

# ***School District Teaches Geese To Take A Hike***

***By R.W. Delaney, Business Writer***

When Max Wilson signed on two years ago as custodian and yard man for McKenzie Career Center in the Lawrence Township School District of Indianapolis, he inherited an indelicate problem. Canada geese overran the two scenic ponds that graced the front of the Career Center.

The flock of geese, numbering between 100 and 150 birds, left an unsightly mess of droppings smack in front of the Center. It was a visual disgrace. "It made such a bad impression," says Wilson. "If it looked bad to me, I knew it looked bad to everyone," he adds.

Furthermore, Wilson feared for the safety of the geese as they strutted their stuff on the driveway circling in front of the vocational school and throughout the parking lot. "They could be run over by vehicles. The geese would walk right out on the busy highway, forcing cars to stop," Wilson recalls. "It was really bothersome."

### **A Sensitive Situation.**

Like most people, Wilson did not want to harm the majestic Canada geese; he and the district administration just wanted the problem to go away. That's when Wilson's supervisor read about a product called GooseChase™, made by Bird-X, Inc. of Chicago.

GooseChase is a concentrate made from extracts of grape parts found to be most distasteful to geese. A solution of one part GooseChase to 30 parts of water is sprayed on the grass and vegetation where the geese normally forage. The solution irritates their palates, which sends them away to "greener pastures" elsewhere. The biodegradable product is friendly to the environment and it does not harm the birds. It simply renders food sources unpalatable to geese.

The word came down: Give GooseChase a try.

### **Easy Application.**

In early spring, Wilson prepared two gallons of the GooseChase mix as directed and sprayed it on the succulent grass surrounding the two ponds. Within a day, geese were repelled, he says. And ducks, too. "Geese and ducks don't like it. GooseChase doesn't hurt them; they just won't hang around it," he says.

"Product directions suggest repeating the spray at two-week intervals," Wilson says, "but I haven't had to spray

that often. Three or four times a year is enough," he indicates, unless heavy rains wash the GooseChase solution off.

"The geese tell me when it's time to reapply GooseChase," Wilson explains. "When they begin to gather at the ponds again and I notice they're back, then it's time." Geese and ducks are naturally attracted to grassy feeding grounds near placid water, but GooseChase harmlessly persuades the critters to flock and graze elsewhere. "Since applying GooseChase, I've noticed that the geese population has been decreasing in the neighborhood," Wilson affirms. They're finding more hospitable territory away from the McKenzie Career Center.

### **Residential Application, too.**

In Ohio, a similar problem faced Dave Kindt, Sales Manager of Kindt-Collins Company. Kindt and his family live in a rural community with many ponds, about 20 minutes outside of Akron. "The geese waddle around and peck at cars," Kindt says, "and they defecate everywhere."

To add to Kindt's annoyance with the geese, he finds that they have a nasty temperament. "One day I beeped my horn at six geese that were blocking my driveway," he recalls. "They wouldn't move, so I got out of the car to chase them. Instead, they chased me," he says.

Soon afterwards, Kindt sprayed a solution of GooseChase around the perimeter of the driveway and also sprinkled it in his front yard. "It got the geese off my premises and into my neighbor's lawn," he says with glee. "You can see the line of demarcation."

Kindt agrees with Max Wilson's assessment that the product does not appear to harm the geese in any way. "It has an offensive odor or taste that they don't like" Kindt affirms. He's quite pleased by the easy relocation of the offending birds, and the aggressive geese stay out of his way now.

### **Benefits to Goose and Man.**

Max Wilson has another take on the subject of geese around the busy school. "In a way," notes Wilson, "we're doing the geese a favor by clearing them away from the highway, where their lives were endangered. I love animals," he says, "and GooseChase doesn't hurt them. It has been an excellent product for us."

GooseChase has also cut at least three hours of cleanup time off Wilson's weekly schedule, now that droppings are no longer piling up in front of McKenzie Career Center and across the parking lot. He feels that the school environment is healthier now too, since bird fecal matter can contain disease-bearing bacteria that are harmful to humans.

Wilson's experience with GooseChase has been positive. "For us, it has worked," he says, and adds advice for others. "Only two things cause GooseChase to wear off: Rain water eventually washes it off, and cutting the grass." Where GooseChase is, geese are not.

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