

Wearable Technology A Good Fit For The Green Industry?



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Don't look for this being rolled out in 2018 for landscape and lawn care companies – but it's coming. I'm referring to green industry service techs using wearable technology on their routes.

Wearable technology? In the consumer market, of course, it's already here. Think Apple Watch, FitBit and the many other smallish electronic, micro-controlled devices that many of us use to monitor and track our activity or our health. These are the most common examples.

But stop and consider the possibilities of fine-tuning and employing this technology for your lawn care company, as one example. Beth Berry, vice president of business development for RealGreen Systems, has. Berry offered up some compelling thoughts on wearable technology and how it might fit into the green industry at the recent [Ohio Turfgrass Conference](#). Berry is a 30-year green industry veteran having worked for both ChemLawn and Scotts MiracleGro prior to joining RealGreen Systems

Speaking at the conference, she said that one of the most common calls customers make to lawn care companies is whether or not a technician has actually treated their lawn. Or, relatedly, if perhaps the technician skipped fertilizing a portion of their lawn, perhaps the back yard.

That's understandable, Berry said, inasmuch as only about 20 percent of customers are home when a technician treats their lawns. Also, when a homeowner pulls into their driveway at day's end, their lawn looks pretty much the same whether it's been treated or not.

But consider how easy it would be to provide customers of proof of service if the technician wore a device (maybe a watch-like device?) that automatically monitored and recorded, not only their start and stop times on each property, but also the route they took and where they sprayed or applied their

fertilizer and weed control.

But that's not all.

"Think of it (wearable technology) also from a quality assurance perspective," Berry says. For example, if you have a new technician and you want to make sure they're treating lawns the way you trained them, you just need to review the data on their device. It will show you if they need additional instruction, even down to a single lawn.

The device might also measure environmental conditions at a job site and technicians' well being, as well – things like their heart rate, body temperature and perhaps even exposure to the chemical products they're using on a property.

Is wearable technology one of the next big things that service company owners can expect or even hope to see in the green industry? What do you think? If your answer is yes, what other features could it offer landscape, lawn care or tree services companies – features to benefit not only their companies but also their service techs and clients, too?