

# Retirement ... No Way!



Source: [www.TurfMagazine.com](http://www.TurfMagazine.com)

Former government worker and wife build successful Pennsylvania landscape firm



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The owner Jeff Moyer, far right, with his hard-working team.  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF GREEN WITH ENVY PROFESSIONAL LAWN AND LANDSCAPE.

Jeff Moyer spent 25 years working indoors as the director of the State Treasury Department offices in Harrisburg, Pa. When he retired in 2005, he figured that he and his wife, Rhonda, would probably find a nice retirement home up in the Poconos and relax a while. The Poconos is where it's at in Pennsylvania. But the best laid plans ...

## **Green with Envy Professional Lawn and Landscape**

**Owners:** Jeff and Rhonda Moyer

**Founded:** 2005

**Headquarters:** Harrisburg, Pa.

**Markets:** Eastern Pennsylvania including Mechanicsburg, Harrisburg, West Shore and in York, Adams, Dauphin and Cumberland counties.

**Services:** Mowing, design/build, snow removal, sports-field maintenance, organic services, pressure washing, fall/spring cleanup, edging, aeration, overseeding, dethatching

**Employees:** 9

**Website:** <http://www.greenwithenvylawncare.com>

To keep busy, Moyer decided to mow a few lawns in the neighborhood from time to time with a John Deere riding mower and trim the properties. Eight years

later, and no longer retired, Moyer has two Exmark 48-inch mowers, one Exmark 52 Lazer, a 72-inch Scag and several 36-inch Husqvarna mowers and Husqvarna trimmers.

"I started out like a lot of guys, I suppose," says the owner of Green With Envy Professional Lawn and Landscape, Harrisburg, Pa. "After mowing a few lawns, customers started asking about lawn treatments, and so I studied and got my certification from the state as a certified commercial chemical applicator and turf expert. The business sort of spread by word-of-mouth; we've never advertised but we're growing at about 30 percent a year. Now, we have two full-time mowing crews, two crews handling hardscape and design/install, Rhonda handles the scheduling, office and customer relations, and I do the applications. We're busy."

Mowing makes up for about 40 percent of their business and Moyer says it's a very competitive market with a lot of undercutting going on. The team services much of eastern Pennsylvania, including Mechanicsburg, Harrisburg, West Shore and many areas in York, Adams, Dauphin and Cumberland counties.

"Our market is the middle-class folks who work all day and want someone to handle multiple turf functions – mowing, weeding, maintenance, landscaping and chemical applications – so that their lawns are taken care of with care and quality. We don't lowball; ours is a professional business." Moyer is proud that Green With Envy has the highest rating on Angie's List.



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## **Sports field niche**

The Green With Envy team performs maintenance on sports fields for several soccer teams. "We do a lot of soccer fields for various communities, about 100 acres a week, so it keeps us busy. That's where the 72-inch Scag comes into play. The fields get a lot of wear and we keep them in pretty good, playable shape."

Moyer says that sports field management is a specialized and growing segments of his business.

"Sports fields must be able to withstand extremely heavy use, must be usable during or immediately after periods of heavy rain, and many had not received regular or adequate maintenance when we first started servicing them. We have the expertise to design successful fields and maintain them. We have an in-depth understanding of several key factors including internal soil drainage, surface runoff, planting media and turf blends.

"These are local soccer clubs and organizations and they want to keep their soccer fields in the very best playing shape possible. Like our residential business, quality comes first," insists Moyer. "Whether it's a soccer field or a small backyard in Harrisburg, I don't put time limits on my employees. They have the ability to stay on a property until it is perfect. It's only fair to our customers to give them our best efforts."



In addition to regular turf care and maintenance, Green With Envy offers an organic service that Moyer says makes up about 5 to 10 percent of their business. But it's growing.

"A lot of people misunderstand what and how long the organic treatments take to begin working. Any lawn that has not received regular maintenance and has a real weed problem or soil problem is probably not a good candidate for organic applications," he says. "We explain to new customers that it will take a year or more of chemical applications before we can transition to a more natural approach."

Moyer's background with the state found him working in computer graphic design, which has been extremely helpful in landscape design.

"I enjoy listening to clients and laying out their properties and designing what they want in a patio or outdoor living area. Fire pits and ornate hardscape designs are big in eastern Pennsylvania. Most of our jobs are smaller, less than \$10,000 constructs. But we don't cut any corners and the work is not only beautiful but easy to maintain."

Green With Envy also installs outdoor lighting and features Vista Lighting with LED technology. It also offers pressure washing, fall/spring cleanup, edging, aeration, overseeding, dethatching, snow removal and the complete install of new lawns.

Although employees have great flexibility when on a customer site, that's not to say that Moyer isn't looking at ways to save time. "We just started using some new routing software that has saved us about 2.5 hours a week in drive-time per crew. I thought I knew the area pretty well until I realized there's a better way."

## **The "art" of lawn care**

Moyer says the chemical applications for turfgrass and for basic lawn care is an art in itself.

"We start in late fall/early winter with treatments, usually from October thru December, by checking pH levels and adding lime or whatever the lawn requires. Often, we'll add fertilizer for the grass to receive nourishment through the colder months," he says.

"Early spring is the application of preemergent herbicides and fertilizers in time to check crabgrass and weed control. Early summer/ late spring we'll check for red thread and other fungi and insects and spray for grub control and apply herbicides if needed."

He says his company uses both liquid nitrogen and granular fertilizer depending upon condition of the lawn; the granular being the slow-release, while the liquid is fast-acting.

Fall is the ideal time for aeration, which is essential for keeping control

of soil compaction and thatch problems. Aeration also promotes fuller root development, which helps the turf with its consumption of microorganisms and other nutrients. And that brings us full-circle back to late fall/early winter and fertilization, pH levels, lime, etc.

“It’s all about having the knowledge, and having quality employees and training them the right way. We believe in giving them the best equipment and the proper amount of time to get the job done to everyone’s satisfaction. Lately, I’ve been purchasing a lot of Husqvarna equipment. They build quality products and we have a great local dealer in the area. It’s just like anything else – you’ve got to use the best to be the best – we’re always looking to increase the quality of our services.”

Not quite ready for the Poconos, the Moyers just bought a new house and need a place to live while the builders are finishing. “We sold our old house in four days. The landscaping was perfect.”

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