



PLANTING SUCCESS FOR TOLL LANDSCAPE

As any homeowner can attest, good landscaping adds enormously to a house's value; excellent landscaping makes it a show stopper.

National home-building company Toll Brothers specializes in luxury homes and planned communities. Not only do they pay extraordinary attention to their houses, they take equal care with the landscaping. So much so that they formed their own subsidiary, Toll Landscape. This wholly owned company not only provides standard packages but also upgraded packages to enhance and maintain select Toll Brothers properties in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Virginia, Washington, D.C., and Florida.

Jim Crawford is Assistant Vice President with Toll Landscape in Florida. In 2001, he moved from the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, area (Toll Brothers corporate headquarters) to the Sunshine State to help get the fledgling Florida landscape operations underway. He has years of landscaping knowledge and equipment experience under his belt — from purchasing and paying repair bills to studying specs and operating equipment. So when it came time to replace an aging compact wheel loader racking up expensive repair bills, Crawford chose a Kawasaki 45ZV-2 compact wheel loader.

"The reliability of the Kawasaki name, our relationship with GS Equipment, and the assurance of guaranteed uptime — those were huge reassurance factors for us. We just can't have the down time. We ride our machines hard; we use the heck out of them.



Operators like the Kawasakis. They report the compacts are easy to learn, run better on the roads, they're fast, and they do a better job of lifting and carrying trees than the skid steers they've used in the past.

We felt the dealership and Kawasaki would stand behind this new-to-them size machine."

MAKING THE GRADE

Crawford ordered the 45 with Bradco/Paladin bucket, forks, and tree boom. The tree boom is rated for 6,000 pounds, in order to handle palm trees. The 45 worked so well he then ordered a 42ZV-2.

"We like the size of the 42 because we can get between the houses with material. Both loaders are setting trees, unloading trucks with mulch, sod, and really anything involved with landscaping. We use the 45 for some of the larger palm trees, especially around the community entrances, the clubhouse, and the public spaces.

"We use the tree boom the most. It is an extension with a hook on it. We are able to put a sling on there for the palm trees to be moved and set. We have to be conscious of balance and tipping load. Florida for the most part is pretty flat, which really helps when you are working with this kind of load. And because the majority of our work is on residential homes, we can't use a bigger machine."

Sometimes property access can be problematic and plantings have to be done over a fence. Then it isn't just about lifting a tree, but being able to lift it high enough that the root ball clears the fence while still having enough control to lower it back down on the other side into a hole. His Kawasaki compacts have lived up to all the challenges.



Those palm trees don't grow there by themselves. These stately accents must be planted. Kawasaki's oscillating axle maintains ground contact while in a swale. Frame-style oscillation helps maintain a more consistent lifting capacity.

ON THE MOVE

Some Toll Brothers communities in Florida are well over 800 acres. So the two compact wheel loaders do a lot of traveling. Unlike a tracked skid steer, they can make their way quickly from one end to the other — without wearing down expensive tracks, calling in a truck and a two-man team to move it, or tearing up streets, not to mention saving time, man hours, and potential repairs. And because there are usually several construction projects going on while Toll Landscaping is on site, some work orders for the versatile compacts are written on the spot, generating additional revenue. So the wheel loaders are often moving pavers and pallets or dumping dirt, rock, or debris for others — with the ease and speed in which the attachments can be changed a real plus.

Crawford says that for this kind of work, he wouldn't even consider a skid steer. "It's a safety issue. When you are working in a confined area — especially a residential area with children and pets, and even subcontractors — visibility and noise are very important. With a skid steer, you're always looking around and can't see everything. Wheel loaders allow us to sit up a little higher and we can see all around.

"We like the Kawasaki. The reliability has been huge for us. GS Equipment has been there if we've needed them. We've been very happy."

Toll Landscape is serviced by GS Equipment, Pompano Beach, Florida.



Toll Brothers communities in Florida are very popular. Some are primary residences, others are seasonal homes. Each community collection has a standard landscaping package, as well as the option for upgrades.