UPCOMING EVENTS

January 21st

Kansas City: Marketing the Dynamic Metro

February 18th

An Insider Look into Independence Center

February 25th

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Bramble-Munching Goats Provide Grounds Maintenance Solution

Maintaining institutional and commercial facilities these days requires that managers think creatively, given the generally limited resources, the demand to work quickly and efficiently, and the ever-growing pressure to improve sustainability. As a result, grounds managers responsible for landscape maintenance occasionally turn to non-traditional measures to ensure landscapes meet organizational demands.

Consider Brevard (Fla.) Public Schools, where rough terrain has made clearing and maintaining a dry pond bed dangerous for human service crews. The only ones to step foot in the overgrown reservoir on the eastern side of Imperial Estates...
Elementary have been a family of gopher tortoises.

To tame the terrain, the district has hit on a creative solution: a squad of bramble-munching goats, according to USA Today. The goats are a solution to a dicey problem, says grounds services supervisor Matt Nolle and Jim Ross, Brevard Public Schools' director of operations and maintenance. The area around the pond is too dangerous for tractors and other heavy equipment, Nolle says.

Where the school district has gone low-tech to deliver performance, the University of Tennessee has gone high-tech. The department uses a cloud-based inventory that includes each tree’s location, species, and size, as well as the tree’s condition, maintenance recommendations, risk assessment, and conflicts with landscape fixtures like buildings, light poles, or signs, according to the university.

The inventory helps the department plan and track the work they perform on campus trees, and it can be used to pull carbon footprint offset data or prepare for a defense against an invasive insect or disease. Students use the inventory for classes like botany and urban forestry, and they assist department staff with updating the inventory.


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