

30 Years and Still Growing



One Step is proud to have served our customers in Monroe County for the past 30 years. We look forward to providing outstanding tree and lawn care for at least another 30 years.

In Memory of Gail Minoia



This issue of our newsletter is dedicated to Gail Minoia.

This past January, One Step lost a long-time employee, and more importantly, a good friend. As our commercial Sales Manager for the last 15 years, Gail was instrumental in firmly establishing One Step as the premier service provider in the commercial lawn care market. Her constant attention and genuine concern for her customers was indeed her trademark.

To anyone who knew Gail, they knew that her first and foremost love was for her family. She always took great pride in talking about her husband, children and in more recent years her beloved grandchildren.

Everyone at One Step misses Gail. She'll always be remembered as a trusted friend and employee.

Early Budding Possible This Year



With the unusually warm winter temperatures this year comes the chance that shrubs and trees will bud earlier than expected. The good news is, even if a cold snap kills the swollen flower or leaf buds, it shouldn't cause any damage to the rest of the plant.

All plants require a minimum number of chilling hours during their dormancy. Some varieties have already reached the requirements.

This causes the flower or leaf buds to swell earlier than usual if there is enough warm weather. When this happens, the buds are vulnerable to drops in temperature and the buds may be damaged.

Unfortunately, there isn't much that can

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President's Message



Wow! Thirty years already?

It is scary sometimes to realize how quickly time passes. It has been a great 30 years and I look forward to at least another 30.

When I started One Step in 1976 I had a vision of becoming the largest and best lawn care company in our market. My plans were to grow slowly by developing a loyal customer base built on solid core values. Those values were really quite simple. Provide the best service at a fair price. Treat each customer as an individual and each lawn and landscape as if it was my own. The formula worked just as well then as it does today.

No business plan or philosophy will be effective if it isn't built with good people around it. I have been very blessed to have put together an exceptional staff that believes in the One Step philosophy and executes it flawlessly. You have no doubt seen many of their profiles in this publication over the years. You have come to know them as fair and honest people who have your interest at heart. They are truly the reason One Step has grown to the level of success that it enjoys today.

The great staff here at One Step is the reason that over the past few years, I have had the opportunity to expand my experiences and help the company by seeing issues from outside the day-to-day operation. My term in the 1990's on the Professional Lawn Care Association of America board of directors, my involvement with local government, my expansion into the franchising of lawn care services, and my many opportunities to travel around this great country have helped shape an outlook and perspective that I have incorporated into improving our company.

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Early Budding Possible This Year



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be done to prevent or protect the swelling buds. If cold weather hits late in the season, the buds may be lost. However, there is one thing that can be done to help the plant to recover.

Watering during dry weather, even in winter, can help support the plant's root system. If the roots are healthy, it will help the plant continue its spring growth even if the buds are damaged.

If the damaged buds are flowers, then the leaf buds will soon follow and the recovery process will begin. If the damaged buds are leaf buds, there actually are secondary leaf buds that remain dormant unless the primary leaf buds are damaged or killed. These secondary leaf buds will emerge and the plant will eventually recover.

Even though you can't control the early budding of plants or late season cold snaps, plants that are generally healthy can withstand climate irregularities. Just be patient, keep plants in good condition year-round, and the rewards of a beautiful landscape will be just around the corner.

Warm Then Cold Weather May Reduce Insect Population



Although it's too early to tell, the warmer January temperatures in Upstate may have had a beneficial effect. The warm days may have started spring insect metabolism. Then, when the temperatures returned to normal, the insects may have been killed. So in addition to having a nice break from the winter weather, you may see fewer insects in your yard as well.

Neighbor Notification Update



As many of you may remember, Monroe County adopted the Neighbor Notification Law last year. In answer to some of your questions here are some highlights of the new law:

- All commercial businesses such as One Step are required to provide written notification at least 48 hours prior to a liquid pest control application to any neighbor whose property adjoins yours.
- Notification is required if a blanket application of a liquid pest control will be done.
- Spot Treatments of a liquid pest control do not require neighbor notification.
- Granular pest control applications do not require neighbor notification.
- Pest controls that are injected directly into the trunk of a tree or injected into the soil do not require neighbor notification.
- Notification is not required if a pest control is classified by the EPA as "exempt" or "reduced risk". Many of these products have been incorporated into our programs.

A new provision under this law now regulates applications of any pest control, liquid or granular, done by a homeowner. Homeowners will now be required to place warning signs around the perimeter of their property indicating that a pest control application has been done.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to give us a call anytime.

Greg Adams Assumes President's Role

Greg Adams has been with One Step since the early days. When Bob Ottley started the company in 1976, it was a one-man operation. Greg joined five years later, fresh out of college. He simply came to help out his friend Bob who was in the landscape business.

Greg hadn't really planned on working in the green industry. He surely didn't realize that his entire professional life would be at One Step.

Greg graduated from R. I. T. with an MBA, but the job market was pretty tight. He thought he'd help out at One Step until one of his job prospects came through.

As the company grew, Greg took on more administrative tasks. He became Vice President in 1985. At one point he handled all the financial aspects of the company. He wrote checks, printed and mailed invoices, prepared payroll, kept the books, and bargained with vendors.

For many years now, Greg has worked solely as an administrator and manager.

"It's about time I gave him the title," explained Bob. "Greg has been running the company while I've been involved with planning for the future, working with legislative issues, participating in green industry associations and other executive tasks."

"In all this time, there's one thing that has never changed," commented Greg. "From the very beginning, Bob created an atmosphere where I knew that my ideas mattered. Bob always values the opinions and expertise of others and that has benefited the company and me tremendously."

Greg has lived in the Churchville-Chili area all his life. He and his wife of 22 years have three children, the oldest of whom is a freshman in college. Much of the family's time is spent at the children's soccer, baseball and football games.

As for the company's future, Greg expects to continue growing One Step while providing the best possible service at reasonable prices. "That's been our goal from day one and we'll always try our best to satisfy customers. That's what really makes the company successful."

Louisiana Termites in New York?



Many Internet users around the country have received alarming emails about Formosan subterranean termites. The emails warn that the termites are in mulch made from fallen trees and other wood products ruined during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Consumers are warned not to purchase cheap mulch from the large home improvement store chains.

Currently there are lots of reasons to believe this issue is of little concern and is based on inaccurate information. Experts around the country, especially those in the hurricane devastated areas, say the chances are next to nil that these termites are being shipped around the country in mulch.

Here's why.

- The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry quarantined the Formosan termites. Wood or cellulose material may not be moved unless it is treated for the termites and approved in writing by the commissioner of the department.
- It is highly unlikely that termites could survive the mulch-making process.
- According to Brian Eshenaur of the Cornell Cooperative Extension, termites need to feed on wood, not bark. Most bagged mulch is bark.
- Rochester's climate is too cold for the Formosan termite. Its usual habitat is the Deep South.

One Step experts suggest that the benefits of mulch outweigh the negligible concerns over termite infestation from the material. Mulch helps to retain water during dry summers and reduces weed growth. Use one to three inches around trees, shrub and flower beds, but remember not to pile mulch up on the trunks of trees and shrubs. It can cause too much moisture which may rot the plant.

If you do use mulch, just casually inspect it as your spread it around. If you see any termites or evidence of mud tunnels, call the Cornell Cooperative Extension at (585) 473-5335. Experts are available to take your calls on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 a.m. until noon.

To find out more about termites in general and how to protect your home, go to www.pctonline.com to read Pest Control Technology's March online magazine.



President's Message



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One key person who has grown with our company for nearly 25 years is Greg Adams. Greg has been the anchor here running the day-to-day operations for many years. The time has come to give him the title that best represents his position. Greg has been named President of One Step Tree and Lawncare, Inc.

For those who think that I may be moving on to greener pastures, don't get your hopes up too soon. I will retain the title of Chief Executive Officer, and will still be very involved in the direction of the company as well as continuing my efforts in the community.

Greg, the rest of the staff and I look forward to serving this community for at least another 30 years. We thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely, 

Bob Ottley, CEO

Got Moles? Try Stamping Out Their Tunnels



Your first encounter with moles this spring is likely to be their tunnels. Despite their tiny size, moles can dig 18 feet per hour and run through existing burrows at 80 feet per minute. Moles eat about 50 pounds of insects each year, which would be a great thing if they didn't leave behind unsightly, raised tunnels zigzagging through lawns.

Wives tales and home remedies abound touting ways to get rid of these aggravating critters. We've heard everything from boring a hole into a mound or tunnel and filling it with poisonous bait to spraying the lawn with a mixture of detergent and castor oil. Others have tried reducing the lawn insect population with pest controls so that the food supply is gone. This is a costly, drawn out option that we don't recommend either.

First of all, try tamping down the tunnels. Check them again in a few days. If the tunnels reappear, then it's clear the moles are still active on the property. If the tunnels remain flattened, the moles may have moved on to another food source. Grass roots will readily re-establish themselves with proper nutrients and water.

If moles are still gnawing away, the best solution is to trap them. There are several types of traps on the market such as harpoon, scissor-jaw and choker that can effectively rid the property of moles. These traps can be purchased at most home and garden stores.



Healthy Lawns Benefit the Environment

Did you know that a thick, green lawn has tremendous benefits to the environment? Did you know that healthy grass is one of the primary ways to prevent pollution in lakes and rivers? No? Well read on.

With the ever-increasing amount of hardscape such as roads, sidewalks, roofs and parking lots being built in our communities, the amount of poor quality rain runoff is also increasing. These types of surfaces create little resistance for contaminated storm water, so it runs into sewers and eventually into streams and lakes.

Runoff can be reduced significantly by healthy grassy areas and lawns. Research has shown that almost all rainwater, except in intense storms, is absorbed when it falls on healthy lawns. Even on grassy slopes, little if any runoff occurs.

This directly impacts the quality of water that ends up in lakes and rivers. Sediment and pollutants remain in the lawn and are broken down into substances used to enrich the soil and improve growing conditions.

Grass and other plants also help clean the air. Tiny particles of dust and dirt, especially those from cars are trapped by leaves and grass blades. The particles are then assimilated into the lawn where they are broken down into substances that can be beneficial to the plants.

There are many more ways that lawns and plants benefit the environment and people. For more information, go to <http://www.sustland.umn.edu/>

Spring Inspection

Winter often brings unexpected and unseen surprises to lawns, flowers, trees and shrubs. The best way to catch these early is to walk your property and inspect your plants and grass.



Look for:

- Broken limbs
- Whitish circles in the grass
- Circles gnawed at the base of trees and shrubs
- Rutted edges of lawn near sidewalks & driveways
- Dead grass under fallen leaves

What to do:

- Broken limbs can be pruned in spring to divert nutrients and growth to healthy branches of trees and shrubs
- The whitish circles are caused by snow mold. Gently loosen the grass and sprinkle seed on the affected area.
- If animals have used your trees and shrubs for food during the winter by gnawing at their base, call our Tree & Shrub Division for help.
- While shoveling or plowing snow, the edges of grassy areas can be peeled back or loosened. Usually all that's needed for repair is to replace the sod to its original location. Sometimes trimming the edge for a better shape and adding some grass seed, fertilizer and water as needed will help the area heal faster.
- Leaves that have escaped raking in the fall will often smother grass during the winter. Lightly rake the area to loosen the soil and add grass seed. It should fill in quickly during the growing season.



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