



WHAT OUR USERS ARE SAYING

Cutters Lawn Grooming | Huntingdon, PA

Nothing Strikes Me Like Grasshoppers; We've Built Our Business on Them.

The landscape surrounding Huntingdon, Penn. is dotted with small towns and rolling hills. At one time industry also dotted the horizon but several of those factories have been hit hard by economic downturn.

In 1999, when Ken Kyper left his job as maintenance buyer for a paper factory to devote full time to his lawn care business, everyone scoffed. After all, "everyone here mows their own lawn. But once people saw what we could do, our customer base really grew," Kyper said.

Today, Cutters Lawn Grooming serves 81 residential, commercial and industrial accounts and is still growing.

If you plan to grow, you need to plan ahead.

Kyper started out working part-time with a lawn tractor, a couple of push mowers and a weed eater. It quickly became apparent that more was needed. As the plan evolved, he began adding Grasshoppers. "Every year, Pam and I go to the agricultural fair and see what's available. And from the beginning, I knew Grasshopper was going to be the way for us. It still is.

"Our first commercial mower was a used Grasshopper 1622 and before long we added a second," he said. "Just a few years later, we bought our first new one, and over time we've had 10 to 11 Grasshoppers. Currently, we have five mowers and two Powervac™ Collection Systems."

We certainly don't abuse them, but we sure do use them.

Kyper is a stickler for maintenance. As a mechanic and a former maintenance buyer, he has an appreciation for a well-made and well-tended machine.

"The Grasshoppers are so well-crafted that downtime is rare," he said. "These mowers are made to last and last. Just one example: The decks. They're welded, not pressed. If you take care of a Grasshopper, it will take care of you for many seasons. They just perform and perform and perform.

"In fact, when we purchased those first Grasshoppers, I wanted to be sure we had one to run and one as a backup so we didn't have any downtime if we did run into a problem," Kyper related. "Before long, we had both running full-time and purchased a third as a backup. That's how we've grown, ramping up very deliberately."



Kyper maintains a supply of parts in his home shop and handles the mechanical end of maintenance, correcting most breakdowns himself. "If one is down, I'll fix it in the evening and have it back up and running for the next day's jobs," he said.

It also helps that his Grasshopper dealer is close at hand. "If anything is beyond my comfort level, I know I can call on them. They will get the part to me, or make the repair, virtually immediately. If something does need to be ordered, I don't have to wait but one or two days. I never want for parts. They have that sense of urgency, the need for quick turnaround that is so critical in this business. We couldn't ask for more."

Kyper employs two full-time workers and has a pool of part-time workers. "Every year, each worker will sort of 'adopt' the mower he will use throughout the season," said Kyper. "And as long as they respect them, that's what they'll keep. They are responsible for checking the belts, the air pressure and the decks, and cleaning out around the decks and blades. When you have good guys you want them to have the best.

Kyper likes his mid-mount Grasshoppers for their stability and speed. "We have a number of sporting facilities in our roster and people marvel at how we can roll in, unload and mow flat out, leaving a beautifully groomed finished product," he said. "On the other hand, we also have a 17-acre cemetery, and Grasshopper's maneuverability allows us to move around and between the headstones and leave a manicured finish there as well."

We wouldn't trade Grasshopper for anything.

"If I could convince anyone thinking of purchasing a Grasshopper, I would say three things," Kyper stated. "Construction and durability. Ease of operation. Dealer support. They have served us so well."