

VERSATILITY IS THE NAME OF THE GAME

Located on a 20-acre tract in downtown Topeka, the State Capitol Building is a prominent feature of Kansas' Capitol city. It can be seen for miles around. Climbing 296 steps to the outside balcony at the top of the dome provides a birds-eye view of the city.

Looking down, visitors are able to survey the beautiful grounds surrounding the nation's second-tallest traditional capitol building. Maintaining those grounds is responsibility of Kris Lopez, Grounds Maintenance Manager, and his crew of nine. **"It is very important to us that the grounds match the majesty of the Capitol Building in every way," Lopez says.** A total of nine Grasshopper diesel-powered, FrontMount™ mowers are used by Lopez and his crew year-round to fulfill those expectations.

In addition to the Capitol grounds, Lopez and his crew are responsible season-round for the grounds of the Kansas Statehouse, Kansas Judicial Center, downtown Capitol Complex and Cedar Crest, the Governor's mansion, including 50+ acres adjacent to the mansion.

Keeping up with all of this demand requires planning, a dedicated crew and reliable FrontMount™ Grasshopper mowers with an array of implements that mount to the power units in place of the decks. Lopez says, **"We depend on our Grasshoppers to do almost everything from the immaculate cut they deliver, to a variety of grounds maintenance tasks including turf renovation, debris management and snow removal. The Grasshoppers have never let us down."**



Cedar Crest – Governor's Mansion

During the growing season, the crews are seen mowing the Capitol Building grounds and other buildings every Monday. Tuesdays finds the crews packing up and

heading 5.5 miles to maintain the grounds at Cedar Crest and the surrounding area. Anything that doesn't get mowed on those days is finished on Wednesday and then the crews move on to other groundskeeping chores in both places. Depending on the time of year, the rest of the week finds the crews putting down fertilizer, pre-emergent weed control, repairing and maintaining irrigation systems and planting flowers, etc.



View of the Capital Grounds from the Outer Dome Balcony

As Grounds Supervisor, Nick Wurtz swears by the quality of cut that his Grasshoppers deliver. **Wurtz says, "We take a lot of pride in our work and the Grasshoppers make the grounds, and us, look good! They cut great and leave a nice, groomed look,"** Wurtz' crews mow with two 721DTs and two 725DTs. When the leaves start to

fall, two of those mowers are outfitted with Model 25 PowerVac™ Collection Systems. Wurtz is also thrilled with how clean the lawns are when picking up the leaves.



Model 25 PowerVac™ Collector leaves a cleanly swept lawn

Wurtz also loves the fact that his diesel mowers save



Kansas State Capital Building

time and money. **"The 725D, with an eight-gallon tank, will go a full straight eight hours before filling up,"** he says.

"I've seen gasoline mowers with a seven-gallon tank needing to refuel every 2.5 to 3 hours. Because my crews are not stopping two or more times a day to refuel, we are more efficient and productive." Fuel consumption of the diesel-powered Grasshoppers is less than a gallon per hour.



Some of the Grasshopper mowers in use by the Capital Grounds crew.

As outstanding as the Grasshopper FrontMount™ mowers are in cutting grass and picking up leaves, they shine equally as well with their versatility to operate as all-season grounds maintenance systems. A 928D is dedicated to a Buffalo Turbine Blower that is used to blow



The Turbine Blower is one of eight implements used by the crew.

off sidewalks after edging in the spring and summer, to clear off the aprons around the statehouse after events and rallies. The ProLawn sprayer precisely places the right amount of weed control on the lawns to keep them weed free. A 60-inch coreless AERA-vator is used to aerate and loosen compacted soil.

And the crew's responsibility doesn't end when winter arrives. When the snow starts falling, they are out there with three Grasshoppers, one with a snowthrower, another with a rotary broom, and the third with a dozer blade clearing off sidewalks and parking lots around the downtown buildings and at Cedar Crest. All three are equipped with Grasshopper winter enclosures for operator comfort. The turbine blower is also used for light snow removal as well as to blow sand and salt off the

sidewalks around the whole Capitol complex. "Our job is to keep everything accessible for state business all year long," Lopez says.

Keeping the equipment running smoothly is the responsibility of C.J. Bunce, Grounds Mechanic. "The Grasshoppers are super easy to work on. I can make most repairs pretty quick and Grasshopper's customer service is exceptional," says Bunce. The biggest advantage of the diesel engines according to C.J. is the power. This is because the horsepower rating of a diesel engine vs. a gasoline engine is not a good comparison. "The diesel engine produces more efficient and usable power



L - R C.J. Bunce, Nick Wurtz, Dave Pitman (Grasshopper Rep), Kris Lopez

because of the torque and the engine has more lugging ability and a better power curve," He says. Bunce specifies and justifies all mower purchases. "I like the front-mount hands down and I won't own anything else. **The shaft-driven PTO puts more power to the ground and to the deck where you need it,**" Bunce says. "You can see everything while you are mowing and they ride and contour so much better than any mid mount I've ever been on." Bunce says you just can't beat the visibility, versatility and ride of these mowers.

The bottom line is that no matter who you talk to in Lopez' crew, FrontMount™ Grasshopper mowers are the way to go. They reliably perform day-after-day and year-after-year.



Committed to the Cut.®

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