

# WHAT OUR USERS ARE SAYING

For most cities and municipalities, the balance between man-hours and equipment costs can be delicate. Budget constraints and stretching taxpayer dollars can make regular grounds maintenance a challenge.

However, Robert Pace, parks supervisor for the city of California, Mo., says the city has been able to maximize its resources, both manpower and equipment, efficiently with its fleet of Grasshopper mowers and implements.

The parks department has five Grasshoppers, two Model 721Ds and three Model 722Ds, as well as a PowerVac™ Collection System, a dozer blade and a snowthrower for versatility year-round.

Pace and his three employees are responsible for maintaining approximately 110 acres of green space to maintain, including four baseball fields, a soccer field, four cemeteries, a 37-acre park and all other city-owned properties and lots.

Pace says that they have the Grasshoppers on a regular use rotation, which allows them to perform regular maintenance and limit operating hours to keep the mowers in good working condition.



**What really impresses me is that even though the mowers are starting to age – our oldest unit is a 2002 – they still plug away.**

"We've never had any serious problems with them, which means we haven't had high maintenance costs associated with them."

Pace says that in addition to their cost-saving durability, the diesels also save operating costs because they require less fuel than gasoline models.

"With our old gas mowers, we would have to fill up twice a day," he says. "But with the Grasshopper diesels, we fill up once and we're good to go all day long. They've really saved us in fuel costs over the years."

In addition to the fuel savings, Pace says that the department has also significantly reduced man-hours to maintain the properties with the combination of zero-turn maneuverability and out-front decks.

"We have a tractor with a pull-behind for more wide-open mowing, but the Grasshoppers just dance circles around it," he says. "There's no comparison, really."

He says at one time they used push mowers to mow around obstacles – fences, trees, headstones, playground equipment, picnic tables, disc golf baskets, sidewalks, etc. – and then go back and mow with tractors, but now, the crew can get within 1/2 inch of those obstacles on the Grasshoppers, eliminating the need for push mowers and reducing secondary trimming.

"We can get under trees and fences easily, and the close trimming we can do really cuts down the time it takes to weed-eat around them, and everything else," says Pace. "That and they cut well. The grass always looks in great shape."

Not only do the Grasshoppers help reduce mowing time, but the snowthrower and dozer blade have also reduced the time it takes to remove snow from city sidewalks, drives and parking lots.

"With the snowthrower, we don't blink an eye with 8 inches on the ground," Pace says. "And the dozer blade pushes snow excellently, exactly where you want it. We can't wait for the snow to fall, it's that easy."



Another feature Pace is impressed with is the comfort and easy-to-use nature of the machines.

"You can ride all day on them and not get worn out, and they're really easy to operate one-handed, so you can really get comfortable on them," he says. "At the end of the day, we can't say anything bad about them. They're just the best."

Pace says nothing else can compare to the Grasshoppers, and with the savings the department has realized because of them, he's certain that he couldn't be convinced otherwise.

"We just love them to death," he says. "They've got a great product and great people that take care of you when you need it. There's just nothing bad to say about them at all." ~