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Public Relations for Spray Crews  
"Please don't turn that person blue."

Slide 2



This is how we see the ROW and our jobs

Safety, legal compliance, ecological protection

Slide 3



This is how some members of the public see our job

Environmental concern, misinformation, hysteria, NIMBY, ignorance, crusader

Slide 4



Smart phones, social media, and the spread of misinformation

Ask for show of hands people who have smart phones.

Research (2015) indicates approx. 92% of Americans have a cell phone; 67% have a smart phone.

The “norm” in society today is instantaneous access to and dissemination of information; good, bad, or indifferent. A member of the public can snap a video and share it across the interwebs with little to no understanding or acknowledgement of repercussion. The anonymity of the internet has breed contempt of social interaction.

Trolling, defined as the act of posting inflammatory, derogatory or provocative messages in public forums, is a problem as old as the Internet itself, although its roots go much farther back. Even in the fourth century B.C., Plato touched upon the subject of anonymity and morality in his parable of the ring of Gyges.

That mythical ring gave its owner the power of invisibility, and Plato observed that even a habitually just man who possessed such a ring would become a thief, knowing that he couldn't be caught. Morality, Plato argues, comes from full disclosure; without accountability for our actions we would all behave unjustly.

**HeraldNet**  
Everett, Washington

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## Lawsuit blames county and weed inspector in man's death

By [Jackson Holtz](#), Herald Writer

VERLOT — Three times Daniel Wasilchen asked a Snohomish County weed inspector to leave his property, a witness said.

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DANA TIMS/The Oregonian

Dead and dying plants extend four to five feet from the roadway in front of John Zeigler's residence on Northwest Leahy Road in Washington County. County officials will meet Thursday morning to determine whether errant spraying by a contractor caused the damage.

It first came to light July 26, when residents living along NW 90th Place in the West Haven area reported that their garbage cans and recycling bins had been sprayed by a passing truck.

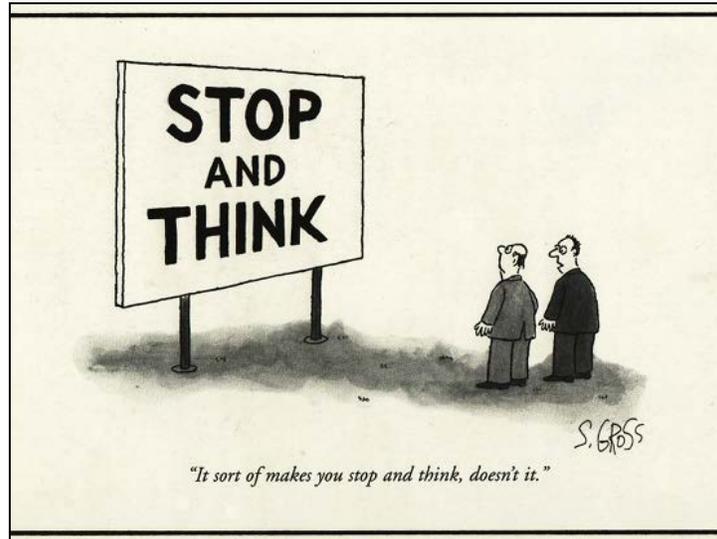
A second report was filed earlier this week, when John Zeigler called to say that the extensive roadside landscaping he maintains in front of his house on NW Leahy Road was brown and dying after having been sprayed.

The press is in the business of selling papers and sensationalizing news. Headlines can help or hurt.

Headlines of weed related incidents:

- Trails group to state: 'Stop the spraying'
- Roadside spraying suspected of killing plants and shrubs
- Rancher wins \$17,000 in weed spraying lawsuit
- Residents sprayed by herbicides sue
- Dog owner stares down herbicide truck bound for popular park
- Farmer slain during argument over herbicide use
- County fights weeds on private property
- Lawsuit blames county and weed inspector in man's death

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Stop and think

Important motto for us and our spray crews especially.

- *Get to know your neighbours.*
- *Treat your neighbours the way you would want to be treated.*
- *Use common sense to avoid problems.*
- *Have an educational process for your neighbours.*
- *Keep your equipment neat and professional.*

Get to know your neighbours

Treat your neighbours the way you would want to be treated

Use common sense to avoid problems (caveat, common sense ain't all that common anymore)

Have an educational process for your neighbours

Keep your equipment neat and professional

- *People remember the little things you do to help them.*
- *Might does NOT make right.*
- *Get involved in the community.*
- *Maintain active communication.*
- *Build good will.*
- *Work with the local officials.*

People remember the little things you do to help them

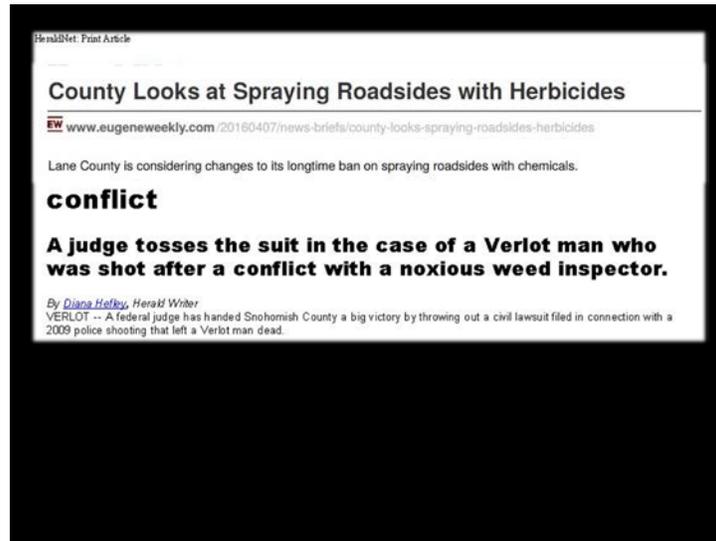
Might does NOT make right

Get involved in the community

Maintain active communication (Board, Commissioners, other Co. Dept. heads, crew, etc)

Build good will

Work with the local officials



Headlines of resolution

County looks at spraying roadsides (after a 7 year ban)

and

County cleared in fatal weed-control conflict

(Federal judge threw out the civil suit filed in connection with the 2009 officer shooting of a Washington man who threatened officers and weed inspector)

*The county and its noxious weed inspector, Sonny Gohrman, were accused of violating Daniel Wasilchen's civil rights under various theories. They also were accused of negligence and breaking weed control laws. A Snohomish County sheriff's deputy fatally shot Wasilchen, 44, outside his Verlot home May 29, 2009 after the Boeing worker refused to drop a gun and pointed the weapon at deputies and county workers. The deadly encounter arose out of a heated dispute over knotweed. U.S. District Court Judge James Robart on Wednesday denied the plaintiffs' motion to find in their favor without a trial. The judge went on to dismiss the lawsuit against the county and Gohrman. The deputy who killed Wasilchen was dropped from the lawsuit earlier. The judge sided with the county and Gohrman on all fronts. He concluded that Wasilchen's constitutional rights weren't violated and*

*Gohrman didn't break the state's noxious weed statute or breach any county policy to de-escalate the conflict.*

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Stay safe out there

Stop and think!