

Surveying Commercial Properties

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Facility management leaders responded to questions to describe their sites, groundskeeping budgets and staffing strategies and – for those with in-house teams –their plans to purchase equipment.

Read further to gain insight to the commercial facilities market, how they manage their grounds and landscape needs, and how you might tap into this pool of customers.



(Photo: Getty Images)

For 2019, *Turf* surveyed the audience of its sister publication, [*Facility Executive*](#) –an established trade magazine for facility management leaders working in commercial and institutional facilities (including corporate, education, healthcare, retail, and more). This recent survey of facility executives found that those in these roles are largely responsible for the grounds maintenance of their facilities. To the question: Are you (or your staff) involved in grounds maintenance for your facility?–91% of the respondents answered “Yes.”

The point where these 91% of respondents diverge (and where Turf readers may be most interested) is the follow up question regarding: Do you have an in-house crew for grounds maintenance, or is this work outsourced? The results: "I have my own crew" responded 54%; and "I outsource" responded 47%.

The size of the areas of outdoor space managed by respondents varied, with the majority (64%) responsible for 10 or more acres. And, 15% of those readers manage sites between five to 10 acres.

The next question focused on winter weather services, asking these facility management professionals: "Are you responsible for snow removal and ice management for your properties?" The majority replied "Yes" (86%). The follow up question about, "Does you own your trucks/plows [for these services], or do you outsource?," revealed a fairly even split—47% work at organizations with their own equipment, while 53% do not own the equipment used at their sites.

When asked about the area for which they require snow plowing, 60% stated their total lot areas were 50,000 square feet or more. And, 31% were responsible for between 10,000 and 50,000 square feet.



(Photo: Getty Images)

The survey respondents were also asked which types of equipment they planned to purchase over the following 24 months for their properties. Leading categories for purchase included mowers and fertilizer/weed control, while another strong area of purchasing interest was ice management products. Additional comments to this question included "retaining walls" and "golf cart."

If you're interested in entering into commercial work or expanding your reach in that market, see the Summer 2019 issue of *Turf*. Two articles in that issue: ["Should You Consider Municipal Work?"](#) and ["Capturing Commercial Work"](#) provide insight into servicing those non-residential markets.

In Other Industry News...

The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI), based in Alexandria, VA,

released its fall quarterly forecast, predicting a strong finish to 2019 and growth in U.S. shipments of outdoor power equipment in 2020. Highlights of the fall OPEI forecast include:

- Commercial mower (e.g., zero-turns, intermediate walk-behinds) shipments will grow 7% in 2019 over 2018. Forecast for 2020 is another growth year of 5%.
- Handheld outdoor power equipment shipments (e.g., chain saws, blowers, trimmers) will rebound in 2019, with 3% growth over 2018. Forecast for 2020 is another growth year of 2%. The driver of growth is cordless (battery-powered) products.
- Wheeled outdoor power equipment shipments (e.g. walk-behind mowers, consumer zero-turns, tillers) will be down 1% overall in 2019 over 2018, but are forecasted to rebound with 2% growth in 2020. Notably, cordless (battery-powered) walk-behind mower shipments grew considerably in 2019, and are forecasted to do the same in 2020. N

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