

# Green Industry Insight from Keesen Enterprises, Inc.

[www.keesenent.com](http://www.keesenent.com)

## Inside this issue:

Spring Fling Is Time For Training and Fun 1

H2-B Program Still Facing Hurdles 1

Trees Need Regular Care, Too 2

Are You 'Going Green'? 2

## Spring Fling Is Time For Training and Fun

Each year, Keesen Enterprises hosts a "Spring Fling" for all of its employees. This event is a key element of the on-going training that Keesen provides its workers.

Spring Fling's main purpose is to ensure that employees understand all of the essential elements of their job, from safe equipment operation to the way they represent themselves when they are at a customer property.

Employees are broken into small training groups and attend a variety of stations during the event. Stations cover such topics as personal protective equipment, irrigation locates, DOT inspections,

safe operation of equipment and machinery, and accident and injury reporting.

There is also time for fun, as different contests are held that allow teambuilding to occur and provide a brief respite from the serious work that is taking place. Everything is capped off with a catered lunch that tests the caterer's ability to keep up with the appetites the crews have worked up during their training.

We believe that our customers benefit from this training as well. The properties that Keesen Enterprises service are well-maintained in a safe and professional manner.

That makes this annual event one that will continue to pay dividends far into the future.



Above: timeout for a "family" picture; Below: Arborist Ben Canady explains the finer points of the chipper.



June 2008						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

  

July 2008						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

  

August 2008						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

## H2-B Program Still Facing Hurdles

You may remember reading about some of the challenges the H2-B visa program is facing in our Summer issue from 2007. We are writing about it again because it is a subject of critical importance to a number of industries, including those that perform land-

scape maintenance functions.

In September, 2007, critical legislation that exempted returning workers under H2-B visas from counting against the federally mandated cap of 66,000 annual H2-B visas

expired. What this means is that many companies that depend on seasonal workers to perform critical jobs do not have enough labor to fill those open positions. Despite advertising on websites and

**Continued on page 3**

## Are You 'Going Green'?

'Going Green' is a phrase we hear seemingly everywhere these days. From car commercials to home improvement ads, we are told what we can do or buy to become more environmentally friendly. Heck, we even recently found out each of us has a carbon footprint, as if we need another thing to keep us awake worrying at night!

Seriously, one of the main actions we can take to be more environmentally friendly is to reduce the flow of paper in our office. This is a major reason that we en-

courage all of our customers to take advantage of paperless billing. It's simple—give us the e-mail address you want your invoices and statements sent to. That's it. Nothing to buy, no form to fill out.

We are also sending more information, like enhancement proposals and contracts, via e-mail.

By helping us be more green, you will green up, too. Besides, storing all that paper takes space and natural resources.

Are you 'Going Green'?



The preferred way to get your invoices

## Trees Need Regular Care, Too—Ben Canady

When we pause to enjoy a beautiful landscape our eyes are drawn to areas of color, clean lines and texture. These neatly-kept landscape features speak volumes about the care of our homes and businesses, so it's important to maintain and enhance the landscape whenever possible. We're living in a breathtaking environment, but it's also a tough, dry place for the trees and plants that add so much to our lives.

Trees are a big factor in our landscapes, but we often overlook them. Large trees are a symbol of strength and permanence, but it takes a real commitment to achieve this in our dry environment. We need to remind ourselves to "look up!" and remember our trees because we all have a tendency to think first about turf, shrubs and flowers. It's unfortunate that we sometimes overlook trees until we begin to notice dead branches or damaged trunks.

Trees add value, both tangible and intangible, to our properties. Properties with healthy, mature trees regularly sell for higher prices than comparable properties without trees. It's also well-known that trees keep energy costs low by providing shade for homes and businesses. Aside from these monetary benefits, it's important to remember the intangible benefits trees provide. Trees make any landscape more inviting because of the shade, habit and calm they add to our lives.

Regular tree pruning is critical to achieving this vision. When young trees are pruned, they are trained to ensure ideal branch structure and a pleasing appearance. Training young trees helps them reach maturity instead of failing due to poor, preventable growth patterns. Older trees, on the other hand, need regular maintenance and corrective pruning to address dead and storm-damaged branches. When older trees are pruned to thin branch structures, light penetrates the canopy, invigorating the tree and maintaining its natural shape.

In Colorado, tree pruning is crucial because storm damage is a constant concern. Trees in this climate are subjected to regular wind and snow damage, and these factors often lead to failure. Strategic pruning efforts reduce the weight and mass at the end of branches to deter excessive weighting from wind and snow. Excessive damage after an early or late season snowstorm is common. In this case, an ounce of preventative pruning is worth more than a pound of reactionary "clean up!"

The Arbor Care Division is new at Keesen Enterprises. We're doing professional, high-quality work for our clients, and making a noticeable difference on the landscapes we service. Making an investment in your treescape is a wise decision,

and the work we do now will have a positive influence on a tree for the rest of its life. We recommend tree pruning every 2-3 years, and we would be happy to produce a plan that fits your budget over the next few seasons. A little preventative pruning will make a big difference in appearance and tree health now and this type of forethought will lead eventually to the vision of a green, tree-filled Denver we're all hoping for.



**Welcome Ben Canady, Arbor Care Manager!**

**Ben is a Certified Arborist and has years of field experience.**

**You may contact us at (303) 761-0444 to schedule an appointment to have your pruning needs reviewed, or visit our website at [www.keesenent.com](http://www.keesenent.com) and send an email to [service@keesenent.com](mailto:service@keesenent.com) to let us know you would like a call.**

Serving the Denver metro area  
for over 36 years



## Complete Commercial Landscape Maintenance and Installation Services

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Email: [service@keesent.com](mailto:service@keesent.com)

**We're on the web!**  
**Visit us at**  
**[www.keesent.com](http://www.keesent.com)**

For more than 36 years, Keesen Enterprises, Inc. has been providing award-winning, high-quality commercial landscape maintenance, irrigation and installation services in the Denver metropolitan area.

We have built our business on service and integrity. Our philosophy is simple; we strive to maintain the highest quality standards and to exceed your expectations. If there is ever a problem, we will do whatever it takes to make it right. Many companies may make this claim, but we live it. We are a locally owned company dedicated to servicing our customers. Our entire livelihood depends on the integrity with which we operate right here in the Denver area and we take great pride in our commitment to quality service.

## H2-B Program Still Facing Hurdles continued from page 1

newspapers, posting help wanted signs on vehicles and trailers, and hiring pretty much anyone that walks through the door, there is still a labor shortage.

Steve Steele, Keesen's Director of Operations, attended a rally with other H2-B supporters in Washington, D.C. in December to try and educate legislators about the H2-B program and its importance to Colorado's economy. The rally was sponsored by the Associated Landscape Contractors of Colorado, an association of green industries in Colorado.

There are many misconceptions surrounding the H2-B program. One is that employers would rather pay an H2-B worker than a person off the street because there is a perception that pay is lower for the H2-B worker. This is not the case. The federal government sets a man-

dated minimum wage for H2-B workers. For 2008, the wage is \$8.75. In addition, employers that use H2-B labor must pay a number of fees in order to get the employees processed and get the proper paperwork. Another misconception is that these workers come to the U.S. and become illegal immigrants or never go home. This is also untrue. These workers are here on a 6 month visa. When it expires, they go home to their families.

While an extension of the cap exemption still has not passed, there are several proposals that may provide some relief to businesses that need seasonal workers. Unfortunately, it is unlikely that anything will be passed in time to help those companies that need labor this summer.

H2-B is not an immigration issue; it is a small business issue. Special interests on

Capitol Hill that suggest otherwise are blocking sensible legislation in order to put pressure on lawmakers to address it only as part of comprehensive immigration reform.

If you feel passionately about getting this issue resolved outside of comprehensive immigration reform (who knows when that will happen!), contact your senator or congressperson and tell them to support H2-B legislation that would reinstate the cap exemption for H2-B workers in good standing that were here during the last three years. The legislation is called the Save our Small and Seasonal Businesses Act of 2007. It is important to note that the legislation does not ask for anything new, only an extension of previously approved and active legislation.

Please contact us for more information.