

## A call you can't refuse

*Editor's note: The "Q&A" column will return to this space next month.*

**G**rove Teates, president of Alpine Services, finally couldn't say "no." When you are asked to work on the grounds of the Washington Monument in our nation's capital, you don't say "no."

From the first fireworks display marking its dedication in 1885 and each subsequent Fourth of July, the Washington Monument has been the backdrop to mark our independence. The Washington Monument includes more than the large white-colored obelisk in the center of the National Mall and its reflection in the aptly named Reflecting Pool; this national park includes land where visitors stroll and picnic, and Washington, DC residents play recreational sports.

"For me, it's all about relationships in this business. When Champion Motor Graders came in, it was no different," said Teates, whose Maryland company builds natural turf athletic fields, as well as bases for artificial turf installations and equestrian arenas and rings. The company has worked in every state in the continental United States but remains a small, family operation with six full-time employees.

Although Teates had repeatedly turned down the Washington Monument job over a 2-week period, he was finally persuaded.

However, there was one stipulation – Teates would run the grader himself. "This was precision grading at its rawest form. And it's the only contract I've ever signed that named me as the operator," said Teates with a laugh.

Alpine's first assignment at the Washington Monument required about 3 weeks of grading approximately 45 acres. With no grade stakes or laser points to guide the grading, eyes did the entire job, which is why Teates was hand-picked for the job.

"It was going to be a tough job and we were very busy with other projects. I really didn't know if we could get it done but when your government calls, it's hard to say no," said Teates.

"The first day on the job site I was joking with Gary Abernathy at Champion that I needed a bigger blade," recalled Teates. "We normally works with a 10-foot moldboard. Three days later a bigger blade arrived."

The larger blade allows for a wider stance and better control and better response from your grader. "Because we couldn't use the lasers, we had to blend in as much as possible. This surprise new blade certainly made the job that much easier for me," said Teates.

Alpine's second assignment was to return to the grounds in the fall and grade the site's

football fields. This also included installing a significant amount of drainage in several key areas to resolve long-standing wetness issues. "We are only too happy to help out a client like Alpine Services and hopefully, make their job that much easier," said Abernathy, president of Champion Motor Graders. ■



## OSHA reports safety is good business

**T**he Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has developed a new safety and health topics information page aimed at demonstrating that investment in workplace safety and health makes good business sense.

Making the Business Case for Safety and Health is a product of several alliances with OSHA. The page highlights information on how a comprehensive safety and health program can help employers save money while protecting their employees.

Workplace fatalities, injuries, and illnesses cost the country billions of dollars every year. In its 2005 Workplace Safety Index, Liberty Mutual estimated that employers pay almost \$1 billion per week to injured employees and their medical care providers. Even one serious workplace injury may affect the bottom line of a small business. Employers that implement

effective safety and health management systems may expect to significantly reduce injuries and illnesses and reduce the costs associated with these injuries and illnesses, including workers' compensation payments, medical expenses, and lost productivity. In addition, employers often find that process and other changes made to improve workplace safety and health may result in significant improvements to their organization's productivity and profitability.

Now that you know that investing in workplace safety and health may improve your company's productivity and bottom line, there are many resources from OSHA and other organizations to help you get started.

The following are examples of resources that may help you improve your organization's workplace safety and health and learn about OSHA's compliance assistance resources:

**OSHA's Onsite Consultation Program.** Using a free consultation service largely funded by OSHA, employers can find out about potential hazards at their worksites, improve their occupational safety and health management systems, and even qualify for a one-year exemption from routine OSHA inspections.

**Compliance Assistance Quick Start.** Use this step-by-step guide to learn about the compliance assistance resources on OSHA's website.

**Hazard Awareness Advisor.** OSHA, (1999). Designed to help general industry employers and employees identify possible safety and health hazards in their workplace, and to direct users to OSHA standards addressing those hazards.

OSHA has a wide range of publications on safety and health topics, including: All About OSHA. OSHA Publication 3302, (2006), 239 KB PDF, 32 pages; Job Hazard Analysis. OSHA Publication 3071, (2002); and Small Business Handbook. OSHA Publication 2209, (2005). ■