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A Can of Worms...

Happy New Year! And so we begin 2004 with “The Thinking Tree Person’s Column” – that means all of you.

Ethical – are you ethical in your business practices? Seems like a pretty easy question to answer doesn’t it? Yes, I pay my taxes. Yes, I advertise truthfully. Yes, I do what I tell my clients I’m going to do. Yes, I provide safety training and quality PPE for my employees. Yes, I’m honest.

Ever get this question? “Honey, does this outfit make me look fat?” Any husband in the world knows there is ONLY one answer to that question. (If you don’t know, I’m not telling.) And so begin the white lies that we are accustomed to telling under the pretense that it will reduce potential hurt to the other person. And yet, is that ethical behavior?

There was a guy named Fletcher who would have agreed. He had a theory called situational ethics, which basically said that something that is wrong in one circumstance could be right in another. Something along the lines of – if your child is dying, you can’t afford the medicine, and you know where you could get it, is stealing it OK to save your child’s life? We are surrounded these days by bio-ethics questions in medicine with scientists, religious leaders, medical practitioners and families wrestling with issues around cloning, the use of stem cells for research, etc., etc. I have no doubt that within the tree care world there are some very strong feelings on both sides of these questions of ethics. And so, too, there are very strong feelings on both sides of the questions that continually plague our industry about ethics.

What are appropriate employee hiring practices?
What are appropriate marketing practices?
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How do our decisions affect the safety of our employees?
How do our decisions affect the quality of life we can offer our employees?
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What are my ethical responsibilities to my customers?
What are my ethical responsibilities to the public?
What are my ethical responsibilities to my employees?
What are my ethical responsibilities to my community?
What are my ethical responsibilities to my competitors?
What are my personal ethics and how do they inform the day-to-day decisions that I make?
What ARE ethics?

And so I ask you to begin 2004 THINKING about what your ethics are, who you are as a person and how that shapes your business, and to share with me your thoughts on any or all of these questions.

This community deserves a conversation about ethics. We have heard complaints for years about what various people and/or companies think about certain practices. We have had speakers at meetings discussing ethics.

NOW, it’s time to TALK about ethics. So what do you think?

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 Tree Care Industry 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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Cover Photo by Matt Palmer/Touched by Nature
New Gear for the New Year

The Glide
When it comes to touring great climbing gear, Sherrill remains in a permanent state of "bent-over backwards." After several attempts to source a similar design from abroad, but unable to satisfy safety concerns, Sherrill approached Buckingham Manufacturing about putting their "work-duty" touch on another rolling big tree saddle design. After a year of sitting down with experts from ArbTech Master training, Buckingham completely redidigned and then revealed a list of first-rate improvements never before seen in this type of suspension saddle. Among some of its highest rated features are the ability to change woom components easily, quick release buckles rated to 2000 pounds (not 2200), heavy-duty but lightweight construction.

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The Root of the Matter

**Green-industry professionals in Illinois rewrite the old standards for nursery trees - and set a precedent for other states.**

By Bernard Jacobs and Terry Warriner Ryan

Last fall, as a result of continuing battles with local municipalities over the right way to plant a tree, a number of green industry professionals in the Chicago area gathered to discuss the impact that inconsistencies in standards, practices, specifications, codes, guidelines and ordinances were having on landscape projects.

In the past few years, as various tree planting requirements have been formally enacted by local jurisdictions, it has become clear that we in the green industry do not communicate with each other, nor do we know which specific practices different associated professions are observing. There has been confusion about what proper practices should be, who sets them and who monitors them. It is sadly apparent that many who are not green professionals – such as planners, architects or public works officials – are setting many of the standards and directing policy.

Frustrated by inconsistencies within the industry, the gathering initiated the Northern Illinois Tree Specification Review Committee (NITSRC), which includes landscape architects, nurserymen, arborists, landscape contractors, maintenance contractors, educators, researchers and public agencies. The group is working to develop consistency within the green industry, adding Illinois to California and Florida as one of the very few states attempting to establish uniform standards for tree growth and planting. These states are setting an important precedent.

The committee has the support of the Illinois chapter of American Society of Landscape Architects, the Illinois Landscape Contractors Association, the Ornamental Growers Association, the Illinois Nurserymen’s Association, and the Society of Municipal Arborists. Representatives of the Morton Arboretum and the Chicago Botanical Garden recently joined the group.

The NITSRC is initially focusing on two issues, the correct use of wire baskets and the proper depth of roots within a harvested root ball.

The practice of basking trees during the harvesting process directly influences a tree’s success. And the days of hand digging root balls are gone. Nurseries now harvest most trees with a tree spade and then place them into a wire basket lined with burlap. This has become the rule in most northern Illinois nurseries as growers mechanize their harvesting operations.

The problem occurs after planting: Do you take the basket off or not? No definitive current research is available, and different conditions and practices for digging and planting exist around the country. There are sound horticultural reasons for leaving the basket on; for example, it keeps the root ball package stable and intact during the initial acclimatization period. Many in the nursery industry fear that root balls are being torn apart on job sites, and some nurseries will not guarantee trees if their baskets have been removed or damaged. Removal can damage the ball and a tree’s stability within the ball, especially in sandier soils or when trees are not staked or guyed.

The NITSRC recommends leaving the baskets on, provided trees are harvested in low-profile baskets, which have larger openings designed to overcome concerns about root strangulation. And because all the wires are below the top of the root ball, these baskets are not tripping hazards. While the new basket design has satisfied many former critics, the directive to remove baskets persists in most designers’ details and specifications, and most municipal agencies still demand the basket be removed.

Not all landscape contractors know how to handle trees with baskets. They sometimes lift the trees using chains or nylon straps threaded through the side loops. When lifted, the basket deforms, pulling it out of shape – in many cases, over the top of the ball. This not only defeats the purpose of the low-profile design but can damage the ball itself. The proper method of handling a tree basket is to lift the tree from the bottom, not from the basket, by using a fork or a bucket on
a backhoe with nylon straps around the
ball. If the baskets and lacing are removed
prior to the trees being set or watered, the
trees may settle out of plumb, prompting
some contractors to try straightening the
trees by pulling on the trunk, further
destabilizing the integrity of the root ball.

Another problem related to wire bas-
kets that the group is studying is drum
lacing. Drum lacing, a practice dating
back many years, used to be the method of
threading a rope around the entire
burlapped root ball to hold the ball toget-
er. As it is done now, drum lacing winds a
rope through the tops of the basket loops
and then over the top of the root ball. The
NITSRC recommends that contractors
leave drum lacing intact to support the
tree during the initial establishment peri-
od, provided that the drum lacing is sisal,
a degradable material. Nondegradable
nylon rope should not be used. It is also
essential that the rope be wrapped spar-
ingly around the trunk; otherwise, it may
fail to fully degrade and eventually stran-
gle the growing tree. If done properly,
drum lacing should not surround the trunk
with layers of rope.

The second big issue tackled by the
NITSRC is the depth of roots within the
root ball. It was very apparent at the
Chicago gathering that even common
nomenclature is lacking within the indus-
try. Where does the root end and the stem
start? Are there differences between
species? How have line production meth-
ods affected the root-to-stem relationship?
It is difficult to specify the highest roots in
reference to the top of the ball when the
topmost roots of a tree are often identified
with different terminology. Landscape
architects typically specify setting the top
of the ball at or slightly above finished
grade. Unfortunately, this language
assumes that the top of the ball is the same
as the top of the root system. We now
know the root system is not always just
below the top of the ball, as it should be,
but in many instances can be much deeper.

While researching nomenclature, the
NITSRC came across a confusing array of
names for individual parts of a plant; the
committee is now also attempting to stan-
dardize names. For example, the top of
the root system, the place where the top-
most whorl of roots departs from the stem
or trunk, is an important junction for
determining how deeply to plant. The
NITSRC has named it the “main order
root,” a phrase coined by Gary Johnson of
the University of Minnesota.

In an attempt to standardize specifi-
cations, details and directions throughout
the various phases of a tree’s develop-
ment, its usage on a project site and its
lifespan, the NITSRC has developed an
approach called “the continuum.” The
continuum is made up of four phases,
each of which sets standards that can be
relied upon in the next phase. The four
phases are liner production, growing nurs-
eries, landscape installation (meaning the
work normally influenced by landscape
architects and contractors), and landscape
maintenance.

The first phase of the continuum is the
liner production. A liner is a young
sapling. Growers of liners are responsible
for developing new varieties and produc-
ning material for nurseries to plant and
grow into more mature trees in accor-
dance with certain standards for grafting,
budding, cutting production, and quality.
According to the guidelines of the contin-
uum, maintaining a consistent
relationship between the liner’s main order root and grade will help ensure that trees are planted to the correct depth.

Additionally, liner producers should standardize the distance relationship between the main order roots and the bud union, the place where the bud of the preferred species of trees is grafted onto the rootstock. This distance should be minimal to lessen the visual hook between rootstock and bud. This hook is all too often the cause of trees being planted too deeply since growers believe, and rightly so, that consumers do not want trees with visual bends in the trunk. In fact, there needs to be an education process that teaches clients and owners to accept the hook so that nurseries do not bury the roots too deeply, which can lead to long-term trunk and root damage.

The root-to-grade relationship is only one of the continuum standards the NITSRC is reviewing, but since it cuts across all phases of the continuum, it is one of the most important issues for standardization. The NITSRC has not yet established dimensional tolerances for depth of soil to the main order roots, or soil from the bud union, but it hopes to have a set of documents for review and adoption by the industry this year. Adoption of new standards will take time. And since many thousands of trees in production were not planted to the new standard, the NITSRC must develop an interim plan for the transition period. The committee is limiting its focus to northern Illinois nursery practices, but the impact of the new requirements will be widely felt because northern Illinois nurseries supply plants for projects throughout the Midwest.

The second phase of the continuum asserts that the growing nurseries should also respect the main order roots and their relationship to the planted grade in the nursery. When liners are planted too deeply, they spend most of their energy developing new root systems, called “adventitious roots,” in the soil above the main order root. As trees are dug and prepared for shipping, growing nurseries should maintain the relationship of the main order roots to the top of the ball. Excess soil on top of the main order root system should be removed before a tree is dug to ensure the correct main order root-to-grade relationship. Then those tagging trees would be assured that trees are not planted too deeply and would have root systems that are well developed and healthy.

During the next phase in the continuum – installation – landscape contractors
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should maintain the relationship of the main order roots by not planting trees too deeply on a site. Soil or large amounts of mulch should never be placed on top of the root ball. Mulching depths and practices to combat the scourge of “volcano” mulching – the deleterious piling of mulch around the trunk of a tree – are being included in the new standards. The NITSRC is recommending that mulch be kept at a minimum at the junction of the trunk and the main order roots. Maintenance practices must also be consistent with established root-to-grade relationships.

New standardized details and specifications are incorporating the latest information available regarding optimal cultural and maintenance practices for the fourth phase of the continuum.

The NITSRC has developed a working outline of more than 100 items that need to be discussed, such as labeling plants’ points of origin and standardizing ball sizes. By limiting its focus to northern

Green Industry Group Addresses Root Depth Issue

An industry-wide working group has been established with the goal of creating consensus regarding a complex national issue – tree decline and death in the landscape due to excessive amounts of soil over the root system. This effort is being coordinated by the Morton Arboretum in Chicago, with Dr. Gary Watson as the chairman of a group that currently includes representatives of the American Nursery & Landscape Association (ANLA), International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA), Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA), and American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA).

Every time a tree is handled, a decision is made to determine the proper planting height. This typically happens throughout the life of a tree in small increments, starting as a seedling. This can occur numerous times, including during liner or rootstock production (such as depth of undercutting), lining out in the nursery (depth of planting), budding and grafting (distance between the roots and the bud/graft site), transplanting in the nursery (soil line near or above the bud/graft site for aesthetic purposes, or settling), maintenance in the nursery row (loose soil from tilling between the rows), harvesting (loose soil placed on top of the ball during hand-digging), planting in the landscape (settling in the hole), post-installation site grading, and maintenance in the landscape (over-mulching). In some instances in the landscape, the first major roots can be covered with more than 16 inches of soil.

Although various groups across the country have been discussing this issue, until now there has been no venue for a national discussion. The group met for
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Illinois, the committee hopes to keep professional working relationships simple and recommendations locally adoptable. Most important, though, is that the NITSRC will establish a unified voice. If landscape architects, nurserymen, arborists, landscape contractors, maintenance contractors, educators, researchers and public agencies set policy and standards together, people will listen. This group could have an immediate impact and will, at the very least, set an example for other states or regions that want to develop better tree-planting practices.

For more information about the Northern Illinois Tree Specification Review Committee, visit www.ina-online.org.

Bernard Jacobs, FASLA, and Terry Warriner Ryan, FASLA, are landscape architects and partners of Jacobs/Ryan Associates in Chicago. This article first appeared in Landscape Architecture magazine, Nov. 20, 2003.

New National Standard for Transplanting in Works

The American National Standard for Tree Care Maintenance Operations is ANSI A300. These standards are developed by a committee of green industry groups and organizations. A new national draft standard for transplanting of landscape plants in being developed. The name of the standard will be ANSI A300 (Part 6)-200x Transplanting. The draft is now in a public review period and can be downloaded at www.treecareindustry.org/default.asp?main=content/laws/publicreview.htm. Follow directions on the Web page for making comments.

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Emerald Ash Borer Eradication Plan Will Fail

By Chris E. Smith

The Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) has just announced a plan to attempt to eradicate the emerald ash borer (EAB) in multiple sites (‘outlier’ areas) throughout the state. What this actually means is the eradication of all ash trees in these zones. As a practicing arborist (tree care provider), I am amazed at the decision-making process that could allow this strategy to go forward. This program is ultimately going to cost untold millions of tax dollars (current requests to the federal government are about $43 million) and cannot help but to ultimately fail. How can I be so certain? Follow my logic:

1. No one knows for sure, but it appears that the EAB has been in southeast Michigan for at least 6 to 12 years before it was identified. In that time it has not only expanded within the core zone, but has been spread through tree and firewood transportation to untold locations both in Michigan and out state. While there is much reference to the adult insect’s ability to move only one-half to 1 mile on its own, this logic completely ignores storm winds, “hitch hiking” on vehicles and other vectors.

2. Identification of these outlier sites will inevitably lag at least one year or more behind the actual time of infection. If a tree is infected in the summer of this year, prominent symptoms of that infection will not be visible until the insect exits the tree in the next year. Even in this case these small exit holes are not easily seen. We have been told that 15 to 30 outlier sites exist. This is in all probability a vast understate- ment due to the inability to identify early infestation.

3. Even if we could be certain we know where all the infections are, complete eradication of every ash tree within a designated area would seem nearly impossible. On Dec. 10, we learned that more than 1,100 trees have been slated for removal within one-half mile of the Delta Township Wal-Mart store. Can you imagine identifying every ash tree and sapling, in every woodlot, swamp, fencero and backyard in this outlier site? Can you imagine the cost to remove those? Can you fathom the property damage that will remain to privately owned yards when the job is complete? Are all the stumps to be removed too? Are crews going to return each year to re-cut sprouts and new seedlings? And this is just one of 15 to 30 known outlier sites.

4. Most recent research has indicated that, in addition to ash trees, there is strong evidence to indicate that both privet and lilac shrubs may host this insect pest. These are not on the eradication list. What other plants might serve as hosts?

5. What about the private homeowner who wishes to attempt to preserve their trees? Due to eminent domain, that will not remain an option. Though research is confirming the viability of treatment for valuable specimens, that choice is to be removed from private property owners within outlier sites. Worse, due to budget constraints and survey lags, we can’t be sure when and where such eradication programs will occur. This pest is largely treatable only on a preventative basis, but the tree you treat today may be removed tomorrow. Not only will we eventually loose our unprotected ash trees, we’ll have no important specimen trees either.

6. While all these efforts are being made to deal with the outlier sites, the thousands of square miles of infection in and around southeast Michigan are left to expand, and the millions of dead trees remain, becoming a greater hazard by the day. This hazard appears to be unaddressed, too, due to budget constraints.

I have been assured by the MDA that the EAB Science Advisory Panel considers this effort “doable.” In my conversations with real-world arborists and foresters, I have yet to find a single one who thinks there is the least possibility the program can succeed.

There is, of course, great pressure to stop this spread from Michigan to other states, but that does not change the fact that the window of opportunity to isolate this pest was lost years ago, before it was even identified. The urge to show that we are doing “something” does not justify attempting the unachievable.

For those of us old enough to remember the once great population of American elm trees, the impending tragedy of the EAB is truly heartbreaking. But just as the demise of the elm continued despite all efforts, so will go the ash. And just as we continue to preserve a few wonderful old elms, we can still preserve a few wonderful ash trees. That is “doable.” Containment is not.

Chris E. Smith is president of Smith Tree & Landscape Service Inc. in Lansing, Mich.
OSHA Recordkeeping Requirements Change for 2004

If your business employed fewer than 10 people full-time in 2003, you may turn your attention to another of your favorite features in TCI. The topic of this column, OSHA recordkeeping, does not apply to you – yet!

In January 2004, employers across the country will begin to record work-related injuries and illnesses on the latest version of the OSHA 300 Log. If you have not seen them yet, now is a good time to review the revised 300 Log and 300A annual summary forms. The forms contain several changes for the 2004 recording year and beyond.

What changed?

Key among the revisions is the addition of an occupational hearing loss column (M)(5) to OSHA's Form 300, Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses. To determine if a hearing loss case is recordable, it has to meet the following three conditions:

- A hearing test shows that the employee has developed a standard threshold shift (STS) with losses of 10 dB (decibels) or more, relative to the most current baseline audiogram averaged at 2,000, 3,000 and 4,000 Hz (hertz) in one or both ears. This raises another issue: Strictly speaking, the provisions of OSHA's noise standard at §1910.95 require employers whose employees work in "noisy environments" to administer baseline and annual audiograms – hearing tests.

- The employee's overall hearing level is 25 dB or more above audiometric zero averaged at 2,000, 3,000 and 4,000 Hz in the affected ear.

- The hearing loss is work-related. Don't presume work-relatedness in hearing loss cases just because employees are working in noisy environments. Rather, it should be determined on a case-by-case basis.

If these three conditions are met, the case is recordable. In all cases, the baseline used to determine recordability will be the same baseline used to calculate an STS under OSHA's noise standard.

There will not be a separate column for work-related ergonomic injuries. However, these cases still must be recorded using the same criteria for any other injury or illness case, with a check in either the "Injury" or the "All other illnesses" column.

Use the right forms

Beginning Jan. 1, 2004, document all recordable hearing loss cases by checking (M)(5) on the OSHA 300 Log, regardless of whether the case is an injury or illness. This is a change from previous recording criteria where hearing loss cases were recorded based on whether they were classified as an injury or illness. Not requiring employers to make that determination simplifies recording hearing loss cases.

Injuries and illnesses for years prior to 2004 should continue to be recorded on the appropriate form for that year (i.e. 2003 and 2002 injuries and illnesses should be recorded on the forms for those years). Additionally, you will need to use the current OSHA 300A annual summary form (without the hearing loss field) to post as required from Feb. 1 through April 30, 2004.

To view or download copies of OSHA's revised recordkeeping forms, go to the federal OSHA Web site. Type the following URL into your Web browser's address line: http://www.osha.gov/recordkeeping/RKforms.html.

Best wishes from TCIA for a Safe and Prosperous 2004!

Peter Gerstenberger is vice president of business management, safety and education for the Tree Care Industry Association.
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E-mail: tcia@treecareindustry.org
Web: www.treecareindustry.org

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Cutting Edge News

GB Expands American Headquarters

GB American Inc., the Lancaster, N.H.-based subsidiary of Australian cutting systems manufacturer Griffiths & Beerens Pty. Ltd., recently completed a move to larger quarters. The expansion was necessitated by GB American’s increased sales penetration in North American markets, the pending addition of Central and South America to GB American’s service area, and recent growth in the GB product line. The new 15,000-square-foot office/warehouse complex is several times larger than the previous facility and will allow GB American to stock more inventory and continue adding new products to its cutting system and power equipment accessory lines, according to Paul Duggan, GB managing director. GB American’s mailing address and phone/fax numbers remain unchanged. However, the shipping address is now 244 Main St., Lancaster, NH 03584. GB is a manufacturer of cutting system components for chain saws and mechanical harvesting machines, and produces a wide variety of tools and accessories for logging and outdoor power equipment applications. For more information, contact GB American Inc. at P.O. Box 514, Lancaster, NH 03584, call 1-800-765-9357 or e-mail gba@gbbars.biz.

Rotochopper adds East Coast Service Rep

Rotochopper Inc. of St. Martin, Minn., a manufacturer of horizontal wood waste grinders, mobile bagging equipment and wood chip processors, has added Ron Hamilton as its new East Coast service rep. He will be based in Lititz, Pa. Hamilton was previously the main service rep for Re-tech Trommel Screens and Royer Soil Shredders, and brings to Rotochopper more than 25 years of grinding, shredding and screening experience. In addition to servicing Rotochopper’s entire product line, Hamilton will be available for service work on Re-tech and Royer equipment. For more information on Rotochopper products, call (608) 452-3651 or visit www.rotochopper.com.

American Society of Consulting Arborists Installs Board

The American Society of Consulting Arborists installed their newly elected board of directors during the society’s annual meeting in Lake Tahoe Dec. 3-6. The Board is as follows:

President: Tim Johnson, RCA No. 360, Phoenix, Ariz.
Vice President: William de Vos, RCA No. 359, Montpelier, Vt.
Treasurer: Steven Geist, RCA No. 340, Denver, Colo.
Immediate Past President: Russell Carlson, RCA No. 354, Bear, Del.
Directors:
John Lichter, RCA No. 375, Winters, Calif.
Joseph McNeil, RCA No. 299, Pleasant Hill, Calif.
Edward Milhous, RCA No. 350, Haymarket, Va.
Judson Scott, RCA No. 392, Carmel, Ind.
Torrey Young, RCA No. 282, Oakland, Calif.

For more information about ASCA, visit www.asca-consultants.org.

Call Backs

Due to a production error in the December TCI magazine, the names of two organizations were omitted from a listing of recipients of TCIA 2003 Excellence Awards. Recipients of the Heritage Award included Busy Bee Tree Service, Forest City Tree Protection and the Ohio Chapter ISA.

Send Cutting Edge News to:
Tree Care Industry, 3 Perimeter Road, Unit 1, Manchester, NH 03103
E-mail: staruk@treecareindustry.org
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### Vermeer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model Number</th>
<th>Part No.</th>
<th>Knife Description &amp; Size</th>
<th>SALE Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BC1000</td>
<td>KCH20109</td>
<td>Double Edge 9&quot; x 4-1/2&quot; x 5/8&quot;</td>
<td>$27.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC1220-BC1250</td>
<td>KCH20092</td>
<td>Single Edge 8&quot; x 3-1/2&quot; x 3/8&quot;</td>
<td>$19.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC1400</td>
<td>KCH20110</td>
<td>Double Edge 8&quot; x 5&quot; x 1/8&quot;</td>
<td>$28.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC1800-BC2000</td>
<td>KCH20103</td>
<td>Double Edge 10&quot; x 5-1/2&quot; x 5/8&quot;</td>
<td>$33.12</td>
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### Morbark

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<th>Part No.</th>
<th>Knife Description &amp; Size</th>
<th>SALE Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100, 200, 290</td>
<td>KCH10001</td>
<td>Double Edge 7-1/4&quot; x 4&quot; x 3/8&quot;</td>
<td>$17.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10, 13, 17, 2050</td>
<td>KCH40001</td>
<td>Double Edge 10-1/2&quot; x 5&quot; x 1/2&quot;</td>
<td>$28.96</td>
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### Brush Bandit

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<th>Part No.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model 90</td>
<td>KCH10002</td>
<td>Double Edge 5-3/32&quot; x 4&quot; x 3/8&quot;</td>
<td>$17.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 90XP, 280XP</td>
<td>KCH10004</td>
<td>Double Edge 5-3/32&quot; x 4&quot; x 1/2&quot;</td>
<td>$18.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 100XP-250XP</td>
<td>KCH10003</td>
<td>Double Edge 7-1/4&quot; x 4&quot; x 1/2&quot;</td>
<td>$20.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 250XP, 254XP after '01</td>
<td>KCH10101</td>
<td>Double Edge 7-1/4&quot; x 4-1/2&quot; x 1&quot;</td>
<td>$21.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 1890 Intimidator</td>
<td>KCH20103</td>
<td>Double Edge 10&quot; x 5-1/2&quot; x 5/8&quot;</td>
<td>$33.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 1290 Drum</td>
<td>KCH30001</td>
<td>Single Edge 12&quot; x 3&quot; x 3/8&quot;</td>
<td>$16.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 1690 Drum</td>
<td>KCH30002</td>
<td>Single Edge 16&quot; x 3&quot; x 3/8&quot;</td>
<td>$18.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Asplundh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model Number</th>
<th>Part No.</th>
<th>Knife Description &amp; Size</th>
<th>SALE Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timberwolf</td>
<td>KCH10001</td>
<td>Double Edge 7-1/4&quot; x 4&quot; x 3/8&quot;</td>
<td>$17.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12&quot; Drum</td>
<td>KCH30001</td>
<td>Single Edge 12&quot; x 3&quot; x 3/8&quot;</td>
<td>$16.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16&quot; Drum</td>
<td>KCH30002</td>
<td>Single Edge 16&quot; x 3&quot; x 3/8&quot;</td>
<td>$18.60</td>
</tr>
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### Mitts & Merrill

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Model Number</th>
<th>Part No.</th>
<th>Knife Description &amp; Size</th>
<th>SALE Price</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drum Style</td>
<td>KCH60001</td>
<td>Double Edge 4-1/4&quot; x 2-3/8&quot; x 1/2&quot;</td>
<td>$9.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*To receive this special pricing, you must use this code: 1004b

All Brush Chipper Knives on sale. Call if your model is not shown. Offer ends January 31, 2004

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1-800-223-5202

www.zenithcutter.com
RedMax Introduces New Chain Saw

RedMax’s complete line of chain saws and outdoor power equipment was recently joined by a new chain saw that combines high power, light weight and low cost. The new G3100, which weighs 7.8 pounds, is powered by RedMax’s 30.1 cc engine with its dust-free air intake system. The new saw is available with a 12- or 14-inch bar. The G3100 is built with RedMax’s ruggedness and carries the company’s one year commercial warranty. To check out the G3100 and all RedMax products, contact RedMax, Komatsu Zenoah America Inc., 4344 Shackleford Road, Suite 500, Norcross, GA 30093, call 1-800-291-8251, ext. 213, or visit www.redmax.com.

J.P. Carlton Adds Stump Cutter to Line

J.P. Carlton Company introduces the SP7015 TRX. This is a 60-horsepower track machine that features wireless remote control, 4-speed ground drive system, traction control, and telescoping tracks. The tracks hydraulically retract from 48 inches to 35 inches so the operator can maneuver through a backyard gate. The SP7015 TRX packs big cutting power in a compact unit. For more information, call 1-800-243-9335. J.P. Carlton Company, 121 John Dodd Rd., Spartanburg, SC 29303.

Fecon Introduces Stabilizing Attachments

Fecon’s stabilization series of attachments are capable of mixing and milling earth, including tough soils, stumps and roots, to depths of 10 to 16 inches. As an attachment, the Fecon soil stabilization product line is just as effective as the dedicated machines used in the past, yet they are more economical. Fecon Stabilization attachments are available in various models, ranging from 100-380 horsepower. All models utilize a heavy-duty rotor construction and long-lasting carbide tip, and are forgiving to stone. They are available with PTO or hydraulic power options. Some models also have mulching capabilities for material above grade level. For more information, call 1-800-528-3113, visit www.fecon.com or e-mail sales@fecon.com.

Rigguy Redesigns Wire Stop Hardware

Rigguy Inc. of Athens, Ga., has redesigned its Wire Stop cabling hardware to eliminate the need for j, lag and eye hooks, thimbles, through bolts, pre-formed wraps, wire clips or any other terminal hardware. It is lighter to carry, easier and faster to use and makes a stronger and better looking finished cabling installation. Pull tested to 100 percent of rated strand breaking strength, the Wire Stop is available for 3/8-, 5/16- and 1/4-inch EHS strand. For more information, contact Rigguy Inc. at (706) 208-8009 or via rigguy.com.

New Chain Saws from Husqvarna

Designed to be lightweight and maneuverable, Husqvarna’s new 334T and 338XPT are the latest chain saws in the Husqvarna product line. Each is equipped with Husqvarna’s Air Injection system that removes up to 97 percent of dust before it enters the filter for smoother operation, extended filter cleaning intervals and decreased wear on the engine. Both have the LowVib anti-vibration system that separates the handles of the saw from the engine with spiral springs of steel. The 334T has a new intake line and carburetor with Air Purge, decreasing the risk of stoppage and making for easier starting, and is equipped with a strong, rapid acceleration engine and high-speed chain. For additional power, the 338XPT is equipped with an efficient 2.2 hp engine, and it has the automatic Smart Start system, making it extra easy to start. Both saws are designed with an angled front handle, thumb support and ribbed rear handle. For more information, call 1-800-HUSKY-62, visit www.usa.husqvarna.com, or write Husqvarna, 7349 Statesville Road, Charlotte, NC 28269.
Teupen Spider Lifts Introduced in U.S.

American Spider Lifts of Reading, Mass., now offers Teupen GmbH spider lifts in the United States and Canada. Spider lifts are a versatile, self-propelled aerial lift with outriggers that can be individually rotated and leveled, allowing operation anywhere, including on slopes of up to 28-percent grade. These lifts can be operated from a truck, or unloaded in minutes. The model Leo 25T has a width of 67 inches, height of 78 inches, weight of 6,050 pounds, and working height of 86 feet (on truck). Once unloaded, it can be driven indoors or outdoors in tight spots, over lawns, patios, septic systems, snow, up and down hills, etc. Teupen’s complete line features units capable of up to 198 feet working height. A Leo 25T will be on display in the Vermeer booth at New England Grows show in Boston, Feb. 5-7, 2004, and at TCI Expo in Detroit in November 2004. American Spider Lifts can be reached at 1-800-944-5898 or via www.spiderlifts.com.

Rayco Introduces New StumpCutter

Rayco Manufacturing Inc. of Wooster, Ohio, introduced its new gas-powered stump cutter, the RG 1631, a larger, more powerful version of its RG 1625A Super Jr., during TCI Expo in Baltimore in November. Production models will be available from the factory in early 2004. This new machine provides 31 hp, fingertip controls, variable travel speeds, single wheel or posi-traction select drive, an anti-creep hill brake, and a Rayco “Quick Stop” cutter wheel brake for maximum safety. For more information, contact Rayco at 1-800-392-2686 or visit www.raycomfg.com.

Vermeer BC1800XL Chips Larger Material Faster

The BC1800XL brush chipper from Vermeer Manufacturing Co. of Pella, Iowa, combines increased speed, larger capacity and enhanced operator safety. Powered by either a 115 hp (85 kw) or a 170 hp (126 kw) John Deere diesel engine, this chipper can cut through 19-inch (48 cm) diameter material for improved efficiency on land clearing and residential job sites. A new drum design that features a sheave upgrade from 8.5 inches (21.5 cm) to 9.25 inches (23.4 cm) in diameter has increased the drum speed by nearly 10 percent. Increased feed roller torque and a hydraulic over-pressure sensor have combined to allow larger material to be processed with less material handling. The patent-pending bottom-feed stop bar is located to make it possible for the operator to strike the bar and stop the feed rollers automatically in emergency situations. For more information, call 1-888-VERMEER (837-6337) or visit www.vermeer.com.
Industry Almanac

Events & Seminars

January 21-22, 2004
Massachusetts Tree Wardens and Foresters Association Annual Conference
Dr. Alex Shipo, featured speaker
Host Hotel & Conference Center
Sturbridge, Mass.
Contact: Pat Felix, (781) 894-4759

February 4-6, 2004
Central Environmental Nursery Trade Show (CENTS)
Greater Columbus Convention Center
Columbus, Ohio
Contact: www.onla.org

January 28-30, 2004
18th Annual Think Trees Conference
Albuquerque Marriott
Albuquerque, N.M.
Contact: Nancy Langenbach, (816) 233-1481

February 1-4, 2004
39th Annual Shade Tree Symposium
Penn-Del Chapter/ISA
Lancaster Host Resort
2700 Lincoln Highway East
Lancaster, Pa. 17602
Contact: (717) 299-5500

February 5-7, 2004
New England Grows
Hynes Convention Center
Boston, Mass.
Contact: (508) 653-3009, www.negrows.org

February 6-13, 2004
Winter Management Conference 2004
Tree Care Industry Association
Frenchman’s Reef & Morning Star Marriott Beach Resort
St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands
Contact: Carol Crossland, 1-800-733-2622, Ext. 106; crossland@treecareindustry.org or www.treecareindustry.org

February 8-10, 2004
Ohio Chapter ISA Tree Care Conference and Trade Show
ISA Arborist Certification Examination/Preparation Workshop
Columbus Marriott North
Columbus, Ohio
Contact: (216) 544-4737

February 9-11, 2004
Golf Course Superintendents Assoc. of America Conference & Show
San Diego Convention Center
San Diego, Calif.
Contact: www.golfcourseshow.com

February 11-13, 2004
ISA Midwest Chapter Annual Conference
Tulsa, Okla.
Contact: (918) 596-7871, www.mwisa.unl.edu

February 12, 2004
Building with Trees Seminar
National Arbor Day Foundation
Contact: 1-888-448-7337; fax (402) 474-0820; arborday.org/phcseminar

February 16-17, 2004
Michigan Forestry & Parks Assoc. and Michigan Chapter/ISA
Winter Conference
Lansing Holiday Inn
Lansing, Mich.
Contact: (517) 482-5530

February 16-18, 2004
ISA Ontario Chapter Annual Conference
Rama Conference Center
Orillia, Ontario, Canada
Contact: (519) 376-1882, www.isaontario.com

February 18-19, 2004
California Landscape Contractors Association
2004 Landscape Industry Show
Long Beach, Calif.
Contact: (916) 830-2780, tarastout@clca.org

February 18-May 5, 2004
Certification Preparation Course
Brea Conference Center
Brea, Calif.
Contact: Ted Stamen, (949) 454-2429

February 26, 2004
ISA Arborist Certification Examination
Davey Tree Institute
1500 N. Mautz St.
Kent, Ohio
Contact: ISA International, 1-888-ISA-TREE

February 21, 2004
Woody Plants for Midwest Landscapes: Urban Uplift
Chicago Botanic Garden
Glencoe, Ill.
Contact: (847) 835-8261, Ext. 1, www.chicagobotanic.org/school

February 21-27, 2004
ASCA 2004 Consulting Academy
Sheraton Newark Airport Hotel
Newark, N.J.
Contact: (301) 947-0483, asca@mgmtsol.com

March 10, 2004
Building with Trees Seminar
National Arbor Day Foundation
Flagstaff, Ariz.
Contact: 1-888-448-7337; fax (402) 474-0820; arborday.org/phcseminar

March 25, 2004
Work Truck Show 2004 and 40th Annual NTEA Convention
Chicago Botanic Garden
Glencoe, Ill.
Contact: Justine Gartner, (573) 522-4115, Ext. 3116, Justine.Gartner@mdc.mo.gov or www.mocommunitytrees.com

March 4-5, 2004
Flagstaff, Ariz.
Contact: (301) 947-0483, asca@mgmtsol.com

March 11, 2004
Building with Trees Seminar
National Arbor Day Foundation
Denver, Colo.
Contact: 1-888-448-7337; fax (402) 474-0820; arborday.org/phcseminar

April 10, 2004
Motor City Forestry Council Annual Conference
Novi Expo Center
Novi, Mich.
Contact: www.worldoftrees.com
March 25-27, 2004
TCI Expo Spring
Tree Care Industry Association
Sacramento Convention Center
Sacramento, Calif.
Contact: Carol Crossland, 1-800-733-2622; crossland@treecareindustry.org or www.treecareindustry.org

April 22, 2004
Building with Trees Seminar
National Arbor Day Foundation
St. Paul, Minn.
Contact: (888) 448-7337; fax (402) 474-0820; arborday.org/phcseminar

May 9-12, 2004
ISA Western Chapter Annual Meeting
Konocti Harbor
Clear Lake, Calif.
Contact: (530) 892-1118, www.wcisa.net

May 20, 2004
Oklahoma State University Nursery and Turfgrass Field Day
Stillwater, Okla.
Contact: Mike Schnelle, (405) 744-7361 or mas@okstate.edu

May 25, 2004
IPM for Landscape Professionals
OSU Campus, Stillwater, Okla.
Contact Mike Schnelle, (405) 744-7361 or mas@okstate.edu

June 25-26, 2004
North American Commercial Real Estate Congress and The Office Building Show
Royal York Hotel and the Metro Toronto Convention Center
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
June 24-27 Pre-Conference Seminars and Business forums
Contact: www.boma.org

August 7-11, 2004
ISA Annual Conference & Trade Show
Pittsburgh, Pa.
Contact: Jessica Marx, (217) 355-9411, ext.24 jmarx@isa-arbor.com, www.isa-arbor.com

September 22-25, 2004
Multi-State Plant Materials Conference
Stillwater, Okla.
Contact Mike Schnelle, (405) 744-7361 or mas@okstate.edu

October 8-9, 2004
Nursery/Greenhouse Trade Show and Convention
Cox Convention Center
Oklahoma City, Okla.
Contact Mike Schnelle, (405) 744-7361 or mas@okstate.edu

October 20-21, 2004
Garden Expo
Canada’s Fall Buying Show for the Green Industry
Toronto Congress Centre
Toronto, Canada
Contact: Landscape Ontario Horticultural Trade Assoc., 7656 Fifth Line S, RR 4, Milton, ON, Canada L9T 2X8, (905) 875-1805; fax: (905) 875-3942; showinfo@landscapeontario.com

October 28-30, 2004
TCI EXPO 2004
Tree Care Industry Association
COBO Conference/Exhibition Center
Detroit, Mich.
Contact: Carol Crossland, 1-800-733-2622, Ext. 106; crossland@treecareindustry.org or www.treecareindustry.org

November 3, 2004
Tree Care Issues Workshop
Stillwater, Okla.
Contact Mike Schnelle, (405) 744-7361 or mas@okstate.edu

Send information on your event to:
Tree Care Industry, 3 Perimeter Road, Unit 1,
Manchester, NH 03103
E-mail: staruk@treecareindustry.org

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Leasing or Financing -
What is the Best Way to Acquire Equipment?

By Thomas G. Dolan

What’s the best way for an arborist to acquire equipment—leasing or financing? The short answer is that there is no best way for everybody. There are pros and cons to either method. What it comes down to is your particular needs and financial situation. That said, here are some current considerations on this topic.

A new factor on this landscape is the Job and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003, signed into law by President Bush in 2003. It is intended to stimulate the economy by encouraging new equipment purchases through an aggressive depreciation schedule.

Some might believe that this law tips the scale toward financing directly from the manufacturer, based on two key figures it contains. The first is that IRS Code 179 has been changed so that, whereas before you could deduct only $25,000, now you can deduct $100,000. Moreover, there is an additional 50 percent bonus depreciation. And then there’s still the standard 20 percent depreciation.

As an illustration of how this works out, suppose you have $400,000 worth of new purchases. Under the new 179 provision you can deduct up to $100,000. That leaves $300,000. Then you have the bonus depreciation of 50 percent of $300,000, or $150,000. Add the $100,000 and you have $250,000 in depreciation. You still have $150,000 left, of which you can take the standard depreciation of 20 percent, or $30,000. So, adding up those sums—$100,000, $150,000 and $30,000—you have a first year depreciation of $280,000 of that $400,000 in purchases.

Nevertheless, leasing may be a more viable option in any particular case. If a business can use the equipment over 24 to 36 months, the lease might lower the cost of operation. At the end of three years they can get another lease and keep the overall cost of payments down. There are also ways of structuring a lease so that it is off the balance sheet and becomes an expense and not an asset.

Leasing or financing options may be best determined by your particular business. For instance, if you’re concerned about cash flow, the low monthly payments of leasing may be the best way to go. But, if you’re an asset-based business, and already have a strong cash flow, then there may be tax and other advantages to ownership.

JonAnne Cucciare, vice president of the Hatfield, Pa.-based leasing company Liberty Financial Group Inc., says “Leasing allows you to pay for equipment with future profits. You’re paying for the equipment with earnings rather than equity.”

Leasing also allows you to preserve your bank lines of credit. And, in terms of securing financing loans from banks, Cucciare says, “Banks will take at least two weeks before you get your money. We’ve heard arborists say that, a lot of times, the equipment is gone by then. And you have longer payment terms for leasing than you do from a bank.” Also, in terms of used equipment, says Cucciare, generally 10 percent down is required in financing, but nothing down is required for leasing.

Bruce Krah, president of another leasing
company, Greystone Financial Group Inc. of West Chester, Pa., says “Most of the tree care companies we’ve spoken with have had a good year. They’ve been profitable, have some cash, and have heard about the new rapid depreciation law, and are not quite sure how to proceed in acquiring equipment.”

But they are definitely thinking about acquiring equipment. Because the new tax benefits extend to 2005, they believe now is the time to do it, Krah says. “One of our tree care customers told me, ‘All my stuff has been held together by baling wire and duct tape, so I need to invest in some new things.’ He’s an excellent businessman, and could have gotten new equipment before, but he’s been cautious because of the economy,” Krah says. “But he thinks now is the time to do it. And he knows it’s best to make all the arrangements before the phone starts to ring in the spring, when he’ll be working from dawn to dusk.”

In responding to the question, what is best, leasing or financing, Krah says, “Why not both? When you choose to lease/purchase, you gain the benefits of leasing and have the security of ownership at the end.”

In saying “Why not both?,” Krah is also referring to the new tax law. He explains that if you lease to buy, your ownership kicks in the year it’s placed into service. So, as long as your lease agreement has a buyout provision in the end, the equipment is looked at as a purchase in terms of the year in which the deal starts. In other words, you don’t have to wait until the two or three years or more of the lease agreement are up before it’s formally yours to take advantage of the accelerated depreciation schedules of the new law.

Meanwhile, Krah says, “You’re able to work the equipment so it pays for itself. You can write off the lease payments every month as an expense. Also, loans typically require down payments. If you are buying several pieces of equipment, that’s several down payments, and they can add up. Leasing allows you to retain your working capital and maintain your cash flow.”

Krah adds that he has a program to upgrade by adding new equipment to an existing lease as it expires. He also points out that you’re not simply trading in one model for a newer one as in automobile leasing. “In the tree care industry 99 percent of the leases end with the buyout at the end, by which time most of it has been paid for; or, if that appears too high, the lease can be extended. At the end of the lease the equipment is yours to continue using or to trade up to something new,” says Krah.

Other benefits of leasing, Krah says, include avoiding debt-to-income ratio problems, no reporting to credit bureaus as additional debt, and writing off lease payments with pre-tax dollars.

Still, when all is said and done, if you have the cash, which Krah indicates many of the arborists he has spoken to do have, isn’t it better simply to put out that cash and buy it – without having to pay any interest or lease expenses?

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"If you are paying cash for a $35,000 piece of equipment you have had to earn $50,000 in pre tax dollars to pay for it," is Krah’s response. "So you are taking that $15,000 out of your business. But if you are leasing, and writing off your lease payments, you are saving that $15,000 and keeping it in your business. From the minute you buy that equipment it begins to depreciate in value."

Jonathan Moran, president of the King of Prussia, Pa.-based Star Capital, says that his company serves as a sales representative for several manufacturers. "We offer both financing and leasing, and which type the customers utilizes doesn’t matter to us, for our only concern is selling the equipment.” Moran explains he has no vested interest one way or the other, and also says that he hasn’t seen any particular trends one way or another.

"Either way you are trying to conserve capital at the same time you purchase equipment to grow your company,” Moran says.

“There are certainly tax advantages that make it attractive to purchase equipment within the first 12 months. But with leasing you can put it off the balance sheet, depreciate fully over the time you use it, and make small payments to maintain cash flow – which are usually the main reasons for small businesses leasing equipment.”

But Moran advises that, as always, when there are different parties competing for your dollars, read the small print. For instance, in straight financing on a loan, everybody knows what the payment structure is. But, with leasing, the buyout at the end can end up costing much more than you anticipated. Generally smaller payments up front mean a bigger price at the end.


"With leasing you can put it off the balance sheet, depreciate fully over the time you use it, and make small payments to maintain cash flow – which are usually the main reasons for small businesses leasing equipment.”

Jonathan Moran
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Green Roofs and Roof Gardens

By Ruth S. Foster

Though newly rediscovered for their ecological values as “Green Roofs,” roof gardens are hardly new. The Hanging Gardens of Babylon may have been the earliest ones. Their pre-Christian-era story tells of a princess from a verdant valley who was given in marriage to a king in the desert. But she pined for her green valley, so he had plants (in pots I assume) planted on her balconies to cheer her up.

Did it help? Who knows, but think of all the water that they had to carry up from the well each day. It may have looked like the church roof garden in Utah in the accompanying picture.

Though roof gardens, as well as sod roofs, have been around for a long, long time, the recent emergence of the “sustainable architecture” movement has given the technology a tweak. Green roofs are more akin to sod roofs than the more classic rooftop gardens well known through the ages. And the main construction problem is still how to handle the water – too much causes leaks into the building, while not enough water requires irrigation or somebody to carry water up from the well.

Let’s begin with a summary

You can grow anything on a rooftop. However, each rooftop ecosystem is unique and presents different problems to be solved. Considerations are exposure, wind, sun, shade, rainfall, temperature variations, weight capacity of the roof, composition and depth of the soil, maintenance availability and, finally, plant material choice.

You might be very successful growing orchids on a rooftop in Puerto Rico, but not in Minnesota. On the other hand, Minnesota could support beautiful evergreen trees if adequate soil, root stabilization and water were provided.

Benefits of Green Roofs - Environmental and Otherwise

“Green” or “sustainable” construction is the new mantra. (Think greenery versus hot tar.) Its aim is to:

- Promote energy efficiency – Plants on the roof insulate against heat loss and gain (25 to 50 percent energy saving for a whole vegetated roof).
- Lessen air pollution – Leaves give off oxygen and remove air pollutants from dirty air.
- Help manage storm runoff and flooding – Green roofs absorb rain, use some, and slow storm-water runoff. Depending on the plants and soil, they may absorb up to 75 percent of the rain.
- Help the urban heat island effect – The larger a city, the higher its temperature compared to the temperature of the surrounding countryside. The cause is reflected and retained heat, plus the lack of evapo-transpiration cooling from vegetation, especially trees. Evaporation, convection air currents and the shade under a mature tree can make it 25 degrees cooler on a hot day, and produce as much cooling as 15 room-size air conditioners.
- Preservation of habitat and biodiversity – Think resident small mammals (probably mice), birds, butterflies and bugs. Don’t laugh. Insects are now a politically correct value as part of biodiversity.
- Social benefits – Green roofs made for people become safe, park-like areas of viable green space in congested or inhospitable places.
- Financial benefits – Though expensive to build, landscaped roofs add to the value and desirability of real estate, particularly hotels. Also a spectacular roof is a trophy-garden to brag about, which appeals to some folks.
- Intangibles – Finally, don’t forget beauty and the sense of well-being humans seem to enjoy when there is greenery and a great view.
Even nice-sized deciduous trees can grow on a roof, as long as one’s customers accept the special maintenance requirements and short life spans. After all, rooftops are not the forest primeval. When your clients understand that these are very special gardens, they may cherish their own urban forests even if the trees do not live forever.

**Types of green roofs**

**Intensive green roofs:** We are all familiar with classic roof gardens. All kinds of trees, shrubs, vines, ground covers (including grasses), flowers and vegetables are grown in raised beds or large tubs. Irrigation is provided either by drip or by hand. The larger the area, the more elegant and complex — and the more need for trees.

They are “Intensive” because they require regular maintenance. Successful and satisfying ones have dead or sickly plants replaced as needed — even large trees. No fussing around. Pruning due to drought or winterkill is done regularly, and bare spots are filled in. Think of a giant window box, always kept full and lush.

Monet’s famous garden, Giverney, in France, is always lush and full. Though barely a couple of acres, it has several gardeners and greenhouses. The secret of lush and full is replacements with a generous hand. When you plant or replace a tree, always add the flowers beneath. All that people really notice in landscape is trees, flowers and miscellaneous greenery.

**Extensive green roofs:** These are low or no maintenance areas with thin layers of soil, sometimes also called “brown roofs.” The concept is not unlike the sod roofs of old stone farm dwellings.

Extensive green roofs are built for energy conservation, water runoff management and as habitats that mimic endangered ecosystems. Usually, they are not planned for people to use as parks, although part of them can be a sitting or walking area. Bird nesting sites can be valuable.

These roofs need little cutting or pruning, survive on natural rainfall and support native or simple vegetation, including wild grasses (which probably account for the “brown” because most grasses brown out during dry spells and green up during rainy periods). The Gap corporate offices in San Bruno, Calif., have 69,000 square feet of undulating roof covered with native grasses and wildflowers, 1¾ acres in all.

That’s a lot of grass, but it’s not a high maintenance lawn.

**Maintenance on rooftops**

Plants have to be able to survive on the extremes of the rooftop ecosystem, with or
without irrigation. Start with hardy trees and plants that do well in your area, in harsh, sunny exposures – and that can be easily replaced. Think drought resistant. Buy good-sized trees to get instant effect.

Trees should be less than 30 feet high at maturity, open branched and, ideally, small leafed, unless you’re prepared to rake. It’s very important to have the root balls anchored with wires to keep them from blowing over. Also, prune the trees regularly so strong winds can pass through them easily. Leaves that act as a sail can cause them to topple.

For trees, go easy on fertilizer, using as little as possible.

Different climatic regions need different fertilization schedules. Low nitrogen is a must. You don’t want soft, tender or rampant growth. Stick with dormant or slow-release, and only when you need it. Ideally, they have flowers sprayed frequently with soluble fertilizer to avoid runoff into the roots. If a lightweight, soil-less mix is used, you will have to use amendments occasionally, ideally with something organic to introduce soil micro-organisms.

Wind and sun are constant problems on most roofs, so you may consider using an anti-desiccant spray to help fight leaf burn. Treat insects and diseases as usual, but watch pesticide runoff.

Choice of growing medium (soil) is a problem because of weight limitations. Sand and clay are heavy, but plants grow better with regular soil than in the lightweight mixes that are mostly peat, bark mulch or synthetics such as vermiculite and perlite. In cold and hot climates, planting boxes are usually insulated with some kind of plastic foam to protect the roots from temperature fluctuations. Some clay is helpful in cold climates because it freezes and keeps cold air from blowing through (as it seems to do in lightweight mixes). Repeated freezing and thawing is a death knell.

It is interesting that plants and even small trees can grow in a very thin layer of soil if adequately watered and mulched. There was, some years ago, a roof garden in Boston’s North End (settled 1630). Atop an old row house was a verdant roof retreat that included a beautiful birch tree about 10 feet high just below the next building’s drainpipe. In a wide area of soil, dust and urban debris several inches deep, this seedling birch had sprouted and thrived.

Ruth S. Foster is the author of Landscaping that Saves Energy and Dollars.
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Have More Fun Using Progressive Arboricultural Techniques

By Tom Dunlap

Modern technology has come into tree climbing in the same way it has come into the rest of our lives. Arborists arrive on the jobsite driving vehicles with computer controlled fuel injection, carrying cell phones with them up in the trees and using space-age fibers in the ropes. The climbing systems used are much more complex also. Technology makes our lives easier and more fun. We should view technology as a buffet; there are many dishes to try, sample all of them when it’s safe – then go back and load up on your favorites.

When I was 12 years old I started dragging brush for my next-door neighbor. He would drop the limbs from the tree, then his son and I would cut them up with bow saws and stack the brush on a trailer – fairly low tech. Now, technology has come full circle. More and more, my jobs find me pruning small limbs with very efficient handsaws. This style of work doesn’t generate large quantities of brush. Most of the time, I won’t bring a chipper to the job site. Instead, several days worth of trimming go onto the trailer, which is pulled by a van that is fully equipped and much more comfortable than a chipper truck.

Ours is a very testosterone-charged profession and some don’t want to hear about the precautions we should take to work safely. What does it take to be a tree climber? I bought a book by John Stuart Martin titled “The Homeowners Tree Book.” In the chapter called Pirates, Gypsies and Nobleman, he writes, “… that any man content to earn their living by climbing trees has to be a little ‘tetched’ to start with. They have to be lean, muscular, nerveless, and somehow persuaded that trees are challenging. They must want to climb and conquer them no matter how tall and perilous. Due to their concentration on survival and a pride in their climbing prowess, all tend to be prima-donnas: sensitive to criticism and quick to anger.” This book was written in 1962. Not much has changed, although we have better equipment today.

In my experience, climbers come in two categories – traditional and progressive. One is not better than the other, just different. A traditional climber learned one technique with one rope and sticks with it. You might see that person ascending into the tree using a body-thrust technique rather than learning modern and more progressive ascent techniques. A traditional climber will have a pretty simple climbing system, probably a rope and a rope snap. An incremental piece of equipment might
be a carabiner, which is a step away from using a typical double-locking rope snap. A traditional climber probably doesn’t use a false crotch for the climbing line, and will only work the outer third of the crown with a pole saw. Another sure sign of a traditional climber is the clunking noise they make from all the steel they carry around.

A progressive climber has learned a climbing system and constantly adds new pieces. The goal is to find the easiest way to work. The less energy we spend at work means more energy we have to take home and spend with our families – or to save for the end of our careers. A progressive climber uses a throw line and foot locks into the tree. A progressive climber uses split tails of some kind with a high-performance friction hitch, slack tenders and a false crotch, because it provides higher performance and saves wear and tear on the rope. A progressive climber works out to the tips of the branches with a handsaw. If a chain saw is used, it will probably be in the inner half of the tree. The progressive climber rarely uses pole saws because they have learned how to climb out onto the tips of the branches to do very good cuts. The progressive climber jingles to the sound of aluminum as they climb.

**Learning new techniques**

Arborists are scavengers. We have some unique things that we have developed just for working in the trees, but we have gone out and picked out different bits from a lot of related working-rope professions. We have done a pretty good job of adapting tools from other parts of the vertical world, but I don’t think that we have done as good a job of bringing over all the techniques. There are traditions from mountaineering that I see we are starting to build into arboriculture and tree climbing.

Incorporate new tools and/or techniques into your climbing system, but do it ‘low and slow.’ When changes are being made to the climbing system, add them one at a time. Once the climber has mastered the particular application, add another new item. If you are going to add a false crotch...
to your climbing system, don’t take that throw line; shoot it up to the top of the tree and start to figure out how to set the false crotch. Do it on a branch 6 feet off the ground. Work with the new procedures, experiment with them and take your time.

**Single Rope Technique**

Single Rope Technique (SRT) is gaining popularity as an access system. The access line is set in the tree and anchored at the base. Once the climber gets to the tie-in point, they can set up a Doubled Rope Technique (DRT) – sometimes called a traditional system – for moving around the tree. There are many advantages of SRT. One of the biggest is that a line is always set in case an aerial rescue needs to be performed. Having the line installed will save time getting the rescue climber close to the patient. Some tree climbers are working in the tree using SRT.

**False crotches**

Adjustable false crotches (AFC) can be made with readily available components. Using a false crotch reduces rope wear and damage to the tree from the rope moving over the bark. The climber uses less energy to move up the rope. Another use of the adjustable false crotch is for working down the spar. Choking the AFC against the trunk allows the climber to move down the trunk and be secured in an overhead climbing system. When the climber is ready to descend, the system is ready to go.

**Gloves**

Thin grippy gloves allow the climber to hold tools and branches with less force. Since the sticky coating holds better, the climber saves energy. When climbing the rope, the tacky grab helps the climber. Also, the gloves protect the hands from minor cuts and scratches.

**Lanyard**

The lanyard that I’m currently using is double-ended, double-adjusting – or DEDA. The 20-foot lanyard has a snap on each end. An adjuster is on each hip with color-coded snaps. Having the DEDA lanyard gives me a lot of tie-in possibilities. With the long length, it becomes a second, short climbing line, too.

**Leg scabbard**

Having the handsaw in a leg scabbard is so much handier than having it on one’s hip. Getting the saw is easier because the handle is at arm’s reach all of the time. Instead of being on the saddle along with lanyards, chainsaws and other gear, the climber only has to reach down to get the saw.

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protection, closer to 100 percent protection can be attained. Using earplugs attached to the glasses keeps them handy all of the time.

Kevlar helmets give more protection to the climber’s most important tool, his or her head. Any helmet without a chinstrap is likely to get bumped off at some time – usually the worst time. Chinstraps can be added to helmets.

Crampons

During ice storm cleanup I’ve found that using my crampons and stiff, plastic boots gives me good stability and traction. They can only be used for removals though. Having the front points makes ascending and positioning much safer.

Conclusion

When I teach people a new knot, I won’t let them use it in a tree until they can tie it without looking. Once they can do it by feel – and learn its applications and shortcomings – only then can they use it in the field. This is important because there may be times when the sweat is burning your eyes and you can’t really see the knot. I want my climbers to know a knot by feel as well as by looking at it. I also expect them to stop and check their gear regularly. I constantly go through my system doing gear checks. Every time I clip and unclip, I look at my system. This only takes moments. I want to make sure that something didn’t change five or 10 minutes ago.

I hear a lot of people say that tree work is a skill. Others say that tree work is like chess. To me, tree work is like backgammon; a lot of skill involved, but there is also an element of luck. Fortunately, I have had the good luck of being on the winning end.

Tom Dunlap is owner of Canopy Tree Care in Robbinsdale, Minn.
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Every arborist has thought about getting into the firewood business at one time or another. After all, the tree business already provides an almost endless supply of wood. And you also have the equipment you need to haul the wood away. The only three things most companies may lack are:

1. Wood processing equipment;
2. A place to store the wood until it dries;
3. Marketing expertise for a very different type of business than commercial tree care.

Those who take the plunge quickly discover that they can produce a lot of saleable wood in relatively short order. The challenge comes in finding people willing to pay for it. The firewood business is not an easy one to succeed in. Putting a cord in the back of your pickup and dropping it off at a neighbor’s house for $100 doesn’t really mean you’re in the firewood business. To succeed, you truly need to think of this as a new venture that requires new ways of marketing.

The closer you are to heavily forested areas, the stiffer the competition for customers will be. Where will you find your customers?

Start with the ones you already have. Your newsletter, seasonal mailing and any advertising you do should include a note on firewood. As fall approaches, put a short mention at the bottom of your invoices.

Every new home built in your area with a new fireplace is a prospective new customer who doesn’t already have a firewood supplier. There probably aren’t too many masons in your area who build fireplaces. Do you know them? Can you convince them to give you a call when they finish building a fireplace at a home that is being remodeled?

Consider partnering with civic groups and service clubs. As soon as Thanksgiving is over, the local Lions Club or Boy Scout troop will start selling Christmas trees on a vacant lot. See if they will take orders for firewood deliveries, too, in return for $10 a cord.

Advertising helps, of course, and your local paper probably has a few regular firewood ads back in the classifieds section. Join them, but don’t stop there. Depending on how much wood you have, print up a card or small flyer that you can post on bulletin boards and at restaurants, supermarkets, condo associations and public parks.

Be innovative in finding new customers.

**Heat Values for Air-Dry Wood**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low, 12-15 Million Btu/cord</th>
<th>Medium, 16-28 Million Btu/cord</th>
<th>High, 29-40 Million Btu/cord</th>
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<tr>
<td>alder</td>
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<td>aspen</td>
<td>avocado</td>
<td>apple</td>
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<td>birch, gray</td>
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<td>pine sp.</td>
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<td>willow</td>
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Dry wood delivers twice the heat of wet wood. Dry wood should have a moisture content of less than 20 percent.
Make use of the businesses you work with. Ask your power equipment dealer to hang one of your handouts. And don’t forget the gas station or repair facility where you fuel up your trucks.

Buy a moisture meter and keep it in your truck. Why in your truck instead of back at the yard? Because when you are out on a tree job and you see a woodpile, you can check it for moisture content. Dry wood delivers twice the heat of wet wood. Dry wood should have a moisture content of under 20 percent. If you can show your tree care customer that your firewood competitor’s wood isn’t very dry, you can pick up some new business.

Make your final product as user-friendly as possible. Hardwood is denser than softwood, so it contains more Btu, which means more heat per cord. (Btu stands for British thermal units. It is the amount of heat required to raise one pint of water one degree Fahrenheit.) In general, hardwood contains almost double the Btu as softwood per cord. Hardwood also burns more slowly, whereas softwoods burn hot and fast, leaving more creosote on the stove and chimney. (See the Btu chart on page 38.)

Make up some roadside signs and post them at the end of your driveway. Post them at job sites, too, with a very visible phone number so neighbors will call. Signs are relatively inexpensive; spend a little extra for color, perhaps with a prominent picture of a stack of firewood. Don’t forget your traveling billboard – your trucks. A sign on the side with a picture of firewood can serve as an inexpensive rolling billboard.

Add firewood sales to your business card or print up a separate card just for firewood. Pass those cards out everywhere you can think of. Every bulletin board you pass should have one of your cards tacked to it. Keep in mind that these boards are cleared out periodically, so check back to see if your card is still up there.

Consider low-cost sponsorships of soccer teams. When fall comes and the weather turns brisk, kids head out to the soccer fields and parents start thinking about firewood. You might try donating a cord or two to a local group in return for a thank you sign.

Take a truckload to community gatherings and park in a visible spot. Politicians do it all the time. Does your town have a fall harvest fest, county fair, or holiday parade? Park your load of wood right in the middle of things and hundreds, if not thousands, of people will see your product and your phone number.

The opportunities for marketing are almost endless. Think creatively and you will be able to sell the wood your commercial tree care operations generate.

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Proactive Control of Fleet Maintenance Costs

By John Dolce

Whether you have a full-time mechanic, a part-time mechanic or outsource all of your maintenance and repairs, learn from the small fleet pros how to maximize productivity of your equipment.

Keeping your vehicle service facility running smoothly and productively isn’t easy. Many things can go wrong, costing us time and money. There must be a plan. We must be proactive rather than reactive to live up to our mission: “safe and economical.” Scheduled activity is predictable, more reliable and extends a vehicle’s life.

Assigning tasks is the first step in ensuring shop productivity. This should be planned carefully because the longer a vehicle stays in the shop, the more unnecessary work it is likely to have done to it. In their desire to appear productive during times of light operations, your mechanic may work on equipment that is parked in the shop or yard. Make-work is negative productivity, so scheduling work into and out of the shop supports productivity.

That is the reason why we schedule preventive maintenance inspections or generated repairs and devote the remainder of our efforts to breakdown work. This system allows us to analyze our breakdown work carefully, so we can see why it was necessary. It also tells us what we can do to reduce breakdown rates by modifying our preventive maintenance inspection programs and carefully schedule the necessary work generated from the PM inspections.

In order to have your vehicles available when they need to be, you should set a goal for “number of miles” or “hours of service” that a vehicle must be available and ready to roll. New vehicles should be available 92 to 98 percent of the time. Availability of older vehicles can decline to 80 to 85 percent. Think about how your own availability rates compare to these.

There are usually five reasons why vehicles are out of service and cannot be made available:

- Parts not in stock or obtainable;
- No personnel to perform the work;
- No vendor to perform the repair and/or body work;
- Warranty settlement difficulties;
- Additional rebuilding or reconditioning time needed.

Maintaining control of repair work backlogs is essential to preventing the work overflows that cripple a shop’s operation, which can lead to deferral of maintenance and subsequent increases in equipment breakdowns.

Backlogs result from situations in which more work is generated than the shop can accommodate, such as after prolonged storms that place extraordinary strains on equipment, parts shortages or insufficient shop space. We should anticipate these cyclical events and hold backlogs to a manageable level, such as one or two weeks.

Managing workload

When a shop finds itself overtaxed, several options may be exercised to reduce the workload to manageable levels. One is to farm out surplus work to commercial sources. Authorizing overtime, hiring temporary personnel, and dispatching mobile
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Good schedules are important. Without them, consistency and efficiency would be impossible to maintain. When making your schedules, keep in mind that vehicles should be brought into the shop based on "mileage," "time," "fuel use" or "hours of operation" and sent out of the shop on a work standard. Keep a monthly list of due dates to support your schedule. If there is a vehicle sitting in your garage bay with no one working on it, your operation may need a new schedule.

The scheduling process for each day should proceed as follows: write all repair orders, including PM work; prioritize repairs; determine how many people will be at work that day; make certain that the equipment/vehicle is there to work on; make certain that the usual needed parts are on hand; and, delegate appropriate work to the best qualified mechanics on duty. Work schedules should be prioritized as future due, present due and past due, so shop supervisors can move things around.

Once the work has been assigned, check the progress to determine when the job will be finished. Check the quality of the work performed, also, so that the equipment/vehicle does not return to the shop before its next scheduled service.

**Documentation**

There are a number of documents that can help you keep track of the activities in your facility and that allow recording of a vehicle’s maintenance history, guidance of current maintenance and repairs, and projection of future repairs and expenses. These documents also provide invaluable data for analyzing productivity and quality of work.

One of these documents is the work order. Supervisors are responsible for initiating work orders and fill out most parts of them. Relevant remaining sections of an order are completed by the mechanic performing the work.

In addition to being a guide for mechanics, work orders serve as a voucher for parts. No parts should be issued to a mechanic without one. A mechanic or technician should indicate on the work order the starting and finishing times for the job performed. It is the supervisor’s responsibility to discuss with the mechanic any repair times that seem unduly long or inappropriate, and the mechanic/technician should initial work done and a supervisor should sign it to indicate this.

A copy of the work order should be placed in the vehicle repair-history jacket. The data processing department and personnel doing data analysis on component failures or road calls should also get a copy. Annual inspection work orders should be copied and put into the assigned vehicles for compliance to regulatory agencies that require verification of annual inspections.

For those of you who outsource most of your work, a vendor service work order (similar to an in-house work order) should include the signatures of both the person who initiated the repair request and the person who accepts the repaired vehicle back from the vendor. The total amount of time the vehicle was at the vendor’s facility should be indicated, along with a detailed itemization of the parts and labor involved in the repair. A supervisor should sign this work order to indicate that the work was performed properly.

Distribution of this type of work order is more complex than the in-house work order. The original should go to accounting as an approval for payment when a vendor’s invoice comes in. The first copy goes to the vendor with the payment. A second copy goes into the repaired vehicle’s jacket coded for reference. A third copy enters the office purchase order register. A fourth is sent to data processing.

Another helpful document is the activity file, which can be maintained either monthly or weekly. It can be used to analyze unnecessary jobs, identify cases of abuse to equipment/vehicles, identify warranty claims, investigate accidents to determine insurance eligibility, and identify improper use of equipment, to name a few.

Several other documents are useful in overseeing repair activity in a fleet shop. The vehicle jacket, for instance, provides a history of preventive maintenance and unscheduled repairs to a vehicle. A shop
Make-work is negative productivity, so scheduling work into and out of the shop supports productivity.

Supervisor should review this jacket before initiating a work order and pay special attention to repeat repairs and unscheduled maintenance.

The “road calls log” should also be monitored carefully and its data studied scrupulously. This information could point to the fact that a majority of the problems could be coming from a small percentage of the fleet. If this is the case, it could indicate poor maintenance techniques or poor quality parts.

Technician productivity

A big part of shop productivity relates directly to the productivity of your mechanic, a well-defined input. All you need to do is keep records on payroll time and the total time spent working on a vehicle or vehicles by adding up their direct labor on work orders to determine what percentage of the paid time is productive. This type of comparing and contrasting should point out any flaws your operation may have. Using work standards is another way of keeping track of technicians’ productivity. Work standards consist of “realistic repair times” for tasks performed. Such times are determined by gathering information on labor hours from shop repair orders and then measuring the elements of work standards.

Elements of work standards are work skills (dexterity in performing the tasks), work habits (sequence of events in task performance), and work knowledge (how to perform the elements of a task). Realistic repair times should be adjusted to reflect the mix of mechanics’ skills.

Adequate time

Work tends to expand in the time frame it is given. If we bring a vehicle in with no set time frame, the tendency is to generate unnecessary work. Supervisors must control unnecessary work by setting or estimating time-sequencing and prioritizing tasks to curtail unnecessary work. If we schedule work using real task times, we can pre-load vehicle workload and direct shop activity rather than have shop activity direct us. We cannot direct all work. We can, however, direct scheduled work and provide space and time for unscheduled work.

Measure, watch and pay attention to everything. Then do it again. And again.

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Practical Techniques to Improve Quality, Productivity & Morale

By Lou Benson, Ph.D.

When dealing with employees, you face unpredictability. In tree care, you don’t deal with the same kinds of workers you would find, for example, in an office setting or a manufacturing plant. One of the questions that managers ask me a lot is, “How do I motivate my staff?”

In reality, there is very little that you can do as a supervisor, boss or owner of a company to motivate your staff. As managers we have better opportunity to de-motivate than we do to motivate. What we can do as managers is figure out how to nurture the sense of motivation our employees have. How do we set expectations for better quality results? How can we generate greater productivity with the people we have working with us? How do we build a stronger, more cohesive work team with higher morale?

If you were to ask your employees why they work in tree care, a lot of them would say because they need a job. If they just need a job they can work anywhere. The responsibility that we have as owners is to identify the purpose of our company and reinforce that purpose with our employees. So what business are you in? Do the people that you have working for you understand the nature of your business or do they just show up, breathe the air and expect to get paid? I refer to those people as clock-punching potatoes because they punch in and then they vegetate. These are people without purpose or motivation. If there is no sense of purpose, then what will happen when the day comes when you really need them? They aren’t going to be there. Those who have a sense of commitment and purpose understand the mission of the organization and are going to be committed and productive.

Once, I was working with a small company in Texas and I talked to the owners about their mission statement. I asked them if they had a mission. They looked at me in a funny way and told me their mission was to make money. I told them that before meeting with them I had talked to a lot of their customers. I told them what the customers had said regarding integrity, quality of service and quality of product. None of their customers spoke about price. I found out that they were a high-priced supplier but that their customers would rather use them and pay the premium because of their quality and integrity. A mission statement must state your beliefs of why you’re in business. Profitability is an important element, but it’s not the only element.

Do you have a mission?

Are you on a mission or are you just sort of showing up? Mission statements are not difficult to put together. They should be simple. The following are some questions to consider:

1. Why are you in business?
2. Whom do you serve and who are your customers?
3. What do you do and how do you do it?
4. Are you in business just to cut down trees or do you preserve them sometimes, too?
5. Are you in business just to clear land or do you do landscaping as well?
6. Are you in business solely to eliminate nuisance trees or do you enhance the overall beauty of the land?
7. What are you in business for? What do you do and how do you do it?

I have called a number of TCIA members during the last several months and it was interesting to hear the different reasons why they’re in business. It was a great question to ask. It tells us who we are – confident, skilled and dedicated professionals. If you believe in your mission statement, then read it when you have meetings, at the beginning of the day – this is why we’re in business. Drum it into your employees’ heads.

Have you ever noticed that, from the time you interview a person until the time they show up for work, something happens to them? There was a book written back in 1988 called Workforce 2000 that predicted the type of worker we would have by the year 2000. It said that workers
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by the year 2000 would be less competent, less dedicated and less skilled. They were off in their prediction because this type of worker showed up around 1995. A companion book, called *Opportunity 2000*, discussed how to motivate and how to work with this type of employee. It said first you have to give employees a purpose and a mission; a reason for being there. Will employees believe in the mission? Who knows? But if you keep drumming into their heads it might just start to sink in. They might start to realize they aren’t just trimming or removing trees, that there’s a larger purpose.

**Communicate your culture**

I was working with a company in Canton, Ohio, and one of the supervisors was talking about his promotion to mill superintendent. He told me that he had a mess on his hands because the mill has always been a money loser. Their tradition had been to lose money. He said that the union guys were rusted to the machines and didn’t want to change anything. The only thing the management team was good at doing was stabbing each other in the back. I asked him what he was going to do with such a tradition and he told me, quite simply, he was going to change it.

Take a look at your traditions, where you come from, and the beliefs you have. Then ask yourself if these are the beliefs you want to carry into the future. Evaluate whether or not changes are necessary in these beliefs and values to influence what employees do when they come to work.

**Relationships**

How do we work with one another? In your business, if your workers and crews don’t work together, what can happen? Accidents? Damage? Death? Face it, you’re in a high-risk business and if you don’t work well together everyone is at greater risk. How do you emphasize the relationship and the importance of working together?

I was at one company that had a new supervisor. He told me he had a problem with his crew. They weren’t getting along and he asked me how to get everybody to like one another. I looked at him and told him that even in a family people don’t always like each other. I told him his job as a supervisor was not to get everybody to like each other, but to get them to work together.

**Expectations**

Do we set high expectations? Someone asked me what I do with the “card-punching potatoes” and I told them – ‘fry em. With people like this you need to turn up the heat and get them sizzling right away. If they don’t want to meet the expectation you set then get rid of them, because that kind of attitude can become contagious. Fry them or fire them but be done with them. If you don’t, the good worker is going to think he can get away with poor performance as well.

**Energy**

Describe the things that drive your company. What are the things that keep your company in business? What are the things that keep workers coming back day after day, year after year? What are the factors that energize the company? A lot of you have workers who are not from the United States. It’s nice that they come from different cultures but you have to explain to them that they now work here. Part of our responsibility as executives and managers and supervisors is to communicate expectations and culture so that anyone coming in understands the rules to succeed.

Years ago the book *The One Minute Manager*, by Ken Blanchard, popularized the term “management by walking around.” I was reading a business journal several years ago and the title of the article was *Management by Wandering Around*. I thought to myself, it isn’t ‘wandering’ around, it’s ‘walking’ around. It reminded me of a time when I was watching the evening news and they had a live sports-cam shot from a hunting lodge. This was a contest with a single shot division, a rifle division and an archery division. The
archer had won five years in a row and the
sportscaster shoves a microphone in the
guy’s face and tells him how lucky he is.
The hunter told him that luck had nothing
to do with it. He said that when he goes out
into the woods he knows where the deer
sleep, eat and everything else because other-
wise he would just be “wandering
through the woods.” If you’re wandering
through the woods in this business you’ll
soon find yourself lost. You need to know
the game you’re in and the game you’re
after.

Know the business you’re in

Use your senses. When you go out to a
job site, trust your instincts. Do you ever
get the sense that something isn’t right or
just doesn’t feel right? Get some sense of
what is happening on a job site or with one
of your crews. If things need to be cor-
corrected, correct them immediately. Don’t
procrastinate. If you are out there check-
ing on crews and something isn’t right,
find out what it is and take action immedi-
ately.

If you go out and ask your crew what’s
going on, what will they tell you? Probably
that everything is just fine. It
happened in my office – I walked in and
something just didn’t feel right. I asked
my secretary and she told me it was noth-
ing. I went over to my manager, Fran, and
asked her what was going on. She told me
she had it under control, nothing to worry
about. Now I am worried so I went to my
“spy” to find out. She told me that none of
the guys would answer the phone and the
women were sick of it and they weren’t
going to do it anymore. Well, we settled
all that with a schedule for breaks and
phone answering, but if I hadn’t listened
to my gut instinct I never would have dis-
covered the problem.

Spontaneous recognition

When people are doing well, let them
know right away that you think so. There
is a book called The Greatest
Management Principle in the World, by
Mike LaBuff, in which he says the great-
est management principle in the world is
this: the things that get rewarded are the
things that get done. What are you reward-
ing? Take a look at the time you spend
with your crews. Do you spend your time
with those who do well or do you spend
your time with those who need improve-
ment. One of the best rewards you have as
a supervisor is your time. Spend time with
those who do well as much as you spend
with those who don’t.

Respond

Respond to what goes on in meetings. If
there is action you need to take, take it. If
there is action employees need to take, follow
up to make sure they do.

I spoke with a tree company owner who
said is that he’s a hands-off owner. This is
the way empowerment should work. For
some owners, empowerment is a difficult
concept. I once had an owner tell me he
didn’t like empowerment in their compa-
nny because he thought it meant you didn’t
do your job; you gave it to your staff to do
instead. I told him that was called abdica-
tion, not empowerment. I have a real
simple definition of empowerment: hav-
ing people do the job that you hired them
to do.

As an owner, one of the problems we
run into is that no one can do the work as
well as we can. Have you ever had that
feeling? No one is going to be able to do
your job as well as you can. No one is as
good at it. Please, hire people who are
good so you can put your time and efforts
into the areas that really make a difference
for the company.

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throughout the United States, Canada and
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We are looking for reliable, career-seeking climbers/crew leaders with minimum 2 years’ climbing experience and to supervise 2 to 3 crew members. Must have or be willing to obtain CDL. $16-$20 per hour starting wage depending on experience. Medical, dental, paid vacation, retirement plan, profit-sharing, and holidays. Call Pleasant View Tree Service - Aric Marohn, Stillwater, MN. (651) 430-0316.

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Serving the finest properties from Boston to Cape Cod, we are seeking arborists with the typical credentials to join our team of professionals. We offer state-of-the-art equipment, facility, benefits and working environment; relocation assistance available. Contact Andy Felix at Tree Tech Inc., PO Box 302, Foxboro, MA 02035; phone (508) 543-5644; fax (508) 543-5251; e-mail treetech@earthlink.net; or visit www.treetechinc.net.

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FMC John Bean Rotomist sprayer, trailer-mounted, good condition $6,000. See photo at www.treecareindustry.org.
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By joining TCIA you’ll gain immediate access to a team of business management consultants — experts in marketing, finance, sales, estimating, accounting and human resources who are dedicated to your business and only a phone call away. You’ll learn about the latest innovations in tree care safety, equipment, technology and techniques. You’ll also become part of TCIA’s extensive list of new business referrals. And you will also add your voice to the thousands of others seeking fair and beneficial governmental regulations and legislation. Call 1-800-733-2622 or go to the Web at www.treecareindustry.org, today. And start running rings around your competitors tomorrow!
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**Tree and Lawn Care Co., Long Island, New York**

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Small consulting and tree care company. Located in the magnificent Rogue Valley of Southern Oregon. Mild winters, sunny climate, booming economy, near Crater Lake National Park. Twenty years in business with approximately 900 elite customers in computer database. We are looking for a buyer who has the knowledge, passion and professionalism to take this undervalued company into this century. Serious inquiries only. Contact us at (541) 826-4506 or frazeedownnder@earthlink.net.

**Safety Corner**

The National Electrical Safety Code requires that various voltage wires are certain distances above the ground. As a general rule, the higher the voltage of a conductor, the higher it is on the pole.

**Wire Location**

Also, it specifies that the highest voltage is recommended to be on top. If there are three voltages on a pole - 69kV, 34.5 kV and 13.2 kV - they would be arranged on the pole as shown above.

Once certified, a climber can legally work within 10-feet of an energized conductor carrying up to 242,000 volts safely.

**From Chapter 1, TCIA EHAP Manual**

Most tree worker deaths involve electricity. You can comply with OSHA’s Close Proximity Act and be exempt from their 10-foot clearance rule by certifying your workers with TCIA’s Electrical Hazard Awareness Program. Once certified, a climber can legally work within 10-feet of an energized conductor carrying up to 242,000 volts safely.
Are your workers FULLY trained in electrical hazard awareness? Address this problem with the latest edition of the Electrical Hazards Awareness Program (EHAP) from TCIA, the Tree Care Industry Association.

EHAP is the cost-effective way to provide your employees with the critical knowledge and training they need to prevent electrical accidents. Meet OSHA safety requirements with EHAP.

The EHAP program is available in English and Spanish. The program combines written information, video training and hands-on training to reinforce important objectives.

Order this essential training program today.

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Web: www.treecareindustry.org

Member $85 • Non-member $135
State of the Association Message

The following is the text of the State of the Association message presented at TCI Expo. I wanted to share the excitement around the progress your trade association is making with you and the outcomes we are seeking on behalf of the industry. Thank you for your membership and for actively participating in your trade association.

– Cynthia Mills, CAE, TCIA president

Good morning! It’s fantastic to see such an enormous crowd at the World’s Largest Tree Care Show. Your turnout proves the value our community finds in coming together as “The Voice of Tree Care” through TCIA. Welcome and have a great time learning from each other, experiencing the marketplace on the trade show floor and the benefits of being part of the Tree Care Industry Association.

This has been a remarkable year for our industry, and it’s not over yet. The members started out this year by voting overwhelmingly to change our name from the National Arborist Association to the Tree Care Industry Association – a name far more descriptive of a trade association. It will help us communicate our business interests with the government more effectively and direct more business from the public to each of you. We may have changed our name, but we will continue to promote arborists as professionals who care for trees, and TCIA as the association that advances your tree care business.

This year, we have launched on a new path to claim our birthright as a trade association more fully.

Raffle & Silent Auction a success for the TREE Fund

Through the generosity of Wood/Chuck Chipper, Engine Power Source, and the 60-plus TCI Expo vendors who donated items, more than $36,000 was raised for the Robert Felix Memorial Scholarship Program. The owner of the winning ticket was John Nelson with Bartlett Manufacturing, who elected to take the option of the $20,000. The Wood/Chuck Hyroller 1250, which was donated, was then auctioned off, and the winning bidder was Jeff Stevens from Davey Tree Experts at $19,000 for a $26,000 chipper. A silent auction was also held, with one hundred items ranging from saws and clippers to wine and works of art, all through the contributions of Expo exhibitors in Baltimore. Thank you to all who purchased tickets or auction items. The funds will be used for the Robert Felix Scholarship program which grants three $4,000 scholarships annually. For more information please visit the TREE Fund Web site: www.treefund.org.
In the past, we directed our attention to regulations that affected our industry in a reactionary way; fighting to get citations written more accurately after regulations were written. We have taken some bold steps to forge a new road that will change us and change how consumers and the government view the contributions we make to the community.

First, we recognize that our industry needs to take strong steps towards admitting and controlling the high accident and fatality rate that continues to plague us. Regardless of whether it is people in our membership or outside of our membership, the industry as a whole is affected. Safety is good business, and morally, it’s the right thing to do.

We formed an Alliance with OSHA, which is directing federal funds toward building resources that will help our industry improve safety. The list of successes we have had in less than a year with this relationship is far too long for me to list here. Yes, OSHA will continue to cite us when we are not following appropriate safety regulations, as well they should. It’s our job to follow regulations and to stay in dialogue with OSHA so that the regulations written are appropriate for our industry.

Understand one thing clearly – regulations happen for one reason. When an industry or profession does not take care of itself, government steps in. Just ask the accountants in this country over the last year. If we do our job well, working seriously together as an industry to reduce accidents and fatalities (while working with OSHA), it is to our direct benefit.

Improving safety is only one aspect of helping our industry mature. When we surveyed the membership on what they needed from TCIA, we found that the responses were the same as those when we asked people what their challenges were 20 years ago. The Board recognized that we were at a turning point. We could continue to put out videos, hold seminars, and come together at meetings like this. But without a road map for our industry to follow, we would be sitting in the same place in another 10 years with the same problems.

It is time to develop an Accreditation program for tree care companies. It’s time to build best business practices for our industry that will help our members have a blueprint for how to improve their companies. By following that blueprint companies will improve profitability, increase credibility with consumers, lower accident rates, lower insurance premiums, and attract quality employees. The insurance company we have been working with to develop a new comprehensive program for tree care companies has assured us that our industry’s plans to put this in place will increase the likelihood of finding a company that is willing to underwrite us. We also sent all member companies an insurance survey that we absolutely, positively need back from you if we’re to lower your insurance premiums.

For the consumer, the government and the media, our Accreditation program will finally give us a way to prove we are a quality industry that contributes critical services to every community. We will have businesses that adhere to best business practices and best tree care practices. At last, we will have our Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval that will help us to distinguish those who are truly committed to arboriculture as a profession and to running businesses to the highest standards. We will finally have a mature, recognized industry with credibility. And best of all, we will have developed the standards ourselves.

The Accreditation Council is made up of a group of your peers that represents large and small companies, safety professionals, utility and residential/commercial companies, and even an outside quality expert from industry. I invite you to participate in the Open Forum tomorrow from 2-4 p.m. in Room 320. This is your chance to speak directly with the Accreditation Council; to learn more about the program as it is developing; and to provide insights to the Council as they finalize our program for release in 2004.

We also took the final step in a process that began four years ago. At the urging of John Britton, we revised our Code of Ethics two years ago. If our industry is to have credibility, we must take responsibility for our own professional community. Instead of complaining about issues, we need to be willing to take action like other professions, such as the Bar Association or the American Medical Association. Our Ethics Committee, established by the Board this year, is made up of a cross-section of members. Since June, it has already had two cases come before the Committee that were referred to the Board for action. The recommended action was termination of membership, to which the Board unanimously agreed. This is a bold new and necessary step for our industry that, again, adds credibility when we are talking to the government and the media. It also provides us with a mechanism to take action against inappropriate business practices and behaviors within our community. We have now begun setting the bar and taking responsibility for ourselves. It is time.

We are also taking major steps to move from being a reactive industry to a proactive industry with government. TCIA formed its first Political Action Committee – Voice for Trees PAC. You may hate politics personally – but in order for us to mature as an industry, we must be recognized in Washington. There is only one way to do that. We must have access to legislators and key Committee leaders. There is only one way to do that. We must support candidates who support our industry by regularly contributing to their campaigns. Yes, money is what buys you the appointment with the legislator and not

TREE CARE INDUSTRY – JANUARY 2004
the 22-year-old college intern when you go to the Hill. Again, you may not like it, but it's how the system works in Washington.

We are required by law to receive written permission before we can ask for donations. I urge you to sign the permission form. 2004 is a critical election year for this country and our industry. Yes, you can make a difference to the tree care industry with your votes and your contributions.

If we want to be viewed as professionals working in a critical industry, then it's time we started guiding our own fate instead of leaving it to others. The American Nursery and Landscape Association has a PAC and a voice in Washington. The American Society of Landscape Architects has a PAC and a voice in Washington. The Professional Lawn Care Association of America has a voice in Washington. The Golf Course Superintendents Association has a voice in Washington. Isn't it about time the tree care industry had a PAC and a voice in Washington?

On sound financial footing, 2003 has been about TCIA positioning our industry to be recognized as the “Voice of Tree Care”—tree care professionals who work in a credible industry. It has been about ending our absence in Washington by putting in place a PAC to help us find our voice and take our rightful place beside other green industry associations who have long been vocal without us. It has been about setting up a framework of administrative, civil and criminal tools to help America’s consumers, businesses and families combat unsolicited commercial e-mail, known as spam.

The new law is a pro-consumer measure that allows consumers to choose to stop further unsolicited spam from a sender. It also provides a protection against spam containing unmarked sexually oriented or pornographic material.

As you know, e-mail is an extremely important and effective means of communication that is used by millions of Americans on a daily basis for personal and commercial purposes. Its convenience and efficiency, however, are increasingly threatened by the rise in spam.

Spam currently accounts for more than half of all e-mail traffic. Today, most spam is fraudulent or deceptive in nature. The growth in spam also imposes significant costs on Internet Service Providers (ISPs), businesses, and other organizations, since they can only handle a finite volume of e-mail without making further investments in their infrastructure.

The problems associated with spam cannot be solved by Federal legislation alone, but will require the development and adoption of new technologies. Nonetheless, the law will help address the problems associated with the rapid growth and abuse of spam.

The new law establishes:

- New criminal penalties to assist in deterring the most offensive forms of spam, including unmarked sexually-oriented messages and e-mails containing fraudulent headers.
- Statutory damages for civil violations – the law also provides greater certainty in interstate commerce for businesses that would otherwise face a wide diversity of state laws on spam.
- Consumers are provided with a choice not to receive any further unsolicited messages from a sender. Senders that do not honor a consumer’s request are subject to civil penalties.
- Spam containing unmarked sexually-oriented material as a criminal offense. The labeling requirement gives parents a tool to protect their children from such messages. In addition, senders are required to place warning labels on messages containing sexually oriented material. If they knowingly violate this requirement, spammers are subject to fines or imprisonment.
- Civil and criminal prohibitions to deter spammers from using false or misleading identification, and imposes penalties against spammers for these violations.

The FTC is in the process of writing specific rules for this legislation. In the meantime TCIA members who use e-mail to market their services should follow these rules:

The law establishes three criteria for e-mail when messages are commercial in nature:

1. “Clear and conspicuous identifi-
Were you unable to attend TCI EXPO?

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Regardless of your reason, here's your chance to purchase a set of CDs or cassette tapes of ALL the highly acclaimed TCI Expo speakers.

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Go to www.soundrecordings.org to get your set of TCI Expo 2003 audio recordings, direct from the studio.

And as always, if you need any additional information or assistance, don’t hesitate to let us know.

Call for nominations for TCIA Board of Directors

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2005-2006 TCIA Board of Directors. Members wishing to nominate candidates should fill out the “Candidate for TCIA Board of Directors Nominator Form” on the next page. This form will be mailed to all members in January and may also be downloaded at www.treecareindustry.org. Those submitting nominations must also contact the candidate to ensure the candidate is willing to serve.

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Washington State Adopts Rule on Cholinesterase Testing

The Washington Department of Labor and Industries on Dec. 3 adopted a rule requiring employers to conduct blood testing of employees who handle cholinesterase-inhibiting pesticides.

The rule covers all agriculture employers and workers regulated by Washington’s safety standards for agriculture and the pesticide worker protection standard (Chapter 296-307) – so nursery, greenhouse and forest applications fall under the rule. Pesticide applicators, growers and others who employ workers applying organophosphate and n-methyl-carbamate pesticides will have to conduct the tests to check for levels of cholinesterase, an enzyme produced by the body to help control nerve function.

Decreased cholinesterase can over-stimulate nerves to the point of exhaustion. Symptoms of low cholinesterase levels include blurred vision, diarrhea, tremors, seizures, loss of consciousness and death.

The rule takes effect Feb. 1, and will cover an estimated 1,700 employers. Employers will be required to provide cholinesterase monitoring to workers who handle cholinesterase-inhibiting pesticides for 50 or more hours in any given 30-day period. In 2005, workers handling those pesticides for 30 hours in any 30-day period will have to be monitored.

For the first year, the department will cover the costs of laboratory tests and medical visits associated with blood testing.

The agency will conduct workshops to train employers on how to comply with the new rule. Other workshops will be available to pesticide workers and health-care providers.

The rule and other information on cholinesterase monitoring are on the agency’s Web site at http://www.lni.wa.gov/wisha/rules/whatsnew/ruleupdate.asp?RuleID=144.
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* Please circle this number on the Reader’s Service Card for more information.
In mid October 2002, I had an appointment with a real estate salesman and developer in a Seattle suburb. The client wanted a price on removing a large Douglas fir on a neighbor’s property, adjacent to the vacant lot where he intended to build a house. My company was called because we had done work for the woman who owned the tree and she was satisfied and recommended us to the developer.

He described where he wanted to site his house and then told me that, because he needed to dig a deep and wide trench for a sewer line at the bottom of his property and very near the fir tree’s roots, he had spoken with the neighbor about removing the tree rather than jeopardize its health and stability. He told me that she had agreed to allow him to remove the tree. I drew a sketch of where the tree was located and wrote up a contract for the tree removal and received the signed acceptance of the price and terms. I agreed that I would phone the developer and the tree’s owner prior to coming to remove the tree, knowing that she may not be able to be home because of her job as a flight attendant.

Approximately two weeks after the signing of the agreement, I phoned both the developer and the tree owner to tell them when we would be on site. We did the job exactly as we had agreed and sent an invoice to the developer’s mailing address. The next day I received a frantic phone call from the tree’s owner declaring that we had taken down the wrong tree and that she had never given permission to take down that or any other fir tree. I immediately contacted the crew foreman to ask which tree had been removed and learned that we had removed the tree on the contract. I phoned the tree’s owner and extended my apologies and suggested that she take her questions to the developer. Immediately I began to expect the worst and after 30 days and several tense phone calls with the developer, we were finally paid for the work.

I had nearly forgotten about this case until six months later when I was served with a lawsuit naming my company and the developer with wrongful cutting of a tree. I turned the case over to my insurance company, who hired an adjuster, who hired a local attorney. I was convinced that even though we did not have written authorization from the tree’s owner, we were only slightly liable because we had relied on the authority of the developer who hired us. I was soon to learn a very hard lesson.

The Seattle attorney phoned me the day before Thanksgiving to tell me that the case had been settled for $24,000, (three times the tree appraiser’s $8,000 value), and that my company’s insurance company had agreed to pay 60 percent, or $14,000, not to mention the thousands in yet-to-be-determined attorney’s fees. I nearly fell out of my chair in disbelief and anger. We trusted a developer to obtain permission and did what we were told and we were taking a substantially bigger hit.

The more I obsessed about this, the angrier I became. I now believe that the developer never had permission to remove the fir tree, although he may have had verbal permission to remove some less prominent tree. You see, this large fir tree, with its 50- to 60-foot spread, was blocking a stunning view from the house he planned to build. With the tree gone, any new house would sell for $60,000 to 70,000 more than a house with a restricted view. The developer could pay a share of the damages and he would actually make money on the deal!

What is the lesson here for all of us? ALWAYS GET PERMISSION IN WRITING! I violated my own policy when I trusted this man. Standard operating procedure here is when neighbor-A wants us to prune or remove neighbor-B’s tree, we provide a written release form, to be signed by all parties, where the tree owner gives permission for our employees to come onto the property and prune or remove the tree. If we cannot get this document, we will not do the work.

I should have gotten the signature of the tree owner or asked the developer to get the permission. Without it, we should have refused to do the job. I hope that when my insurance renewal comes up again my carrier will look at the extenuating circumstances of this case and not just at what they had to pay out. We will get signed releases in every case in the future, even if we have to make an embarrassing request of a huge and powerful construction company to get the neighbor’s permission. We will do it, or we will walk away!

John Hushagen owns SeattleTree Preservation Inc. in Seattle, Wash.
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