety as well as that of the public, arborists need to know and understand electricity and electrical hazard.

An electrical primer

Electrical contact accidents frequently occur because people do not understand the extreme hazard posed by high voltage, partly because electricity is invisible. While utilities do all they can to keep arborists and the public at large informed of the danger, accidents still happen. A helpful way to understand electricity is to visualize it in terms of a fluid, such as water. Like water running downhill, electricity seeks the path of least resistance to ground through conductive objects, and it may take more than one path. When electricity goes to ground, it dissipates in concentric "ripples," similar to those caused when a rock falls into calm water. The human body is a conductive object, so it can provide the path of least resistance. Therefore, electricity may use the body of someone who is touching an energized object and the ground; an energized object and another conductive, grounded object; or multiple contacts with an energized object (such as two hands, a hand and foot or any combination of body parts).

Voltage is a measure of electric potential. We can think of it analogous to pressure (such as pounds per square inch) or kilopascals (in a hydraulic system). Electrical engineers use the letter "V" as a symbol for voltage. Voltage in power lines is often measured in thousands, represented by a "k" for kilo.
So, 1,000 volts is 1 kV, or one kilovolt. Utilities have a range of different lines energized at voltages from 2.4 kV up to 765 kV. However, single lines serving neighborhoods are commonly charged to 7.2 kV. To put this into perspective, that is nearly three times the voltage of Florida's electric chair.

Voltage is not current, and by itself does no work. However, it has the potential for work, so it is also called electric potential. To understand voltage as electric potential, consider that a fully pressurized, high-pressure water hose with its valve closed has no water running through it. In the same way, a high voltage line can be fully energized, but have no current. When we turn on an electric appliance, we open the valve, current begins to flow, and electricity "realizes its potential" by starting to work.

Physicists measure electric current in amps, or amperes. One amp is the charge carried by $6.25 \times 10^8$ electrons moving past a given point in one second. For our purposes, we can think of amps as analogous to gallons or liters of water per minute. Ohm's Law relates voltage and amperage. Ohm's Law says that at constant resistance, increasing voltage increases amperage (current). The average distribution line has the capacity to serve hundreds of customers, enough current to operate hundreds of refrigerators, electric ranges, washers, dryers, air conditioners and myriad other appliances. The average distribution line often has the capacity to carry industrial loads of electricity.

**Electrical injuries**

In contrast to the industrial loads in the high voltage grid, the human nervous system operates on a very delicate electrical system, whereby minute electrical impulses pass from the synapses of one nerve cell to another. It does not take much current to disrupt or overwhelm this delicate electric system. For example, contact with only 16 milliamps can disrupt a person's nervous system to the extent he cannot release his grasp. Twenty milliamps can cause respiratory paralysis. So, someone contacting only 20 milliamps might not be able to let go of the electrical source, and might suffocate unless the electric connection is broken in time. One hundred milliamps can cause ventricular fibrillation, which may result in death due to disrupted heart function. Two amps can cause cardiac arrest and internal organ damage, and 15 to 20 amps will likely kill (Table 1). However, a victim contacting high voltage can create a fault current that builds to thousands of amps. Little wonder most people are killed outright by high voltage contact.

Survivors often suffer permanent injuries. Surface temperatures at the point of contact with high voltage can reach 1,000° C (1,862° F), enough to ignite clothing and hair. Inside the body, industrial loads of electricity are capable of creating muscle spasms intense enough to fracture bones. Furthermore, high-voltage contact can create nerve damage that causes comas, seizures, paralysis or other neuropathology. In 30 to 45 percent of cases, nerve and tissue damage is so severe that doctors must resort to amputation.

Finally, the big threat to high voltage contact victims is overwhelming infection that enters through external burns. The danger of infection often lingers until multiple rounds of skin grafts are finally successful.

These are very painful injuries. Electrical contact survivors often languish for weeks or months, needing intensive care in critical burn units. Victims may have to be put into induced comas or treated with morphine to dull their misery. Moreover, even after they have stabilized, their ordeal is not over. They commonly have to endure months or years of painful physical therapy as they train damaged nerves and muscles to function again – and learn to live with lifelong deformities and disabilities.

**Electric safety standards**

Given the seriousness of high voltage contact, preventing electrical accidents is vitally important. Every arborist is responsible for his safety, as well as the safety of colleagues. One way to exercise that responsibility is to study, know and
implement electrical safety standards for arboricultural operations. Two important examples in the United States are OSHA 1910.269 and ANSI Z133.1-2000.

OSHA 1910.269 is the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's vertical standard pertaining to the generation, transmission and distribution of electricity. A section of OSHA 1910.269 requires that everyone performing tree work in proximity to electric hazards must be qualified, and their training has to be documented.

ANSI Z133 is the American National Standard for Arboricultural Operations - Pruning, Repairing, Maintaining, and Removing Trees, and Cutting Brush - Safety Requirements. Z133 is the definitive safety standard for arboricultural operations. The Accredited Standards Committee has recently revised Z133, and it is available from the National Arborist Association.

ANSI Z133 is a "sacred" document, written in the blood of arborists who have been injured or killed on the job. It has the force of law because it is a document an OSHA compliance officer will often reference when citing a safety violation for arboricultural operations.

Z133 defines electric hazard to exist anytime a worker, tool, tree or any other conductive object is closer than 10 feet (3 m) from an energized overhead conductor rated to 50 kV or less (Figure 1). The area of electric hazard expands 0.4 inch for each kilovolt above 50 kV, ultimately out to 35 feet (10 m) for lines rated between 785 kV and 800 kV. The standard specifies that only qualified line-clearance arborists (or trainees under the supervision of qualified line-clearance arborists) can work inside of these minimum approach distances.

Annex B of Z133 provides safety-training recommendations to qualify workers as line-clearance arborists. So, OSHA 1910.269 and ANSI Z133 operate together to direct rigorous training requirements for anyone working within Z133's minimum approach distances for energized conductors.

ANSI Z133 contains other important provisions pertaining to electric hazards. For example, it advises that there are two different types of electric contact: direct and indirect. Direct contact occurs when someone contacts an energized fixture for instance, a child climbing a tree and grabbing a power line directly. On the other hand, indirect contact happens when an individual touches a conductive object in contact with an energized fixture. Arborists need to be aware that trees, people, various tools, fences, telecom wires, the ground and many other objects are conductive. The example at the opening of this article where a tree worker was electrocuted illustrates the danger of indirect contact through a tree.

A new stipulation in the latest edition of Z133 is a warning of step potential.
Step potential is a hazard that can occur when electricity goes to ground (a ground fault). Remember that when electricity goes to ground, it dissipates in concentric “ripples” similar to those formed when a rock falls in calm water. As electricity dissipates, a voltage difference builds between one “ripple” and another. Step potential develops when a person standing near a ground fault with his or her feet apart straddles that voltage difference. The danger is that electricity will jump from higher to lower voltage through the body. In effect, step potential constitutes multiple contacts with an energized, conductive object - the ground. So, step potential is indirect contact with high voltage through the ground. Consequently, an arborist (or anyone else) who is merely standing near a ground fault may be injured or electrocuted by step potential, even if not touching an energized object like a tree.

Another pertinent clause in Z133 requires that anyone not employed by a utility who intends to work inside minimum approach distances must notify the operating utility before beginning operations. A utility needs to know if people are working near their lines, so it can take appropriate safety measures. This requirement applies only to qualified line-clearance arborists; others should not encroach upon the minimum approach distances under any circumstances.

ANSI Z133 has many other safety requirements and recommendations that cover more than just electric hazards. One requirement is a pre-work job briefing that reviews potential hazards associated with the project, including procedures, special precautions, personal protective equipment, and work assignments as well as electric hazards and other issues. Every arborist must honor the recommendations and requirements in Z133.

Safety precautions

Don Blair in his book *Arborist Equipment* (1995) promotes the idea of accident prevention as distinct from safety. The concept holds that safety is mundane and passive, while accident prevention is deliberately planned. An electric hazard brings home the importance of accident prevention, because by the time someone has contacted high voltage, it is nearly always too late. The only way to ensure safety around high voltage is to fear it and use experience and the provisions of Z133 to plan carefully to prevent direct or indirect contact.

Tree on line

If accident prevention fails and a tree or tree part falls on a line, it is trouble. The best course of action is to call the operating utility and, if necessary, emergency crews immediately. Maintain minimum approach distances for everyone. Respect these approach distances from anything that is or could be ener-
ized, including the tree, fences, tools or other objects. In order to avoid the risk of step potential, do not violate minimum approach distances with the base of the tree, or tree part or other potentially energized object on the ground. If someone is in the tree and he is still alive and not being shocked, it is probably best for him to stay put until the utility arrives to shut off power, rather than run a gauntlet of electric hazard to evacuate the tree.

On the other hand, if the person is electrified, there is not much anyone can do to mount a rescue without risking life and limb. If there is enough energy present to threaten one person, it is a good bet there is enough to imperil others. Remember that an energized human body, tree or climbing rope are all indirect contact threats. Potential rescuers should not touch anything that is or could be energized. Electrical contact will thwart the rescue by injuring or killing the rescuer. That does not help the original victim and compounds the tragedy by increasing the number of casualties. In nearly all cases where someone is energized, the only reasonable course of action is to wait for utility and emergency crews to arrive. Regrettably, they often come too late for the victim. That is why accident prevention is so important.

**Downed lines**

Downed lines are extremely dangerous because they are accessible to people on the ground for direct contact. They can fall across and energize conductive objects such as fences, vehicles or metal-sided buildings, expanding the threat of electrical contact exponentially. Moreover, live wires can arc and whip around, potentially striking bystanders and inflicting physical or electrical injury.

Lines down across occupied vehicles are special cases. In these instances, people in the vehicle are usually safest if they stay inside. Electricity will flow like water off the vehicle to ground, and ordinarily pose little danger to those within. Call the utility and emergency crews, and keep all others away. Do not let anyone touch or stand near the car or truck. Making contact with the ground and an energized object at the same time will provide a path to ground for electricity through the body.

There are few circumstances where occupants of an energized vehicle are safer to evacuate than to stay inside. Fire is one of those cases. If occupants have to evacuate, they must jump well clear. They need to make sure to land without touching the vehicle, and to avoid step potential by landing with their feet together and without falling down. Then clear minimum approach distances by hopping, keeping feet together, or bounding, touching only one foot to the ground at any one time.

**Mitigating tree hazards is a professional responsibility**

Clearly, conflicts between trees and power lines are hazardous. The status of electric contact as one of the three big killers of arborists is reason enough for any arborist to respect and fear high voltage.

However, the hazards caused by tree/power line conflicts extend to the public as well. Consider that if it is dangerous for professional arborists to work on a tree that has grown within 10 feet of energized conductors, it is at least as dangerous for others to encounter elec-
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TREE CARE INDUSTRY - JANUARY 2002
ANSI Z133 defines an electric hazard as any time a worker, tool, tree or other conductive object is closer than 10 feet from an energized overhead conductor of 50 kV or less. Electric hazard expands with increasing voltage out to 10 ft for lines rated between 785 kV.

Trees that grow or are blown by wind into the power lines may become energized, and people touching or standing near them are at risk. A poignant example of indirect contact hazard through trees occurred when chain link fences throughout a neighborhood were energized. A cottonwood adjacent to the fence line had grown near a 138 kV transmission line. A property owner reported that whenever the wind blew, branches would strike the power line causing an arc, and the fences in the neighborhood would rattle. They rattled because they were electrified, through either an energized root or the ground. Had the utility not corrected the situation immediately, serious injury or electrocution from indirect contact with an energized fence in their yards threatened people throughout the neighborhood.

One of the important reasons for utility line-clearance work is to prevent these dangers. Many utilities have tens or even hundreds of thousands of miles of line, and scores or perhaps hundreds of trees per mile. Any one of these trees could provide direct or indirect access to power lines, putting people at serious risk. With such enormous exposure, utilities simply cannot afford to leave potentially hazardous tree conditions.

Responsibility for mitigating tree-caused electric hazard should not rest just with utilities. All arborists have an obligation to protect the public from hazards caused by trees. As a profession, we take that responsibility very seriously. For example, no responsible arborist would fail to order the prompt removal of a mature oak with advanced Armillaria root rot from a place where it may fall and crush someone. Furthermore, no responsible arborist would disregard a large co-dominant stem with included bark that was splitting out and...

References

The following references were used to compile this article.
threatening the public.

Similarly, no responsible arborist should neglect tree/powerline conflicts. However, many otherwise responsible arborists oppose utility line-clearance work as heavy-handed and unnecessary. Regrettably, this is every bit as much a dereliction of professional duty as opposing the removal of a mature oak with Armillaria teetering next to someone’s home. Clearly, the results in both cases can be the same, with victims just as injured, just as maimed or just as dead.

This is not to say that all utilities are always right and always exercise good judgement. However, any responsible resolution to tree/powerline conflicts must consider electric hazard as seriously as hazards caused by Armillaria, included bark or any other factor.

Conclusion

Electrical contact is one of the three big killers of arborists. Moreover, hazards resulting from tree/powerline conflicts mean accidents every year leave children and other innocent people disabled or dead. Arborists have a professional obligation to mitigate hazards caused by trees. So, for their own safety as well as that of the public, arborists need to know and understand electricity and electrical hazard.

Electricity takes the path of least resistance to ground through any suitable path, including the human body. When it passes through a person, current can cause death or permanent disability. Arborists can protect themselves by careful planning for accident avoidance by using experience, by honoring safety standards for arboricultural operations such as ANSI Z133, and by being aware of step potential. Finally, arborists have the same obligation to protect the public from hazards caused by tree/power line conflicts as they have to mitigate other hazards caused by trees.

Arborists should strive to eliminate electrical contact as one of their three big killers, and to protect the public from electric hazard. Success will prevent accidents such as the one at the beginning of this article where someone contacted high voltage through a tree, called for help, and fell silent.

Acknowledgements

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Randall H. Miller is System Forester with PacifiCorp in Portland, Oregon. He is a certified arborist and certified utility specialist. This article is an adaptation of a presentation delivered Aug. 14, 2001 at the ISA Annual Conference in Milwaukee, Wisc.

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Status of Job Safety & Health Regulations Affecting the Tree Care Industry

Since January is a traditional time to establish long-terms plans and agendas, the NAA Governmental Affairs staff thought it appropriate to share the following list of key regulatory issues that we monitor with TCI readers.

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<td>Existing rule is based in part on consensus standards dating to 1946 and before</td>
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<td>49 CFR 1.73, 395</td>
<td>Proposed rule to limit number of hours commercial drivers can operate without a rest issued May 2, 2000</td>
<td>NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING comment period ended Dec. 15, 2000; final action expected September 2002</td>
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<td>Ergonomics programs: preventing musculoskeletal disorders</td>
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<td>Final rule withdrawn April 23, 2001</td>
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<td>Flammable and combustible liquids: update and revision</td>
<td>29 CFR 1910.106</td>
<td>Identified as part of agency initiative to update 30-year old safety standards</td>
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<td>Injury and illness prevention</td>
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IRS Reporting Rules Simplified to Aid Small Businesses

On December 10, 2001 the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) announced the simplification of accounting rules affecting many small businesses. Under the new rules, small business tax payers with average gross receipts of between $1 million and $10 million will be allowed to use the cash method of accounting as opposed to the accrual and inventory methods they were previously required to use. Firms grossing under $1 million were previously allowed to use the cash method, so they are not affected.

This simplification could affect over 500,000 firms that, by the old regulations, were required to report under more costly and time-intensive requirements.

Congressional proponents of the accounting change, including Senator Kit Bond (R-MO) and Rep. Wally Herger (R-CA) who introduced legislation earlier this year, were pleased with the revisions. Bond applauded the regulatory change and specifically referenced the benefits to service businesses.

This is welcome news for businesses that handle their finances with a checkbook and perhaps the latest version of Quicken™. Company managers should review these IRS rules changes with their bookkeeper or accountant.

Peter Gerstenberger is vice president of business management, safety & education for the National Arborist Association.
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Building a Foundation for Success

By Wayne Outlaw

Everyone wants to build a stronger business in today's volatile economy. Every time we turn around we see reports of layoffs, reduced earnings, and concern for the future, but economists predict a mid-year rebound.

How do you respond to these volatile times? Some try reducing labor costs, marketing, advertising and even training. A weakened organization that has focused on cutting, however, may not be able to capitalize on an improved economy. A better approach is to build a more efficient and productive labor force.

You are probably asking, "How can I create an efficient and productive workforce of loyal, committed, talented, and skilled employees?" Workforce magazine publishes a biennial survey, which gives us insights not only how, but why. The top 10 percent of the firms, based on the way they handle their workforce, have per-employee sales of $617,576. The bottom 10 percent have only $158,101. As you can see, good employee practices are great business practices.

Good employee practices begin with some simple and basic actions. Here are the most important ones:

Ensure individual productivity
Ensure you have the right person in the job. Examine the productivity of each employee and evaluate to see if the employee is meeting expectations or lagging behind. Set standards and measure employees against those standards to spot those not pulling their weight. Take corrective steps if someone is not productive.

Upgrade staff
For those who are not meeting standards, identify why and resolve the situation. With some it may be a lack of skill or knowledge. For them, training will help. For others it is a matter of job fit. If they don't have the self-discipline, desire, determination, and capability to do the job, they must be replaced with someone who does.

You should have many candidates to pick from. Choose carefully. Testing to see if they match the position pays dividends. Top firms have 36.55 applicants per job, and bottom firms have only 8.24. Of the top firms, 29.67 percent hire based on a validated selection test, while only 4.79 percent of the bottom firms do.

Develop skills
Especially in a customer contact business involving equipment and trees, it is critical that all employees are highly skilled. One careless word can lose a customer for life, and one careless act can cause an accident or mishap. Remember the old adage about training employees. "What happens if, after training them, they just leave?" A better question is, "What happens if you don't train them and they stay?" The top firms invest 116.87 hours of training for a new employee (all industries) and the bottom firms invest only 35.02.

Reward positive performance
People are motivated to do what benefits them. If you want employees to perform well, they must be rewarded. Some say, "I pay them a salary, why should I share or give them anything else?" You should only do it if you want the employee to be committed to giving his or her best effort, applying creativity, and doing the things necessary to make the company successful. Rewarding performance is more than just "pats on the back" and prizes. It can be a formal incentive pay plan or a strong merit increase system that recognizes and rewards high performance and penalizes under-performers. Raises, based on performance rather than tenure, make good fiscal sense. Of the top 10 percent of the firms, 87.27 had a workforce whose merit increase or incentive pay was tied to performance, while only 23.36 percent of the bottom 10 percent had the same.
Innovative plans can be elastic, which expand with the good times and high performance to keep employees, yet shrink to adjust for lower company earnings and even lower individual performance.

Provide performance feedback

The only way an employee can improve is with candid and frequent performance feedback. Imagine athletes who practice and play each week without knowing if they score or even assist others to score. Unfortunately, we ask employees to be motivated and improve consistently yet many do not know how they are doing or even what needs to improve. If you want to improve employee performance, provide regular feedback and appraisal. Of the top 10 percent of firms, 95.17 employees regularly receive performance appraisals while only 41.31 percent of the bottom 10 percent do. Feedback is essential to top performance. Of the top 10 percent, 51.67 percent get performance feedback from multiple sources, and of the bottom 10 percent only 3.90 percent get the same.

How often do employees get real feedback and quality appraisal of their performance? A brief conversation along the lines of, “Here is how you are doing and here is your raise,” is not a real performance appraisal and can’t even come close to meaningful performance feedback.

Provide positive leadership

How employees are treated makes a tremendous difference in not only how they perform, but also whether they stay. The most important skill to develop is people skills. The leadership and management skills are the foundation on which everything else sits. Don’t buy a new truck or new tools and fail to invest in developing strong leadership and management skills. Employees see the vision of the company through the eyes of the leader. Develop a compelling vision and a clear strategic plan for all aspects of the business, especially employees – your human capital. They are the success imperative for the company.

No one knows what the future will bring! Whether the economy improves, stays the same, or even worsens, those who concentrate on developing a stronger, more productive, more talented workforce and retain them will not only weather bad times but will position themselves for a great leap forward when conditions improve. You will not get a better chance to upgrade your workforce. Begin now and take advantage of the predicted business upturn.

Wayne Outlaw is the author of “Smart Staffing: How to Hire, Reward, and Keep Top People for Your Growing Company.”

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Advanced Landscape Plant IPM
PHC Short Course
Department of Entomology
University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20742
Contact: Debbie Wilhoit, (301) 405-3913,
e-mail: dw34@umail.umd.edu or visit
http://www.pest.umd.edu/events/events.html

January 8-10, 2002
Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council
Eastern Pa. Turf Conference & Trade
Show
Valley Forge Convention Center
King of Prussia, PA 19406
Contact: Nancy Bosold, (610) 378-1327
or e-mail nfbl @psu.edu

January 16-18, 2002
Mid-America Horticultural Trade Show
Navy Pier,
Chicago, Ill.
Contact: (847) 526-2010 or
www.midam.org

January 17, 2002
Connecticut Tree Protective Association
80th Annual Meeting
Aqua Turf
Plantsville, CT
Contact: (203) 484-2512 (or, in Connecti-
cut: 1-888-919-2872)

January 18-19, 2002
The Idaho Nursery Association
2002 Idaho Horticulture Expo
Boise, ID
Contact: Ann Bates,
1-800-INA GROW (462-4769)

January 21-24, 2002
72nd Annual Michigan Turfgrass
Conference
Holiday Inn – South
Lansing, Mich.
Contact: Kay Patrick (517) 321-1660
or visit www.michiganturfgrass.org

January 21-February 15, 2002
ACRT, Inc.
Commercial/Residential Arborist
(Spanish & English)
Wilbur Wright College
Chicago, IL 60634
Contact: Lois Tennant, 1-800-847-3541

January 23-24, 2002
Massachusetts Tree Wardens
and Foresters Association
90th Annual Conference
Host Hotel & Conference Center
Sturbridge, Mass.
Contact: Pat Felix, (781) 894-94759

January 24, 2002
Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council
Northeastern Pa. Turf School & Trade
Show
The Woodlands Inn & Resort
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702
Contact: Andrew McNitt, (814) 863-1368
or e-mail asm4@psu.edu

January 27-29, 2002
Wisconsin Arborist Association
38th Annual Tree Care Conference
& Trade Show
Regency Suites
Green Bay, Wis.
Contact: Jesse Zieminski,
(262) 542-0404

January 28-29, 2001
Think Trees New Mexico
Crown Plaza Hotel
Albuquerque, N.M.
Contact: Bernalillo County Extension
Service, (505) 243-1386

February 3-5, 2002
37th Annual Penn-Del Chapter - ISA
Shade Tree Symposium
Lancaster Host Resort
Lancaster, Penn.
Contact: (215) 795-0411

February 7-9, 2002
New England Grows
Hynes Convention Center
Boston, Mass.
Contact: (508) 653-3009, fax: (508) 653-
4112, or visit www.NEGrows.org.

February 7-May 2, 2002
12-session Arborists’ and Tree Workers’
Certification Preparation Course
Brea Civic & Cultural Center
Orange County, CA
Contact: Ted Stamen, (909) 656-3431,
fax: (909) 656-3451

February 9, 2002
Long Island Arboricultural Association
Annual Tree Conference
Hofstra University
Hempstead, NY
Contact: LIAA Office, (516) 454-6550

February 10-12, 2002
Ohio Chapter ISA Tree Care Conference
and Trade Show
Columbus Marriott North
Columbus, Ohio
Contact: (216) 381-1740
February 12, 2002
Stockbridge School Job Fair
Campus Center
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, Mass.
Contact: Call (413) 545-2222, e-mail stocky@fnr.umass.edu or visit
www.umass.edu/stockbridge

February 13-17, 2002
National Arborist Association
Winter Management Conference
Ritz-Carlton Kapalua
Maui, Hawaii
Contact: Carol Crossland, (800) 733-2622; crossland@natlarb.com

February 15, 2002
College of Extended Learning at
California State Univ., San Bernardino
Western States Palm Conference
The Arboretum of Los Angeles County
Arcadia, CA 91007
Contact: Karen Yates, (909) 880-5977, fax: (909) 880-7065

February 19-20, 2002
ACRT, Inc.
Cultural Diversity for Supervisors
Wilbur Wright College
Chicago, IL 60634
Contact: Lois Tennant, 1-800-847-3541

February 19-20, 2002
University of Illinois
Southern Ill. Grounds Maintenance School
Gateway Convention Center
Collinsville, IL
Contact: Ron Cornwell, (618) 692-9434

February 20-22, 2002
ISA-Ontario 54th Annual Conference
and Trade Show
Clearly International Centre
Windsor, Ontario, Canada
Contact: (519) 376-1882

February 20-22, 2002
Landscape Contractors Association
Winter Workshop 2002 “Grow in Winter”
Bethesda, Md.
Contact: Laura Lloyd-Henry, (301) 948-0810

February 25-March 1, 2002
ACRT
Basic Arborist
2545 Bailey Road
Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221
Contact: Lois Tennant, 1-800-847-3541

February 26-28, 2002
Western Pa. Turf Conference & Trade Show
Pittsburgh ExpoMart/Radisson Hotel
Monroeville, PA 15146
Contact: R. Eric Oesterling, (724) 837-1402 or e-mail reol@psu.edu or Thomas Bettle, (412) 257-2313 or e-mail tbettle@stargate.net

February 26 - March 1, 2002
American Society of Consulting Arborists
Consulting Academy
Doubletree O’Hare Hotel Rosemont, Ill.
Contact: (301) 947-0483 or www.asca-consultants.org

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Dick Miller's years as a tree man
have taught him a lot about trees
and how to help you help them.
Deere Sells Homelite; Closes Tenn. Factory

Deere & Company announced recently that it sold its Homelite consumer products business to TechTronics Industries Co., Ltd. of Hong Kong.

Under terms of the agreement, TechTronics will own the Homelite brand of handheld and power equipment that is well-established in mass-market outlets. TTI will also own the Green Machine brand name previously used by Deere on handheld and power equipment.

Deere announced in August that it planned to exit the Homelite business. Deere said the company's extensive dealer network will continue to market the John Deere Pro Series line of handheld and portable power equipment for commercial users. Deere said this announcement does not affect other John Deere products made for consumers.

Deere said the sale of the Homelite business affects operations in Chihuahua, Mexico, as well as Greer, S.C., and Charlotte, N.C. This sale does not include the John Deere facility in Columbia, S.C., that makes saw chain as part of the Homelite operations. That business is being marketed separately.

Deere & Company also said recently it plans to close and sell its Loudon, Tenn., factory and move the production of skid steer loaders from there to the company's Dubuque, Iowa, facility. The move will eliminate excess production capacity and increase manufacturing efficiency in Deere's construction and forestry division.

Deere employs about 370 people in production and engineering and 50 more in sales and marketing at its Loudon facility. Although some of those employees will be offered transfers to Dubuque or Moline, the majority of Deere employees in Loudon will lose their jobs and will receive severance packages.

Layoffs will likely total more than 300 employees, according to company officials.

The transition will take place over the next several months and the Loudon plant will close totally within the next year. The company said it had not defined the exact timing of the move or the number of Loudon employees that will be asked to transfer.

In Dubuque, Deere will add more than 200 wage jobs but said it does not plan to hire new employees for these positions because it has enough current employees to fill the work assignments. Salaried positions in Dubuque will also increase by more than 75 and will be filled by people who transfer from Loudon and through other hiring processes within the company.

Deere had previously announced that it was implementing a corporatewide comprehensive strategy to gain substantial improvement in business performance. The company has also stated that it is significantly reducing the manufacturing and marketing costs in its construction and forestry division, which manages the skid steer loader product line.

This action by Deere is expected to result in pretax charges of about $30 million, primarily in the first quarter of fiscal 2002, company officials said.

ACRT Adds Environmental Services

ACRT, Inc., has added environmental services to its consulting and training business. According to President Michael Weidner, the firm has hired a group of geologists, environmental scientists and environmental engineers based at the company's Ohio headquarters. They will travel to manage projects for ACRT's national and international clients.

Weidner says the environmental services group will provide the firm's utility clients with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) assessments they need before starting line maintenance and construction projects.

ACRT will also provide public- and private-sector clients with environmental assessments, environmental impact studies, wetlands studies and other ecological services. In addition to serving ACRT's traditional clients, which include utility, municipal and commercial arborists, the environmental services group will work with federal, state and local entities to provide the environmental impact studies necessary before government funded or licensed projects can be permitted. The group will also provide the private sector, commercial lenders and real estate buyers with the due diligence studies required for environmental regulation compliance, and for most industrial and commercial real estate transactions.

Clopyralid Contamination Found in Compost

For the second time in two years, residues of clopyralid were found in two compost facilities in Washington, according to the Pesticide Action Network Updates Services. Clopyralid is the active ingredient in Confront, and is a persistent herbicide that breaks down extremely slowly, especially in composting. This chemical was also recently found contaminating compost in Pennsylvania and New Zealand.

Clopyralid's persistence, mobility in soil and water solubility allow it cause serious damage to plants. It is toxic to sunflowers, tomatoes, potatoes and legumes at levels of 10 parts per billion (ppb).

Residue testing of compost at the facilities revealed clopyralid levels between 73 and 80 ppb. These levels have the potential to damage crops, gardens and nurseries.

Actions have been taken to ameliorate the problem. Washington State University is requiring vendors of straw and hay to be used in compost to guarantee their product is pesticide-free.

A campaign started in Spokane, Wash., aims to educate the public concerning the importance of pesticide-free compost. Public utilities in Oregon and Washington asked EPA to require that there be no residual herbicides in compost after a 60 to 90 day cycle.

In addition, the U.S. Composting Council is asking Dow AgroSciences,
WE'RE stocked TO KEEP YOU well equipped

Our new 160 full color page catalog of professional tools and equipment for the arborist, landscaper and serious gardener will leave quite an impression with over 400 new items!

Husqvarna Garners Innovation Award

Husqvarna's newly developed 325HDA55x hedge trimmer recently won the Wageningen Innovation Award 2001 in the Netherlands.

The award is given to innovative products for agriculture, forest and garden care. "We're very proud of the award," declared Kees van Opdorp, managing director of Husqvarna Netherlands.

The Husqvarna 325HDA55x hedge trimmer won the award in the category "Tool for green spaces." Fifty products were nominated from an assortment of more than 500, spread across 13 product areas.

The hedge trimmer is the latest in the line of newly developed hedge trimmers that have left Husqvarna's factory in Huskvarna, Sweden, this year.

The 325HDA55x is intended for people who work professionally in parks and cemeteries.

The prize was awarded by a jury consisting of expert members from: The Ministry of Agriculture; Wageningen University and Research Centre; DLV Mechanisation, Dronten; and Innovation and Applied Agricultural Science Centre IPC Plant, Ede.

The Hartford’s Fogelsville office employs about 200 people in Pennsylvania’s Lehigh Valley.

In addition to this employee-driven effort by Fogelsville staffs, The Hartford has contributed $700,000 to the September 11th Fund, which was established by the United Way and The New York Community Trust to help those affected by the tragedy.

Hartford Employees Donate $3k for Sept. 11

Employees of The Hartford Financial Services Group’s Fogelsville, Pa., operations have raised more than $3,000 for the Shanksville (Pa.) Volunteer Fire Company, the first fire department to respond to the crash of United Airlines Flight 93 on Sept. 11.

Representatives from The Hartford presented a check representing their fund-raising efforts to Assistant Fire Chief Rick King and other fire and rescue officials in mid-November at a ceremony at the Shanksville Fire Station.

A portion of the funds will be used to finance a new tanker truck, which will be dedicated to the heroes of Flight 93.

“Our employees wanted to do something to help,” explained Blaine Holden, sales manager of The Hartford’s Personal Lines Affinity Office in Fogelsville.

“This seemed like a natural thing for us to do. Shanksville is a small community and so are we.”

Ele the manufacturer of Confront, to buy the contaminated compost and compensate for all losses.

Brendy Clendening has been appointed vice president of sales and customer support at Time Manufacturing Co.

Clendening has been a part of the Time group of companies for over seven years, most recently serving as sales and marketing manager for the Self-Propelled Division of Time Condor Corp.

Clendening’s responsibilities will include the oversight of the sales administration department, special account sales, distributor sales, and the parts and service departments.

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**T30 and T40 Tractor Arches**

Future Forestry Products Inc. has recently added the T30 and T40 tractor arches to its line. These arches aid in moving large logs without heavy or expensive equipment. These new arches are similar in concept to the ATV Forwarding Arch, but capable of much larger diameter logs and heavier loads. The T-series arches are designed to lift and carry logs clean off the ground for low-impact removals - clean logs for portable sawmills and low power requirements. The arch eliminates the need for high-value logs to be cut into pieces for removal. For more information, contact Future Forestry Products at P.O. Box 1083 Willamina, OR 97396, call 1-888-258-1445, e-mail contact@futureforestry.com or visit www.futureforestry.com.

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**VersaDyne compact loader/tool carrier**

VersaDyne has introduced a new compact articulated wheel loader/tool carrier. It provides tool visibility, pilot control hydraulics, ergonomic operator’s station, universal tool carrier and 2-speed auto shift drivetrain. The new 3,000 lb. lift capacity loader/carrier features hydro/mechanical drive with an 85 hp Cummins turbo diesel and an integrated rear axle/transfer case with 10 degree oscillation (stays level). Front and rear axles include 45 percent limited slip differentials for skidless operation on turf and other sensitive surfaces. Axles feature planetary reduction hubs and internal sealed wet brakes. For more information, contact VersaDyne, the Loader Division of NMC-WOLLARD, Inc. at 2021 Truax Blvd., Eau Claire, WI 54703, call Kevin Bird at 1-800-656-6867, e-mail: loaders@ncm-wollard.com or visit www.ncm-wollard.com.

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**Vermeer BC1000xl brush chipper**

Vermeer has introduced the BC1000xl brush chipper. This unit has all the features of its predecessor - the BC1000 - but with a larger feed opening of 12 by 17 inches. The cutter drum can handle wood up to 12 inches in diameter. A clutchless PTO allows the drum to be engaged without using a traditional engine clutch, idler pulley, or sliding the engine. Extensive steps have been taken to produce a quiet machine with reduced vibration. To that end, the BC1000xl has a rubber-mounted engine and feed housing, rubber torsion suspension, a patent pending noise reducing design, and an optional sound abatement package. This brush chipper has a 66 inch long feed table and a gear-driven discharge chute. For more information, contact Vermeer at 1-888-VERMEER or visit www.vermeer.com.

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**Bandit Introduces 24-inch Whole Tree Chipper**

Bandit has added a 24-inch diameter capacity unit to its line of whole tree chippers. The Model 2400 Tree Bandit is designed for high production loggers and land clearers. It produces approximately 100 tons of chips per hour, depending on the quality and size of material being processed. The hydraulic Five-Wheel Feed System consists of two horizontal and two vertical wheels with an added top wheel set on a diagonal. The extra wheel nearly doubles the feed wheel surface area that comes in contact with the wood and makes it extremely easy to feed large trees as well as short, blocky material. For more information, contact Bandit Industries at 1-800-952-0178 or visit www.banditchippers.com.

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Dynamic Stumpro Self-Propelled Stump Grinder

Dynamic Manufacturing of Weidman, Mich., has introduced the Stumpro self-propelled stump grinder. The fully hydrostatic drive Stumpro is compact and maneuverable. Direct hydraulic drives put the power to the cutter head, stopping damage to belts. The four-sided cutter tooth is aimed at increasing efficiency. The dual-purpose stabilizer/blade allows for stability while cutting, and levels the site smooth when the job is done. The Stumpro is available in three sizes. For more information, contact Dynamic Manufacturing at (989) 644-8109, or visit www.pik-n-pak.com.

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Versalift VO-260-1

Time Manufacturing Co. has introduced the Versalift VO-260-1, an expanded edition of the VO-250/255-1 line of tree-maintenance aerials. The VO-260-1 is an insulated tree care aerial with a platform height of 60 feet and working height of 65 feet. A new option on the VO-260 is the placement of the "Unitrol" single stick control between the upper boom and the platform, giving the operator three sides of the platform free from obstructions. Standard features include maximum overcenter horizontal side reach of 50 feet, 8 inches; maximum non-overcenter side reach of 46 feet, 6 inches; upper boom articulation of 245 degrees; lower boom articulation of 125 degrees; and maximum platform capacity of 350 lbs. For more information, visit Time Manufacturing/Versalift at www.versalift.com.

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How To Eliminate the Labor of a 3-man Crew

“A Two-day Job Got Done in 8 Hours! This ImpleMax 4836Lw Is Unbelievable!”

- G. Hayton, Hopewell Junction, NY

See the ImpleMax 4836Lw video!
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TREES CARE INDUSTRY - JANUARY 2002
What is the “Incident/Severity Rate”?

To an insurer, the “Incident/Severity Rate” is a means of forecasting the future based on history. If we don’t learn from history, we are doomed to repeat it – and insurance companies know this!

When an accident occurs, there is the human aspect – the pain and suffering of that individual – and then there is the financial aspect. We have to measure the likelihood of an accident occurring again, and what the severity of that incident will be. There is a phrase: frequency breeds severity. If the frequency of accidents is high, then it increases your chances of having a highly severe accident. It is important to measure how a group is performing.

To determine the incident rate, we need to know the number of accidents from one year and the total number of hours worked in that year by all workers combined. We also need a constant number so that we can compare all companies in the same manner; in this case we use the constant of 10,000 hours. This would be the equivalent to each member of a five-person crew working 2,000 hours annually.

To find the incident rate, we do the following math:

\[ \text{Number of accidents} \times 10,000 \text{ hours} \]
\[ \text{Total number of hours worked} \]

Let’s say that we had a five-person crew that worked 11,500 hours and in those hours we had three accidents. The equation looks like this:

\[ 3 \text{ accidents} \times 10,000 \text{ hours} \]
\[ 11,500 \text{ hours worked} \]

When you do this formula, you come out with an incident rate of 2.6 accidents. What that says is that every time this crew works 10,000 hours, the likelihood is that 2.6 people – or in this case, round 2.6 off to 3 – are going to get hurt.

Severity Rate

Next, we need to measure the severity rate. An example of severity is the amount of time lost following an accident. Let’s assume you lost 40 days during the course of a year due to an accident. To get the severity rate, use a formula similar to the previous one:

\[ 40 \text{ days} \times 10,000 \text{ hours} \]
\[ 11,500 \text{ hours worked} \]

Here, the answer we come up with is a severity rate of around 36. The likelihood is that every time we generate 10,000 hours, we are actually going to lose 36 to 40 days out of that. How many of you can afford to function in that environment?

Every day, we want to send everybody home with all their fingers and toes and with profit for the organization. If we don’t keep our incident/severity rate low, we are going to find ourselves with employees who are off work or off the job.

Safety Program

By Joseph Tommasi and Peter Gerstenberger

Your company’s safety program is vital to its profitability, professionalism and success.

An effective program should certainly enable your company to prevent injuries, vehicle accidents and property damage. By doing so, your safety program can also lower your insurance costs.

But that is only the beginning. A really effective safety program can also:

- Satisfy contractor/commercial client bidder requirements
- Boost crew productivity
- Ensure OSHA compliance
- Produce better motivated employees
- Improve ability to finish jobs on time and within budget
- Enhance your company’s reputation

As an industry, we need to devote more attention and resources to safety. From the rather unique perspective of having administered safety in a large company and communicating safety to an industry, it feels as though safety is not keeping pace with industry growth. As evidence of this, a year ago the National Arborist Association learned that its endorsed insurance program carrier would be ending its workers’ compensation coverage for more than 300 companies.

Around the country, other insurance providers are dropping their tree care clients or dramatically increasing their rates.

Why? In the NAA case, we discovered that during 1999 and 2000, our workers’ compensation program had been running at an underwriting loss. In other words, the carrier was paying out more in claims than it was gaining in premiums. Later on, while researching the feasibility of a captive insurance program and in analyzing
the historic data, we discovered that our program had been running at a loss ratio of 80 percent for five years. That means that out of every $100 gathered from premiums, $80 was paid out strictly for claims. To an insurance company, that is not a lucrative situation.

Safety as the profit center

The goal that we want to shoot for is simple: “Safety is a profit center because my workers’ comp rates are significantly lower than my competitors’ and thus safety means money in my pocket.” This was an actual statement from a company that has been successfully managing its losses with a proactive safety program. This is only one aspect of safety: the financial aspect. Certainly there is a human – or morale - aspect of safety. The direct costs of being unsafe are easier to measure and talk about.

If you are bidding work for a municipality or a large commercial client, they are going to look at your accident rates as well as your safety program. Organizations like these want to see people with good safety histories on their property. If you don’t qualify, you don’t get a chance to bid. If you do qualify and bid, and if your rates are higher than your peers’ rates, the likelihood is that you are going to have to cut on either your profitability or someplace else in order to get the job. Ultimately, the person with the better rate is going to come out the winner.

The goal is to make safety become a cultural activity – the norm for your workers and yourself. When people know what the safety expectations are and they are performing to those expectations, there is less likelihood of safety violations. There is a comfort zone with the employees if they know what your expectations are and what your safety values are. They can perform professionally automatically. That is what safety is all about.

What is a safety program?

In your mind, what is a safety program? We have found that company owners can have very interesting perceptions.

One company owner said he doesn’t have a written policy, but holds safety meetings once a week. That was his program.

Others feel that management has a negligible role in safety day to day, and that any safety program worth its salt should be directed at the field.

Many small companies – which make up the bulk of NAA’s membership – report that their safety program consists of being very vigilant every day when they are out with the crew on the job. That mindset, while admirable for the present, presents problems for the future. What happens when the company grows and the owner cannot be the watchdog for ev-
What the NAA regards as a proper safety program has a few basic elements.

**Management commitment.**
Management needs to take ownership of the program. Safety isn’t a book or videotape; it is a culture. You need to get that safety culture into the operation so it can be self-sustaining. Direct involvement, leading by example, and providing the necessary funds to acquire training materials and protective equipment are just a few actions that show true commitment and ownership of the safety program.

**Employee involvement.**
Look to the employees to take ownership of their portion of the program. Take input from the employees and giving advice. One way or the other, involving the employees in your safety program is a must.

Consider human nature. Is it human nature to just fall into line when things are dictated to us without us having any input? Would any of you react well in that type of environment? If you can give the employee some ownership of the process of safety, you will have a much more successful safety program.

**Clear guidelines and training.**
Spell out very carefully what we expect of our employees, set a standard and stick to it consistently. The ANSI Z133 Standard provides guidance for accepted safe work practices.*

How many of us like to be treated differently than someone else? If we are not consistent in the way that we treat each other when it comes to the safety program – particularly with holding people to a different standard – then we are inviting problems.

**Inspection and maintenance.**
Look at the equipment, the workplace and the job site setup to see that the performance that we desire, the standards that we have set, are indeed in place. If we identify problems in regards to the maintenance of the equipment, is there follow-up? Do the problems get resolved/ fixed so that you can move on?

**Document, document, document!**
Be diligent. Keep records. Make sure that if, for instance, you are encountering an inspection process, you have some documentation of the correction. Keep accurate records of your training. If it is written, then it is important. If a person...
signs off on a training record, take some ownership of that. Those records are important for you in terms of creating that culture, but they are also important to you for demonstrating safety at some later date. Whether it is meeting with your insurance agent or an OSHA representative, documentation is very important.

Regulatory compliance.

The reason this follows documentation is that OSHA compliance consists of three basic elements:

1) You must have a safety policy that you can document.
2) You must have training to support that policy. (In other words, you must communicate that policy to your employees very clearly.)
3) You must have enforcement of your policy; otherwise it could be argued that you don’t really have a policy.

What are we enforcing? What are we held to ourselves? You have to start with knowing what regulations apply to us. There is a variety of federal OSHA regulations and, in some cases, state regulations. You need to know what you are exposed to in terms of your regulatory environment because you have federal and state regulations to adhere to. Then we have one of our own – the ANSI Z133 Standard.

Be dynamic

The best of all safety programs also needs one other critical component: It needs to be able to change and adapt to an ever-changing environment. Things change over time, and what works today to keep employees safe might not necessarily work tomorrow. We want to encourage you to start laying groundwork and to be proactive about anticipating changes that could occur in your company that could affect safety.

For instance, right now you may employ six people in the field and spend a significant amount of your time directly supervising them. What happens when you grow to 10 employees and you split off into two or maybe three crews going in different directions each day? Your time directly supervising the crew is cut 50 percent. In the process of that growth, you may find yourself taking more inexperienced people into your organization. Then you get notice that the foreman who has been with you for 15 years decides to start his own business. Suddenly you lose the experience base that you had before, both in supervision and actual performance of the work. It is a dynamic situation and you need to have a structure in place that is going to allow you to adapt to those changes in your business.

The NAA Model Safety Program (MSP)

The NAA’s Model Safety Program follows the process that the NAA Safety Committee felt collectively was what a company starting from scratch would have to go through to develop a comprehensive, effective program. It provides a template for developing a program from nothing, for building upon a program that you already have, or for simply reassuring yourself that what you already have in place is adequate.

The checklist

The first part of embarking on this journey of developing a better safety program is figuring out where you are. The MSP Checklist is the best way to do assess your current safety program. It comes with the program can also be downloaded for free from the NAA Web site, www.natlarb.com.

The employer guidance section

The employer guidance section takes the issues on the checklist and explains to you, the manager of the company, what exactly is required and the significance of what you are doing. It is arranged by the topic, so it is consistent and follows the outline of the checklist.
Forms/materials

We wanted MSP to be a readily adaptable tool that you could use to launch a safety program relatively quickly, so the program provides customizable forms and other materials to facilitate your company’s policy implementation.

Company policy section

The MSP’s Company Policy section contains customizable policy language that you can adapt to your situation. It is arranged in logical order to follow the checklist. Just having it in the manual would not be as useful; therefore we put this section and the Forms section on a CD that is provided with the program. You have the ability to modify and edit the document to your needs.

Conclusion

One of the fundamental aspects of following or beginning this path toward developing a safety program is, again, developing a culture of safety. The culture has to start with each of you. Implementing a company safety program might seem daunting at first, but you can start today and work at it incrementally. Get a copy of ANSI Z133. Order the Model Safety Program. Make sure they don’t sit on the back shelf, collecting dust. Use them. Determine that you are ultimately going to create that safety culture within your operation, and don’t lose sight of that goal.

Our common goal is a safer workplace for arborists. Your credibility, your business and your life literally depend on the safety culture of your company. As an industry, we must strive to improve safety, one company and one worker at a time.

* The latest version of ANSI Z133.1 is October 2000. The previous revision was 1994. The latest revision has significant changes from the previous version. Be sure you have the current edition.

Joseph Tommasi is Manager of Safety & Loss Prevention for the Davey Tree Expert Co. in Kent, Ohio, and Chairman of the NAA Safety Committee. Peter Gerstenberger is Vice President of Business Management, Safety & Education for the NAA. This article is excerpted from a presentation they made at TCI EXPO 2001.
Successful companies have effective safety programs. Does yours?

Your company's safety program is vital to its profitability, professionalism and success. Whether your company has an existing safety program or is trying to develop and implement one, the National Arborist Association (NAA) Model Company Safety Program can help you establish the most comprehensive and effective safety program possible.

A program developed with the aid of the NAA Model Company Safety Program will:

- Prevent injuries, vehicle accidents and property damage
- Lower insurance costs
- Satisfy contractor/commercial client bidder requirements
- Boost productivity
- Ensure OSHA compliance
- Produce better motivated employees
- Improve ability to finish jobs on time and within budget
- Enhance your company’s reputation

The NAA Model Company Safety Program represents the best practices of some of the foremost companies in the industry. It contains instructions to guide you through implementation, as well as sample company policy language and useful forms for program implementation in print and on CD.

Call to order today! The long-term success and well-being of your company and its employees just may depend upon it.

ORDER TODAY!

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Selling Your Wood Products

Getting out in the community to market your wood products can reap great rewards.

By Harry Watt

Tree care company owners that sell their lumber often miss out on sales to folks they meet in their daily lives. It is too common for your neighbors not to think of you when they need lumber. This is a missed opportunity. You need to have everyone in a 15 to 20 mile radius of where you live (at least) think of you when they need to buy lumber.

Give some serious thought to doing your marketing on a continual basis. This means that you should do something every week that gets your name, face, or lumber out in front of prospects and past customers. Take some positive action each week to talk to prospective clients and those who can give you referrals. Make sure that your notices and handouts promoting your services and lumber are scattered around the community.

When you implement these marketing ideas, you create a "trail" that lumber product purchasers can use to find you. You also create interest in the products you can saw to meet their varied needs. The goal is to have these trails out there 365 days a year, so you can spend your time doing what you love.

Marketing methods

You can employ many methods to get your message out to buyers. Of course, you should use those ideas that have a high return for your investment of money and time.

Identify prospective customers and contact them. A person taking out a building permit to build a structure may need you for tree takedowns and could also be a source of logs — or, the builder may want some of your lumber for construction. Contact all your neighbors who are candidates for lumber. There are many uses for your higher grade lumber, such as furniture, cabinets, and flooring, as well as the lower grades, such as pallets, barns, and storage buildings.

Make it your goal to meet everyone in your neighborhood. Assess their needs for your lumber. You can use index cards, a notebook, or a computer to list your prospects and some ideas of what their needs might be.

Look at the list every week to keep your mind focused on marketing. You will do a better job at marketing and will do your neighbors a favor by helping them solve their lumber needs.

Remember that the number of customers you need each week is your weekly sawing board footage divided by the average footage purchased by a customer. So, if you are sawing 10,000 board feet per week and the average customer buys 2,000 board feet, you need five customers each week to buy from you. You need to find these five customers each week and sell them some lumber! If half of your contacts are buyers, then you need to contact 10 prospects per week to sell 10,000 board feet per week.

Try to take advantage of other businesses that you support. They may be able to help carry your banner. Ask the
local power equipment dealer where you purchase your chain saws and related items to put up one of your handouts. Sawmills use a lot of gas and diesel at the local filling station, so make friends with their staff and put your notices up there, too. You should try to put up a business card or flier at the garage where you have your trucks serviced.

Ask your sawmill manufacturer to put you on their list of recommended users.

Promote A wide variety of products

When you convert logs into lumber, you create a wide variety of products, various grades and sizes, lots of species, grain and figures, etc. Include all the products you offer in your notices and discussions. Otherwise, you accumulate items that don’t sell because of your lack of promotion.

Use illustrations on your printed materials and signs. People understand messages quicker in a visual format than a text format. So find some graphic art items such as photographs, clip art, drawings, or other figures to get your point across.

Be sure to present all the products and services you offer. Make sure to note if you offer portable sawing, delivery, and operations such as planing and drying. You should also mention any need to buy logs. You should try to create a sawing business that makes your customers say, “Wow.”

Your neighbors are buying lumber and related wood products every day. Most are not aware that you can meet much of their lumber needs. Work hard to create a great story to tell, and make sure that everyone hears it loud and clear.

Methods to Market your Wood Products

These marketing methods can help you become a recognizable and successful wood seller in your community.

Roadside signs: Use several, one at your driveway and others at forks in the road that lead to your location. Make a creative sign that shows off your product.

Business cards: Leave them wherever you can. Pass them out as often as possible. They will get your name out there!

Sponsorships: Sponsor a Little League baseball team or an adult softball team. This brings exposure to your business.

Join a group:

Civic clubs and churches are a good way to meet your neighbors – and promote your products and services!

Donations:

Donate a bench made of your lumber at a community location with your name on a permanent plate. You may want to
make a bench form a durable species for the local park, schools, churches or fire department.

Shop classes:
Sell lumber to the local school woodshop classes at a discount. Students may tell their parents about you. And students may buy from you in later years.

Support local groups:
Be a supporter of the local FFA, 4-H Club, Boy and Girl Scouts, or similar groups that need lumber for their community projects.

Craft shows:
Take out a booth at local craft shows, and make simple items or sell lumber.

Sawing by the road:
Sawing with a portable mill along a highway always gets attention.

Demo sawing:
Do a demo day of tree care and sawing for the community. It will make people aware of your wood products and will foster good will.

County fairs:
Set up a portable mill at the local farm day show or county fair.

Community fund-raiser:
Set your mill up as entertainment at your community barbecue fund-raiser.

Signs on trucks:
Paint a sign on your trucks, or use magnetic signs advertising your wood products as well as your tree care services.

County Forestry Association:
Join your local forestry association or, if your county doesn’t have one, help start one.

Socializing:
Visit the local diner for lunch or “watering hole” after hours to see what is going on in the local community. Be sure to talk about tree care and lumber!

Government and private foresters:
Make sure the local department and private foresters know about your lumber products. Get to know those foresters on a first-name basis.

Public speaking:
Develop a talk about tree care, forestry, using lumber, etc., and present it to any group willing to listen! A good place to start might be the local library.

Hats and shirts:
Get a couple hats and shirts with your business’ name on them, and wear them everywhere you go.

Reprinted with permission from the June/July 2001 issue of Sawmill & Woodlot Management. Harry Watt is president of Wood Management Systems, Inc., a woodworking consulting company. He can be reached at (704) 876-2724 or at wmshww@mail.i-americainet.
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Andrew J. Jarabak of Concept Engineering keeps busy explaining the Air Spade to visitors on the trade show floor.

ArborSoftWorx demonstrated how software can boost company profits.

Attendees fill out a form for a chance to win in one of the many drawings throughout the show.

Registration is abuzz with attendees anxious to get through the trade show doors.

These folks can really go the distance with Opti-Logic's rangefinder!

We caught this visitor dreaming about a shiny new chipper!

Robert Phillips (left), translator Mar and Mark Chisholm set up between booths.

We caught this visitor dreaming about a shiny new chipper!

Robert Phillips (left), translator Mar and Mark Chisholm set up between booths.

Registration is abuzz with attendees anxious to get through the trade show doors.

These folks can really go the distance with Opti-Logic's rangefinder!
These folks took time to peruse through the NAA’s latest offering: The Model Company Safety Program.

Forestry Suppliers Inc. was at your service.

Excellent in Arboriculture Award winners’ project boards were on display for all to admire.

The demo tree was center stage where experts Robert Phillips (left) and Mark Chisholm (right) shared their knowledge of rigging and climbing.

Step on up to Leonard’s booth!

John Bean sprayers was on the show floor.

Mark Havel talks to customers at Future Forestry’s booth.

“They’re Baaaaack!” Employees from Back Tree made sure to check out the latest and greatest tools and technologies available in the industry.
Representatives from Plant Health Care took their message of a "natural systems approach to improving plant health" to the people.

An exhibitor focuses on his equipment as a rope climbing competition goes on behind him.

Zenith chipper knives were right in their element.

Up close and personal with a Tamarack truck.

The best view of the trade show floor was - of course - from a bucket truck!

Rears Manufacturing brought an example of their custom-built power sprayers to the trade show floor.

The folks at Aerial Equipment patiently wait attendees shortly before the show opens.

All your arborist needs - including ropes and harnesses - in one location.

Videos offered yet another way for arborists to learn while attending EXPO.

A sign of the times indeed: Men were certainly working in trees - even on the EXPO trade show floor!

There were countless opportunities to ask questions about equipment - such as this Morbark chipper - before settling on the one that will best meet the needs of your tree care company.

Dan Banks from ArborSystems LLC demonstrates their tree injection system.
Another bird's eye - or, tree climber eye's - view of the show.

Charles Vander Kooi encourages audience participation in his seminar on Balancing, Estimating, Job Costing and Accounting.

Got stumps? Carlton has their stump grinders rarin' to go!

Attendees gather at TerraVent's booth.

NAA videos were shown for those who wanted to pick up a few tips, and are available for those who want to take the knowledge with them.

One Sherrill representative is - literally - showing these guys the ropes.

It's just like the sign says: These men are hard at work!

See you in November!

Milwaukee, Wisconsin
November 7-9, 2002
Midwest Express Center
For the first time ever, the Excellence in Arboriculture awards ceremony was held at TCI EXPO instead of Winter Management Conference. It was a great success, with hundreds turning out to see some of the best work performed in the tree care industry. Attendees and exhibitors mingled and enjoyed hors d’oeuvres as they joined in recognizing outstanding accomplishments of commercial arborist firms.

Awards this year covered projects ranging from general tree maintenance to tree relocation; from tree preservation on construction sites to technical rigging. The Judge's Awards, presented at the ceremony, served to honor projects that are worthy but fall outside of the scope of the Excellence program. Last but not least, the ceremony served to publicly reward the work of companies doing pro bono tree maintenance for trees of historical significance or in conjunction with Arbor Day. These awards are of the Grand Award caliber.

In all, there were 19 Excellence in Arboriculture awards for 2001.

--- Grand Awards ---

**Hartney Greymont**

"The Park at Post Office Square & Angle Memorial Park"

**Fitco Consult**

"Punta Murena Restoration"

Tree Maintenance - Commercial over $10,000

A view across the North Plaza.

A controlled removal using Hobbs devices.

Tree Maintenance - Residential over $10,000
Grand Awards

Treeworks Ltd., working with Alpine the Care of Trees

Bracing systems prior to concrete installation. Cable to the left of trunk attaches at ground level and roughly 30 feet up the trunk, running though two towers, eliminating stress on the insertion point.

“Madison Avenue Willow”

Tree Maintenance - Residential over $10,000

Top of willow as seen from the roof of the Madison Avenue townhouse.

Hendrickson the Care of Trees

“LeWa Farm”

Construction Site Tree Preservation

This newly created wetland was made possible by removing invasive species. Portions of the wetland have been re-planted; others have not, in order to yield information about species selection and restoration techniques.

Tree Maintenance for trees/sites of historic significance

Hartney Greymont

“For the Common Good”

Liriodendron tulipifera sitting above ground just prior to its being relocated to its new planting site.

Tree Maintenance - Residential over $10,000

Owen Tree Service

“Seven Ponds Nature Center”

This oak was one of many that framed a farmhouse and entrance of the Nature Center; competition from the road and drive as well as foot traffic is a problem. After pruning, this oak is in full leaf.

The F. A. Bartlett Tree Expert Co.

“Valley Forge National Historic Park”

This grove of trees overlooks Washington’s headquarters.

Tree Maintenance for trees/sites of historic significance
Awards of Distinction

Valley Crest Tree Co.
“Port of Long Beach, Phase 2”
Transporting a 114-inch boxed Ficus rubiginosa.

Tree Relocation

Vine & Branch Inc.
“The Orchard School”
This 150-year-old chestnut oak was hand root pruned and fertilized before construction. The consulting arborist was retained to watch the oak during the bulldozer operation and to “call off the operation” if major roots were encountered.

Construction Site Tree Preservation

Collier Arbor Care
“Old Apple Tree”
The old apple tree displays an open hollow trunk cavity.

Tree Maintenance - Heritage Tree

RTEC Treecare
“Panda Exhibit at National Zoo”
The climbing arborists hazard prune on the right as giant pandas climb around on the left.

Tree Maintenance - Commercial under $10,000

RTEC Treecare
“Levine Residence”
Front view of new house with tree in full leaf.

Construction site tree preservation

Winklers Tree & Landscaping, Inc.
“Stream Maintenance - Du Page County”
Creek bed after removal of undesirable species and trimming of remaining trees.

Tree Maintenance - Commercial over $10,000

CLS Landscape Management, Inc.
“Pomona Valley Memorial Park”
This is an example of how a pruned tree (California sycamore) can add to esthetic beauty.

Tree Maintenance - Commercial over $10,000

Collier Arbor Care
“Parry Center for Children”
This project involved tree hazard reduction pruning by crown cleaning and crown thinning this oak. Note the nearby parking lot.

Tree Maintenance - Commercial under $10,000
Honorably Mentioned
The Care of Trees
"Isaac Newton Square"
Row of willow oaks shown with new parking lot. The new building is in the background.

Construction Site Tree Preservation

Fritz Tree Service
"Swiftcreek"
Community developer and his son help in the planting of the Arbor Day Memorial live oak.

Construction Site Tree Preservation

Fritz Tree Service
"Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort"
A view of the golf course.

Tree Maintenance - Commercial over $10,000

Sponsors
Wonderland Tree Care Inc.
"Arbor Day 2001 Festival"
Children line up for their chance to climb this 80-foot American elm.

Meritorious project other than tree maintenance

---

**WoodsmanPRO**

Chain Saw Chain

Here is our most popular pro-arborist chain. 30LP is an aggressive cutting low-profile chain that matches perfectly with an ArborPRO™ bar. Do not choose this chain unless you are a professional arborist or utility worker with experience running a chain saw. Chain is .375 pitch, .050 gauge, full comp. Popular loop prices are below.

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<th>Description</th>
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**ArborPRO**

Sprocketnose Bars

If you are tired of the low quality laminated bars that come with today's smaller professional saws, here is your answer. ArborPRO bars are designed with today's professional users in mind. Made of special micro-alloy steel, these bars are wider and thicker than stock bars. They also come with a stout 4 rivet tip to give you increased life in the nose area. Try one on your tree saw and see why professional arborists refuse to run anything else. Bars fit Stihl, Husky, Poulan and Echo saws.

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TREE CARE INDUSTRY - JANUARY 2002
Software designed with arborists in mind helps increase your knowledge of client preferences, property work history, treatment schedules — and keeps crews from getting lost.

Choosing computer software can be tough for tree care professionals because usually a person who knows a lot about trees and is good at running machinery is generally not savvy at handling a computer. When that new chipper gives you fits, you can always whack it with a crescent wrench; not so a computer. The good news is that in ways similar to equipment dealer support, when you buy a new piece of machinery the companies that sell computer software have support staff ready to walk you through the setup and operations phases of their programs. Chances are, you’re going to need it.

According to the National Arborist Association, about 80 percent of its membership has sales under $250,000. Operations this size usually cannot afford a full-time office manager, the kind of person who can get a computer system up and running. As a consequence, many tree care owners and managers put off buying a system and software that will help them organize their business because they just don’t want to deal with learning how to run the thing. The problem, though, is that this is exactly what prevents a tree care company from taking the next step in growth. Instead, business just plateaus or slowly muddles along without any breakthroughs in profitability.

Let’s break tree care into two main groups: tree work (pruning, removals, cabling, etc.) and plant health care (fertilizing, spraying, mycorrhizal injection, etc.). If your company only does tree work and only has a few employees, then chances are you can get by with an inexpensive accounting program such as Quickbooks. But if your company runs multiple tree crews, then chances are you are having difficulty staying organized. If your company performs plant health care (PHC), then a whole new range of organizing skills are needed. This is where a program designed for tree care companies can really help. PHC requires a good deal of scheduling, organizing of inventory, routing of crews, licensing, marketing, etc. These are the areas where a business can become inefficient and a good program can save the day.
According to Donna Garner, co-owner of Tree Management Systems, the makers of ArborGold software, “The purpose of using a specialized tree care program is better customer management. What do you want to do with your data? You want your program to sell additional work for you each year by organizing your customers. Once a company gets to six to 10 employees, its job management is more complex, and things need to be more organized and efficient.”

Now let’s separate tree care companies into three categories of sizes: large- and medium-sized companies that already have a computer system (they’re not reading this article); small companies that have a part-time or full-time bookkeeper; and small companies where the owner is trying to do it all. It’s these latter two groups for which a new software package can make a huge difference.

The company with a bookkeeper generally finds it easier to integrate a new computer system. The ones where the owner is also the bookkeeper have a tougher time. Fortunately, some software companies (such as the ones listed in this article) specialize in green industry businesses and are prepared for this. Representatives can walk you through the entire process from setup to daily operation.

When you are ready to buy...

When buying a software program, keep several things in mind. The program should help with sales and marketing by tracking where you get your phone calls from, as well as the dollar volume proposed and sold based on those phone calls. It should track the performance of different salespeople. It should allow you to write out proposals in the field on either a laptop or handheld computer device, then easily update those proposals into your office system. The software program should turn proposals into work orders easily when the job is approved. You should have a feature for drawing maps on it for proposals and work orders. Once the work is installed as a proposal, the software should be able to track that money into the work order, the invoice, the state-
ments, and the accounts receivable. This accounting information can either be entered directly into the program or easily uploaded into an accounting software program.

Keep in mind that the software program should be able to grow with you as your company grows.

You should also find out if the software company is planning to upgrade their program soon and if upgrades can be downloaded from the Web.

There is one more important item to be aware of: If you presently use Quickbooks, you are not going to be able to transfer your address file from Quickbooks to the new software by yourself. You will have to send the software company your Quickbooks file and they will enter it for you. Some companies want to be paid for this, some do not. If you use an accounting program other than Quickbooks, make sure the company can post your customer list or you will have many fun hours typing in each one.

The Software Companies

Tree Management Systems, makers of ArborGold Software, is owned by Donna and Jon Garner. Donna grew up in a family of arborists and watched her father's company grow from a few employees to more than 35. She saw first-hand the need for a program to help organize a tree service. Jon studied forestry in college and finished his degree in computers.

The ArborGold program allows big and small companies to automate. They offer their software in a sort-of-a-la-carte menu. The basic price for ArborGold Complete Management program is $1,995. They also have a small business option for up to 500 customers for $995, and an even smaller company option for up to 250 customers for $495. When a company gets larger, it can upgrade to the larger system. The Quickbooks posting feature is $295. This allows you to send all accounting information to Quickbooks. Tree Management will download your client list from Quickbooks to their program for free. They also have ArborGold Synch, which allows you to synchronize from a laptop in the field to the office PC for an additional $1,295.

ArborGold, like all the programs in this article, is versatile. You can estimate in the field, then download when you get to the office. All information is tracked right through invoicing and accounts receivable. You can order Microsoft's MapPoint option ($249), which automatically prints roadmaps onto ArborGold work orders. There is also a landscape map feature that allows you to draw pictures of the property onto proposals and work orders. You can monitor job progress, and then invoice on separate services or all together. When done, you can post all transactions into your general ledger in Quickbooks.

Arbor Computer Systems makes software packages under the same name and is owned by Peter Hannan. Hannan's tree service, which he started in 1963, is presently run by his son. In 1978, he started writing computer code to design a software package for his own company because he couldn't find anything on the market to suit his needs. Shortly thereafter, Hannan started selling the package to other tree services and has refined it over the years. He now claims to be "The largest provider of software for tree care companies."

While some companies separate their various products, Hannan offers his as one large package for $3,995. If you add up the many options other companies sell separately, you might reach a similar number. Hanna states his program is easy to learn and use. "The learning curve for our program is about three hours," he says. "After our customers learn how to use it, we don't tend to hear from them again."

Arbor Computer Systems also recognizes that every company is different, so they customize their programs for each customer. Arbor Computer Systems gives you unlimited free support for one year. The software is not compiled or copy protected, which means that if, after the one-year warranty is up, there is a part of the program you would like to change, you can do it yourself with the manuals provided.

"People buy from us because once they talk to us they know we understand not only the application but also the business," said Hannan.

Arbor Computer Systems also believes that a computer company should be able
to offer a complete turnkey service. Therefore they sell both the software and all the necessary hardware. They will upload all your current files, give you 2,000 custom statements and window envelopes and 1,000 custom letterhead and window envelopes, plus one-year support for $6,960. If you subtract out the $3,995 for the software program, that means you are paying $2,965 for a custom-designed hardware and software package, with all the necessary tech support.

**Creative Automation Solutions** makes ArborSoftWorx (formerly ArborWare) and is owned by Mark Smith and managed by Diana Cardillo. Neither has worked in the tree business, but according to Smith this is a positive. "You don’t expect the engineers who design chippers to be out there running them every day. You just want them to make great chippers. The same goes for your software program. You just want it to do great things for you."

Smith got into the business of writing computer programs in 1983. A few years later a friend who owned a tree care company approached him about writing a program. This friend had been through three different programs already, none satisfactory. Smith designed a program to meet his friend’s needs and has been selling to the tree care industry ever since.

When you open ArborSoftWorx, you notice that the program uses pull-down tabs on the top of the screen instead of large keys in the middle of the screen. This can be visually intimidating at first, because so much of the screen is empty, but according to Smith, this allows a program to have a huge amount of extra information in it and be more flexible. For instance, the search engines in the program are incredible. If you are having trouble remembering a customer’s name, but can remember some of the address or most of the phone number, the program can find the customer. Every program has a learning curve, so if you can get past the pull-down tabs, ArborSoftWorx will help you organize your company.

Creative Automation Solutions also makes a tree service program for municipalities that is slightly different than the one for industry.

Smith is pretty has a cut-and-dried answer about when is the right time to buy a software package: “When you get a client base that is no longer manageable in your memory and on paper, then it’s time for a tool to aid you in that job.” To that end, ArborSoftWorx has one of the least expensive programs on the market. The price for the base package is $1,000. This gives you ability to write proposals, work orders, invoices, statements and accounts receivable. The program does not post to Quickbooks, but, according to Smith, this is based on a philosophical issue, not a technical issue. Smith feels the accounting in ArborSoftWorx is more than sufficient to meet customer needs, so he doesn’t feel you should have to pay for this service unless you specifically ask for it. The posting feature has a nominal charge.

Other software options include a PHC program that organizes your chemical reports, DOA reporting, and recommendations for PHC, IPM, and maintenance programs for $500. The field device import/export option is $500.

**Practical Solutions** makes Service Solutions software and is owned by Maris Franke. He was one of the original owners of Barefoot Grass, a large successful lawn maintenance company that he sold several years ago. He started writing computer programs for lawn companies in 1983, then adapted their program in 1989 to fit any service that does repetitive work. According to Dave Cross, the director of marketing, this is important because it allows a company to expand into other services beyond tree care.

“Our program is very advanced,” said Cross. “We also feel this program will grow with your business, without having to buy expensive upgrades.” Cross was contacted for this article while attending the Ohio Turf Conference. “We’re opening a lot of eyes right here at the show with the routing and mapping features alone, not to mention the accounting parts of the software,” Cross said.

The cost for the Service Solutions program is $4,950 and includes on-site installation and training. Travel costs are extra. One year unlimited tech support is included and can be done over the phone or online. When tech support works with you online, they can literally watch where you are moving your mouse, how you are entering data, and

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can even move your mouse for you. Microsoft MapPoint 2002 is also installed directly in the program. This feature provides maps of almost anywhere in the U.S. These maps can then be printed onto work orders.

It is better to buy MapPoint as part of the software package because if you buy it after-market, it can be difficult to set up and it is not integrated directly into your software program.

Practical Solutions admits their program is more expensive than others, but Cross says, "We feel it is the most powerful, productive, and fully integrated of any program in the outdoor services. When you think that people spend $40,000 to $50,000 on a truck, we think it is a small increase to pay for our product compared to others."

Service Communication Software makes the ServicePro program and is owned by Richard Deering, with Scott Williams as vice president. Deering ran a tree and lawn service for 25 years (which he sold just last year to focus on software) and has had the software company for 11 years. There are 11 employees in the company that keep the office open from 8 a.m. to 7 pm.

Unique features in the ServicePro software are the Intella-search key and the Marketing key on the opening page. The Intella-search key lets you find a customer in a variety of ways, and then allows you to pull up every piece of information about that customer on one page. The Marketing key brings you to a page that helps you create more business. There are three choices: the first to gain more revenue from existing customers, the second to get additional customers using existing customers, and a third to design a mass marketing campaign.

The company likes to think that what sets them apart is, "A lot of real world experience in the program," said Scott Williams. They understand what issues tree care companies have, Williams says, "Also, our program is easy to use and operate, with quality tech support well versed in hardware and software." There is no electronic posting to Quickbooks.

The base price starts at $2,995 for one computer and includes two tutorial CD's, a 300-page manual, and three months of unlimited tech support.

Williams gives a piece of advice to companies considering buying a program, "Make a list of what you want your program to do. Then online, in person, or by phone make those companies demonstrate that their program can meet your needs." This may be the most important piece of information you, as the potential customer, need to know.

Any software you seriously consider purchasing must meet all criteria you have set out for it. Make sure you can understand the software as it is presented on the screen. A program that is visually appealing and easy for you to use might not be to someone else. Call around to some or all of the companies listed here and find out which ones can meet the needs of your firm. Then think about it for a while before taking the plunge - otherwise you'll just end up buying from the last company you talked to.

Buying a software package can be confusing, and installing it and running it for the first time isn't nearly as exciting as getting behind the wheel of that new truck you just bought. But a new software package should organize your company and give you more free time. It should also help you make more money, which is, of course, even more exciting.

Michael Roche is the owner of Stone Tree & Landscape in Stowe, Vt.
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Promoting David to that new management position seemed like a great idea. He always worked long hours and wanted to move up. And he was so popular with coworkers! Why bother tracking down an outside candidate when there was already a staff member ready to roll?

Unfortunately, problems cropped up as soon as David took on his new duties. He failed to keep staff informed about new projects in the company. He scheduled safety meetings – only to keep everyone waiting while he completed some phone calls. The staff – formerly friends – started to grumble that he was “too bossy.” People lost interest in doing a good job and the business started missing its sales and profit goals.

Not a pretty picture, but one that is all too common. Done right, promoting from within motivates the entire team and fosters staff loyalty. Done wrong, it sparks workplace friction and resentment.

How can you make sure your own internal promotions move people up the ladder of success without falling on their heads? For the answer look to the first half of this article, in which consultants from around the country offer valuable pointers. The second half contains advice for the new supervisors themselves.
Part I: Tips for Coaches

No. 1: Be a good role model.

Your own behavior as the company owner must demonstrate the style of leadership you expect from newly promoted individuals. For starters, you need to treat your staff fairly.

"If they have been mistreated by their own managers, new supervisors will commonly do the same with their subordinates," warns Ian Jacobsen, president of Jacobsen Consulting Group in Sunnyvale, Calif. "Just as a child from an abused home is more likely to be an abuser, new supervisors who have not had good role models will behave in dysfunctional ways."

Second, you need to play by the company rules. "A lot of people think they can start slacking off once they are promoted," says Peggy Morrow, a Houston-based consultant. "Show them this is not your way by being a strong role model."

No. 2: Involve your staff in the promotion.

What characteristics will make a successful candidate for crew leader or area manager? Ask your staff about the characteristics needed, but don't ask them to choose a specific person. People will more likely accept a decision in which they have invested their own ideas.

"Have the people who are going to be supervised participate in the development of criteria for selection," says Jacobsen. "Hold a meeting to discuss how the job may have changed in recent months and what the company now needs to look for in a new leader."

The criteria may be as varied as technical competence, communications ability and talent in solving problems. Does the foreman also sell while the crew is on a property? Do neighbors wander over and ask for bids?

"Brainstorming these criteria not only gives people some input into decision making, but also helps them better understand more of what the job entails," says Jacobsen. "All of this will make it easier for the new person coming in - as long as the criteria have been adhered to when the selection is made."

No. 3: Train the person.

Good leadership is learned. You need to groom the person for the job. "Too often today, new supervisors are not given a sense of what to expect from their positions," says Judy Foritano, president of Somerset Consulting Group in Titusville, N.J. "They need to be trained so they know how to deal with relationship issues."

Consider having a current supervisor mentor the prospective manager, suggests Fred Martels, president of People Solution Strategies in Chesterfield, Mo. "The mentor can serve as a coach, answering questions such as "What will your first day as a supervisor be like?" suggests Martels. "The mentor may also outline the expectations the company holds for new supervisors, and impress upon the prospect the need to meet them."

One approach is to give prospective
supervisors temporary work assignments that will hone the skills required to do similar work full time. “Try having the prospective manager develop the skills of a buddy,” suggests Mel Kleiman, president of Humetrics, Houston. “Then see how the person deals with problems that arise.”

Skills need not all be gained on the job. “Maybe someone is president of the PTA or other civic organization,” says Kleiman. “Encourage individuals to get active in such groups because it is a non-threatening way for them to gain skills that can be effective on the job.”

No. 4. Announce the promotion appropriately.

The formal transition to supervisor must be announced in an unambiguous way so the staff realizes the new supervisor has the backing of the organization. Don’t just announce casually “Joe will be the crew leader this week, then we’ll see how it goes.”

The process will vary by size of group. In a small group I would hold a short meeting to inform the group of decision. Then let the new supervisor take the reins. The new supervisor not only needs to express his vision but also must let people know he is behind each of them. “People always want to know ‘What’s going to happen to me?’” says Martels. “If the new supervisor expresses a desire to move each of them forward, then everything will be OK.”

In large workgroup, communicate the promotion through a letter from the person who made the decision. “Inform people of the decision and ask for their support. Invite anyone with questions to come and see the person who wrote the letter.”

No. 5. Follow through after the promotion.

“How’s everything going?” That’s the question to answer after a person is promoted. As you walk around the shop, ask people how the new manager is working out. You are not being a snoop, but you are getting the feedback you need as you go about your task of coaching the new manager.

Informal discussions are likely to be more fruitful than passing out a questionnaire, says Jacobsen. “People feel much more at ease talking about this on an informal basis.”

No. 6: Tackle problems.

Suppose the new manager just can’t seem to get the respect of subordinates, who start carrying out their duties in a perfunctory manner or let things slide. The way to tackle this issue is to ask questions, either of the supervisor or of the subordinates. “Be sure to cite the specific behaviors,” says Jacobsen. “And then state that this is not what you expected when you made the promotion.”

If you are approaching one of the new supervisor’s subordinates, ask: “I’ve really been surprised that [...] doesn’t get the respect from you that I thought he would. This is what I see going on [ cite the specific behavior issues ]. How come?”

Part II: Tips for New Supervisors

No. 7. Participate in the formal announcement.

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promotion in a staff meeting, then invite you to say a few words. Express how happy you are to be in your new role, and discuss how you want to retain your friendship with each of them, while understanding that in your new position you will have new expectations as to how you will interact with them.

State that you have a vision as to what the group can accomplish, and describe what this vision is. Add that you want to include them in the process of developing shared goals, and that you will be talking with each of them on an individual basis to obtain their ideas before making your decisions. Finally, let them know you want to help each of them achieve their personal goals.

No. 8. Become a skilled listener.

"Listening is a key skill for a leader. Most workplace consultants agree listening is a vital and perhaps determining factor in the ability to understand and motivate people. When someone talks with you, pause whatever you are doing and give your full attention. Make good eye contact. Be genuinely interested in what people have to say and learn to have real empathy for them."

Says Morrow, “Ask questions. Talk with your people. Come back and get their ideas for improvement. What can be changed? What can be made better?”

No. 9. Learn how to open people up.

Part of being a good listener is encouraging people to speak up in the first place. Get skilled in stimulating people to advance their ideas and opinions. And when people advance ideas, don’t shoot them down. Avoid idea-killer phrases such as “I can’t sell it to management” or “We’ve tried that before.” Instead say: “Tell me more about that” or “How does that work?” and “What does the group think?” These approaches encourage people to bring more of themselves to the table.

Every group has an informal leader, a person who is not officially in management but seems to perform as a pivot for the group’s ideas. You will be smart to identify, and work with, your informal leader. If they support your initiatives, everyone else in the group will. Get their “buy-in” by asking their opinions, listening to them and working extra hard to get their input.

No. 10. Avoid precipitous actions.

Many new supervisors want to make their mark quickly with dramatic initiatives. Avoid this. “Don’t make major changes in the early days,” suggests Morrow. “Your authority has not yet been established.” Instead, get that valuable feedback from your staff so they will feel invested in the decisions you will make.

No. 11. Socialize with your staff.

So now you’re the boss. Can you still have beers with your peers? “There used to be a rule that you had to stop being buddies when you were promoted to management,” says Morrow. “Today you can still be friends and maintain authority.” Indeed, maintaining social relationships pays rich dividends. Today's supervisor gets work done through subordinates. And if you’re going to get work done through others, they have to be on your side. Furthermore, in social settings your staff is more likely to provide you with valuable new ideas and advance warnings of problems.

“People will tell you things over a beer that they won’t tell you otherwise,” says Morrow.

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Handling Resentment

Getting promoted is great. But how about Sam - that co-worker who was bucking for the same job and got passed over? Now Sam will report to you. How will you handle his resentment?

Rather than wait for Sam’s simmering emotions to explode into workplace issues, schedule a one-on-one talk with him. Acknowledge that you know the person was a contender for the job. Say you recognize it may be an awkward situation and your intention is to create a situation where Sam will be able to thrive, and you want to honor his wishes to move up and will do whatever you can do to help support him in his career growth.

Then emphasize that you want to cultivate a positive working relationship. State that you look forward to working with Sam as someone who is strong and can add to the team. Follow through with additional one-on-one’s when situations arise that can benefit from his expertise. Involve Sam as an ally by getting his perspectives on issues.

In serious cases the resentful co-worker may harbor ill feelings that start to surface in performance issues. In such cases, once again, it is important to act promptly. The danger of waiting is that it gives time for the person’s resentments to fester. The individual can become dysfunctional or counter functional to the team. So schedule one-on-one meetings and concentrate on performance issues.

“You need to be very sensitive to changes in behavior. Keep notes of such changes and be able to describe them and their impact work performance. Not all such behaviors need to be directly tied to the staff member’s work duties. Resentment may surface, for example, in the forms of derogatory comments, jokes, a decline in initiative, or even in long silences during meetings. Because all such actions affect team performance, they may be referenced in a one-on-one with the staff member.

Describe what you have seen and ask what is causing the activity. Avoid making value judgments such as “you are not supporting my authority” or “you are not a team player.” Such assessments address attitudes rather than actions and will only spark denial and arguments. Instead, identify the behaviors that are causing you to feel the person is not supporting you as a new supervisor. Then talk about those.

Such meetings can be difficult at first. “It requires a strong self-esteem for a new boss to sit down and have such a chat. But these talks will help you get the information you need, and can help avoid an escalating performance problem with the staff member.

‘How’s it going? What am I doing that is making life easier for you? Am I doing anything inadvertently that is making life harder for you?’

For most new supervisors, the transition from buddy to boss is fraught with stress. The tips in this article should help most any new manager make a transition that will minimize team disruption and lead to greater profits and success.
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(Please reference code 102T)

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Give your crews comprehensive training in chipper use and maintenance, plus a lot more. Basic Training for Ground Operations in Tree Care is the newest video series available from the NAA. The five videos and fully illustrated workbook break new ground in crew training. Video titles are: An Orientation to the Arboriculture Profession; Vehicle Safety; Job Planning and Preparation; Working Safely and Efficiently; and Brush Chipper Operation and Maintenance. To order either product, contact the NAA at 1-800-733-2622 or order online at www.natlarb.com.
Management in Maui

NAA's Winter Management Conference lands in Hawaii

The business of tree care is the purpose of Winter Management Conference, and the excursions are a parallel payoff. Fortunately for attendees, the island of Maui presents extraordinary outing, tour, and adventure opportunities. The natural beauty of the Hawaiian islands is unparalleled, so naturally tours that present the panorama of Maui's plants and animals are sure to delight.

Tours, Outings & Events

Opening Reception: Welcome to Hawaii! Warm breezes and sensuous fragrances of tropical blossoms transport you to another place in time. Re-acquaint with old friends and make new ones. This traditional start to the conference will ease you into the right state of mind.

Robert Felix Memorial Golf Tournament: You are welcomed to an afternoon of relaxation and friendly competition — all for a good cause. Watch a few shanks, mix in sandtraps and the results are four scholarships for students studying arboriculture.

Breakfast, Crafts and Fauna: Enjoy pastries and tropical juices while local artisans share their crafts of coconut weaving, lei making and the art of Lauhala hat making. After breakfast and Hawaiian crafts, you will embark on a “Sense of Place” tour, led by Clifford Na‘ole, cultural advisor, who will walk though the hotel’s Medicinal Garden as he shares a part of the island’s history and lifestyle.

Hawaiian Luau: This evening will take you back in time to experience the age-old tradition of the Hawaiian Luau. As the sun sets, burning tiki torches light up the night and line the path to your luau feast. The gentle music of a Hawaiian Trio plays during dinner, as you enjoy an array of foods of the islands. After dinner, a Polynesian show features dances celebrating the many cultures that make up Hawaii.

Cheese and Wine Tasting: Taste some of the extraordinary domestic and international cheeses made today. Executive Chef Stephen Marshall will lead the group through a tasting of cheeses which include Brie, a selection of Chevres, Queso Manchego and more.

Deep Sea Fishing: Board a tournament winning deep-sea vessel from Lahaina Harbor for a chance at hooking “the big one.” Afternoon on the water is a magical time where you may see whales and where dolphins often escort you to one of Hawaii’s abundant fishing areas. Troll for Marlin, wahoo, mahi mahi, yellowfin tuna and other species of Pacific warm water fish.

Whale Watch Cruise: State-of-the-art under- and above-water video equipment will provide incredible viewing opportunities. Enjoy the narration by marine mammal experts with the latest scientific information about Humpback whales including whale behavior you’ll experience live!

Afternoon in Lahaina: You will have the opportunity to wander through the boutique-style stores of historic old Lahaina Town, which incidentally is more interesting than Michener’s “Hawaii.” Within the span of a few decades, this little town hosted rowdy whalers, zealous missionaries and the royal Hawaiian family. Lahaina has now been restored to become a bustling tourist mecca; full of restaurants, art galleries, jewelry stores, and delightfully off beat “tourist traps.” You will enjoy a brief historical drive-through tour of Old Lahaina town and then stroll through the town, select gifts and soak up the local color.

Book your reservation now

Here is the information you need to help you book your trip to WMC 2002.

The dates of the Conference are Feb. 12 - 17, 2002. The Opening Reception is scheduled for Tuesday evening, Feb. 12, and Sunday, Feb. 17 is a travel day. The conference concludes on Saturday evening.

The Ritz-Carlton Kapalua is the site of the conference. Reservations can be made by calling 1-800-262-8440. We have secured the following rates:

- Ocean Front Suite - $600
- Deluxe Ocean View - $295
- Executive Suite - $525
- Ocean Front Suite - $600

Rooms are limited in each category. In order to secure your preferred room type — reserve early! Please reference the National Arborist Association.

We have contracted with the following airlines for reduced fares to Hawaii. Travel reservations can be made by contacting your local travel agent or by calling the airlines directly.

American Airlines
To take advantage of the special fares being offered by American Airlines, call 1-800-433-1790 and refer to the following Authorization Number #3122AC.

Delta Airlines
Reservations and schedule information may be obtained by calling 1-800-241-6760 and referencing the File Number #178610A.

Early Bird registrations must be received by Jan. 11, 2002. Registrations received after Jan. 11, 2002, not complying with the appropriate fees, will be billed accordingly.

For more information, contact Carol Crossland at 1-800-733-2622.
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TREE CARE INDUSTRY - JANUARY 2002
Dutch Elm Disease Reaches Seattle ...

The city arborist in Seattle, Wash., found himself pleading for calm after the city's first-ever verified case of Dutch elm disease was reported early in the fall.

Arborist Nolan Rundquist told the Seattle Times that the city doesn't have to fear the same kind of mass destruction of street and yard trees that other communities have experienced in the nearly 100 years since the disease first appeared on the East Coast. And he should know. Rundquist worked in the city of Fremont, Neb., in the 1970s when Dutch elm ravaged that city.

"Fifty, 60, 70 percent of the tree population was American elms," Rundquist told the newspaper. "Fremont had a backlog of 500 trees to remove."

In Seattle, the arborist estimates that there may be 700 elms on public property. And he expressed some hope that a fungicide used in other cities may help.

The View from the Jail Cell Is Not as Good

Someone illegally cut down a half-dozen trees in an area known as Lake Park in Milwaukee County, Wis.

According to the Associated Press, the county sheriff's department is investigating the removal of the trees. And the investigators don't have to look too far to find some suspects. Apparently, homeowners in the area have long been complaining that they pay taxes based on the fact that their homes have a view of Lake Michigan, but that they can't actually see the lake because of the trees.

The homeowners have asked the county's parks department to remove or prune the trees in the past, but to no avail. Parks officials say the trees and shrubs help prevent a hillside from eroding. In addition to pursuing the culprits, the sheriff was also trying to figure out what fines or penalties would apply to the crimes. While

Drought Keeps Ohio Arborists Busy ...

The drought that plagued southern Ohio in 1999 and 2000 is over, despite average rainfall for most of 2001. But arborists there tell the Cincinnati Post that the damage has been done. In fact, one Park Board arborist said the problem is a 10-year stretch of what he calls "unstable" weather, with long periods of drought and occasional flooding. Spruce, white pine, ash, maple and dogwood are being hardest hit.

The city of Cincinnati said it expected to remove more trees than normal under its hazardous program and would seek to expand its maintenance program as well. Local arborist Rick Hannah of Davey Tree Expert Co. told the newspaper that business was brisk.

"Last year's drought was the straw that broke the camel's back" he said. "This year we've seen stuff go down quickly."

Tree Climber Makes Guinness Book — Sort of

The publishers of the Guinness Book of World Records say their 2002 edition contains a new entry relating to tree climbing. In a way. The book will, for the first time, carry an entry for "best tree-climbing fish." The winner and apparently the only entry is the Anabas testudineus, also known as the climbing perch, which can scamper up palm trees in its native Thailand and has gills that enable it to breathe out of water.

In a development apparently unrelated to arborists the world over, the 2002 edition of Guinness will also carry an entry for the first time for the loudest burp, which measured 118 decibels, or about as loud as an airplane on takeoff.
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TREE CARE INDUSTRY - JANUARY 2002
Can I Trust the Rope?

Learning to Climb

By Stefanie Freele

Forty feet up in the cool January Sonoma County air, I cling frantically to a tiny piece of fir bark that will undoubtedly not save my life. For the hundredth time, Seth Lewers, owner of Lewers Tree Service, patiently tells me to “let go of the tree and hold onto the rope.” Somehow at the beginning of every climb, my earth-loving mind and gravity-dependent body just cannot grasp this simple concept. Obviously, I have a much better chance of survival holding onto the braided safety blue rope than obstinately clinging to a 1-inch potentially mobile sliver of this enormous 200-year-old tree.

Seth imitates my stance to show me how ridiculous I look hugging a tree with my rear extended, rather than relaxing into the saddle. “Lean back into your saddle and hold the rope. LET GO OF THE TREE!” His antics make me laugh and relieve some stress, but as the ever-stubborn pupil, I don’t quite listen. Instead I compromise and grab the nearest branch. He gasps, “What is your hand doing over there? There is a reason they call it a lifeline! Hold onto it.”

Ever calm, my tree-climbing guru explains how I need to use my leg muscles rather than my wimpy arm muscles. He rappels down with uncanny ease to be by my side, determined to get me through my obligatory panic stage.

“But you do this for a living!” I cry. I glance at Seth; content, happy and oblivious to fear. I think, there is something perverse and weird about a professional tree climber enthusiastically climbing on a Sunday just for fun. For the billionth time in the same day, I resolve to stop this foolishness and take up a safe hobby like canning peaches, playing bingo or clipping coupons.

There is a purpose for today’s climb other than to torture me. The landowners have hired Seth to give his professional opinion regarding the status of the tree. The 150-foot Douglas fir, with a diameter of 5 feet, may be removed to make room for a house. Another was removed due to proximity to the potential home — it was uphill and leaning. However, this tree’s removal was a difficult decision. Located on a ridge, the fir has been exposed to strong winds. Upon closer inspection, the tree is now aged and brittle, perhaps unable to flow with the wind, and could possibly snap. Halfway up Seth also points out a fungus. It looks like this gallant fir, older than every human on earth, will soon become firewood.

Watching Seth move effortlessly gives me some courage. I start to body thrust, advancing the Blake’s hitch. I hear his encouragement far in the distance even though he’s 16 inches away. Before I realize it, I’m at the tie-in point and securing my flip line.

The gorgeous Dry Creek Valley surrounds us. As usual when we climb, somewhere long after the inevitable panic session and much higher in the tree, it always dawns on me: a terrific feeling I get nowhere else. I relish the quiet, give silent thanks to the tree that is supporting me and pat the safety snap with gratitude — not quite trusting the rope, but at least pretending to.

Seth explains that my previous white-knuckling event has potentially left me with little reserves and perhaps using my remaining energy we should descend. As my tired feet touch the ground my weak legs bend before I stand straight. As I explain to Seth that I absolutely cannot wait to get out of this 300 pound saddle, he informs me that its weight is quite possibly closer to 2 pounds. The relief is sweet and joyous. We did it! Looking up at the limbs that just minutes ago supported my terrified body, I feel a sense of buoyant giddiness. The leather gloves, an hour ago almost thrown at Seth in frustration, are tossed gleefully into the rope bag. We gather the gear into the pickup and drive home slowly as the sun sets purple and calm, both looking out the window with tired and satisfied smiles, keeping our eyes open for next Sunday’s tree.

Stefanie Freele is a freelance writer in Healdsburg, Calif.

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