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It's not supposed to happen this way - or maybe it is ...

T

hink back to when you were a kid. Parents were strong; the source of the sched-
tule, the authority figure in your life, and you never questioned that you could
count on them. That was where your balance came from, even when you were test-
ing it. Now think to a time when your balance got thrown a bit – your mom was
sick! Who was going to make your breakfast? Help you get your clothes out for
the next day? Pick you up from baseball practice? Your dad couldn’t play catch with you because he had the flu?
Dads aren’t supposed to sit on the sofa with a trash can nearby all day long. Dads are supposed to take us fishing,
teach us to ride our bike, take us camping, go to the soccer game and teach us cool stuff with the car or the
boat. It’s Saturday – and he’s not up?

I distinctly remember the first time that both of my parents were really sick for days and days with a nasty
virus. These are two people who don’t get sick. Fortunately, I was 16 and driving. Once I got myself ready for
school, I essentially forced them liquids to keep them hydrated and insisted they eat or they were heading for
the hospital. Years later, both of them told me that if it hadn’t been for the care I provided, they would definite-
ly have been in the hospital. I remember even more vividly how my balance was thrown off kilter. Parents are
not supposed to get sick – and certainly not both at the same time. It was a big step toward adulthood – taking
care of them, caring for myself, keeping to my own schedule and doing so without a support system. You see,
I’m an “only” – so there was no team of siblings to share the load and no family nearby to help. I watched
the strong in my life become the weak, and it demanded something else of me.

In today’s culture, it’s very popular for leadership to be depicted as ruthless – you’re fired! Or totally in con-
control – (pick any political figure), or separate from life’s trials – (pick any celebrity who is silly enough to think
money and fame builds walls from life’s challenges.) As we begin a new year, I would ask you to really think
about what leadership means in your company. Are you ever vulnerable with your team, or do you insist on try-
ing to keep up a facade of all-knowing, strength, the total source of power, untouchable by life’s realities? I
would suggest if that is your style, or you believe that you need to try to emulate that style, that you may want
reconsider. You just may be short-changing your team from a growth opportunity.

Just like parents aren’t supposed to get sick, we’ve built a culture that suggests that to lead is not to seek
answers from others. To lead is not to lead with a group supporting you – know-
ing your weaknesses as well as your strengths.

Last year, I had one of the toughest years of my life. My very foundation was shaken multiple times by loss-
es too great in number and too concentrated in a very short period of time. I share this with you not to receive
expressions of sympathy but to communicate what happens to those around the leader during a time like this.
They don’t know how to respond. You’re who they normally follow and support. Now, you’re vulnerable. Your
may be absent at unexpected times. You may need human interaction in a way that they have never experienced
with you before. You may respond in ways that they don’t expect. You’re the person who has always been there
for them, and now, the roles are reversed. Not everyone is comfortable.

To lead is to allow those around you to have different types of experiences and to help them through them –
yes, even when you are the vulnerable one who needs their support and help in a different way. It allows your
team to experience you as a human being; one whom life will touch with just as many agonies as themselves. It
requires them to step up to the plate, to step into voids that they didn’t know they would have to fill, and to find
something in themselves that provides a growth experience – in many cases both personally and professionally.
It solidifies the team in a way that you could never do if you tried to create a scenario to accomplish this growth.

Leadership is finding opportunities for your team even in the moments of your greatest adversities. As you enter
another year, remember that you don’t have to know it all or do it all. You have to be more than you have to do –
and being includes all the aspects of human experience. It’s not a long list of activities that will see you to lead-
ership; it’s who you are in those moments of leadership.

Just when you think it’s not meant to be this way, just maybe it is.

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, prac-
tices, 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
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TCIA is proud to announce the launch of the industry’s first safety certification program – The Certified Treecare Safety Professional (CTSP).

There is no personal visit or phone call worse than having to tell a spouse, child, or parent that their loved one is not coming home that day.

The tree care industry is ranked among the most dangerous professions in the U.S., close behind logging and commercial fishing. We are also one of the top five industries that OSHA targeted in their strategic plan because of our poor safety record. Rolled into this is the complicating factor of landscapers doing tree work without appropriate training.

The tree care industry has participated in standards development for years – both voluntary and through government regulation – to identify hazards and improve safety. This is commendable.

TCIA, and previously NAA, worked to develop tools to help companies with safety training – videos, Tailgate Safety programs, Pocket Guides, and the Model Company Safety Program. We have held seminars, workshops, conferences and committee meetings to share knowledge about safety developments and encourage arborists to embrace best practices. This, too, is commendable.

What we haven’t done is make a significant difference in the overall industry’s accident rates. They’re unacceptably high. This collective experience of the tree care industry reduces our credibility with the outside world and profoundly impacts insurance rates and other costs of doing business.

When TCIA announced our intent to Transform the Industry over a decade, we committed ourselves to five outcomes that include: “Safety will have measurably improved. Accident rates will have lowered.”

Part of the Transformation of the Industry was the launch of Accreditation, a program to assist companies to implement best business practices and to give consumers a way to identify qualified tree care companies. Our experiences in the field during the implementation of this program clearly pointed us to the solution for how to accomplish this second and noble outcome – to save lives – by establishing a program that will train companies on how to establish a safety culture.

What we know is that we cannot keep doing what we have been doing, or the industry will not improve its record. We know that providing tools is not enough. We also know that companies that do not have the resources to hire a person specifically devoted to this activity must have an alternative that will provide this leadership for their team. The Certified TreeCare Safety Professional (CTSP) program has been developed with the majority of TCIA member companies’ needs in mind.

Providing direction on the use of tools, training safety leaders in every company, developing a coaching style within the employee team and establishing a culture of safety can lower companies’ experiences of accidents. This requires management’s commitment and buy-in to the investment in a safety culture.

With that in mind, TCIA put together a task force that is to be commended for their
We are Not Just Talking - We are Doing!

By Cynthia Mills

Earlier this year, we promised you that we would be reporting significant movement forward for the tree care industry in 2005. This issue of the Reporter includes the interim State of the Association message given at the record-breaking TCI EXPO in Columbus, Ohio. We are making great strides in the Accreditation program, with more than 800 companies now expressing an interest in becoming accredited; that’s over 50 percent of the U.S. tree care company members expressing an interest in working toward having best business practices in place.

An unanticipated benefit to the intense working relationship TCIA is developing with its members around the country as they go through Accreditation is speedy identification of the gaps that exist in programs and services to help tree care companies run better businesses. We pledged to the membership when we launched the Transformation of the Industry that we were going to partner with them and government to lower the accident and fatality rate. Being in close proximity to our members in Accreditation consulting and site visits provided us with the opportunity to see what was happening more readily with regard to safety practices in the industry.

Before we started our Accreditation program, we learned that all of the business management guides and conferences, while great, did not show members how to implement best practices in a systematic way.

Thus, Accreditation was born. We have the same problem with safety. We’ve put out the Model Company Safety Program, pocket guides, the TreeWorker, and videos; and held workshops and conferences on topics with safety information; and had committees – but the bottom line is that most tree care companies don’t have one or more people solely dedicated to this and there is no system to help with the “how”? We’ve learned that there is no video in the whole wide world that is going to establish a culture of safety in a company.

We are now going to help you to develop a culture of safety by providing you with the steps and the opportunity to train your team on just that – through the Certified TreeCare Safety Professional (CTSP) program.

And, so, you may ask – “Why do we need another certification program?” Because responsible industries have certification programs specifically for safety.

We also know that as a best business practice, safety is essential. We cannot deny that an investment in safety is good business – from employee morale to employee recruitment to insurance costs to company reputation.

Now, we will have the pride of the arborist professional who is leading a safety culture in each tree care company as a Certified TreeCare Safety Professional, and the peace of mind of an owner that someone has been trained on how to establish and preserve a culture of safety every business day.

Stay tuned for the official launch of the new program in just a matter of weeks. You, too, may be a CTSP before the end of 2006!

Cynthia Mills is president and CEO of the Tree Care Industry Association.

And so you may ask – “Why do we need another certification program?” Because responsible industries have certification programs specifically for safety.

We have lagged far behind, and we owe it to ourselves to step up to the plate. We have a proven need, and we need a program designed just for our industry that helps us to address our specific problems, that has the credibility of third party development from your trade association – the only association that works to advance commercial tree care companies.

We know establishing a safe work environment is morally the right thing to do.

We also know that as a best business practice, safety is essential. We cannot deny that an investment in safety is good business – from employee morale to employee recruitment to insurance costs to company reputation.

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CTSP Council

Similar to the Accreditation Council which monitors the TCIA company credentialing program, TCIA is establishing the Certified TreeCare Safety Professional (CTSP) Council. TCIA expects to have both external and internal expertise on this Council for credibility and breadth of knowledge so this credential has validity for the profession as well as for the government and public.

Therefore, the Board of Directors has approved the following representation on this Council:

Seat 1: OSHA
Seat 2: DOT/FMCSA
Seat 3: National Safety Council
Seat 4: Independent Safety Consultant
Seat 5: One large tree care company member (as defined by the gross tree care revenue dues structure)
Seat 6: One medium-sized tree care company member (as defined by the gross tree care revenue dues structure)
Seat 7: One small tree care company member (as defined by the gross tree care revenue dues structure)
CTSP Advisor: Independent Academic advisor

The Board retains the right to make
TCIA expands safety focus with new task forces to help fulfill Transformation of the Industry

TCIA has decided to expand its work on safety initiatives in conjunction with the development of the Certified TreeCare Safety Professional (CTSP) program. TCIA has long been known as the place to turn to for its wide array of safety products, workshops, seminars, and conference content over the years. However, with the development of a safety certification program, there will need to be an ongoing and more regular reassessment of existing tools and the development of new tools to support CTSPs across the nation.

In addition, TCIA wants to be able to respond to the changing safety needs of the industry by quickly assembling experts in particular areas of safety to focus in on a project or program, complete it, and get it released to the industry as quickly as possible. TCIA will also be outsourcing some of the content development; partnering with both commercial and volunteer resources. This manner of working will replace the former Safety Committee and will provide more members with many more opportunities to be involved, as much of the work can be done by teleconference and digital review, reducing the need to travel to be involved in enhancing our safety initiatives.

For 2006, TCIA is looking for volunteers for the following Task Forces:

**EHAP Review:** The focus of this task force will be to provide a final review of the revision to this popular and renowned program, which 2300 arborists attended in the last year.

**Crane Best Management Practices Review:** The focus of this task force will be to provide a final review of the draft for a new best practices guide for the use of cranes in the industry.

**Tailgate Safety:** The focus of this task force will be to review and revise existing content, to provide suggestions for new sections to be developed and to look at the flow of the program to determine if it can be improved for use on-site.

**Model Company Safety Program:** This task force will do the final review of the program, which was conducted in 2005.

**TCI EXPO 2006 Safety Track:** With the launch of CTSP, TCIA will be providing a Safety Track at EXPO. This Task Force will work with the staff to design content which should be covered for EXPO attendees.

**Hispanic Worker:** With the continuing increase of our Hispanic work force, TCIA recognizes that the needs of employers have changed. This task force will look at the CTSP program, the existing safety programs and tools, and will work with staff to strategize how to support tree care company owners in the area of safety for the Hispanic worker.

**Benchmarking Safety:** Part of knowing whether or not we have improved our accident and fatality rate requires tree care companies to share data with TCIA and requires TCIA to do an effective job of collecting the data. This task force will be convened every three to five years to review our surveys, progress, collection methods, and any changes in government access to data. The next task force on this topic will convene in 2008.

**Research & Development:** This Task Force will look at the totality of safety projects, programs, and initiatives with staff and will help identify the next areas of TCIA’s focus on safety initiatives. Staff will coordinate these recommendations with the CTSP program.

TCIA members who are interested in participating in these task forces should contact Peter Gerstenberger, senior advisor to the president for safety, standards and compliance (peter@treecareindustry.org). The number of positions for each task force may be limited for effectiveness.

---

**CTSP Council**

adjustments based on the availability of parties identified to serve.

TCIA will begin appointing these positions this month. Interested parties should contact Cynthia Mills at mills@treecareindustry.org.

Stay tuned for the first announcement of Step 1 to earn your safety certification from your company’s trade association – the Tree Care Industry Association.

Every tree care company should have CTSPs on their team and commit to establishing a safety culture. We know you’re ready to Transform the Industry by partnering with TCIA to save lives so everyone goes home every night.

We’re looking forward to congratulating your company as one of the first to have a CTSP on your team!
Limited Availability - Make Your Reservations Today!

“The WMC is not to be missed. It offers the chance to understand the issues facing our industry. Every detail was first rate. A truly rewarding and beneficial conference.”

Thomas J. Duffy | Sherrill Arborist Supply

TCIA’s Winter Management Conference in St. Kitts is right around the corner! If you haven’t already done so, please make your reservations for your hotel and airfare. We know from contacting the hotel and making arrangements for travel that the rooms and available flights are filling up quickly.

We have made many enhancements and upgrades to the Winter Management Conference, so don’t miss your opportunity to attend. Some of the enhancements include:

- Excellent Selection of Business Seminars – TCIA has carefully selected speakers who will deliver relevant content and help your company move to the next level.

- All Inclusive Social Networking Events – To help simplify things and minimize some of your costs incurred at WMC, TCIA has included complimentary beverages and food in many of the social and networking events.

- Unveiling of TCIA’s new Safety Initiative – Learn first hand how this new safety program will benefit your company and transform the industry.

- New Child Registration – When you’re not in sessions, take advantage of the resort location and spend quality time with your family. The child registration includes daily supervised “children’s only” breakfasts and a ticket to the closing Kittitian Masquerade Party. Other children’s programs are available directly through the hotel.

To learn more about the educational sessions, networking opportunities, optional tours, and the island of St. Kitts, visit www.treecareindustry.org. To reserve your hotel accommodations today, call 1-800-223-6388. See you on the sunny beaches of St. Kitts!

Jan. 13 is WMC Early Bird Registration Deadline

The Winter Management Conference early bird deadline is January 13. Members who register early save $60 on the cost of the full conference; $50 on education sessions registration. Register online at www.treecareindustry.org/public/meetings_winter_management_conference.htm

In addition to good business, WMC will be good fun.

“If I could only attend one conference a year, it would be the WMC. Every year I come home with some tidbit that is worth thousands (sometimes tens of thousands) of dollars in added revenue to my business.”

Paul Markworth | Wachtel Tree Science and Service, Inc.

“We have been attending WMC for over 15 years. We return from the meeting with added knowledge and practical information. We have made some wonderful friends over the years ...”

Jeanne Houser, GM | McFarland Landscape Services, Inc.
From coverages such as pesticide and herbicide application to workmanship errors, our experience and knowledge of the arborist industry enables us to offer you the tailored, comprehensive coverage you need. To find out more, contact your local Hartford Agent or visit mb.thehartford.com/treecare.
Amstutz named ArborSystems rep

Dale Amstutz has joined ArborSystems as manufacturer representative for Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Oklahoma. Amstutz provides distributor recruitment, training and sales support. He is also working with university extension departments on research and testing of ArborSystems Wedge Direct-Inject tree injection unit and chemicals. For more than 20 years Amstutz owned and managed Northern Lawns, which booked more than 30 percent of its annual revenue from tree care services. Contact Amstutz via email: Dale@ArborSystems.com.

Bartlett Training Workshop at National Arboretum

Continuing a tradition of volunteer service at U.S. National Arboretum, Bartlett’s Mid-Atlantic Division used its annual training and skills workshop as an opportunity to help preserve some of the site’s mature maples, conifers and oaks. The workshop enabled Bartlett employees to hone their pruning skills following the latest ANSI A300 Tree Care Standards while also applying new techniques like the use of the Cambium Saver.

Some of the projects included pruning a group of oaks and sweet gums near the Arboretum’s Azalea Collection, as well as Japanese maple, dogwood, crape myrtle, birch and redwood trees located in the Conifer Collection. In total, employees completed services valued at nearly $20,000 to help enhance and preserve the Arboretum’s beauty.

Changes at Bayer

John (J.T.) Turner recently returned to field sales as a lawn and landscape sales representative for Bayer Environmental Science, covering Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin and Kentucky. Previously, he was formulator account manager for Bayer. From 1997 to 2002, Turner was a turf, pest control and formulator sales representative for Bayer Garden and Professional Care, covering the northern Midwest. He also covered the Midwest as a manufacturer’s sales representative from 1980 through 1997, working for TUCO, Nor-Am and AgriEvo. He began his sales career with TUCO, part of the Upjohn Company, in 1980.

Jason Kuhlemeier recently joined the marketing team for Bayer Environmental Science in Research Triangle Park, N.C., as a marketing specialist. He will coordinate regional and field sales communications, assist in programs management and work with the marketing team to facilitate strategic planning and execution. Most recently, Kuhlemeier was a golf field sales rep for Bayer, covering southern California, Arizona, New Mexico and Las Vegas. Before that, he worked for Aventis as a crop sales representative in Iowa for three years. He also covered Iowa as a sales rep for Rhone Poulenc for two years.

Davey’s Soderstrom Honored

The Pacific Northwest Chapter of the ISA presented the Utility Arborist award to Rod Soderstrom, vice president and general manager of Davey Tree Services, a division of the Davey Tree Expert Co. The award, presented at the chapter’s annual meeting in Victoria, B.C., was in recognition of Soderstrom’s more than 35 years of service to the industry. He joined Davey in 1986 when Davey Tree acquired his organization, High Tree Services Ltd. Soderstrom founded High Tree in 1969.

Teupen sells first 100FT lift

Teupen America recently sold the first 100-foot spider lift in the America tree care industry to Keene Tree Service in Keene, N.H. Keene Tree Service has been a TCIA member since 1974. Recognizing the need for safer and faster methods to perform tree work, Keene Tree Service owner Winn Johnson felt this model was the best all around choice. “I had a 75-foot and sold it to buy this,” said Keene Tree owner Winn Johnson. “The 75-foot was a nice little lift, but it didn’t have the side-reach I wanted.” The side reach was about 35 feet he said. The Leo 30T has 100 feet vertical reach with 52 feet side reach. The unit is 62 inches wide, 78 inches high, 23 feet and 6 inches long and weighs 9,240 pounds. Equipped with rubber tracks, the Teupen HyLIFT Leo 30T self loads/unloads off a truck, giving it the ability to work on or off a 19,500 GVW chassis. It can also be towed on a skid steer-style trailer with a 3/4 ton pickup truck.
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Sherrill customizable spray rigs

Sherrill Tree has added a full line of customizable, high quality spray rigs to their line of arborist products. These new spray rigs range from 50-300 gallon skid, trailer and commercial truck-mounted units, giving tree care operators and lawn maintenance professionals their choice of pump, hose and engine sizes. The ability to customize these units will also allow operators to match their desired unit to their spraying and/or injecting needs. All of the Sherrill spray rigs utilize the latest technology in high-pressure jet agitation, where chemicals are mixed without the use of leak prone mechanical agitation parts or ineffective bypass technologies. Additionally, this technology maximizes both incoming and outgoing PSI to provide a consistent spray rate throughout the application process. The entire line of Sherrill spray rigs is designed specifically for the professional user, offering a self-contained and compact spraying solution for today’s applications. Contact Sherrill Tree at 1-800-525-8873, or via www.sherrilltree.com.

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RedMax rugged, lightweight commercial trimmer

Crew members will eagerly volunteer to do the trimming when they can use the new RedMax TR2300S string trimmer. And your maintenance department will appreciate the new trimmer’s ruggedness and reliability. The 9.5 pound TR2300S is equipped with RedMax’s powerful, 21.7 cc, pure two-cycle engine. This one horsepower power plant has fewer moving parts than a four-cycle engine, increasing reliability and reducing maintenance, especially valve maintenance. Power is transmitted through RedMax’s heavy duty, solid steel shaft to a PT104 Plus head. This four-inch tap & go nylon head has a metal insert to extend the tap knob’s life. RedMax is so confident of the ruggedness and reliability it has built into the new TR2300S trimmer that it is backing it with the company’s two year commercial warranty, as well as a lifetime warranty on the ignition coil. Contact RedMax, Komatsu America Inc., at 1-800-291-8251, ext 214, or via www.redmax.com.

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Corona Clipper’s new professional tree pruners

Corona Clipper has expanded its product lines with the addition of several new professional tree pruners and tree care accessories. Leading the pack of new tools is the Heavy-Duty Arborist Head AC 9300, crafted out of high strength aluminum casting for rugged tree care service and a slim profile, able to get into tight spots. The AC 9300 was designed for reliability and efficiency. High-grade steel blades make cutting limbs up to 1¼-inch in diameter a breeze and the lightweight (1 pound, 7 ounce) yet durable head helps eliminate fatigue. The AC 9300 head fits Corona’s FP 3000 series of fiberglass poles as well as most competitors’ poles. Corona’s FP 3000 series poles are lightweight and durable, made of hollow core fiberglass and available in 8, 10, 12 and 14-foot lengths. Other new products include the 14-foot Compound Action Tree Pruner TP 5850 with its high strength zinc alloy head, allowing for maximum strength to weight ratio, boasting a large, 1¼-inch cutting capacity for small to medium sized branches easily; and the Compound Action Tree Pruner Head AC 9000 with a Teflon-coated blade for smooth cutting action, and with an adapter to fit Corona’s FP 3000 poles and most competitors’ poles. Contact Corona Clipper 1-800-847-7863 or via www.coronaclipper.com.

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John Deere diesel engines

John Deere Power Systems’ new PowerTech Plus diesel engines offer a Tier 3/Stage III A solution that boasts best-in-class fuel economy, as well as unprecedented power and performance. JDPS now offers Tier 3/Stage III A engines with improved performance and power density, as well as a fuel economy that is 1 to 5 percent better than their Tier 2/Stage II counterparts and 6 to 13 percent better than competitive engines. Emissions regulations for diesel engines in the off-highway market for the 130-560 kW (175-750 hp) power range went into effect in January 2006. Even though JDPS Tier 2/Stage II PowerTech™ engines offer competitive fuel economy, John Deere reached a new level of efficiency with its Tier 3/Stage III A engine models. For example, not only does the 9.0L six-cylinder diesel engine offer best-in-class fuel economy, but it also has increased performance and power density, higher levels of power bulge, increased levels of peak and low-speed torque, and better transient response time than its Tier 2/Stage II counterpart. To achieve most of these improvements, JDPS employed three key technologies: cooled exhaust gas recirculation, the variable geometry turbocharger, and a state-of-the-art electronic control unit. The John Deere PowerTech Plus 6.8L engine consumes 10.2 percent less fuel per hour than one competitor and 13.4 percent less fuel per hour than another competitor. Factory observations of bare engine data at full-load rated speed revealed that the PowerTech Plus 9.0L consumes 6.5 percent less fuel per hour than one competitor and 7.1 percent less fuel per hour than another competitor. And the savings get even better at partial loads. Contact JDPS at 1-800-533-6446, or via www.JohnDeere.com/jdpower.

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Vermeer BC600XL brush chipper

The high-performance Vermeer BC600XL disc-style brush chipper from Vermeer Manufacturing Company can process material up to 6 inches (15cm) in diameter. The chipper is powered by a 27 hp (20kw) Kohler Command gas engine, which boasts an 8 percent increase in horsepower over its predecessor. This engine delivers essential power to the 24-inch (61cm) cutting disc. The BC600XL features a 64-inch (163cm) wide feed table and a 6-inch by 6-inch (15cm x 15cm) infeed opening. This chipper features the latest technological advancement to improve operator safety — the innovative “Bottom Feed Stop Bar” system. This patent-applied-for system is located to enable the operator’s legs to strike the bar and shut off the feed either intentionally or automatically in an emergency situation. The new Bottom Feed Stop Bar system offers two sensitivity settings to assist in difficult chipping conditions. Due to the compact size of the BC600XL, it can be easily moved within restricted spaces, such as a parking lot or yard and towed by a small pickup truck or SUV. The chipper also features a hydraulic system with fewer switches and parts allowing for easy operation and decreased service costs. This hydraulic system allows the feed speed to be adjusted up to 230 fpm (70 m/min) for maximum engine efficiency and reduced stress. The discharge chute rotates 240 degrees and is 94 inches (239cm) in height. The BC600XL is ideal for those looking to process brush or limbs. Contact Vermeer at 1-888-VERMEER or via www.vermeer.com.

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Events & Seminars

January 9-11, 2006
2006 GLE Expo & MPFA Winter Conference
ISA Cert. Arborist, Util. Spec. Tree Wkr, Muni. exams
DeLoess Place, Grand Rapids, MI
Contact: mfa@acd.net or call (571) 337-4999

January 11, 2006
Urban Tree Care Workshop
Lake & Porter County Ext. Service Svcs
Porter County Gov’t Center, Valparaiso, IN
Contact: Stan Simz (219) 755-3240; or Russell Hodge (219) 406-0431

January 11-13, 2006
7th Annual CSRA Ornamental Tree & Turf Seminar
Julian Smith Casino, Augusta, GA
Contact: (706) 854-0926; www.empiretree.com

January 19, 2006
Starting a Model Company Safety Program
Tree Care Industry Association
MGIA Winter Education Program
Bingham Center, Bingham Farms, MI
Contact: MGIA at (248) 646-4992

January 24, 2006
Pest Management of Ornamental Landscape Plants
Rutgers Office of Continuing Professional Education
New Brunswick, NJ
Contact: (732) 932-9271; www.cookce.rutgers.edu

January 25-27, 2006
Iowa Nursery & Landscape Assoc. Conv. & Trade Show
Polk County Convention Complex, Des Moines, IA
Contact: (515) 233-1481; info@iowanla.org

January 26, 2006
EHAP – Electrical Hazard Awareness Program
TCIA’s recognized training program
MGIA Winter Education Program
Location: TBA
Contact: MGIA at (248) 646-4992

January 26, 2006
Northeastern PA Turf Conference and Trade Show
The Woodlands Inn & Resort, Wilkes-Barre, PA
Contact: (814) 236-2402; busofc@paturf.org; www.paturf.org

January 27, 2006
Urban Tree Care Workshop
Lake & Porter County Ext. Service Svcs
Lake County Gov’t Center, Crown Point, IN
Contact: Stan Simz (219) 755-3240; or Russell Hodge (219) 406-0431

January 29-31, 2006
41st Annual Shade Tree Symposium
Penn-Del Chapter of ISA
Lancaster Host Resort, Lancaster, PA
Contact: E. Wetzel (215) 795-0411; www.penndelisa.org

February 1-2, 2006
New England Grows!
Boston Convention & Exhibition Ctr, Boston MA
Contact: Mary Simard (508) 653-3009; www.negrows.org

February 7, 2006
Solving Plant Problems in the Landscape
MGIA – Bingham Center, Bingham Farms, MI
Contact: MGIA at (248) 646-4992

February 9-9, 2006
Pennsylvania Landscape & Nursery Conference
Penn State Conference Ctr, State College, PA
Contact: PLNA 1-800-898-3411; www.PLNA.com

February 11, 2006
LAA 34th Annual Tree Conference & Trade Show
Long Island Arboricultural Association
Farmingdale State University, Farmingdale, NY
Contact: (631) 454-6550; www.liatrees.org; liaa@ol.com

February 12-16, 2006
2006 Winter Management Conference
Tree Care Industry Association
St. Kitts, West Indies
Contact: Deb Cyr 1-800-733-2622, Ext. 106; cyr@treecareindustry.org

February 12-17, 2006
Municipal Forester Institute
Lake Arrowhead, CA
Contact: Society of Municipal Arborists, UrbanForestry@prodigy.net; www.urban-forestry.com

February 20, 2006
Hazard Tree identification class
Rutgers Office of Continuing Professional Education
New Brunswick, NJ
Contact: www.cookce.rutgers.edu/courses

February 20-23, 2006
60th Annual Conference, Midwestern Chapter ISA
Ramota Hotel, Bismarck, North Dakota
Contact: Jeff Heintz, (701) 222-6561; jheintz@state.nd.us

February 21-22, 2006
ANSI A-300 Standards: safety, prun., fert., cabl./brac., lightning protect., plant, transplant, construction
Rutgers Office of Cont. Prof., Ed., New Brunswick, NJ
Contact: (732) 932-9271; www.cookce.rutgers.edu

February 21-24, 2006
2006 ASCA Consulting Academy
Atlanta, GA
Contact: Angela Corlo, ASCA (301) 947-0483

February 23, 2006
Woody Ornamental Updates: Review ’05/Anticipate ’06
MGIA – Bingham Center, Bingham Farms, MI
Contact: MGIA at (248) 646-4992

February 23 & March 23, 2006
Arborists: Innovations, Techniques & Solutions
Rutgers Continuing Prof. Ed., New Brunswick, NJ
Contact: (732) 932-9271; www.cookce.rutgers.edu

February 28-March 2, 2006
Western PA Turf Conference and Trade Show
Greater Pittsburgh Expomart, Monroeville, PA
Contact: ptcinfo@paturf.org; www.paturf.org

March 7, 2006
38th Annual Professional Plant, Turf & Tree Conference
Nassau Suffolk Landscape Gardeners Assoc-L.I.
Huntington Town House, Huntington, New York
Contact: Pat Voyes (631) 665-2250; NLSGA@optonline.net

March 9, 2006
Urban Tree Care Workshop
Lake & Porter Cty Ext., Lowell Pub. Library, Lowell, IN
Contact: Stan Simz (219) 755-3240; or Russell Hodge (219) 406-0431

March 14-16, 2006
CARTS-Cert. Pest. Applicator or Regist. Tech training
MGIA – Oakland CC, Orchard Ridge Campus
Farmington Hills, MI
Contact: MGIA at (248) 646-4992

March 17, 2006
Urban Tree Care Workshop
Chesteron Public Library, Chesteron, IN
Contact: Stan Simz (219) 755-3240; or Russell Hodge (219) 406-0431

March 30, 2006
Garden State Tree Conference, NJAISA Annual Conf.
Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ
Contact: www.NJArboristsISA.com

April 1-4, 2006
ISA Southern Chapter Annual Conference & Trade Show
The Wynfrey Hotel, Birmingham, AL
Contact: 1-888-339-8733; dcarter@isasouthern.org

November 9-11, 2006
TCI EXPO 2006
Tree Care Industry Association
Baltimore, MD
Contact: Deb Cyr 1-800-733-2622, Ext. 106; cyr@treecareindustry.org; or www.tcia.org

From the Field

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It's a beautiful Saturday morning and you hop in your hydrogen powered personal transporter and set your coordinates for the local garden center. Upon arrival you make your way past nursery personnel wearing white lab coats and enter the biotechnology department. You log into the computer’s tree request form and check the appropriate boxes under the species and characteristics you desire.

Perhaps you desire a specific fall color, a narrow growth habit, spotted lavender flowers, water tolerance, or resistance to a particular disease. You click enter, inventory is checked, selected and before you know it you are on your way home with your made-to-order clone or cultivar.

While this may seem like an excerpt from a science fiction novel or bring to mind Dolly, the cloned sheep – instead think holly, the cloned tree. In fact plant cloning has been happening for thousands of years, and has developed along with other forms of technology – to the degree that the aforementioned scenario may not be that far off.
The first incidence of human-assisted cloning was probably a result of survival. Perhaps a crude lean-to shelter was constructed out of branches taken from a thicket and simply stuck in the ground for support. Time passes and the branches root in the soft wet soil, leaves emerge and perhaps it flowers and fruits – to the amazement of the inhabitants. This lesson may have contributed to early farming techniques.

As early man progressed, at some point he realized that this type of propagation reproduced an exact duplicate. This is why Grandma is known for her green thumb and famous in the family for producing and lovingly handing out those geranium plants, taken from cuttings from her garden each year.

Today, we know that genetic inheritance is passed on through the “blueprint of life” – the DNA code. This is not to say that things always stay the same. DNA particles or pieces can alter spontaneously, changing their chemical structure, which can create a new cultivar. Farmers and consumers have benefited from these natural mutations for hundreds of years. As an example, today’s seedless navel orange has its origin as a chance mutation occurring on one branch that sported fruit devoid of seeds. Cuttings were taken and a new cultivar was born.

Also, an existing cultivar over time may mutate (changing its DNA structure) and exhibit new characteristics. If these new mutations exhibit valuable traits, the plant is reproduced and is evaluated through a process known as “plant growing trials.” If the resulting plant clearly has a transferable genetic trait, a new cultivar is born. This was the case with the apple mutation named ‘royal gala’ – a natural mutation of its parent and predecessor ‘gala.’

From discovery to actually being offered for sale at your local garden center may take some time. Perennials and shrubs may take two to 10 years and trees often take longer to undergo trials. Plants may suddenly revert to normal growth and therefore be deemed “unstable” and unsuitable for mass production and distribution.

Some trees may have tendencies to revert to a degree, but are still deemed positive additions to the nursery industry. A prime example would be Acer palmatum ‘butterfly.’ This Japanese maple, prized for its variegated foliage and diminutive size, often has branches that revert to its green leaf parentage; if left on these stems, it will grow faster than the cultivar and in time will dominate the structure of the tree. Simply cutting the reversion off will eliminate the rogue DNA.

However, even though cultivars are released into mass production, other factors may influence their future. For instance, the popular shade tree red maple (Acer rubrum), was cloned and grafted on rootstock. These new varieties, selected for their desirable fall color and lack of seed production (male selections), would unfortunately outgrow the rootstock after a period of time, causing graft incompatibility, then would suffer quick decline and subsequent death. Today, these trees are grown on their own roots without any problems.

The “International Code of Botanical Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants” includes the Cultivated Plant Code, which regulates the names of cultivars. Prior to January 1959, cultivar names were published in Latin form, which was confusing because the names were often similar to genus/species names. Hence, cultivar names must now be in a modern vernacular to distinguish them as a cultivated variety.

An example might be Sequoia sempervirens ‘Aptos blue.’ This name for the coastal redwood clone would break down as follows: Genus – Sequoia (named after an Indian chief who developed an alphabet system for his tribe); Species – sempervirens (Latin for everlasting); cultivar – ‘Aptos blue’ (named after the town Aptos in California where the original parent tree was found. Blue describes the beautiful deep green foliage with blue undertones).

Whether found growing along a smoggy freeway, as was the aforementioned redwood tree, plucked from a batch of 10,000 seedling at a nursery’s growing ground, or spotted 100 feet from the ground in the crown of a pine tree on a “witches broom” (a natural mutation that occurs on an established tree with radically different characteristics), these new cultivars are most often spotted by experienced horticulturists.

New cultivars that reach wide acceptance in the green industry mean big business and are patented by the compa-
nies producing them. These patent rights are enforced and only nurseries authorized by the original patent holder to propagate and sell or distribute may do so. Each of these plants sold include a plant royalty, and must be labeled and properly identified with its specific trade designation (cultivar name) as directed by the Cultivated Plant Code.

Within the past 20 years, technologic advances in science relating to tree care have been vast. Cultivar development has and continues to improve our urban environment in terms of aesthetic and maintenance factors. Modern boulevards are now lined, and homes and parks are landscaped with cloned selections that offer many benefits over past seedlings, including:

1. Better branch structure (reducing maintenance costs from structural limb failure and possible tree removal).

Another Monterey Cypress cultivar, Cupressus macrocarpa 'Saligna Aurea' was discovered around 1920 and is just now becoming popular. And rightfully so, as this clone has beautiful fine golden foliage and a unique weeping form.

This variegated leaf red twig dogwood is a cultivar of Cornus alba, named 'Ivory Halo'. This mutation was cloned from a parent plant with green leaves. The overhanging tree is the author's favorite tree cultivar - Taxodium distichum 'Pendens', also known as the weeping topped Swamp Cypress.

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4. Seedling inferiority is eliminated (producing a superior, consistent stand).

5. Cultivar varieties come in different sizes and shapes, allowing architects and designers to design utilizing site-specific planting that matches plant to site. (i.e., trees that won’t grow into power lines or a narrow growing cultivar that will fit nicely between two closely situated homes).

6. Cultivars such as the cloned Sequoia selections ‘Aptos blue’ and ‘soquel,’ which were partly selected for their inability to sprout basal stump sprouts (once a problem and a key to minimizing maintenance on the coastal redwood), is
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now one of the most widely planted evergreens in the Sacramento Valley and many other temperate climates.

7. Designers, architects, plant collectors, nurseries and the public benefit from the superiority of cultivar selections, and the constant introduction of new cultivars keep the industry thriving, motivated and exciting.

While genetic engineering of trees has been conducted for more than 40 years, we now have modern genetic biotechnology. Today scientists are able to transfer only the specific DNA segments that code the desirable traits. This advanced process is more precise than past traditional methods and reaches directly into the DNA of trees, thereby removing genes, or even adding desirable gene traits from a different genus.

This technology means that the following traits or patterns may be altered: ultimate size of a cloned tree may be increased or decreased; manipulation of branch structure (including angle and spacing); rate of growth; flowering and fruiting characteristics; insect and disease resistance; site adaptability (acceptance of more inhospitable growing conditions); genetic sterility (no seeds or fruit); and even the ability of the tree to convert sunlight into energy may be altered.

Modern biotechnology has arrived at a good time. Each year, some 8 billion trees are cut down for commercial purposes, only 10 percent of which come from tree plantations. Genetically engineered super-trees are now in place and goals are set to meet future demand, which is predicted to double in 15 years. Another sign of the times are the robots, which can prepare and plant 15,000 cuttings per day, that are starting to be used for genetically engineered forest production.

Tree care and development is indeed at an exciting point in history. We now have the ability to produce a super ace of trees. Imagine a world without tree roots that break our sidewalks, foundations and driveways. Who knows, perhaps someday you’ll wake up on that beautiful Saturday morning, pour yourself a cup of genetically altered decaffeinated coffee (they are working on that now, too) make your way to the nursery, and check a box on the computer’s tree request form that states, “leaves that disintegrate after they fall.” Come on, it’s the future – let’s keep our fingers crossed on that one.

Rod Whitlow is an ISA Western Chapter Certified Arborist, California Certified Nurseryman, and licensed landscape contractor. Whitlow operates a landscape design firm and is a garden writer and photographer.
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What Happened To You?

By David Hawkins

"What Happened To You?"

People have asked me that a lot since my accident. I initially would tell them I just fell down. But I could tell that explanation usually would not do because they continued to stare at my arms, specifically the steel contraption on my left arm (an external fixator) and the cast on my right arm. At this point I would give them a rundown of my last day of work, Sept. 28, 2005.

The alarm went off at 5 a.m. I was already awake because our newborn baby (future arborist Nate) was not yet sleeping through the night, but I figured I would be okay with two or three hours of sleep. After I got up I looked out the window and noticed that it was a little drizzly. Great – I knew this meant the trees would be slick and I would have wet feet all day. Oh well, it wouldn’t be the first time.

The job that day was about two hours away. That’s the price I pay for living in a rural part of Massachusetts and having clients in the metropolitan area of Boston. Due to unusually high traffic, the drive took about two and a half hours. So, I was tired, aggravated and late when I arrived at my client’s home.

The day’s task was to prune as much as I could in eight hours on a property that was over-planted with ornamentals and surrounded by a 30-foot high evergreen hedge – also overgrown. When I pulled up to the job I notice that the driveway was taped off because it had just been coated with a driveway sealant. This would mean no dragging or stacking brush on the driveway; I would just have to work around it. So, I was tired, aggravated and late when I arrived at my client’s home.

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Since I was already in a bad mood I figured I would start with the worst of the job first – the 30-foot-high hedge. I would begin at the driveway and work my way into the backyard. I set my 10-foot, three-legged orchard ladder next to a white pine; the step portion of the ladder on the driveway and the third leg in a planting bed. Halfway up the ladder, I noticed that the third leg may have been extended a little further than it should have been. No problem, I’ve done this hundreds of times – the ladder’s sturdy. So, with my 14 foot pruner in hand I started knocking back long ends.

The last long end was beyond my reach, so I climbed as high as I could on the ladder, set the pruner head on the limb, slid it toward a whorl of branches in the interior of the tree, and pulled the rope. The next sounds I heard were the crack of the branch and that of my face hitting the driveway. I don’t remember the actual fall. Apparently the portion of the ladder on the driveway slid out from under me as I made the cut and wondered how bad the fall really was.

I saw lots of blood on the driveway and decided to get up and go to the client’s door to see if I could get something to wipe my face. That’s when the pain hit. I look at my wrists and noticed they were at very strange angles and there was a bone sticking out of the left one – a very bad day. My client’s shocked face when he answered the door prompted me to have him call 911.

So, after an ambulance ride, two CT (computerized tomography) scans, a dozen or so X-rays, two surgeries and a boatload of painkillers, I write this story four weeks later for these reasons:

- I have lots of time now to think about stories to write.
- It lets me practice with my new voice-to-text software.
- It’s kind of therapeutic to talk about it.

More importantly though, as an arborist with 28 years of (serious) accident-free experience and one who routinely teaches safety and skills for arborists, I think it is
important for accidents to be brought out in the open, talked about and analyzed. So in hindsight (which I excel at), I offer the following advice:

1. When you show up to a job tired, pissed off or distracted, start the day with something simple and low risk. Sharpen a saw, spend some time assessing the job, start pruning from the ground – do anything to get your head into the job and to get warmed up before starting something a little risky such as climbing or getting on a ladder.

2. Know your equipment, know its limitations and use it correctly. Don’t cut corners. In my case I should not have set the ladder on the newly sealed pavement, or at least I should have secured the third leg so it wouldn’t have spread apart.

3. Trust your instincts. If something doesn’t seem right, stop, look it over and, if necessary, take the time to fix it (I should have reset the third leg so the ladder was in a more upright position).

4. For all you self-employed arborists, cover yourself with either workers’ compensation insurance or a separate disability policy (I have neither). Like the TV commercial with the duck says, “It won’t hurt when you get hurt.”

5. Carry a good health insurance policy. Fortunately I had one. If I didn’t, I may have had to go out of business.

This advice may seem simple and based on common sense, but the easy jobs you take for granted and have done a thousand times before can take you down just as easy as the tough climbing job or nasty removals. Don’t underestimate them.

As bad as the accident sounds, it could’ve been worse. Aside from two broken wrists and a broken nose, I have no head or back injuries and the doctors say I should have a full recovery. I still have about eight weeks of physical therapy in front of me though. Maybe by the New Year I’ll be back into tree work.

I hope this article is useful. I know it helps me to write about it. Who knows, maybe the next time you get on an orchard ladder you’ll remember reading about the poor schmuck who took a header off of his.

David Hawkins, owner of Urban Forestry Solutions, Inc. in Pelham, Mass., has been a Massachusetts Certified Arborist for 26 years, is an ISA Board Certified Master Arborist and a member of the American Society of Consulting Arborists. Urban Forestry Solutions is a Tree Care Industry Association member.
**Letters**

**Hurricane damage adds up**

Many of your readers are aware of the damage done to urban trees by both Hurricanes Katrina and Rita; some are to be commended for volunteering crews to help in the cleanup. But, we are all tree people and should also know what’s going on in our woods. Since the national media has virtually ignored the horrendous hurricane damage done to our southern forests, here is a summary of reports from the Society of American Foresters, U.S. Forest Service and the four effected states.

Katrina destroyed 4.2 billion cubic feet of timber worth $1.8 billion on 5 million acres in Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi, with Mississippi bearing the brunt at 3.1 billion cubic feet worth $1.3 billion on 3.4 million acres. Most of the damage occurred in stands less than 30-years old; 65 percent occurred on land owned by non-industrial, private families within 60 miles of the Gulf Coast. Many of these owners had planned to let their trees grow larger and more valuable before harvesting them, so this “windfall profit” certainly damaged financial plans as well.

Then along came Hurricane Rita destroying an additional 142 million cubic feet of timber worth $226 million in Louisiana. Texas suffered 967 million cubic feet of timber blown down or splintered worth $462 million, plus 435 million cubic feet damaged – but still standing – worth $371 million, all spread over 771,000 acres.

In total this damage from both hurricanes represents slightly over two years of normal harvest and enough wood to build 800,000 new homes, plus 25 million tons of cardboard and paper.

The problem now is that this mess should be salvaged or cleaned up soon enough that it does not become a fire hazard or breeding ground for pine beetles, which can kill many more trees. Not only will the downed trees themselves burn rapidly, they make it much more difficult to plow fire lines with tractors and fire plows. Making a timely salvage difficult is the fact that most mill storage yards were already full, some mills were damaged, diesel fuel is in short supply, weight restrictions on roads must be waived, and loggers are worn out and also in short supply.

But, all in the forestry profession are optimistic that the work will get done and done well. Then, of course, there was massive damage done to the nursery and greenhouse industries, but that’s another story.

Check the following Web site for more details: www.safnet.org/archives/Hurricanes.pdf.

**Steve Sandfort, Registered Forester, Certified Arborist and Urban Forestry Consultant, Cincinnati, Ohio**

**Licencing clarification**

I recently received my December 2005 copy of Tree Care Industry and read the article on arborist licensing, for which I was interviewed. I thought that this was a very timely and very necessary article. There are, however, a few corrections and clarifications that need to be made.

Under the Rhode Island section on the first page, it states that “A licensed arborist ... lost control of his weed eater.” The correct statement is that the arborist lost control of the leader that he was cutting, meaning that it went the wrong way and did damage on a neighbor’s property.

In the third paragraph on the second page, there is a statement about the wording on the reverse of the arborist license. From the 1950s to 1997, the wording on the reverse of the license was as follows:

*Purpose of the law is to protect both the general public and the arborists’ profession against fraud and incompetence.*

Certificates are issued to individuals who have passed a state qualifying examination in arboriculture. They may be revoked for cause.

On March 10, 1997, I wrote a letter to the then director of the Department of Environmental Management, Timothy Keeney, respectfully requesting that he give me what I was promised on the back of my license. When I received my 1998 license, it was blank on the reverse side.

This bureaucratic response clarified perfectly the apathy that the licensing body showed for my profession and the crucial part of the environment that we are entrusted in caring for.

Finally, in paragraph four on the second page, it states that licenses are granted to anyone who asks for one. This is incorrect, as there is an exam that has to be passed with a minimum grade of 70 percent to get the license. A $25 annual renewal fee is required yearly. The exam given is a good exam that is very similar to the ISA exam. Aside from the yearly fee, there are no other requirements.

My problems with the license are:

1. No standards of practice.
2. No way to revoke a license
3. No liability insurance requirement.

We have gone to the legislature on two different occasions: once to get a separate law to require liability insurance, and another time to try to be included in the state contractor’s board, which requires liability insurance. The department of forestry has opposed both of these efforts and the legislature has refused both requests.

I feel these clarifications are necessary to preserve the integrity of a very good article.

David Schwartz, president, Schwartz Tree Care, Cranston, Rhode Island
A solid preventive maintenance program can help vocational fleet managers keep vehicle repair costs and downtime to a minimum. But an inefficient, poorly designed program can cost time and money.

Robert Johnson, fleet management liaison for the National Truck Equipment Association (NTEA), says vocational fleet managers should review several areas to evaluate whether their preventive maintenance programs are optimized.

1. Analyze your fleet maintenance records. Are you tracking enough of the right information to make informed maintenance decisions? For example, simply recording that “front end work” was completed on a vehicle does not give you enough information to detect failure trends for individual front end components. Your records should indicate at least the make and model of vehicle, date and mileage at time of service, and services performed to specific components. But remember, “All the records in the world won’t do a thing for you if you don’t analyze the data,” Johnson says.

2. Examine any unexplained incidents of demand maintenance that were required between scheduled preventive maintenance intervals. Look for trends. If a number of particular failures occur on certain vehicles, determine if it is possible to adjust your preventive maintenance program to eliminate those failures in the future. Some vehicles will be more prone to problems with certain systems than others. You may need to develop a different preventive maintenance schedule for certain makes and models of vehicles in the fleet or for those operating in specific applications. Remember, one generic preventive maintenance program may not work equally well for all fleets, or even for all vehicles within a particular fleet.

3. A good measure of the efficiency of your preventive maintenance program is the number of “touches” technicians have on a vehicle. For example, you may have a vehicle scheduled for preventive maintenance three times a year, but find that it was actually pulled in for service six times – the three scheduled services, plus another three times for various other services such as government-required safety and emissions inspections. Proper scheduling would have enabled these inspections to have been handled at the same time as the preventive maintenance. Every time a technician touches a vehicle, it costs you money and represents possible downtime. On average, every vehicle “touch” takes a minimum of an hour of labor. Proper planning can minimize these costs.

4. Determine whether you could be doing a better job of predictive maintenance. Use your records to calculate your fleet’s average service life for various components, so you know when to proactively replace them. For example, say you find that Brand X alternators on Brand Y vehicles fail at around 85,000 miles on average. Your preventive maintenance schedule calls for 8,000-mile service intervals. Your service schedule, then, should include an alternator replacement as part of the first preventive maintenance service after 77,000 miles.

5. It is possible to set preventive mainte-
nance intervals too close together. Intervals should be based on the type of vehicle application, usage (mileage, hours, operating environment, etc.), OEM warranty requirements and regulatory requirements.

“Far too many companies have one preventive maintenance schedule. But what’s right for one vehicle may be too much for another vehicle and not enough for a third,” Johnson says. “There is no one magic number for every vehicle in your fleet. And just because you’ve always done it, doesn’t mean you have to continue doing it.”

Start your review by going back to the manufacturer’s recommendations for the type of service for which you are using the vehicle. If your preventive maintenance intervals for the vehicle are more frequent than the manufacturer recommends, try conducting a lubricant analysis, primarily of engine oil. Also check to see how much residual lubricant is present in unsealed joints at each service visit. If the oil analysis shows the oil is still good, there is still plenty of lubricant in each joint, and you have a good failure history, you may want to consider extending the service interval by a month and checking the same factors again. “It’s a combination of science with trial and error,” Johnson explains.

Robert Johnson will discuss these techniques and others in greater detail in an educational session at The Work Truck Show 2006. He will be joined by Dave Williams, fleet regional manager, Verizon Communications (Valhalla, N.Y.), and Larry Allen, highway equipment manager, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Equipment Division (Harrisburg, Pa.), in a session titled “Fleet Preventative Maintenance Programs – Is My Work Truck Program Working?” The Work Truck Show 2006 will be held in conjunction with the 42nd Annual NTEA Convention at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, Ga. Educational sessions start Feb. 28, with the show floor opening on March 1. To learn more, visit NTEA.com or call 1-800-441-NTEA (6832).
Industry Needs New Rules

A December 6 Federal Register notice announced that OSHA had granted a permanent variance to International Chimney Corporation, Karrena International, LLC, and Matrix Service Industrial Contractors, Inc., addressing the provision that regulates the tackle used for boatswains’ chairs as well as the provisions specified for personnel hoists. Why should you care?

If your company uses cranes for tree removal, you probably see the relevance to arborists of this situation in a construction trade.

The alternative conditions the three companies proposed to OSHA regulate rope-guided personnel-hoisting systems used during inside or outside chimney construction. The systems raise or lower employees between the bottom landing of a chimney and an elevated work location.

These three companies are merely the most recent to seek and obtain this variance. Companies have been doing this since 1973. However in each case, OSHA had to review the alternative work practices and determine that they protected employees at least as well as OSHA’s standard.

In the past 30 years, a number of chimney-construction companies have demonstrated that OSHA’s standard for personnel-hoists result in access problems that pose a serious danger to their employees. These companies requested permanent variances from these requirements, and proposed alternative equipment and procedures to protect employees while being transported to and from their elevated worksites during construction and repair work inside and outside chimneys.

International Chimney and Karrena applied for the variance on September 15, 2004, and Matrix Service applied January 10 of this year. OSHA published their variance applications in the Federal Register on April 21. The Agency heard nothing adverse; in fact, they heard nothing at all.

These employers construct, remodel, repair, access problems that pose a serious danger to their employees. These companies requested permanent variances from these requirements, and proposed alternative equipment and procedures to protect employees while being transported to and from their elevated worksites during construction and repair work inside and outside chimneys.

To transport employees to various heights inside and outside a chimney, the employers proposed in their variance application to use a hoist system that lifts and lowers personnel-transport devices that include personnel cages, personnel platforms, or boatswains’ chairs.

The term “boatswain’s chair” piqued the author’s curiosity. According to Webster’s, a “boatswain” is a petty officer on a merchant ship in charge of hull maintenance (i.e., scraping barnacles and the like). OSHA regulations were searched for a definition.

The aforementioned person’s chair is, “… a single-point adjustable suspension scaffold consisting of a seat or sling designed to support one employee in a sitting position. It must be rigged with properly eye-spliced, minimum five-eighth-inch diameter, first-grade manila or equivalent rope.”

Think “playground swing” for the proper mental image. Of course, with the influx of new thinking in the area of fall protection, the laborer using the boatswain’s chair must also be secured with a full body harness and fall arrest lanyard.

Currently there are OSHA and ANSI standards that prevent us from legally using the load line of a crane to hoist a climber into position in a tree, even when that tree is unsafe to climb and other means of access are unsafe or infeasible. Several state plan OSHA’s allow the climber to be hoisted by the crane, and California recently enacted a permanent standard allowing the practice.

If a construction laborer can be allowed to do his job 100 feet up inside a chimney sitting on a swing, perhaps it is time for arborists, individually or collectively, to apply for a variance, too. When used properly, cranes make the tree job safer.

Peter Gerstenberger is senior advisor for safety, compliance & standards for the Tree Care Industry Association.
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What is an ornamental tree? It’s always useful to start with a few definitions. Although I’ve never seen a definition for “ornamental tree” in print, we can probably agree on a description.

The first thing that comes to mind is size. An ornamental is a small tree, which is to say it is generally less than 40 feet tall at maturity. This small tree is not to be confused with a “young tree,” which Alex Shigo once described as a tree under 15 years old. A young, large-growing tree can withstand a great deal of training to correct double leaders and included bark, and the arborist’s focus is well-placed in such pruning to reduce chances that such trees fail in storms many years later. Since the tree is young and mostly dynamic wood, any decay will be minimal in the adult tree.

On the other hand, an ornamental tree that is well over 15 years old may be the same size, and yet it is too late to “train” the tree. The same size cuts on the ornamental tree would endanger its health and longevity by introducing decay into the mature tree, one which is less able to deal with those wounds.

Nor is it necessary to do such corrective pruning. In fact, the major difference in pruning between ornamental trees and others is that safety is not a concern, since these trees will never be large enough to do significant damage in the landscape. A small, ornamental tree stands in contrast to larger trees, including those described as “shade trees” and “forest trees.”

The small ornamental is also in contrast to the small fruiting tree, such as a dwarf apple or fruiting pear. The purpose of fruiting trees, at least in working orchards, is the production of fruit. Pruning to maximize fruit production, while keeping trees at a size that is easy to spray and harvest, will make for radically different pruning than that which is done to ornamentals in the landscape. Peaches, apples and pears are pruned frequently using many selective and sometimes not-so-selective heading cuts to achieve the above goals. This pruning is hard on the health, longevity and aesthetics of these trees but is a necessary trade off to achieve specific utilitarian goals for the trees themselves.

Ornamental trees are generally planted for their beauty and their size. That beauty could be flowers (flowering ornamentals), such as the flowering cherries, purple leaf plum trees, crabapples, magnolias and plumerias. Ornamental trees can also be planted for their fall color, such as Japanese upright maples and sumac, or for interesting branch structure, such as weeping trees and contorted trees. Ornamental trees could also include understory trees, such as vine maple, serviceberry and fringe tree.

**Good pruning**

Pruning is rarely done for the sake of the tree, but for the tree owner who perceives a need. The goal of the professional arborist is to please the tree owner without damaging the tree’s long-term health, beauty or safety. As stated above, safety is not a concern for ornamental trees.

Professional pruning of an ornamental tree will generally consist mostly of deadwood removal, followed by numerous true thinning cuts, and only a few selective heading cuts (reduction cuts, drop-crotch cuts). The amount of live crown removed will be small when compared to the amount of foliage removed from shrubs. A good average would be around 1/8 or less of the live crown. Some trees can take more thinning (such as conifers, which do not generally water sprout) and others will take far less (those trees that water sprout easily, such as cherry, crabapple, plum,
Bad pruning

A tree that has been pruned beyond its natural limits will show signs of damage, responding with water sprouts, increased deadwood or internal decay. Unfortunately, the tree does not respond immediately to mal-pruning. The ill effects are often not seen for several months or even years. As with most trees, ornamentals should not be restricted in height.

A great deal of mal-pruning occurs on ornamental trees, usually they are over-thinned (cherries, plums), pollarded badly (hawthorns, crepe myrtle), attempted topiary (crabapples, plums), or trees are mistakenly pruned to a single leader or trunk (dogwood, vine maple). In Seattle, where tree topping has declined significantly in the past 15 years, ornamental trees continue to be mal-pruned at an alarming rate. The reasons may be:

1. the relative ease, and relative low cost, with which they can be mal-pruned since they are small enough for anyone with a tall ladder to cut;

2. the unconscious judgment that they are of lesser value than large, stately trees. An arborist who would not dream of mal-pruning an oak might easily justify clipping a crabapple into a ball, since it’s “just a crabapple.”

Crown restoration

Many of these mal-pruned trees can be re-grown to their natural size and regain a semblance of their former beauty. The most difficult part is convincing the tree owner to leave the vast majority of water sprouts alone long enough for them to turn back into arching, side-branched, thicker branches. Since these trees do not grow large enough to do damage if they “fail,” the crown restoration is mainly an aesthetic process (the arborist does not need to be concerned about a decayed trunk or included bark).

What is coppicing?

Coppicing is a traditional practice of environmental management used by the native California basket weavers. It involves cutting a plant back to its base and removing the weak shoots to encourage vigorous re-growth. The plant is allowed to re-grow from the cut stumps.

Tree specific information

Flowering cherry – Poor compartmentalizer, therefore dies back from topping and tipping, usually delay of two to five years. Also water sprouts readily. Most common forms of mal-pruning are over-thinning and selective heading to prevent spreading wide. Light thinning only.

Crabapple – Good compartmentalizer, water sprouts readily. Therefore thin very lightly. Frequently mal-pruned into “umbrella” form.

Purple leaf plum – Poor compartmentalizer. Natural branch structure of young trees is messy and twiggy. Dies quickly from topping and tipping. Young trees prone to water sprout-like shoots not caused by pruning. Also prone to water sprout response even with light-handed thinning. Only old trees develop pleasantly arching branches. These trees are commonly grown and sold with many included-bark scaffolds. Choose trees with less included bark. Resist temptation to “fix” with pruning. Very light pruning only.


Corkscrew willow – Can be coppiced.
Dogwood – Water sprout readily, therefore thin very lightly. Eastern and western dogwoods have naturally artistic branch structure. Cornus mas, (cornelian cherry) on the other hand, is naturally awkward and stiff. Do not prune in attempt to make better. Light thinning only. Previously mal-pruned dogwoods can be rehabbed over several years. Water sprouts will eventually turn into decent branches. Prune older, inside and lower branches to reduce aesthetic dissonance between new and old growth. No size reduction whatsoever on these trees.


Japanese upright maple - Medium compartmentalizer. Medium water sprout response. Medium success in crown restoration. Flaccid water sprouts from tipping and topping (if not too large) will eventually lift up, thicken and become viable new limbs. Many upright maples are sold with braided trunks and/or included bark or multi-stems, which is neither wise nor necessary to correct.

Weeping trees – Usually excellent subjects for thinning.

Japanese laceleaf/Dissectum/Cutleaf maple – Excellent candidate for thinning and layering. Weeping branches can be selectively headed to upper, out-facing laterals. Avoid height restriction and minimize width restriction.

Weeping cherry – Avoid “evening-out” the crown; remove branches originating from below graft union. Water sprouts easily therefore prune lightly. Weeping branches touching the ground can be raised by pruning to out-facing laterals of goodly size, or to out-facing buds.

Camperdown elm – Thin tree, especially branches closest to trunk, avoid pruning elms in leaf.

Weeping spruce – Resents heading, good candidate for thinning.

Weeping blue atlas cedar – Takes a lot of thinning – really, quite a lot.

Weeping birch – Good candidate for thinning, and takes a fair amount. Avoid pruning in spring when sap flow can be heavy (a bleeder, this will not hurt the tree but will scare the client)

Weeping pine – Takes heavy thinning and can even withstand some heading.

Plumeria – Leafless branches naturally appear to have been headed even when they weren’t. Still these trees are often headed non-selectively, which they withstand. Mythologies as to reasons for this treatment are many and varied. Such pruning is unnecessary and bad for the tree. Light thinning is okay.

Crepe myrtle – Subject to unnecessary heavy-handed topping and tipping (erroneously called pollarding), which ruins very nice branch structure. (Called crepe murder in literature.) Withstands this treatment well, though. Light-handed deadheading of blooms using small heading cuts can be beneficial if and when tree stops producing satisfactory flowers.

Vine Maple – Naturally multi-trunked tree. Do not train to single leader.

Cass Turnbull lives in Seattle, Wash., is a professional landscaper, certified arborist, teacher and writer. She worked with the Seattle Parks Department landscape crew for 11 years and has owned her own landscaping business for 18 years. She founded the non-profit organization, PlantAmnesty, whose mission is to promote good pruning, and has written two books, The Complete Guide to Landscape Design, Renovation and Maintenance, and Cass Turnbull’s Guide to Pruning, published last year.
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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>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BC1000</td>
<td>KCH20109</td>
<td>Double Edge 9&quot; x 4-1/2&quot; x 5/8&quot;</td>
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<td>BC1800XL</td>
<td>KCH20112</td>
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<td>BC1220-BC1250</td>
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<td>BC1800-BC2000</td>
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**Morbark**

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<td>100, 200, 290</td>
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<td>10, 13, 17, 2050</td>
<td>KCH40001</td>
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**Brush Bandit**

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<td>90XP, 280XP</td>
<td>KCH10004</td>
<td>Double Edge 5-3/8&quot; x 4&quot; x 1/2&quot;</td>
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<td>100XP-250XP</td>
<td>KCH10003</td>
<td>Double Edge 7-1/4&quot; x 4&quot; x 1/2&quot;</td>
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<td>250XP, 254XP after '01</td>
<td>KCH10101</td>
<td>Double Edge 7-1/4&quot; x 4-1/2&quot; x 1/2&quot;</td>
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<td>1890 Intimidator</td>
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**Asplundh**

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<td>16&quot; Drum</td>
<td>KCH30002</td>
<td>Single Edge 16&quot; x 3&quot; x 3/8&quot;</td>
<td>$19.75</td>
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When Purchasing a Chipper, Know Thyself!

By Rick Howland

Out of the blue, a consumer called TCIA looking for help in purchasing a chipper. Seems his boss, an affluent sort with a lot of property, needed one, so this underling was assigned to do the research.

We asked, “Was this for around the yard, light-duty brush chipping, or was the large landowner needing something stout for clearing and cleaning?”

Well, our researcher didn’t know, but his questions got us to thinking. That same dilemma applies even to commercial tree care companies. How do you get going when it’s time to buy that chipper? Considering that they last five to 10 years, it’s not a purchasing decision one makes on a regular basis. Choosing the right brush chipper can be trickier than some prospective buyers realize.

Chris Steinlage, Vermeer’s dealer in Oregon, advises customers to buy the chipper that’s best for how they’re going to use it the majority of the time. And biggest isn’t always best. Renting a 20-inch chipper for a big job is more cost effective than towing a larger chipper around 100 percent of the time.

Automatic feed is a common feature that customers have come to expect when purchasing chippers. An automatic feed system monitors and controls feed-roller speed by sensing engine load. The feature provides a more consistent feeding speed, reduced engine stress, fewer jams and better efficiency. Vermeer offers a modified system called SmartFeed, which allows the chipper to adjust the roller speed automatically based on the resistance detected. It also reverses the rollers or “massages the wood” automatically when a jam occurs.

Another feature to consider when deciding which machine to buy is drum versus disc chipping mechanisms. Drums can tackle large material, making them very productive with large diameter material. Discs, on the other hand, typically produce smaller chips than drums and are ideal for landscape use. They also tend to weigh less.

Vermeer offers a full line of brush chippers, with material capacities ranging from 6 inches to 20 inches in diameter and horsepower ranging from 23.5 hp to 200 hp, both drum and disc-style models. Most models feature the Vermeer AutoFeed II, an automatic feed-rate control system that frees the operator from manual control and reduces operator exposure to incoming brush. The BC1400XL model, which is the newest Vermeer chipper, features a 122 hp CAT engine and a 15-inch-diameter chipping capacity. Other factors for consideration are safety features, serviceability, warranties, and support after the sale.

On the small side, the 6-inch is for rental and small landscapers, perhaps minor tree trimming. For them, Faber says, pieces larger than 6 inches become firewood. At the other end of the spectrum, for land-clearing and large tree service companies specializing in takedowns, there is the 18-inch model designed primarily to process as much wood as possible. Prices range from $13,000 to $18,000 on the low end and $44,000 to $100,000 at the top, depending on options and engine selection.

Rob Faber, commercial sales specialist at Morbark, says the company offers eight brush chippers, 6-inch to 18-inch machines, with a PTO (power takeoff) on some versions. Most are trailerized.

Faber recommends asking these questions: What do I want to do? What material and diameter will I be chipping? What kind of volume and throughput speed do I need?

“The results will be quite varied depending on whether you do a job here and there or five jobs a week,” explains Faber.

The next questions to ask involve choices such as larger engine options, gas versus diesel, features such as winches and loaders, knuckleboom loaders, and auto feed systems. Faber also recommends buyers examine durability records. Finally, question a dealer about safety features and ease of use.
“Auto feed systems are not as labor intensive and have an rpm sensor to work with the feed control bar. Winches can be a safety item because they help bring bigger material to the machine,” he says.

As for longevity, Faber stresses maintenance is the key. A chipper kept in good order should last 5,000 to 7,000 hours, with the majority experiencing a four- to seven-year life cycle.

Jerry Morey at Bandit Industries echoes the need to look at the nature of the work before buying. “The question kept coming up at TCI EXPO. I told people you need to ask yourself what you’ll be doing, generally speaking. You need to know if the chipper is mostly for trimmings or to be used for some takedowns and light land clearing. That determines the size. Then you need to look at what kind of truck you have to pull it with.”

A heavy-duty chipper can require a 250 hp puller, which can put your tow vehicle into another class and require a commercial driver’s license. (Check with state and federal authorities.)

“Then we talk about differences between disc and drum-style chippers,” continues Morey. “The advantage of a disc-type is chipping on a fixed angle. They chip easier, so they consume less fuel and energy when handling larger diameter material. In the long term there is a little less maintenance.”

Size is a relative term, he explains, with respect to disc versus drum. “The general configuration is that you can get a larger opening with a drum versus a comparably sized disc machine. Size for size, drum feed machines can accommodate bigger openings for handling large amounts of linear material,” he says. These drum units chip harder due to the straight cut or against grain, versus at an angle as with disc types, so the drum unit consumes more fuel and requires a bit more maintenance. “It’s simply because of the way they chip and the amount of vibration they develop. Users have their preferences, though, and we sell more disc than drum,” he says.

“The most important thing you can do is to run with sharp knives and maintain the anvil,” Morey says. “Chipping with dull knives will beat apart the machine and prematurely age it. Some tree care guys think that by not changing or touching up knives and finishing out the day they are money-ahead, but in the long run that’s not so in terms of fuel consumption and machine wear.”

Next, Morey says, the discussion with customers will turn to features and options and ways to customize each unit to individual needs. Some will want hydraulic winches or to make their chipper capable of feeding wood into a trailer. “Two things we promote are local service and good dealers,” he says.

The smallest Bandit in the commercial class is a 6-inch disc, ranging up to 12-, 14- and 18-inch units. In the drum class, there are 12-, 15-, 18- and 20-inch capacity versions, he says. The lowest prices are gas-powered in the $11,000 to $12,000 range, with diesel for the same units running to $15,000 to $17,000. In the 18-inch capacity model 1890, a 250 hp unit, prices go up to $65,000, depending on options, and the company offers virtually every diesel brand power unit. For larger, self-propelled units, he says, “throw another $25,000 on the price tag.”

What to ask, or answer, to Help You Buy the Right Chipper

Where and what will you be chopping? (species and size of material)
- What size truck do you have to tow it with?
- How often will you use it? Is renting more cost effective?
- Do you need specific features or engine sizes (gas/diesel)?
- Disc vs. drum-style?
- Proximity of dealer support (service, warranties, parts)?
- What kind of features, options do you need or want?
- What will be the estimated total cost of the unit and maintenance over its lifespan?

What to ask, or answer, to Help You Buy the Right Chipper

Morbark’s Tornado 15 is a mid-size chipper. “I think the questions to ask are, one – ‘what do I want to do?’” says Morbark’s Rob Faber. “What material and diameter will I be chopping? What kind of volume and throughput speed do I need?”

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The company expects to debut at least four new models in the spring.

For Ken Skoczen, national sales manager at Rayco, one chief issue regarding chippers is serviceability. “Once you get a machine, you get to live with it. So, they need to be easy to service – checking belts, fluids and changing the oil and filters.”

Ease of operator performance or comfort is another issue. “The clutch is a No. 1 value item, and a fail-safe clutch takes a lot of owner worry away. With Rayco, the operator can’t damage it on purpose and shorten the work day,” says Skoczen.

Most equipment is now electronically controlled and will sense the nature of the material and if there is a jam. Some guys will try to clear a jam by starting a chipper and then throwing the clutch – sometimes that works, other times not. It can prematurely wear the clutch, though, or do other damage. Depending on the machine, the electronics will speed up or slow down the feed to avoid a jam or putting too much work on the machine.

Rayco also offers its “reliable feed system,” which means one, not two, operators can feed material, and it has a patent-pending device that increases down pressure up to 2,500 pounds for four to five seconds when extra power is needed.

“Compactness and design also are factors,” he says. “Newer units are engineered for compactness.”

Another thing to look for is where the chips will fly. Skoczen says to look for 360-degree rotation and the ability, or need, to throw the chips on the ground or onto a truck or trailer. His machines can fire them at up to 73 mph onto a 40-foot truck or deep into the woods.

The Rayco offerings start with a 6-inch model with a 25-hp gas engine, largely used by smaller landscapers, part-timers or rental companies. Prices start around $11,500. The 10-inch, 50 hp diesel units for a small tree contractor can run to the high teens. The company also offers a wide variety, from the 12-inch, 82-86 hp range diesel units aimed at governmental, residential and land clearing operations, up to 115 hp units selling in the $28,000 to $34,000 neighborhood for a drum unit, or 80 to 115 hp in a disc. “It’s pretty much a personal preference,” he says. The 15-inch unit is the most popular for tree care companies with two to three crews that want power and capacity – and are willing to spend in the mid $30,000 range and up.

The 18-inch, 170 hp units are for serious land clearing operations and larger tree companies, Skoczen notes, and they can be found in large rental or contractor yards. This unit starts in the $50,000 range. “The
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big daddy,” a 20-inch unit with grapples, winches, a 225 hp power unit and tandem axle, will approach the upper end of $50,000 to $60,000.

Tom Gross, owner of Dynamic Manufacturing, maker of the Conehead chippers says, “I first want a buyer to tell me what market they plan to go after. Just light pruning or landscape trimming? Will they follow a landscaper or be into big takedowns or lot clearing? That will give me an idea of the size of machine they need. Once I know that, it’s a matter of how they intend to feed the chipper, which has a role in horsepower. If it’s hand feeding, there are units available today up to 100 hp,” powerful enough to keep six men busy hand-feeding all day long. “Mechanical feed – by winch, skidsteer or crane – needs more horsepower because you’ll be doing bigger jobs.”

Gross recommends looking at the total cost of owning a chipper, not just the initial purchase price. “I’m going to point out machines that are low cost to operate and feature mechanical efficiencies. Don’t forget, you’ll be married to the machine for five to 10 years. Capital costs are not a true reflection of what it will really cost over the chipper’s life cycle.”

The Conehead is different because of its mechanical advantages, Gross insists. “We feel ours is more efficient because of the configuration of the cutting drum. Because of this configuration the knife cuts at a more desirable angle. That efficiency, consequently, means less horsepower and not as much fuel to make the chip.”

Dynamic recently came out with a 12-inch unit, the lowest cost Conehead, aimed at municipalities and small tree care companies with light work.

“Models typically are rated as diameter capacity,” says Gross. “Our 18-inch has an opening 18 inches high by 28, which is the cutting width, for more capacity.” Cost for that runs $38,000 to $55,000, depending on horsepower. On the high end there’s a 20-inch-high and 35-inch-wide unit for lot clearing and takedowns – usually a crane job with mechanical feeding. Those run $50,000 to $75,000, and with a loader approach six figures. The company also makes several 12-, 15-, 18- and 20-inch units, including one for heavy forestry.

J.P. Carlton offers the model 2512HD Brush Chipper, a disc type, in 9-, 12- and 18-inch configurations. It’s offered with a beefy 125 hp Caterpillar turbo diesel. Machines feature, among other things, reversing autofeed, digital tachometer, live hydraulics, twin lift cylinders, hand crank swivel, height adjustable discharge and a 36-inch telescoping tongue.

At Woodsman, maker of only drum-type units, compactness is the name of the game. According to Bob Campbell, sales manager, “A drum allows you to have larger capacity in a more compact machine. Our advantage is keeping the unit compact and simple to maintain. With a disk-type, the size of the machine has to increase as the capacity does.”

The Woodsman line features several models, such as the Woodsman Model 12Xtreme standard with a 13-inch high, 24-inch wide opening and a drum that makes two full cuts per revolution, versus four half cuts, for smoother more uniform chips.

The line is comprised of the following models and sizes: 12X (13 inches high) and 15X (16 inches high) both by 24 inches wide. At the top end are the 18XX (19 inches high) and 20X (21 inches high) by 36 inches wide. Prices start at $29,000 and run to $90,000, according to Campbell.

Altec, known for its extensive line of aerial devices, offers 12- and 16-inch rotor-size units in a variety of gas and diesel configurations. The DC12 and WC612 are gas powered 12-inch units running 3 and 4.9 liter engines, respectively. The WC616 is a 16-inch run by the 4.9 gas engine. The WCD12-inch and the WCD16-inch both feature the 2.7 liter diesel.

Gene Bridges, VP at Wood/Chuck, says, “First of all, as manufacturers we ask a few questions: what kind of work are you doing – line clearing, tree care or tree removals?”

That will direct them mostly to whether they want or need a disk or drum unit, he says. “We make both disc and drum. The drum machines are throw-through, non-controlled feed with a capacity of up to 6 inches.”

Wood/Chuck makes only one of that model, he says. The remainder, both disc (9, 12, 14, 18 and 20 inches) and drum (12, 14, 16, 18 and 20 inches) all are control fed and feature panic bars as standard safety equipment. They are primarily diesel powered (the 6-inch throw through drum is gas) and prices range from about $17,000 to $40,000.
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Bear Cat makes a slew of machines starting at the very light duty, homeowner spectrum 1-inch to 5-inch chipper/shredders. The commercial line effectively begins with a 5-inch towable commercial chipper; several are Honda or Briggs and Stratton-powered; others run off a PTO.

The heavier duty Bear Cats start at 6 inches and go to 9-inch units. Power options include Honda and Kubota gas, Kubota diesel and PTO. These feature a 360-degree rotating bed, permitting operators to feed the hopper from any angle, and a full 360-degree rotating discharge chute.

Bear Cat also offers 8-inch PTO powered (utility tractor) units with self- or hydrostatic hydraulic-feed, and units in the 5-inch and 8-inch class for skid steers.

Sal Rizzo, president of Salsco in Connecticut, offers both gravity- and power-fed chippers in both PTO and engine-driven styles. The PTO chippers are from 3½ to 10 inch, both gravity feed and power feed. “Right now, I am the only one to have a PTO-type with feed sensing and auto feed,” he says.

In the engine-driven class, Salsco offers gravity-feed chippers in the 3½ to 6-inch class and auto feed types in the 3½ to 18 by 24-inch class. Prices range from $1,700 to $65,000. The “homeowner” size, as Rizzo calls the smaller units, are commercial grade, hence the higher starting range. “Most of the pros go with 6-, 10- or 13-inch sizes in the $11,000 to $38,000 price range,” he explains, “depending on how they want theirs set up. Our machines are mostly custom-built from the ground-up.”

Another feature of the Salsco line is that “our units are wider than higher, so a 6-by-12 can take a crotch or vee.”

For Rizzo, the first questions to be answered are how large is the material you want to chip and how frequently. “If you’re chipping 25-30 hours a week,” he says, “you may want to go diesel.” From Rizzo’s perspective, it’s “how large are you chipping, then motor size, then options like auto feed and feed sensing.”

After that, he feels that accessories are pretty much up to personal taste and business requirements.

Recently, the company took the gravity-feed 600 model line and produced two PTO types, one with its own oil requiring only driveshaft input, the other at a little less cost requiring the tractor’s oil. Coming soon is a new 4-inch, self-feed, 16 hp trailerable chipper for landscaper or golf course use.

Now that you know what to ask, are you ready to buy?
Help Wanted

Foreman/Climber

Wanted to manage a crew. This could be the upward move for you! Minimum 2-3 years’ experience, technical rigging, equipment and communication skills a must. Should be proficient in tree ID, ANSI A300 Pruning Standards and ANSI Z133.1 Safety Standards. Candidate will be well groomed and drug and alcohol free, and possess a Class B CDL and good driving record. Arborist Certification, or willingness to obtain, preferred. Good pay & benefits package - Medical, Dental, 401(k), Various bonus opportunities and possibilities for advancement. Send resume to: Shawnee Mission Tree and Landscaping, 8250 Cole Parkway, Shawnee, KS 66227 Phone: (913) 441-8888 Ext. 106 or e-mail: pats@smtree.com or fax: (913) 441-8922.

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Tim Kastning, owner
Grace Tree Service, Hayden, ID
Accreditation Number ID-001

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As an eager house hunter several years ago, I was thrilled to find a property I could afford that was surrounded by tall pine trees, including three set very close together in the middle of the front lawn. I was less than thrilled when the first strong thunderstorm roared through during my first week in the house. I watched from the window as those three giants swayed like tall grass in the wind, and I pictured what my new house would look like in splinters if one cracked apart and fell, possibly dragging the other two down toward my tiny rooftop. It’s an imaginary tale, and those three trees will outlast the house by a hundred years, but who would I have called?

How to Find a Qualified Arborist

Homeowners often have questions about tree care and few local resources for answers. Their landscapers aren’t necessarily tree experts, and without an expert, it’s hard to discern tree hazards before giant branches come crashing down on the new car in the driveway. So how does one find an arborist? On the Internet! The Tree Care Industry Association’s Web site has a new and growing resource center for consumers that not only answers common questions, but also tells them how to find an expert.

From the left-hand pane on the home page, an Internet surfer can pick on the Consumer Resource menu to enter the Consumer Resource Center. This opens a page that acts as the home base for a number of linked consumer information pages. These links include helpful articles, ways to search for qualified arborists, and an extensive library of frequently asked questions. It also contains links to other Web sites in the industry with tree care information.

Throughout the Consumer Resource Center, the advice urges homeowners to call qualified tree care companies and allows methods for searching our site for accredited and member companies. The Accreditation search is an interactive map where the homeowner can click on a state and a window will open to show accredited companies in that state. If none are available, the member search option is open via a link to the member database search. From there, consumers can find a TCIA member company by zip code, state, company name, or country.

Please don’t bury me! Helpful articles on pruning, planting and damage

TCIA maintains a collection of press releases on arboricultural topics that range from tree care to pest management to storm damage. These articles are listed in the Consumer Resource Center as helpful tips for consumers, but they are also useful as press releases that can be sent to local media with your contact information. Newspapers will often publish these articles as public information and include your company name and phone number as a local resource. Not only does this educate consumers, but it also sends them to you when they need advice or services. A catchy headline such as, “Please Don’t Bury Me,” on an article about digging a hole that’s too big for the tree, attracts readers and can serve to advertise your business.

Can my tree be damaged by a lawn mower, and other cutting-edge questions

Homeowners – or more correctly, tree owners – have concerns about the planting, pruning and feeding of trees, and often ask about tree damage from construction, storms and collisions. Our Frequently Asked Questions pages are divided into five subject areas: Basic Tree Care Practices, Storm Damage, Tree Defects and Hazards, Trees and Construction Damage, Selecting and Planting, and Tree Health. Each of these pages has a number of common questions and answers, including the above. The answer? Yes, a lawn mower can indeed cut through important vascular tissue just inside the bark of a tree, which can lead to decay and ultimately death.

Do you have a frequently asked question you would like to post to the Web? Please e-mail Webmaster@treecareindustry.org with the question. Include the answer, or we can have our staff arborists provide one. It will help expand our knowledge base and improve our usefulness to tree care consumers.

Kay Harrison is Web editor for the Tree Care Industry Association.
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On behalf of everyone who worked to make 2005 a banner year for The Voice for Trees PAC, we want to extend a huge Thank You to everyone who donated and made this effort a monumental success! Your contributions mean that we can continue to take your voice to decision-makers in Washington, defend your interests in the halls of Congress, and advocate for legislation that will help your businesses succeed.

The commitment of so many company executives to advance the concerns of the green industry will change our regulatory and legislative environment for the better. In particular, VFT-PAC has enjoyed great success in the past year with respect to DOT and OSHA issues, and we will continue to work on your behalf in 2006. The time and financial commitments of the people and companies listed below continue to make a difference for the industry. We thank them again for their generous support for our efforts.

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What goes in a Personnel File?

P

Practically the only rule about what NOT to keep in personnel file is: no information on medical conditions/health insurance claims. Medical information provided to the employer for purposes of reasonable accommodation of a disability should be kept in a separate file.

Also, any entries that do not directly relate to an employee's job performance and qualifications - such as references to an employee's private life or political beliefs, or unsubstantiated criticisms or comments about an employee's race, sex or religion. A rule of thumb is, don't put anything in a personnel file that you would not want a jury to see.

In the case of a subpoena or litigation discovery-request for records, you will be required to produce any record - paper or electronic - that relates to the claim that is in your possession. This means you need to have a good document retention policy and follow it.

This is the type of advice you will find in the monthly member giveaway included with this month's issue of Reporter, an update to our Business Management Guides. It is detailed information from Robert Sumner of Sumner & Associates, P.C. in Suwanee, Ga. Robert Sumner is TCIA's legal counsel. In it, Sumner outlines what you should - and should not - keep in personnel files.
Grace Tree’s mission: enhance professionalism in tree care through Accreditation

Tim Kastning, owner of Grace Tree Service in Hayden, Idaho, is on a mission to enhance professionalism in tree care. “The way things are now, anyone who can cut down a tree could call themselves a tree service,” says Kastning. He sees Accreditation as one way to change that. Kastning has been in the tree business for 20 years and owned and operated Grace Tree Service for seven. He believes that one of the things the industry is lacking is set of standards all tree services should have to abide by. “A program that will help the industry on the business end has been a need for a long time,” he stresses.

Grace Tree Service works in and around the resort area of Coeur d’Alene, but eventually Kastning would like to change that too, with offices in several different regions of Idaho. Most of the company’s business comes from the 10-man tree service crew, but Kastning runs a nursery and planting service also.

“It (Accreditation) was an absolutely wonderful program,” says Kastning. “Every step that we take to make our company more professional not only benefits us, but the whole tree care industry, by raising the bar to other companies and challenging them to provide the same exceptional service that we provide on a daily basis.”

While the process wasn't completely painless, Kastning found that in some cases he had already met or exceeded the requirements for Accreditation.

“We had a lot of things in place already – an employee handbook, company safety policies and documentation, DOT folders and drug testing. One thing we didn’t have was a written business plan. My plan was in my head,” reports Kastning. “There were also a few other things, such as better record-keeping for DOT compliance and a change in our bid proposals to comply with ANSI A300 standards.” Kastning estimates it took 80-100 hours to get the missing pieces into place for the Accreditation audit.

Full compliance has raised costs, admits Kastning, but “we are building a foundation that will sustain our company to be a leader in the years to come.”

Even before Accreditation, Grace Tree had an extensive customer review and complaint procedure. When a job is done, the crew is required to do a walk-through with the client and if no one is there at the time someone from the company is in contact with the client before an invoice is ever sent out. With the billing they also send a customer satisfaction survey that gives the client a chance to comment on things such as clean-up, the courteousness of the crew, and a space for other comments. Above all Kastning makes sure his crews leave behind a feeling of satisfaction with their clients.

“My climbing days are over,” he says, “but I still want to work with the crews and oversee quality control.”

Grace Tree Service is the first Accredited tree service in Idaho and the 31st out of 37 in the nation. Kastning says the employees are proud of the distinction and it encourages them to work and act in a professional manner.

“I believe that this program is the most important development in our industry since the certified arborist program. The biggest problem in the tree service industry is that people can run a company with no rules, regulations or set standards,” reiterated Kastning. “We need to continue to strengthen our industry, especially in the area of business and safety compliance. Accreditation is one step in a long process toward a higher level of professionalism.”

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Example: If you buy $2,000 in products from Midwest's Web site, your company will receive a credit from Midwest Arborist Supplies that will reduce your next year's membership dues by $50. Your credits will accumulate throughout the 12 months of membership and when you receive your dues invoice at the end of this period, you can subtract the credits from your dues. This excellent members-only program helps reduce your company’s dues and helps offset some of the costs involved with keeping this industry safe.

Requirements: You must be a confirmed TCIA member, and you must order supplies online at www.treecaresupplies.com/tcia_discounts.shtml.

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To learn more about how your company can benefit from these and other TCIA affinity programs, please call 1-800-733-2622.
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By Bruce Colman

A pesticide applicator works in the crosshairs of two major anxieties. The fear of insects is thought to exist almost at birth. Many people have irrational fears of chemicals, mostly I believe, because we tend to fear what we don’t understand. All fears are rooted in a base anxiety called “death anxiety.” We fear insects because there lays a suspicion that they could kill or harm us. While most people receive insect bites without any adverse reaction, that fact still doesn’t mean we won’t go far out of our way eradicate any potential threats.

I have been a certified pesticide applicator for more than 22 years. In that time I have experienced a wide range of reactions to both insects and pesticides. Most of the time a person’s reactions to insects or pesticides tell us more about that individual than about the insects or pesticides.

Mrs. “M” wanted to meet me to go over her landscape before I did her pest control application. Her landscape had been installed about a year ago and this was the beginning of fall. Our practice is to inspect each plant and apply pesticides on any plants that will benefit. This generally means that if we find an insect or disease in a high enough concentration to cause visible damage, we make the appropriate application. So Mrs. M and I start to walk around her clean, small, but well designed landscape. I point out a few issues on some plants and I can see in her eyes a fairly high level of anxiety over what I was showing her. Soon she is going from plant to plant showing me minor insect, fungal, and bacterial damage. At this point I start making statements like “yes, this is a slight problem, but the plant looks great overall and is going to be OK.” Finally I stop Mrs. M and tell her that every plant has something damaging it, in a minor way, but that most of the time – 99 percent of the time – the overall health of the plant will not be affected. Then she says “but you are going to spray every plant, aren’t you?” I assure her I will spray all the plants that will benefit from the application.

Death anxiety can also elicit a different response from a customer. Mrs. “T” had been a customer for many years. One day I knocked on the door to tell her I was there for the regularly scheduled pest control application. She was glad to see me as she was worried about the health of the tree that I was there to treat. She then asked me if I had an organic pest control that I could use to treat the plant. She recently had been diagnosed with cancer, and she was worried about any potential carcinogens in her environment. I thought about the fact that the vehicle I drove to her house was a diesel truck and the exhaust was a known carcinogen. And I thought about the fact that none of the pesticides we used were known carcinogens. But instead I told her there was an organic product that I could use. She accepted the new work change order, I was able to take care of the tree and she was able to feel safer.

Of course there are as many ways that death anxiety can affect how someone will respond to plant disease and pesticides. These are only two examples.

As a plant health care specialist it can be difficult to balance responsible stewardship of the environment and meet the needs of our customers. By better understanding our customers, we can bring balance to our work.

Bruce Colman is a certified commercial pesticide applicator for Collier Arbor Care in Clackamas, Oregon.
Caring for trees with Chlorosis

Chlorosis is a plant health condition defined as a lack of chlorophyll.

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