Here's why Disc Chipper users are going back to Drum Chippers.

**More** Dumping Fees.
**More** Repair Costs.
**More** Downtime.
**More** Fuel Consumption.
**More** Overheating.

**Do you need to chip everything?**
If you're like most disc owners, you've been chipping more of what was once sold as firewood (or left for people to take), and have watched your dumping fees go up and your productivity go down. Your crews spend more time running to the dump, clearing jammed chutes, washing down radiator screens and waiting for overheated engines to cool.

The Asplundh Whisper Chipper not only offers lower operating costs, but extremely low life cycle costs. And, how many used disc chippers have you seen for sale after ten years of service?

**Are you spending more on fuel?**
At 70- to 120-feet per minute, it takes a disc chipper almost three times longer than a Whisper Chipper to chip six-inch material. How much more fuel do you think it uses? And, with the engine running longer, you're looking at shorter engine life and, again, higher operating costs.

**The Asplundh Whisper Chipper** saves time, fuel, and, most important, money.

**Are you paying hydraulic mechanics more?**
The chart below compares replacement parts for a Whisper Chipper with those of a popular disc chipper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whisper Chipper</th>
<th>Disc Chipper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Chippers</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blades</td>
<td>Blades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belts</td>
<td>Belts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cutter Bar</td>
<td>Anvil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Hydraulic System</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>none</td>
<td>Hydraulic tubes, fittings, hoses, motors, filters, tanks, flow dividers, O-rings, seals, (over 30 hydraulic components alone)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Feed System</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>none</td>
<td>Feed wheels, feed teeth, bearings, bushings, feed wheel springs, feed wheel yokes, etc., etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whisper Chippers have far less downtime. That translates into more time making money and less spending it.

Please circle 7 on the Reader Service Card.

**Are you ready to think about a drum chipper?**
The Whisper - designed, built, used and backed by Asplundh - carries a one-year warranty honored by the most extensive service in the industry. Plus, with full-sized Whispers starting at $8950, you'll keep your investment at its lowest and your yield at its highest.

Come back to the Asplundh Whisper Chipper - the chipper that keeps paying dividends for up to 20 years.

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Wood waste recycling is a fast-growing sideline in the tree care industry. Top photo courtesy of Steve Nimz, Honolulu, Hawaii.

COVER PHOTO:
The patented Waste Recycler. Photo courtesy of Recycling Systems, Inc.

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What's ahead for commercial arboriculture?
Will the tree care industry feel the recession?
Will there be a ripple effect from the Northeast?
How long will it last?
Is the economy really as bad as the media would have you believe?
Are retail sales down because only part of your credit card interest can be deducted?
Is my bank going under?
The questions go on and on, and the media fuels the fire.
The media always thinks that the glass is half empty. That's what sells newspapers and attracts TV audiences. As they say, no one ever reports on the planes that landed safely—only on the ones that didn't. If the media wasn't so pessimistic, perhaps we would recover very quickly from whatever it is that they tell us we are suffering from.
I'm the eternal optimist. My glass is always at least half full, if not filled to the brim. I believe that everything is going to be fine. I just don't know when. In the meantime, I'm going to do my part to keep our business moving and I'm going to be very positive about it. I will be cautious, but I will also be confident.
We must have confidence in ourselves, our country and our economy. That confidence needs to be conveyed to customers, employees, friends and relatives. Wouldn't it be great if we could get the mass media to be positive also? That would turn things around in a hurry.
Being confident isn't to say that there are no problems out there. Just to be in business is a challenge, a risk, an opportunity to use your training and experience to overcome problems in whatever form they may take. In difficult times, we work a little harder, always smarter, and it all works out in the end.
I'm not going to make any forecasts, but I've been involved in the tree care industry for more than 35 years and we have not only survived, but grown and prospered. For many, 1991 will be a bigger challenge than usual but we will get through it and go on to bigger and better years. I'm confident of that.
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RECYCLE!

It's Good For The Environment And Your Pocketbook

By Peter Gerstenberger and Brian Barnard
TCI Staff

In a survey conducted by the National Arborist Association, 22% of respondents said their state or county prohibited dumping of chips, wood or brush in landfills. Forty-two percent indicated that dumping wood debris was restricted in their area. According to data from the National Solid Wastes Management Association (see accompanying table), 10 states and the District of Columbia have imposed bans on yard waste disposal. Bans or severe restrictions are imminent in many more. Faced with enormous tipping fees, many companies pass wood chips along to nurseries, parks, or arboreta. This system may work conveniently, especially for companies that produce small volumes of wood waste.

Many other tree companies are clamoring to get into recycling, not necessarily because it is lucrative, but rather to get around the problems and cost of wood waste disposal. Once into recycling, many find the potential for future growth in this area to be virtually limitless.

According to Environmental Protection Agency 1988 data, 6.5 million tons of wood waste is disposed of annually but only about 6% of it is being recycled. In 1989, members of the Waste Recyclers Council, which represents mainstream waste management companies, reported handling 206,000 tons of wood waste from construction and demolition and 185,000 tons of yard waste, which includes green wood, leaves and grass clippings. However, the scene is rapidly changing as entrepreneurs recognize the enormous potential in this area.

Here are three companies who are venturing into the business.

Taylor Tree & Landscape
Montgomery, New York

In the last six months, landfills in New York have come under pressure from the Department of Environmental Conservation to keep out all wood waste and yard waste. Some landfills have found it cost-effective to excavate wood waste and yard waste for recycling.

Jim Taylor, president of Taylor Tree and Landscape, saw the need for alternative wood waste disposal in 1985. Capitalizing on the wood waste disposal crisis in southeast New York, his company now operates a recycling business that services a four-state area. "The writing was on the wall (in New York as to what waste disposal was coming to)," he says. "(Recycling) is good as long as I can make it profitable for me, cost-effective for clients, and it's good for the environment."

The Taylor operation takes two types of wood waste—green waste from trees and construction/demolition waste—and turns it into high-grade mulch. Construction/demolition waste includes contaminated wood—which generally has some type of finish on it—and uncontaminated wood. Taylor does not recycle contaminated wood, but uses wood pallets—often included in construction waste—since they are generally untreated. Except for nails, the pallets can be used for quality mulch. More on the nails later.

The 40-acre site behind the Taylor offices is a combination green wood waste disposal site and mulch operation where a sister operation is using a tub grinder to mix non-contaminated wood waste with whole tree chips, brush chips and stump wood. Taylor describes the product as a soup in which specific ratios of different materials are blended to come up with a product that the market will accept.
“(Recycling) is good as long as I can make it profitable for me, cost-effective for clients and it’s good for the environment.”

—Jim Taylor, Taylor Tree & Landscape

Two processes using different types of equipment are involved. Primary reduction takes whole trees, stumps or pallets and reduces them to a rough product. A Waste Recycler from Recycling Systems, Inc. is used to reduce raw material. Everything that requires primary grinding goes through Taylor Tree.

A major concern at this stage is foreign debris—eyebolts, cables, screws and trash. Also, tires, portions of fence, plastic, and telephone poles with creosote must be separated from the wood. Mountains of this material are stacked in an organized fashion on the site.

Once the primary reduction process is completed, secondary processing in a tub grinder further reduces the rough product and mixes it with other ingredients to create the final product. Taylor’s business partner, who wishes to remain anonymous, does the secondary grinding and mixes the ingredients to make the saleable product. The mulching operation behind the Taylor Tree office guards its trade secrets for reduction, mixing and color.

Taylor’s partner transports the final product to garden centers in New York and New Jersey, who in turn sell it to residential and commercial customers for use as decorative landscape material.

The operation calls for an abundant supply of whole tree wood chips, which the company obtains from land clearing work and purchases for $3 per yard from companies in Massachusetts and New Jersey. The company also buys pallet material from firms in New Jersey.

Taylor Tree allows local firms to dump brush chips at its facility, but charges a tipping fee of $8 per cubic yard. The fee covers the cost of handling the material, which contains a high proportion of leaves, twigs and bark but not the quantity of wood fiber that Taylor needs.

While finding a market has not been a problem, finding raw material has and Taylor is concerned about being able to keep up with demand. “Our product is in such demand that we are concerned about meeting that de-
mand,” Taylor says. “We’ve been able to honor our commitment up to this point.”

Taylor’s is the only green wood waste site approved by the DEC in southeastern New York, and the only wood waste recycler for Orange County. The company can accept or refuse any wood material that comes in. Material that is refused generally goes to the nearby landfill.

Taylor Tree crews may see the material again when it arrives at the landfill as the company is probably the first contractor in New York to have a landfill restoration project. Crews spent a month cleaning up the landfill and removing recyclable wood, excavating a mound that was 50 feet deep. In December, Taylor processed 10,000 tons of wood in the landfill, which will be filled in July and is slated to close in 1992. New York’s Solid Waste Law prohibits new landfills to open after 1992.

Meanwhile, the county will be allowed to bring 10,000 tons of garbage to the site as a direct result of the recycling project. “For every ton we take out, they can put back three at a lot higher price,” Taylor says.

As in any business, unforeseen things have cropped up, such as the fire control system the state requires. Some of the surprises are good. Consider nails. Taylor purchased a new conveyor with a $14,000 magnetized roller for recovering nails from pallets. Based on the volume of waste that is processed, the company will quickly recover its investment by selling the high-quality metal scrap for $60 a ton.

Taylor Tree also offers on-site recycling with portable equipment. The company recently negotiated a contract to process wood on IBM Corporation property and then use it on site.

As Taylor sees it, the major obstacle to progress is bureaucracy, considering the permit process that must be completed before digging up the wood. “Everyone is getting into the recycling business and wood waste business, but they have no idea what is required in the permit process and they have to have a market,” he explains. “They don’t have a source of whole tree chips, and they don’t have a market for quality whole tree mulch.”

As for the future of the business he says, “My goal would be to figure out how to do this for free on the incoming side but still be able to make money on the market. That is recycling.”

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**States With Yard Waste Disposal Bans**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connecticut</th>
<th>North Carolina</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>New Jersey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>Ohio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
</tr>
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<td>Iowa</td>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*—States with yard waste disposal bans typically restrict landscape and wood waste. Source—National Solid Wastes Management Association*

B. Haney & Sons
Chicago, Illinois

B. Haney & Sons, Inc. is located in Franklin Park, just minutes from Chicago’s O’Hare Airport. The company got into large-scale recycling in 1971 when the costs of dumping, which were running about $600 for a 50-yard semi-trailer load, became prohibitive. It now handles green wood waste for 12 municipalities and several tree companies. The com-
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The company does some waste processing on the job site, but most debris is trucked to its yard.

The company produces eight products for an average of 200 cubic yards per day, and sells them primarily to landscape firms, garden centers and other large commercial clients. The two-acre yard contains a sizable pile of logs plus a 3,000-cubic-yard pile of brush chips awaiting the tub grinder. The products are not aged or composted. Only two employees run the yard operations.

B. Haney emerged on the recycling scene before the advent of some of today's state-of-the-art equipment, so innovation was the order of the day. A log grinder was constructed on a semi-trailer chassis and is capable of reducing 80-inch-long logs of virtually any diameter. Its controls are mounted on an extension so that a grapple operator can pull his truck beside the unit and simultaneously operate both devices. B. Haney's Waste Recycler can also grind logs, but the log grinder is still functioning because it produces a large-dimension chip favored by some customers.

Jack Haney notes that people venturing into the business often overlook the considerable capital investment needed in support equipment, such as trucks and yard tractors. His operation, for instance, requires a vehicle that does nothing but fleet maintenance. Haney says, "People have trouble seeing past that $300,000 recycler. I have at least as much invested in support equipment as I do in primary equipment."

For B. Haney, the motto for handling wood waste is, "Don't move it off site if you don't have to." The company encourages its customers to accept and use wood chips and shies away from processing stumps because of the difficulty in cleaning them and the added wear and tear on the machinery. The company charges a fee for all incoming waste wood to cover the cost of trucking and for the final product to cover the processing.

The company is looking to replace its PTO-driven tub grinder with a self-powered unit after finding that on cold days, warm, wet chips hitting the cold steel of the unit tend to freeze on the machine's moving parts and clog it.

**Chip It, Inc.**
Honolulu, Hawaii

Steve Nimz, president of The Tree People in Honolulu, Hawaii, recently started a new venture called Chip It. The new business was born out of a combination of two main factors—economics and Nimz's belief that there is a better use for wood waste debris than merely disposing of it in a landfill.

"Being in the tree service business for twenty years, I have always felt that our organic debris must have a more viable use than the landfill," Nimz says. "Disposal of chips at nurseries, farms and parks has never been a problem, but who wants mixed loads of palm fronds, coconuts, chips and logs? And eco-
“Being in the tree service business for twenty years, I have always felt that our organic debris must have a more viable use than the landfill.”

—Steve Nimz, The Tree People

Nomically, handling firewood in tropical Hawaii is real questionable.”

Nimz was prompted to look seriously at trying to recycle non-chipped tree debris when the nearby landfill closed recently and tipping fees increased from $10 per ton to $54 per ton within a year.

His first step was to meet with various recycling groups where he found people working with aluminum, paper, plastic, glass bottles and used oil. But green debris generated little interest, leading him to believe that this segment of the island’s debris problem was low on the priority list. Meanwhile, the monthly bills for disposal at the landfill were increasing and there was talk that soon organic debris would not be accepted.

Looking at the data on the quantity of green debris going into the city landfill and cogeneration power plant, Nimz assumed that he might be able to divert one-third to an alternative site. After searching for recycling equipment and doing some basic financial analysis work, he calculated that operating a tree chipping venture could be less expensive than paying landfill tipping fees.

Then the question was: Who would use these mounds of chips? Electric power had long been produced by burning byproducts of processing sugarcane and the sugar people were even willing to pay for the material. However, getting the chipped material to the right particle size and moisture content would require a much larger financial investment.

A pineapple plantation presented a more optimistic picture. Chips and cattle manure could be used in the fields to improve the soil and reduce chemical use, and particle size and moisture content were not critical factors. In addition, the plantation was conveniently located—adjacent to a major freeway. Furthermore, the plantation would handle the many necessary permits, including land use, health department, fire department, noise and composting.

While financial institutions were interested in the venture, they were reluctant to fund an unproven enterprise without substantial collateral. The breakthrough for Nimz came

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while The Tree People was relocating trees at a major new resort golf course.

"The general contractor was having trouble disposing of grubbing material—some of the stumps were ten feet in diameter," Nimz recalls. "I suggested that he contact Morbark Industries (RSI Division) about their product line. I had seen the Waste Recycler work and just knew that this would do the job and produce an end-product which could be used on the project. The contractor could purchase the equipment, and after the golf course project, it would be moved to the tree recycling site on a joint-venture basis."

This avenue provided longer-term equipment amortization for the contractor and answered the financing problem. Thus, Chip It was born.

Start-up costs were kept to a minimum. After the legal formalities were completed, the business was launched with a used Case 1000 dozer with front-end bucket and an 8-foot-by-10-foot field office. Nimz figured the company could collect material for four to six months before the Waste Recycler was needed on site. The tipping fees—at a rate much lower than the city landfill—generated an initial cash flow. Chip It then invested in a new rubber-tire front end loader with a four-in-one bucket when the recycler came on site. A computer accounting package, new FAX-phone line and answering machine were handling the business support details.

While chipping on site is just starting, benefits are already apparent: Tree service companies are reducing tipping fees; landfill debris is reduced; organic material is going back into the soil; and an environmentally compatible new business venture has been started.

Further processing the chips with a tub grinder could yield a product for use in soil amendments and nursery mixes, compost and fuel. Other recyclable items to incorporate into the project might be paper, pallets, construction materials (wood) and sewage sludge.

With the mobile Recycler and tub grinders, satellite sites are possible. Also, subcontracting with clearing and grubbing companies and municipalities looks promising as a way to keep the machine busy.

Still, there is more to be done. "A lot of research and legwork is still ahead—here in Hawaii and elsewhere," Nimz says. "But now it is the time to 'go for it' and the tree industry should be a leader in organic recycling."
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Pricing Strategies

My Buck And A Half's Worth

By Donald F. Blair

Let's say that a practical, realistic work year is 230 days. That gives time for vacations, holidays, bad weather, etc. That makes a work year of 1840 worker hours or 3680 team hours. If you could charge out all of that time—which you can't—that team on a straight worker-hour-bid basis of $45 will gross $165,000. At that rate, you're making payroll, meeting all other expenses, but you have trouble making the NAA Annual Meeting in February. You'd love to institute some training for your people, but you can't quite swing it. You know you should retire your climbing lines every year, but that's $168 a year for just that team.

Have you ever figured to the penny what all the tools on a pruning truck for a two-person team cost? I did. Not counting chain saws, blowers and special tools, I added up $4,654.87 worth of pruning tools, cabling gear, maintenance items, ladders, ropes, saddles, etc. Almost $5000 worth of stuff that wears out, gets lost and just plain disappears.

Now, add 50 cents to your team-hour rate and you've got $1,840 for small tool replacement and upgrade. Now your people can get their new climbing lines every year.

Add another 50 cents an hour to your team rate and you just might make the Annual Meeting in February. At least you're $1840 closer.

Add yet another 50 cents an hour to your team rate and you can afford to institute that training program. For just a buck and a half, you are now better equipped, better informed and better trained. Do you really think your clients would desert you over the $12 per day in rate increase? So, you went from $720 to $732 per day. You could go to $750 but that's more than a buck and a half.

If you take that same buck and a half and apply it to your worker-hour rate instead of each two-person team, you'll double all your numbers and I still don't think you'll lose anyone important over $24 a day. The biggest mistake I think most of us make in pricing our product is the assumption—or fear—that our clients know to the penny what tree work costs. But if we don't have any idea of what we should be charging, how can they?

Grindstones and cats

We've discussed the power of a buck and a half in increasing your
revenue. Here are a few more ideas for valid tree maintenance services that might increase your revenue and your standing as a professional.

**a. Service calls**

Professional arborists have been fighting “free estimates” for years. I don’t always choose to charge, but I keep that as my option, not a policy. We have never advertised “free estimates.”

To be sure, there were certain classes of work that we wouldn’t consider charging for: removals, municipal work, projects that had details, written specifications. As for the homeowner who calls and says, “I have some trees on my property. I’d like to have someone come out and look at them and tell me what they need.” Now, that’s a perfect service call.

We finally developed a workable policy. We charged the equivalent of one worker-hour for the call. We learned to collect the fee on the spot and that we didn’t have to credit the fee to the work done or resort to any other trick to make clients think that they weren’t paying for the service.

We didn’t charge our established clientele. We used the service call to prequalify a prospective client and as a modest source of revenue. I’m fond of saying I’d rather lose a job in the office with my feet up on the desk than to spend all day driving around in a cold car to accomplish the same net result.

Developing a successful service call program depends on good telephone skills. You must find out what the caller wants. If it’s a removal, you’ve got to decide if you want to bid the job. In this case, I don’t see a service call as justifiable. There’s no diagnosis involved; the tree’s dead. Do you want to take it down or don’t you? The client must be informed early on that there is a fee, what it is, and how it is collected. If you don’t attend to these details, don’t expect to either get paid or have a happy client if you show up and spring your fee unexpectedly. Work it all out and try a few numbers. Let’s stay with the undervalued rate of $45 per worker-hour. That’s your service call charge.

If you go from a zero base to five service calls a week, multiplied by $45 over 50 weeks, you’ll increase your revenue $11,250.

You’ll also realize the following cost benefits. First, you don’t have to do anything different; you simply have to explain an expected charge and collect it. Second, you don’t have to capitalize any major equipment. Third, you have further upgraded your company’s services.

We thrived on service calls in the San Francisco Bay area, where there were 200 companies in the phone books and 98% offered free estimates. When a client asked why we charged, we welcomed the opportunity to explain that we operated an established, insured, professional firm. We would be there when we said we would, we would do what we said we’d do and the charge for the tree work reflected the true cost of doing the work. By covering the overhead of the service call with a fee, we didn’t have to hide the expense in the actual work done.

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TREE CARE INDUSTRY • APRIL 1991
b. Root crown inspections

This is another grindstone that will help to set your business apart from all the “guys in the brush business.” Let’s first appreciate the fact that most problems in the foliage originate below ground. You can educate your clients with this simple explanation: Trees have two parallel systems, mechanical and biological. If a tree fails biologically, you have a standing dead tree. We can deal with that. If a tree fails mechanically, something attacked the anchoring root system and caused the tree to fall over, even though it “looked great.” We want to avoid that at all costs. What we are trying to accomplish with a root crown inspection is a more thorough understanding of the below-ground condition of the tree. We don’t want to charge money to prune an important tree that “looks good” only to have it fail biologically a year later. We certainly don’t want to have a tree that “looks good” fail mechanically while one of our people is in it and have an injury on our hands.

The purpose of a root crown inspection is to determine if a more extensive root crown excavation is warranted. An RCI consists of a shallow inspection at the most likely spots for root decay. These spots are found in the valleys between the anchor roots. Plants and turf that have been allowed to grow right to the base or ivy that encircles the trunk should be removed. Such growth can hide serious problems from a “glance through” inspection.

If dead or dying bark tissue is encountered or fruiting bodies or decay is discovered, a more extensive root crown excavation is highly advisable. The aim of a root crown excavation is to carefully excavate soil from the trunk out about two to three feet and down far enough to expose the top curve of the anchor roots. Once this excavation is completed, a more accurate appraisal of the below-ground condition of the root system may be made.

If we took over the care of important trees on a site that had no recorded history of care for us to refer to, we would often insist (as gently as possible) on an RCI before we agree to undertake a major pruning operation. Some pruning jobs can cost $2000. A $200 RCI is a good insurance before committing primary funds to pruning. I can assure you that in a competitive situation, we were the only ones to charge to come and look at the tree and the only ones who suggested digging a hole instead of climbing a tree. We generally got the contract. If you only prescribe 20 root crown inspections/excavations in all of 1991 at an average cost of $150, you still increase your gross sales by $3000. This is work that can be done as a fill-in, on days too windy to spray or prune. This is work that can be done by careful laborers who might not be top-notch climbers, but have the patience to treat their digs as an archaeologist would.

Donald F. Blair, president of Sierra Moreno Mercantile Company, Big Pool, Maryland, is an arborist, entrepreneur and teacher.
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Meet NAA’s President
F. David Dickson Takes The Helm

F. David Dickson, president of Swingle Tree Company, Denver, Colorado, has been installed as president of the National Arborist Association, a trade association of 1200 tree service firms in the United States and Canada.

Swingle has been a member of NAA since 1948 and specializes in residential and commercial landscape care. Dickson joined the firm in 1967 and has served as a member of the NAA Board of Directors since 1986. In the tree care industry, Dickson is well known for his approach to total plant health care using innovative, environmentally sound techniques as well as his pioneering efforts in computerization and marketing.

Dickson was born in the East, attended Hobart University, served in the U.S. Army, worked for a tree company in Connecticut and moved to Denver in the mid-60s. He is married, has two sons, is active in the Better Business Bureau and enjoys hunting and fishing. At home he has a reputation as a gardener who “loves to clip.”

The National Arborist Association is well known for its technical and safety training aids. Under Dickson’s leadership, the association will broaden its activities and provide its members with a variety of management aids. Dickson believes that members miss a major benefit if they don’t use materials that a trade association offers. To illustrate his point, here is an excerpt from his acceptance speech:

“The NAA has two basic avenues to serve your needs. First, they provide learning tools for managing your business such as guidelines, examples of successful brochures, seminars, speakers on business subjects and so on.

“The other is direct and informal—the networking avenue. You call the NAA office with a question and the staff either answers it or puts you in touch with another member who can.

“Experience is the world’s greatest teacher, and we have experience on the staff as well as many experienced members. Here’s an example: In 1973 I wanted to know what companies in the East were doing. I didn’t know any, so I went to the NAA Directory and put a list together. I paid a visit to four companies, all of which are still members today, which says something. The tangibles I walked away with were many ... my commitment to start a newsletter, to improve my customer ‘door-hangers’ and to begin a payroll savings plan for my employees to draw upon on winter days. Now, 18 years later, I’m still networking with those same firms!”

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New Grants Available
Do You Qualify For Funds To Plant Trees?

Under the Appropriation Act of 1990, the Small Business Administration (SBA) was allocated more than $15 million for fiscal 1991 for tree planting projects. Funds have not yet been distributed since the federal fiscal year begins in October and the SBA is still in the process of developing regulations for allocation.

Still, many tree firms may benefit, providing the proper channels are accessed.

The Act requires, among other things, that SBA make grants to or enter into contracts with any state in which small businesses would plant trees and provide three years of care and maintenance on land owned or controlled by state or local governments.

The Act is designed to encourage and develop the capacity of small businesses and to permit increases in employment opportunities in communities through tree planting programs. Grant amounts vary from state to state, based on a population census estimate. At least half of the total amount available to each state will be allocated.

To be eligible for funds, the state applying for the grant must provide 25% of project costs. These funds may be contributions and may include the cost or value of providing care and maintenance of trees for three years after planting. Non-federal money, or in-kind contributions, must not include any value attributable to the land on which the trees are to be planted. The remaining half of the funds are allocated by the Administrator to applicants who agree to contribute more than the requisite 25% in non-federal funds.

To qualify as a small business, a company must have less than 100 employees and gross sales of not more than $34,000 per employee. This will qualify most tree firms. Contact your local government to determine what state agency has been designated to apply for grant money.

With $15 million authorized for fiscal 1991 and $30 million each year through fiscal 1994, many tree firms can take advantage of the program. This federally funded source of new business is worth pursuing and you may want to go after these contracts through local and state agencies.

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United Labs To Certify Protective Chaps

The American Pulpwood Association (APA) Standard Committee on leg protection for chain saw users has established a voluntary standard of performance requirements for leg protection for chain saw users. United Laboratories (UL) and other certified testing labs will check the garments.

This standard will establish standard quality requirements for the garments. Recommended minimum threshold stopping speed is 3000 feet per minute, or 15.25 meters per second.

Chap use is expected to rise, particularly in the logging industry. The final draft of a 1989 proposal for chap use for the logging industry is expected this fall. As the Occupational Safety and Health Administration begins to enforce these regulations, arborists could be pressured into a similar requirement. However, even as the current proposal is written, those in the logging industry would be exempt from chap use when working aloft. This has been a concern of arborists with prior chap use proposals.

The voluntary testing of leg garments is expected to be initiated at the end of this year.
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Fines Implemented

OSHA Sets Criteria For Determining Penalties

By Steven R. Semler

Last year, in its tax increase legislation, Congress ordered the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to increase its fine structure sevenfold. It did so for two reasons: to raise more money for the U.S. Treasury and to force employers to treat OSHA compliance more seriously. OSHA retains discretion in determining the size of the fine it will impose.

OSHA recently announced it will rely on two factors in exercising its discretion: the gravity of the violation and use of adjustment factors.

The gravity-based factor

First, OSHA assesses the gravity of the violation from the following principal classification options:

a) Non-serious: The cited hazard does not expose employees to death or serious bodily harm. Under the new policy, the unadjusted maximum fine is $7000 per violation, although we expect rarely to see a maximum penalty for a non-serious citation. (There can be, and often are, multiple violations issued by OSHA as a result of one inspection.)

b) Serious: The cited hazard exposes employees to death or serious bodily harm. (All “general duty” citations are, by definition, “serious.”) Under the new policy, the maximum fine will be $7000 but most are expected to fall unadjusted in the $1500-$5000 range. The OSHA Area Director can impose the $7000 maximum only with the permission of the OSHA Regional Administrator.

c) Willful: In the case of a willful violation, the employer knows that his conduct was not in compliance with OSHA requirements. A willful violation can be “willful/non-serious” or “willful/serious.” A non-serious willful violation will be subject to a minimum fine of $5000. A serious willful violation will be multiplied by a factor of seven, for a maximum penalty of up to $70,000, depending on the degree of willfulness and the deterrent effect sought by OSHA. A penalty of this size can be imposed by the OSHA Area Director only with the approval of the OSHA Regional Administrator.

d) Repeat: A repeat violation is one which the company has been previously cited by OSHA which the company has (1) agreed to by payment, agreed to by settlement agreement, or been found guilty of after a hearing; and (2) for which the company was again cited. The “repeat” fine structure caps at $70,000, as with willful violations. Because repeat violations can mean potentially enormous fines, employers are advised to vigorously prevent the original violation from ever becoming established so that an ensuing violation cannot be characterized as a “repeat.” In short, a $1000 penalty paid today to “get rid” of a case can come back to haunt the employer a year later as a “repeat” violation with a staggering fine. This problem will become particularly troublesome for national tree care employers. OSHA’s present policy confines use of repeat citations to those occurring in the same geographic zone as the one in which the original violation occurred. However, we understand that OSHA shortly plans to announce a revised policy: that a violation can be labeled
a "repeat" based on a similar violation that occurred anywhere in the country. We understand that OSHA plans to run a computer check on employers before issuing citations to determine whether the employer has an OSHA "rap sheet" that can permit the new violation to be termed a "repeat." A California violation, for instance, which is settled but recurs later by a different crew in New York can be treated by OSHA as a "repeat."

Due to this anticipated change in enforcement policy, it is suggested that if an employer pays upon or settles an OSHA violation, it should consider distributing a bulletin to all crews stressing the nationwide importance of safety compliance regarding the cited activity. (The bulletin need not mention the existence of the prior violation.)

**Penalty adjustments**

Apart from the gravity-based classification system, OSHA fines (with the exception of those subject to minimum amounts) are subject to penalty adjustment based on the following factors: company size, good faith and history of compliance.

**Conclusion**

Apart from the moral imperative of compliance, OSHA's new penalty structure is aimed at making it too expensive not to initiate and enforce compliance with OSHA requirements. Over the long term, I suspect that OSHA and states increasingly will resort to criminal prosecution of executives if sufficient deterrent effect is not achieved through hitting corporate pocketbooks.

Steven R. Semler is a partner in the Washington, D.C. law firm of Semler & Pritzker, which exclusively represents management with respect to labor law matters. Mr. Semler is labor law counsel to NAA and several corporations in the tree care industry.

Readers should not rely upon this article as individual advice for specific situations; that can be provided only by the reader's own counsel.
Recycling Systems, Inc., of Winn, Michigan, manufacturer of the patented Waste Recycler, offers an innovative and cost-effective alternative to expensive landfiling. Stumps, demolition material, logs, brush and other waste wood can be converted to chips or mulch at a rate of 25 tons per hour. Volume reduction on processed material is as much as 10 to 1. Material produced by the Waste Recycler is often used on site for erosion control, fill material, ground cover or as a construction road stabilizer.

The Waste Recycler, which is completely portable, is powered by a 650-hp Caterpillar or Cummins diesel engine and features an 8-foot diameter cutting disc equipped with 56 reversible steel or carbide-tipped disposable knives. There are now over 125 Waste Recyclers operating in the United States and Canada.

For more information on this and other products, contact Recycling Systems, Inc., P.O. Box 364, Winn, Michigan 48896. Phone: 517-866-2800.

Haybuster Manufacturing of Jamestown, North Dakota, manufactures a number of industrial grinders. Featured here is the all-new I.G. 8. This unit is especially suited to grinding tree limbs up to six inches in diameter, pallets, yard waste, wood chips, bark and other demolition lumber.

The I.G. 8 features a variety of screen sizes, a heavy-duty 26-inch-long cylinder with half-inch A.B. hardened hammers, and a conveyor which is 8 feet, 2 inches long and 24 inches wide to deliver the end product. It is powered by a diesel engine and an electro-hydraulic sensing governor maximizes grinding efficiency and prevents clogging. The overall height of the I.G. 8 is 7 feet, the length is 18 feet, 9 inches, and the width is 8 feet, 4 inches. It is portable and is easily pulled with a half-ton pickup.

For more information, contact Haybuster Mfg., Inc. at P.O. Box 1940, Jamestown, North Dakota, 58402-1940. Phone: 701-252-4601 FAX: 701-252-0502.

The Jeffrey Road Hog is a portable, self-contained shredding plant that can be transported to the job site to reduce all types of solid wood waste. The Road Hog combines a Model 47 WBH wood hog and a material receiving table with a Cummins 600 HP diesel engine drive and discharge conveyor, all mounted on a triple axle, rubber-tired chassis. It can process 10 to 35 tons per hour of wood waste depending on feed material, procedure and size of end product.

Special alloy steel hammers quickly shred material, and screen bar assemblies are designed to maximize discharge. Shredded material is deposited on a 42-inch-wide belt conveyor that carries it up to a 10-foot discharge height for dump truck loading. A magnetic head pulley separates ferrous material from the shredded product, and the conveyor tip is hinged to fold back for travel.

For more information on the Road Hog, write Jeffrey Division, Dresser Industries, Inc., P.O. Box 387, Woodruff, South Carolina 29388. Phone: 803-476-7523 FAX: 803-476-7510.
In Recycling

Bandit Industries, Inc., has introduced a self-propelled, 19-inch diameter capacity whole tree chipper. The Model 1900 Track Bandit is driven by a Caterpillar 225 undercarriage with 30-inch pads and a powerful 2-speed piston motor track drive with ground pressure of about 5 PSI. The Track Bandit has the power and flotation to traverse rough and soft ground.

The 1900 has a powerful hydraulic feed system for crushing and pulling trees and limbs into the chipper. The 1900 will chip trees up to 19 inches in diameter and will chip an 80-foot whole tree in less than a minute. A hydraulic knuckleboom loader efficiently feeds the 1900 while the chip discharge swivels 220 degrees, allowing chips to be discharged in virtually any direction or even broadcast over the site.

For more information on this and other Bandit wood-chipping products contact Bandit Industries, Inc., at 6750 Millbrook Road, Remus, Michigan 49340. Phone: 517-561-2270.

Stumpmaster, Inc., of Rising Fawn, Georgia, is a major manufacturer of wood waste reduction equipment. The featured product is the Model 101, the largest proven waste wood processor with a capacity that exceeds 40 tons per hour. The Model 101 features a 50-inch-by-101-inch feed opening, 15-foot telescoping cab, 180-degree turning radius, 400-gallon fuel capacity for longer operation and a 750-hp Caterpillar diesel engine.

The Model 101 is designed to be set up quickly and run continuously with a minimum amount of maintenance. The key feature which allows this is the hammermill's patented, hardened-steel, wing teeth which are resistant to quick wear. The wing design keeps the machine running smoothly and enables finer grinding. End product is carried on a conveyor to minimize waste and keep the job site clean and safe.

For more information about the Model 101 and their other line of products, contact Stumpmaster, Inc., P.O. Box 103, Rising Fawn, Georgia. Phone: 404-462-2445.

The Diamond Z PWG 1463 Portable Tub Grinder is a mobile, versatile and metal-tolerant hammermill recycler. The machine features a Caterpillar 3412TA 750-hp engine which powers 52, 2-1/2-inch hammers. The tub drive is hydraulic reversible and the tub dumps 90 degrees to clear metal and allow convenient access for maintenance.

The unit, which weighs 78,000 pounds, is mounted on a triple-axle trailer and the conveyor folds overhead for transport. The PWG 1463 is capable of processing 35-80 tons per hour of wood demolition. Stumps are processed at 25-50 tons per hour while everyday yard waste is processed at 15-60 tons per hour.

Coast to Coast Tree Equipment in Challenge, California, is a recognized dealer of the Diamond Z. For more information write or call Allen St. Clair, Coast to Coast Tree Equipment, P.O. Box 219, Challenge, California 95925. Phone: 800-786-5008.
May 4-7
Menninger Sun Belt Tree Conference
Cooperative Extension Office
West Palm Beach, Fla.
Contact: Carol Smith, 813-446-3356

May 18-21
ISA—Western Chapter
Red Lion Inn

Modesto, Calif.
Contact: Charles Mathias,
805-929-5113

Aug. 11-14
ISA Annual Conference and Trade Show
Adams Mark Hotel

Philadelphia, Penn.
Contact: 217-328-2032

Nov. 13-17
National Urban Forest Conference
Biltmore Hotel
Los Angeles, Calif.
Contact: 202-667-7751

ISA Western Chapter Conference Set

The Western Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture will hold its 58th Annual Conference and Trade Show in Modesto, California, on May 18-21.

The lectures and trade show will be held in the new Red Lion Hotel and Convention Center. The theme, “Visualizing Tomorrow’s Urban Forest,” will be brought to life with a wide variety of educational lectures, a hands-on field day, commercial and educational exhibits, a children’s program, great entertainment and modern facilities. Even the great Central Valley itself offers many possibilities for recreation and entertainment surrounding Modesto.

For further information, contact Allen Lagarbo, city arborist, at 209-577-5344.
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Levco Manufacturers, Inc., introduces its newest stump grinder model—the HD50JT. This towable machine is now available with a turbocharged John Deere, 4-cylinder water-cooled diesel engine with 91 hp. The standard 75-hp. John Deere diesel model is still available. The HD50JT is designed for unmatched speed on the stump or for large-scale, high-production land clearing. The HD50JT is one of 10 models available. For further information, call Levco Manufacturers, Inc., Wynne, Arkansas, 501-238-8126.

Falkenberg, Inc. introduces its new HydroBrush pressure washer for tough tree equipment and truck cleaning jobs. The HydroBrush features 16-hp Vanguard and Honda engines. A power-on-demand option keeps the engine idling, saving gas and avoiding the wear of fluid heat buildup. The compact Cat super flow pump uses ceramic plungers for continuous forward water flow, reducing cavitation risk and extending pump life. For more information call Falkenberg, Inc., in Clackamas, Oregon, at 1-800-424-7867.

A new overcenter aerial lift, designed for maneuverability in tight locations, is available from Hi-Ranger, Inc. The new lift, named Scrambler, is available in 42-foot and 48-foot working heights. The Scrambler has a 29-inch diameter turntable bearing mounted on a one-piece rigid pedestal, with 360-degree continuous rotation. Platform capacity for the 42-foot unit is 400 pounds, and 350 pounds for the 48-foot tower. For more information write to Hi-Ranger, Inc., P.O. Box 177, Waukesha, Wis. 53187. Phone: 414-547-1000.

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We are a Midwestern full-service tree care company with a commitment to growth and personal development and we have positions available in all phases of the tree care industry. If you are a self-starter with experience in tree care, then we may have the position for you. We offer an outstanding benefit package plus relocation assistance. Send resume with salary history to Josie Grosse, c/o Hendricksen, The Care of Tree, Inc., 2371 S. Foster Ave., Wheeling, Ill. 60090.

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positions for our San Jose and Los Angeles offices. Great opportunity for career growth in both areas. We are a division of Environmental Care, Inc., a leader in the Green Industry. Job includes scheduling, training and development of crews. Must have good knowledge of proper pruning and safety procedures. We are members in good standing with I.S.A. and N.A.A. Please send confidential resume to: Arbor Care, 825 Mabury Road, San Jose, Calif. 95133. FAX: 408-437-1817.

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- Wood demolition 35-80 tons/hr.
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Trials and Tribulations

By Joseph W. Imes

I have been an arborist and foreman for almost 20 years. In that time, I have encountered some pretty interesting people and, to say the least, all different kinds of situations. I could tell you about many dangerous things I've done through the years while taking down some very large trees around houses, or trimming trees around high-voltage electrical lines and removing large limbs hanging out over these wires. But what I really want to tell you about are some of the situations an arborist faces when he is in the field doing his job and dealing with the public.

Just last year, Washington, D.C., was plagued with a series of severe thunder and wind storms which literally left trees, limbs and debris scattered everywhere. You could not drive through the streets of some neighborhoods without brush and tree limbs scraping the sides of your car.

When we arrived, we found that we had to cut back brush and debris just to get our truck and equipment through the street to even begin the overwhelming cleanup task. Ideally, we needed to have the street closed to traffic so we put up signs and cones to prevent cars from entering our work area. We had no place to put our truck and chipper except in the middle of the street and it was impossible to get through. But cars insisted on trying to get through anyway. The irritable and angry drivers cursed us and gave us looks of total disgust.

After putting in a 10-to-11-hour day, we were really tired and beat. We were handling four to six full loads from the chipper and all the wood the crane could pick up. After putting in a full day of hard work and aggravation, we went to our hotel room to get cleaned up. It was getting pretty late into the evening by the time we all finished showering and calling home to see how our families were doing without us.

It was time to get some dinner and try to relax before calling it a day. To our dismay, this proved to be quite a task. We had worn casual clothes, which meant we were not allowed in some restaurants. The host at one restaurant door even told us to come back when we were “dressed better.” We finally found a small diner that welcomed us.

I guess the most discouraging thing about this trip was not the hard physical work involved, but the way the public looked upon us and treated us. We had been called to go down to this job with no prior notice and no time to pack or be selective about our clothing.

I think I have made my point about the negative side of this job. But I must add that not all times are bad. For example, I have run into some very nice people during my years of tree trimming. I recently worked on a job where a large mulberry tree fell down on a brand new building. Now, if anyone should have been upset, it would be these people. But when we arrived to begin the work, they were most pleasant and very trusting. They had to leave the premises for a while and left the building unlocked, the stereo on and their tools in plain sight. They were so pleased with what we were doing that they even made a video tape of us working, with a copy for me to take home so my family could see what their daddy does for a living.

Our job is certainly more rewarding when people really let us know that they appreciate what we do for them. This is what makes me proud to be an arborist.

Joseph W. Imes is the general foreman in charge of the tree division of the Frederick County office of Antietam Tree and Turf Service, in Hagerstown, Maryland.

Do you have a story for From the Field? TCI will pay $50 for published articles. Submissions become the property of TCI and are subject to editing for grammar, style and length. Entries must be submitted by field workers and must bear the name of the worker and his employer or they will not be considered for publication. Articles and photos must be received by the first day of the month for the following month’s issue.
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