

Midwest Mowing continues to gain ground

September 27, 2010

By [FRED POLLARD](#)

The Telegraph

BRIGHTON - Midwest Mowing Inc. is receiving props from its home "turf" as the River Bend Growth Association's Business of the Month for September.

"The RBGA has been wonderful," owner Claire Pugsley said. "We are proud to be a part of it."

Midwest Mowing, an Illinois corporation in operation since October 2004, provides government and commercial services including mowing, trimming, pesticide applications, landscape installation and maintenance, as well as winter services.

"We specialize in year-round grounds maintenance, landscape installations, turf restoration and snow removal," Pugsley said. "We have over 40 years of combined experience in operations management and all aspects of grounds maintenance."

Pugsley said her business, owned and operated by a woman in a male-dominated industry, has persevered through a sagging economy.

"A woman-owned landscaping company is unique by definition," she said. "Our rates are very competitive, and we are proud of not willing to sacrifice our level of maintenance reliability and quality deliverables to the lowest bidder. We have learned to balance the technical specifications and the esthetics of 'pleasing to the eye' to create the appearance desired by both our public and private sector customers."

Midwest Mowing's services are divided into three categories - landscape installation, grounds maintenance and snow removal.

Installation services include the design and installation of Keystone, Versalok and Sims Stone retaining walls, design and installation of patios, driveways and walkways, retaining wall rebuilds, and complete landscaping.

Ongoing maintenance includes mowing, seeding, sodding, pruning, fertilizing, leaf and brush removal, tree planting and stump removal, among other services.

When the weather turns bitter, Midwest Mowing is on hand with snow and ice removal equipment to ensure safety and convenience.

Pugsley said her company has worked for several government agencies, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the city of Alton. For the last five years, it has maintained the upkeep for two Alton cemeteries through a contract with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

"Our biggest focus right now is on government contracting," she said. "That type of a situation requires you to build relationships with subcontractors. We find ourselves with jobs that require more manpower than we currently have, so it is good to have those positive working relationships."

Acknowledging the importance of that team effort, Pugsley said she feels it is better and more valuable to have a positive working relationship because there is plenty of work for everyone.

Midwest Mowing's staff consists of three full-time employees, three part-time employees and four "casual" employees.

"We also are participants in the Put Illinois to Work program," she said. "That is a wonderful service and it has been a big help to us. We currently have two employees with us from that program."

Another crucial team member is Laura McAfee, director of sales and marketing.

"We have big plans to expand our capabilities," Pugsley said. "Government agencies we have worked with and built a good relationship with want us to expand and do more for them. We are on-site and we do whatever they need. They are happy with the way we manage the work for them."

Realizing the importance of supporting its home community, Midwest Mowing takes pride in purchasing products, supplies and tools from local businesses as much as possible. Throughout 2009, 93 percent of all fuel purchased was from the River Bend.

Midwest Mowing, certified as a Small Disadvantaged Business and Female Business Enterprise firm, also is 8(a) certified through the U.S. Small Business Administration. Covering an area as far away as Metropolis, Ill., the main office is in Brighton on five acres of land. Expansions in 2009 included a new entryway, meeting room, exterior landscapes (including new signage), new equipment and an upgraded logo for the landscaping division.

For information, call (618) 372-4466 or visit the website at www.midwestmowinginc.com.