

DHS Increases Number of H-2B Visas by 15,000: This Week's Industry News



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Want to keep up with the latest news in lawn care and landscaping? Check back every Thursday for a quick recap of recent happenings in the green industry.

DHS Increases Number of H-2B Visas by 15,000

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced on July 17 that it will be increasing the number of H-2B visas by 15,000. To qualify for the additional visas, petitioners must attest, under penalty of perjury, that their business is likely to suffer irreparable harm if it cannot employ H-2B nonimmigrant workers during fiscal year 2017. "Congress gave me the discretionary authority to provide temporary relief to American businesses in danger of suffering irreparable harm due to a lack of available temporary workers," announced Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly. "As a demonstration of the administration's commitment to supporting American businesses, DHS is providing this one-time increase to the congressionally set annual cap."

A-LIST Releases Environmentally Friendly Lawn Grass List

Want to provide your clients with turfgrass better able to withstand a variety of stresses? Check out the new list of perennial ryegrasses and fine fescues approved by [The Alliance for Low Input Sustainable Turf](#) (A-LIST). The A-LIST is an independent, non-profit industry initiative fostering the development of turfgrass varieties that meet metrics like water conservation, reduced fertility, heat and drought stress tolerances, all with no fungicide or insecticide applications. Nationally recognized cooperators selected on a regional basis test the turfgrass to include environmental adaptability.

Monsanto Fights California's Listing of Glyphosate as Cancer Causer

On July 7 glyphosate, an herbicide and the active ingredient in Monsanto Company's popular Roundup weed killer, was added to California's list of chemicals known to cause cancer by the state's Office of Environmental Health

Hazard Assessment. California voters approved Proposition 65, a ballot initiative in 1986. Monsanto vowed to continue its legal fight against the designation, and called the decision “unwarranted on the basis of science and the law,” and has vowed to continue its legal fight against the designation.

Ditch Witch, Grasshopper Showcased as Made in America

Ditch Witch represented Oklahoma at the Made in America Product Showcase celebrating American-made products hosted at the White House on Monday, July 17. A Ditch Witch JT20 horizontal directional drill was on display at the event. Thanks to suggestions from Kansas’ Governor Sam Brownback and members of Congress, a Grasshopper 727 EFI FrontMount mower represented Kansas at the same event.

Arborjet Expands Organic Solutions with Eco-1 Garden Spray

[Arborjet](#) Inc. has announced the expansion of its organic plant solutions line with its new Eco-1 Garden Spray for protection against insects, mites and diseases. Eco-1 Garden Spray made its debut at Cultivate’17 this week. Eco-1 Garden Spray is a botanical blend of thyme and peppermint oils with flaxseed oil, creating a unique emulsion that offers up to 15 times more active ingredients for highly effective control. Other included ingredients help the oils mix with water and dissolve an insect’s exoskeleton for additional pest fighting power.

MTD Completes Transaction with Robomow

F. Robotics Acquisitions Ltd, the makers of Robomow, is now a subsidiary of MTD Products Inc. The transaction, which closed as planned on July 2, 2017, will enable MTD to employ Robomow’s progressive technology and broad line of robotic products under MTD’s brands in Europe and North America; while Robomow will benefit from MTD’s broader outdoor power equipment portfolio, sales and marketing resources, and global network of dealers. Robomow’s operations will remain headquartered in Pardesiya, Israel.

OPEI Installs 2017-2018 Officers, Board Members

Members of the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute gathered June 20-22 for their 65th annual meeting to discuss the challenges ahead for the outdoor power equipment industry and also its potential for growth. OPEI members also elected officers and installed board members for 2017-2018. They are as follows:

- OPEI Chair: Daniel Ariens, chairman & CEO, Ariens Company
- OPEI Vice Chair: Tom Cromwell, group president – power, Kohler Company
- OPEI Secretary/Treasurer: Bjoern Fischer, president, Stihl Incorporated
- Immediate Past Chair: Tim Merrett, vice president, global platform – Turf & Utility, Agriculture & Turf Division, Deere & Company

Rounding out OPEI’s board of directors will be as follows: Edward B. Cohen, vice president, government & industry relations, Honda North America, Inc.; Tim Dorsey, president, Echo Incorporated; Marc J. Dufour, president & CEO, Club Car, LLC; Tom Duncan, president and CEO, Positec Tool Corporation; Peter Hampton, president, Active Exhaust Corporation; Jean Hlay, president & COO, MTD Products Inc.; Jeff Hohler, president, Consumer Brands Division, Husqvarna Group; Paul Mullet, president & CEO, Excel Industries, Inc.; Rick

Olson, president & COO, The Toro Company; Lee Sowell, president – outdoor products, Techtronic Industries Power Equipment; Todd Teske, chairman, president & CEO, Briggs and Stratton Corporation.

CASE Announces SiteControl CoPilot System for M-Series Dozers

CASE Construction Equipment has introduced their new SiteControl CoPilot powered by Leica Geosystems. Available factory-installed or as a retrofit on select CASE M Series dozers, the CoPilot system bridges the gap between automatic and indicate-only systems and offers a entry into 2D and 3D machine control technology. The system allows operators to set a desired slope/grade reference, and automatically holds that slope/grade without the need for lasers, masts or GPS.

KAI Design & Build Hires 10 New Architecture Department Employees

KAI Design & Build in St. Louis, Missouri has hired ten new employees to its Architecture Department including:

1. Carl Karlen, of Brentwood, MO, Senior Designer/Senior Architect.
2. Christina Laney, LEED GA, of Clayton, MO, Intern Architect.
3. Bruce LaSurs, RA, LA, of Webster Groves, MO, Project Manager.
4. Chris Link, CM-BIM, CDT, LEED AP, of Godfrey, IL, BIM/VDC Manager.
5. Jacob Manse, of Chesterfield, MO, Intern Architect.
6. Decorda McGee, LEED GA, of University City, MO, Intern Architect 2.
7. Matt Niemeyer, of Gillespie, IL, Project Architect.
8. Jason Randle, of St. Louis City, MO, Project Designer.
9. Andy Sebacher, RA, LEED AP, of Florissant, MO, Project Manager.
10. Adam Walker, of Florissant, MO, Project Designer.

Porous Pave Selected for Federation Housing, Inc.

Federation Housing, Inc. completed the Gil Rosenthal Garden of Peace at the Samuel A. Green House, a low-income housing tax credit building for the elderly, by installing 1,650 square feet of Porous Pave XL permeable pavement for the garden's walkways and circular patio. Located in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania. [Garrett Churchill, Inc.](#) designed and installed the five-foot-wide walking paths and 24-foot-diameter patio with Porous Pave XL batch mixed on site and poured in place at a depth of 1.5 inches atop a four-inch base of compacted crushed aggregate.

Simplot Partners Targets Northern California

The J.R. Simplot Company has opened a new Simplot Partners retail location in Sacramento, California. The location will enable Simplot Partners to meet the growing demands of turf and horticulture customers in northern California and Nevada.

Ruppert, Associated Builders And Contractors Host Networking Event

Ruppert Landscape partnered with Associated Builders and Contractors of Metro Washington to host their summer networking event on Wednesday, July 12, 2017 at Ruppert's corporate headquarters in Laytonsville, Maryland. More than 550 people attended the event. ABC's Metro Washington chapter has been holding its Summer Networking Event at Ruppert headquarters for nearly 19 years.

ILCA Announces 9th Annual Turf Education Day

Illinois Landscape Contractor's Association and the Chicago Botanic Garden have come together to present the 9th annual Turf Education Day. Stay informed about the latest turf care products and practices. This day of training and education is for any professional who cares for and looks after turf. The event will be Thursday, September 21, 2017 at the Joseph Regenstein, Jr. School at the Chicago Botanic Garden.

Former WLCA President Roy Zehren Dies at 87

The Wisconsin turf industry lost a long-time friend and leader on June 10. [Roy G. Zehren](#) had a passion for sharing information and networking. He served as President of the Wisconsin Landscape Contractors Association in 1968-1969. He was a founding board member of the Sports Turf Management Association along with the late Harry Gill, the storied Brewers Grounds Manager who were early pioneers in organizing the Sports Turf Industry. With his growing expertise in designing natural turf drainage systems, he founded Natural Athletic Turf, Inc. and Sports Turf Consultants in 1974. Zehren worked with golf courses and professional sports teams across the country, including the Milwaukee Brewers, to develop systems that could sustain healthy natural grass playing surfaces. Zehren was a 39 year member of the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association.

Durante Rentals Chris Jones Wins CFO Innovation Award

Chris Jones, [Durante Rentals](#) Co-Founder and CFO, was honored with the 2017 Small Market Companies: Thinking Big Award at the 2017 CFO Innovation Conference. The awards ceremony and dinner was held at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center. CFO's received recognition in fourteen CFO-focused categories with finalists and award recipients selected by an independent panel of judges.

Excellence in Irrigation 2017 Award Winners Announced

The 2017 [Excellence in Irrigation honorees were presented awards at the](#) American Society of Irrigation Consultants National Conference in Seattle, Washington. A total of eleven projects were identified as deserving special acknowledgement as examples of unique or outstanding irrigation design challenges and solutions. The individuals were independently judged by a panel comprised of an academic team from Cal Poly Pomona and Kansas State University and peer review. Challenges must be unique and the site solutions must successfully address the distinctive climatic, structural, agronomic and system operational needs of each project.

National Concrete Masonry Association Will Celebrate 100 years in 2018

The National Concrete Masonry Association is celebrating 100 years and is planning events for 2018 including a gala event at the summer 2018 Midyear Meeting in Chicago, Illinois. NCMA is offering [sponsorship opportunities](#) that will recognize each company's support of this event and their commitment to the association, its mission, its activities, as well as their investment in this industry's future.

Read last week's industry news roundup: [Former STIHL President Fred Whyte Dies at 70](#)