

changes in customer satisfaction levels. Over the long term, TransAlta expects its door-hanger survey to become an extremely valuable tool for measuring satisfaction levels and planning customer service programs.

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ABSTRACTS

BEST, CHERYL. 1989. **Natural pest controls.** *Garbage* 1(1): 40-46.

Since only a few natural pest controls were widely available, early organic gardeners often fought an uphill battle against the endless onslaught of insects, weeds, and diseases. Many invented their own concoctions. Nineteen seventy-six marked a turning point for gardeners. That year, at an international conference on entomology, the era of Integrated Pest Management was officially proclaimed. Integrated Pest Management, or IPM, considers the entire garden ecosystem to determine the best methods for controlling pests. IPM was quite a radical departure from standard agricultural practices of the 1950s, 60s and 70s, which was based on regularly scheduled applications of pesticides to prevent the invasion of pests anticipated each season. In fact, we've come so far in the last 13 years that a plethora of natural pestcontrol products for the home gardener is now available. The names of the larger companies specializing in these natural gardening products—Safer and Ringer are two of the best known—are now household words, at least among gardeners who prefer an organic approach. For the last few years, some of the products of these larger companies have been for sale at hardware stores and nurseries. Produce treated with botanical pesticides is generally safer than produce treated with synthetics. However, the handling of botanicals during the mixing and application is generally just as hazardous as the handling of most home garden synthetics. Just because something is natural doesn't mean it isn't toxic.

WATSON, GARY W. 1989. **Competition between trees and turf.** *Grounds Maintenance* 24(10): 30, 32, 59-61.

Two plants growing beside each other compete for sunlight, water and nutrients. Competition for soil moisture and nutrients is not always clearly visible. Two similar plants competing for a limited supply of water and nutrients divide what is available. Each gets a smaller share than if either were growing alone, and this stunts the growth of both. If they are not similar plants, one plant has advantage over the other. Foresters and orchardists have known for years that turfgrass competes more vigorously than trees for soil moisture and nutrients. When grown together, turfgrass outgrows the tree. The tree's growth is less than if it were grown without turfgrass. Compared to grass roots, even the smallest tree roots are coarsely branched and less efficient at extracting water and nutrients from the soil. An organic mulch, such as wood chips or composted leaves, is one of the best and most inexpensive soil and root enhancers available. It is a good alternative to turf around trees.