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PROSCAPES
A Newsletter for the PROfessional LandSCAPE IndustrieS
Bringing you the latest information on commercial horticulture practices in Miami-Dade County

Miami-Dade County Cooperative Extension Service
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Henry Mayer
Ext Agent, Comm Urban Hort

April - June, 2004

It is the policy of Miami-Dade County to comply with all of the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). For sign language interpreter services, call 670-9099 five days in advance. For material in accessible format call the Consumer Services Department (CSD). For ADA complaints call CSD at 375-3843 or the Office of ADA Coordination at 375-5666

Welcome!!

This newsletter is for all of you, the professional horticulture service industries: design, installation & maintenance contractors, arborists, sports turf professionals, interior-scapers, and others.

This is your newsletter: please let me know what information you would like to see in it

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Did You Know?

Summary of the Best Management Practices for Protection of Water Resources in Florida is available now in Spanish.
Resumen de las prácticas más adecuadas para la conservación del agua en Florida esta ahora disponible.

Pruning for Hurricanes
(Landscape companies and homeowners)
Thursday, May 20, 2004. 8:30 a.m - 2:30 p.m at the CES Auditorium in Homestead. Cost of this seminar is $12.50 which includes pastelitos, coffee and lunch. A flier with the registration form and the agenda is available at the Extension office, also on our web site.

Pruning for Hurricanes (public employees)
Friday, May 21, 2004. 8:30 a.m - 2:30 p.m at the CES Auditorium in Homestead. Cost of this seminar is $12.50 which includes pastelitos, coffee and lunch. A flier with the registration form and the agenda is available at the Extension office, also on our web site.

Mangrove Management.
Friday, June 18, 2004. 8:30 a.m - 3:30 p.m at University of Miami's RSMAS, Virginia Key. Cost of this seminar is $40.00 which includes pastelitos, coffee and lunch. A flier with the registration form and the agenda is available at the Extension office, also on our web site.

Pesticide Training
Wednesday, April 21, Private Applicator (English) review and exam. Cost $15.00
Friday, May 14. Worker Protection Standard (Spanish). Cost $5.00
Wednesday, May 19. General Standards. Core (English). Cost $15.00
Wednesday, June 30. Ornamental and Turf (English). Cost $15.00
Friday, June 11. Train the Trainer (Spanish). Cost $12.50.

Other Events Calendar
Friday, April 23. Scouting in Nursery (English).
Friday, April 30. Scouting in Nursery (Spanish).
Friday, May 7. Florida Law: People & Trees. ISA Fl. Chapter (941) 342-0153
Friday, May 15. Small Ag. Business Seminar (Spanish).
Thursday, May 27. Best Management Update (English).
Friday, June 25. New Nursery Crops/Marketing New Crops. (English)

New or Interesting Publications
Maintenance Equipment Training Videos (in either Spanish or English)- available from the Associated Landscape Contractors Association. See their website at www.alca.org then go to the Bookstore then click on Education/Training/Safety.
Florida's Best Native Landscape Plants- Gil Nelson, see the website at www.upf.com or call 1-800-2263822
Invasive list plants http://pcb2441.ifas.ufl.edu/list%20of%20species.htm
IFAS/UF Publications- http://miami-dade.ifas.ufl.edu/publications.htm
Sudden Oak Death (SOD):

More than a dozen states have banned some or all of California's plants after two Southern California retail nurseries were found to have the disease in early March. USDA is imposing regulations that should supercede the state bans. Monrovia, one of the infected California nurseries, has destroyed more than 200,000 plants valued at more than $4.3 million. Researchers have found that the organism causing this disease *Phytophthora ramorum*, spreads in the wild from spores moved by the wind or water. Recently DPI and UF/IFAS have introduced the guidelines for Surveying and Sampling *Phytophthora ramorum only in Camellias, Rhododendron and Viburnum*. You can see it here: [http://spdn.ifas.ufl.edu/FL_SOD_Conference.htm](http://spdn.ifas.ufl.edu/FL_SOD_Conference.htm). On March 31, 2004 DACS issued a press release indicating that SOD had been found on three retail nurseries in North Florida. For more information on SOD, see the DACS website at: [http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/](http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/) and the UF publication on SOD at: [http://www.edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pp118](http://www.edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pp118).

ATRazine

Many of you may be aware that while small containers of the selective herbicide Atrazine have been available to homeowners, the larger container- 2.5 gal & above are “Restricted Use” (RU) and can only be purchased by certified applicators. It is the fact that the label on the larger containers included the use of Atrazine on corn that determined the RU designation. Now for the real news- EPA has issued something called the Atrazine IRED (Interim Re-registration Eligibility Decision). That means eventually all Atrazine products greater than 4% active ingredient will be designated “Restricted Use”. That includes the homeowners products except for weed-n-feeds. (Sources ProHort Industry Update April 13, 2004)

TIMELY TOPICS.....

News from the University of Florida and other land-grant institutions around U.S.

Does your company have a business plan??

What is a business plan? It is a document that defines your business and presents a compiling argument for you, your potential employees, partners, and investors. It's also a thorough, rigorous and realistic process of thinking and documenting your business to eliminate or reduce risk.


It's needs to be updated continually, not prepared and put on the shelf. The process of preparation and monitoring is important and really useful. Every business plan should address the four basic strategies: marketing and sales, human resources, production, and financial strategies.

**A marketing strategy** addresses issues such as: Who are or will be the target customers? What will be the policy regarding pricing, advertising and promotion?

**The human resources strategy** addresses the following: The organization chart, the compensation and benefits employees will be offered, labor and training goals.

**A production strategy**: The requirements for equipment, and materials, and the financial strategy: Does the planned level of operation generate sufficient profits to make the venture worthwhile? Does the business generate adequate cash flow to sustain operation?

It doesn't matter if your business is a one person business or a large operation, at the end you need to consider these questions and make the final decision : to continue in the business or to change........ the decision is yours, but take a justifiable one. (Source Ag-Development & Marketing Newsletter August-October 2003).

Landscape Maintenance Association (LMA) proposes changes to the Limited Commercial Landscape Maintenance License.

The LMA was established in 1988 to serve as the professional Association in Florida representing the landscape industry and these particular license holders. The core of the LMA mission is to promote
professionalism within the landscape maintenance industry and to promote and provide education for its current and potential members. The LMA has submitted to the FDACS Bureau of Entomology & Pest Control the following modifications: study material and the test be printed in Spanish, change the wording in Ch. 482.156(1) to eliminate the words “herbicide” and “insecticide”, replacing them with the words “pesticide”, reduce the work experience requirement to one year, maintain the educational requirement, but reduce the class hours to six hours, add the capability to supervise up to 5 employees, issuing ID cards for them (they need to comply with some requirements). (Source: LMA “The Cutting Edge” October/November/December 2003.)

How to Turn Angry Clients into Lifetime Business

Angry, irate clients, every business has them from time to time. How you handle them can make the difference between stagnate sales and a thriving organization.

Think about the last time a customer complained to you. How did you react? Did you roll your eyes in annoyance and think “Oh great...another whiner,” or did you treat the situation as a genuine learning opportunity? In most cases, complaining clients are seeking an improvement of service and not an end to the client/provider relationship.

No matter where you work in an organization, whether you’re in sales, customer service, accounting, management, or technical support, your goal should be to keep your clients for life. So how do you turn your angry clients into loyal clients?....follow these tips:

1. **Generously listen to you client’s concerns:** when upset clients call, the main thing they want to do is vent. Until they get those negative emotions out, they will be challenging to work with. Therefore, do not interrupt and let them talk. Hear them out completely. During this venting process, recognize and remember that your clients are not necessarily upset with you; they are upset with the situation. Don’t take anything they say personally. As you respond, speak in a professional and polite manner so you can keep your angry clients focused on the facts and assure them you are there to help. After your clients explain why they are upset, thank them for sharing their concern with you. After all, they have just revealed how you can improve your service. A simple, “Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention” will calm people down.

2. **Offer a genuine apology**
Even if your company is not at fault for a problem, give your clients the benefit of the doubt and apologize. Realize that an apology is what your client wants to hear. By offering an apology, you set yourself up to win. So the sooner you apologize, the better. Smart businesses know that the keys to long term profitability and success lie in repeat and referral business.

3. **Present a game plan....**
Once you’ve apologized, most clients are by this time calmed down and ready to listen to you. Now is when you present a game plan to correct the situation. “We are going to do the following.....” Then do exactly what you said you would do. If you’re not sure what to propose, simple ask, “What can we do to make it better?”

4. **Present an opportunity for future contact.....**
Before your upset clients leave or hang up, take control of the situation. Ask if there is anything else they need, and let them know that you are always available to help them. Restate your name and encourage your client to call you personally the next time they need anything.

Always remember that angry clients are a goldmine of opportunity. (Source: by Richard Buckingham “The Cutting Edge”, October/November/December 2003).

Be Wary of Training your Workers in English only......

Consider these statistics:

Of approximately 1.8 million hired farm workers in the United States, 75% report that they read English only a little or not at all, 84% report that their primary language is Spanish, according to the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and the National Agricultural Workers Survey.

The U.S. Hispanic population, estimated in the 2000 census at 35 million, is expected to reach 56 million by 2010 and 70 million by 2020, or 21% of the U.S. population.

And according to government figures cited by USA Today, more than 6,800 Hispanic workers died on the job from 1992 through 2001, a 15.1% increase in the workplace fatality rate for that period, compared to a 15.4 decline in the fatality rate for all other workers.

“If your work force has a significant number
of non-English speaking individuals, training provided in the English language will not be of much value for them and will be no defense to you in case of a legal challenge," Attorney John McLachlan of Fisher & Phillips LLP in Oakland, CA says.

“You certainly do not get any value for your training investment when the training you provide goes completely over employees’ heads because they cannot understand what is being said. Such training will not satisfy any employer’s obligations to communicate with employees and is, at bottom, a waste of time” he adds.

In recent months, OSHA, the federal agency that regulates workplace safety, has publicly stated that it is placing major emphasis on the safety of Hispanic workers. What that means in practical terms is that if there is a serious injury or fatality at your workplace involving a worker who speaks Spanish only, you can expect to be cited by OSHA if you failed to train that worker in Spanish. (Source: Florida Arborist, Spring 2004, reprinted from Gempler’s ALERT, newsletter of Ag/Hort safety at [www.gemplersalert.com](http://www.gemplersalert.com)).

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**Planting Trees is Easy**

These are some recommendations from Dr. Ed Gilman when planting a tree:

- Dig a shallow planting hole as wide as possible. Shallow is better than deep!

- Many people plant trees too deep. A hole three times the width of the root ball is often recommended but about one-and-half the diameter is more common. Wider hole might help roots from becoming deformed in these tough situations. The depth of the hole should almost always be LESS than the height of the root ball, especially in compacted or wet soil.

- If the top-most root is buried in the root ball then you will have to remove enough soil from the top so the point where the top-most root emerges from the trunk is within the top two inches. Check for and cut circling roots especially in the top half of the root ball. If these cut roots are large, the tree might shock and could die. Its OK if the point where the top-most roots emerge from the trunk is exposed and visible. If the tree is a little deep in the hole, the tree must be lifted and reset after adding soil to the hole. Continue this until it is set at the appropriate depth, it is always better to be planted a little high rather than too deep. Once it is at the appropriate depth, place a small amount of soil around the root ball to stabilize it. Soil amendments are usually of no benefit. The soil removed from the hole makes the best backfill unless the soil is terrible or contaminated.

- Straighten the tree in the hole. The top of the root ball might be sticking out above the backfill soil and inch or two. Cover the exposed sides of the root ball with mulch or loose soil and apply mulch to as large of an area as possible around the tree. Construct a berm of mulch or soil at the edge of the root ball only if the tree will be watered with a hose, bucket, or other high volume means.

Consult the University of Florida web site: [http://hort.ufl.edu/woody/planting](http://hort.ufl.edu/woody/planting), for more details. (Source Florida Arborist, Spring 2004, Dr. Ed Gilman)

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**Miscellaneous Web Sites**

- The Landscape Maintenance Association (LMA) [http://LMAssociation@cs.com](http://LMAssociation@cs.com)
- See the DACS website for more info on SOD [http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/pi/enpp/pathology/soakdeath.html](http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/pi/enpp/pathology/soakdeath.html)
- CPCO - Certified Pest Control Operators Ass’n - [http://www.cpccofflorida.org/](http://www.cpccofflorida.org/)
- FNGA - Florida Nurserymen & Growers Ass’n - [http://www.fnga.org/](http://www.fnga.org/)