

Home Services

Pest Control · Septic & Sewer · Landscape · Pool · Appliance Repair · Moving

Six trades, one publication. Every item is something that moves a number on your P&L, changes what you must do by law, or changes what parts and labor cost you.

IN THIS ISSUE	PEST CONTROL EPA closed registration review on 20 pesticide cases on September 17 because every product in them is already canceled, among them the rodenticide alpha-chlorohydrin.	SEPTIC & SEWER EPA and the Army Corps reopened Clean Water Act jurisdiction on September 9 with a supplemental "waters of the United States" proposal; comments close October 9.	LANDSCAPE EPA pushed the comment deadline on its glyphosate open-literature search from September 24 to November 23, delaying the human health risk assessment the search feeds.	 Read it online This issue, and every one before it
	POOL PHTA and the International Code Council published ANSI/PHTA/ICC-2 2026 on September 16, the public pool operations and maintenance standard health departments write into code.	APPLIANCE REPAIR Commerce set a 56.43% preliminary dumping margin on seamless refined copper pipe and tube from Mexico's largest producer on September 21, using adverse facts available.	MOVING Commerce preliminarily found on September 22 that compacted graphite iron brake drums from China circumvent existing orders, exposing them to a 150.25% antidumping rate.	
	BACKGROUND SIGNAL The fraud that reads your invoices before it sends one			

MONEY

Commercial auto rates rose 3.58% and general liability 4.18% in August while workers' comp fell 1.1%, and WTW put overall second-quarter commercial pricing up just 0.5%.

WTW's Commercial Lines Insurance Pricing Survey, reported September 14, found U.S. commercial insurance prices rose an aggregate 0.5% in the second quarter of 2026, down from 2.5% in the first quarter and 3.8% in the second quarter of 2025. Large accounts saw an overall price decrease for the first time since the end of 2017.

The August Ivans Index, reported alongside it, shows the relief is uneven by line. Commercial auto was up 3.58% (July: 4.03%), general liability 4.18% (4.99%), business owners policies 5.44% (5.94%), commercial property 5.69% (6.16%) and umbrella 6.82% (7.42%). Workers' compensation was the exception, at minus 1.1%.

Those are the policies a home-services firm carries: a van or truck fleet, general liability on every job site, a business owners policy and an umbrella over both. On the fleet line, the Council of Insurance Agents and Brokers' second-quarter survey had commercial auto up 4.5% while broader commercial premiums fell 2%, ServiceMag reported September 22.

These are market averages, not your renewal. ServiceMag's advice is to expect individual renewals to diverge from the average based on your loss history and driver records, and WTW's first decrease since 2017 applies to large accounts, not a small fleet. Five of the six Ivans lines still eased from July to August; only workers' compensation, already negative, edged up.

What to do about it: Pull every policy expiring in the next 120 days and ask your broker in writing for the expiring premium, the proposed premium and the percentage change on each line. Compare each line with the August figures: 3.58% commercial auto, 4.18% general liability, 5.44% business owners policy, minus 1.1% workers' comp. If a renewal on a clean loss record comes in above them, ask for competing quotes at least 60 days before it expires. Send the broker your driver list, motor vehicle reports, telematics or dash camera data and training records, and ask what credit each earns. Confirm in writing that tools and equipment carried in the vehicles are covered, because auto policies do not cover them.

Insurance Journal: WTW, Ivans reports (Sept. 14) · ServiceMag: commercial auto rates (Sept. 22)

PEST CONTROL

TWO ITEMS

REGULATION

EPA closed registration review on 20 pesticide cases on September 17 because every product in them is already canceled, among them the rodenticide alpha-chlorohydrin.

Why it matters: EPA's September 17 notice (91 FR 58897) ends registration review for 20 cases - including alpha-chlorohydrin, methyl-parathion, ferbam, citral and the mosquito larvicide Lagenidium giganteum - on the ground that all products in each case are canceled. Canceled means you cannot legally distribute or sell the product, and in most cases cannot hold or apply it. Several cases carry no docket at all because registrants withdrew before any assessment began. This week: run that active-ingredient list against your chemical inventory, service-vehicle stock and label library, and get anything on it off the truck before a state inspector finds it.

[EPA closes pesticide review cases, 91 FR 58897 \(Sept 17\)](#)

DEMAND

NPMA published the 2026 Pest Management Standards for Food Processing and Handling Facilities on September 1, the first full revision of the document since 2016.

Why it matters: The 2026 edition rewrites what a food-plant auditor expects to see: current IPM practices, new US and Canadian food-safety requirements, updated FDA and Health Canada allergen lists, and fresh sample inspection reports and risk-assessment templates. Optional practices moved to a separate resource guide, so what remains is what an auditor can hold you to. If you hold food-processing, warehouse or commissary contracts, your documentation and your technicians' certificates are now measured against the new text. Order the 2026 study guide, book the exam for technicians on those routes, and reissue site risk assessments on the new templates before the next third-party audit.

[NPMA updates food safety standards, PMP \(Sept 1\)](#)

SEPTIC & SEWER

TWO ITEMS

REGULATION

EPA and the Army Corps reopened Clean Water Act jurisdiction on September 9 with a supplemental "waters of the United States" proposal; comments close October 9.

Why it matters: The supplemental proposal (91 FR 57284) would require a relatively permanent water to flow year-round, with dry spells no more than 30 days, and would require a continuous surface connection of perennial water before an adjacent wetland is federal. It also reworks ditches, waste treatment systems, prior converted cropland and groundwater exclusions. For an installer, that separates a routine drainfield or sewer-line job from a Section 404 permit with delay and mitigation cost. The November 2025 proposal drew roughly 220,000 comments. Comments close October 9 and no hearing is scheduled: file on the site conditions you actually work in, and re-check pending jobs sited near intermittent channels.

["Waters of the U.S." definition, 91 FR 57284 \(Sept 9\)](#)

SUPPLY

Commerce issued antidumping and countervailing duty orders on steel concrete reinforcing bar from Bulgaria, Egypt and Vietnam on September 18, with margins up to 136.57%.

Why it matters: The September 18 orders set antidumping cash deposits of 53.27% for Bulgaria, 34.20% for Egypt (52.73% for El Marakby Steel and Suez Steel) and 123.49% to 131.53% for Vietnamese producers, alongside countervailing duty orders for Egypt and Vietnam. Scope is rebar in straight length or coil, any metallurgy, length, diameter or grade; plain rounds are excluded. Liquidation is suspended on entries from March 13, 2026. Rebar is priced into cast-in-place tank slabs, pump stations and the precast you buy, so quotes move before your next dig. Ask suppliers in writing for country of origin and the duty component on open orders, and put a steel escalation clause in unsigned bids.

[Commerce, rebar AD: Bulgaria, Egypt, Vietnam \(Sept 18\)](#) · [Commerce, rebar CVD: Vietnam, Egypt \(Sept 18\)](#)

LANDSCAPE

TWO ITEMS

REGULATION

EPA pushed the comment deadline on its glyphosate open-literature search from September 24 to November 23, delaying the human health risk assessment the search feeds.

Why it matters: EPA's September 28 notice extends comment on docket EPA-HQ-OPP-2009-0361 by 60 days, to November 23, 2026, "to allow for further meaningful input from stakeholders." That search decides which published studies enter the new glyphosate human health risk assessment, and the assessment is what any future label change, buffer or use restriction will be built on. Nothing on your label changes today; the decision slips and the uncertainty you are pricing into 2027 renewals lasts longer. If you apply glyphosate on turf, hardscape edges or beds, put your own use and exposure specifics on the record before November 23 - rates, PPE, re-entry - rather than leaving the file to litigation science.

[EPA, glyphosate literature search extended \(Sept 28\)](#)

LABOR

USCIS said on September 12 that the 33,000-visa first-half FY2027 H-2B cap filled on September 4, and no supplemental allocation for FY2027 has been announced.

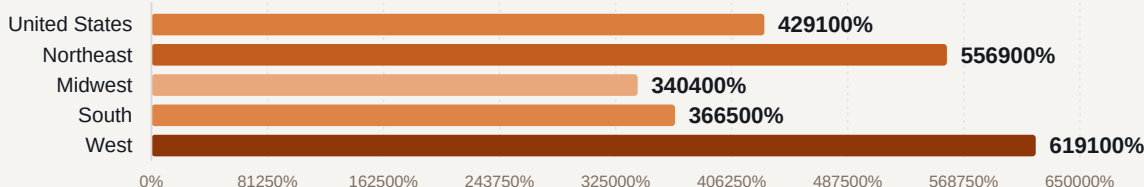
Why it matters: USCIS set a final receipt date of September 4 for the 33,000 first-half FY2027 cap, which covers start dates from October 1, 2026 through March 31, 2027. Any new cap-subject petition with a start date before April 1, 2027 is now rejected, closing the winter window for anyone not already filed. The separate 33,000 second-half allocation covers start dates on or after April 1, 2027. USCIS has not said whether FY2027 supplemental visas will exist, so do not budget on them. This week: confirm receipt notices on anything filed before September 4, start prevailing-wage and ETA-9142B work for April 1, 2027 starts, and plan the winter on domestic hiring and overtime.

[Visas Update, H-2B cap reached for FY 2027 H1 \(Sept 12\)](#)

INFOGRAPHIC 1 / WHAT THE HOUSE IS WORTH

Median existing-home price by region in August 2026, against the national median

Median price of existing homes sold, US dollars; NAR Existing-Home Sales, released September 10, 2026



Regional price spreads decide what a homeowner authorizes without financing. A \$619,100 West median supports a full equipment replacement out of pocket; a \$340,400 Midwest median does not. Price the same job differently by market, and put a financing option in front of every Midwest and South quote. [NAR Existing-Home Sales Report Shows 2.0% Decrease in August \(Sept 10, 2026\)](#)

POOL

TWO ITEMS

REGULATION

PHTA and the International Code Council published ANSI/PHTA/ICC-2 2026 on September 16, the public pool operations and maintenance standard health departments write into code.

Why it matters: The 2026 edition covers water vessels, mechanical systems, chemical treatment systems, decks and ancillary spaces at public pools, spas and aquatic venues. The committee pulled specific water-quality values out of PHTA-2 and now points to ANSI/PHTA/ICC-11 instead, so the numbers your technicians test to live in a different document. That is a paperwork problem first: service logs, operator training material and contract scopes that cite PHTA-2 clause numbers for water quality now point at text that no longer exists. Reprint commercial log sheets and CPO training references against the 2026 edition and PHTA-11 before spring inspections.

PHTA and ICC publish updated PHTA-2 standard (Sept 16)

REGULATION

PHTA opened a 45-day public review on September 18 of a revised PHTA-13 water conservation standard adding leak detection, evaporation and water reuse requirements.

Why it matters: The revision of ANSI/APSP/ICC-13 covers residential and public pools, spas, portable spas and swim spas, and adds requirements and guidance on evaporation mitigation, leak detection and response, water-conditioning devices, and water reclamation and reuse. Practices that were optional move out of the standard into a separate resource guide, so what remains is what a water authority or plan reviewer can cite. In drought-restricted jurisdictions this becomes the text behind fill permits and cover mandates. The review runs 45 days from the September 18 ANSI Standards Action listing. Comment through PHTA's public comment page if leak-detection or reuse language would change how you build, fill or service.

PHTA opens review of PHTA-13 water standard (Sept 18)

APPLIANCE REPAIR

TWO ITEMS

SUPPLY

Commerce set a 56.43% preliminary dumping margin on seamless refined copper pipe and tube from Mexico's largest producer on September 21, using adverse facts available.

Why it matters: The September 21 preliminary results for the November 2024 to October 2025 review assign Nacional de Cobre a 56.43% weighted-average margin for failing to submit information Commerce required; the review was rescinded for Golden Dragon and IUSA. Copper tube is sealed-system stock - line sets, driers, suction and liquid lines - and Mexico is a primary source. A preliminary rate that high points to higher cash deposits and a higher landed cost at your distributor once final results issue. Case briefs are due 14 days after publication. Price sealed-system repairs off current distributor quotes rather than last quarter's, and get lead times in writing before you commit to a flat-rate sealed-system job.

Commerce, copper pipe from Mexico, AD review (Sept 21)

DEMAND

Existing-home sales fell 2.0% in August to a 3.98 million annual rate while inventory reached 1.62 million homes, the highest since November 2019.

Why it matters: NAR's September 10 release puts August sales at a 3.98 million annual pace, down 2.0% on the month and 1.2% on the year, with months' supply at 4.9 from 4.6 and the median price at \$429,100. Fewer closings means fewer of the service calls that cluster around a sale: inspection-driven repairs, warranty work, and the replace-or-repair decision a new owner makes in the first 90 days. With 1.62 million homes listed, sellers carrying time on market are the ones who pay to repair rather than replace. Point fall marketing at repair-to-sell work and at the 30-year-old installed base, and do not build a Q4 plan on move-in replacement volume.

NAR, existing-home sales fell 2.0% in August (Sept 10)

MOVING

TWO ITEMS

SUPPLY

Commerce preliminarily found on September 22 that compacted graphite iron brake drums from China circumvent existing orders, exposing them to a 150.25% antidumping rate.

Why it matters: The September 22 preliminary determination treats CGI brake drums from China with an inside diameter of 14.75 to 16.6 inches and weight over 50 pounds as later-developed merchandise covered by the existing brake drum orders. The China-wide antidumping rate is 150.25% and the all-others countervailing rate 11.94%, and liquidation is suspended on entries from January 27, 2026 - retroactive to drums already invoiced or on your shelf. Those are straight-truck and tractor drum sizes, a moving fleet's routine brake job. Case briefs are due 14 days after publication. Get origin and metallurgy in writing on drums quoted now, and reprice brake work in the maintenance budget.

Commerce, brake drums from China, circumvention (Sept 22)

MONEY

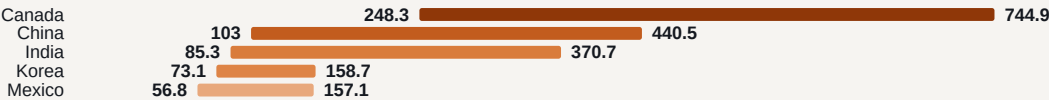
Commerce opened dumping and subsidy investigations on September 14 into linear hydraulic cylinders from five countries, with alleged margins as high as 744.85%.

Why it matters: Petitions from the Hydraulic Cylinders Fair Trade Coalition allege margins of 248.33-744.85% for Canada, 103.05-440.48% for China, 85.31-370.67% for India, 73.09-158.74% for Korea and 56.79-157.12% for Mexico. Scope covers steel-barrel cylinders with a bore of at least one inch and retracted length of at least four inches, plus barrels, piston rods and attached parts - the liftgate, tilt-bed and ramp hardware on a moving fleet, new and replacement. Nothing is owed yet; duties attach at Commerce's preliminary determination, due within 140 days of initiation. Buy the liftgate cylinders and rebuild kits you know you need before that determination, and get country of origin in writing.

Commerce, hydraulic cylinders, 5 countries, LTFV (Sept 14) · Commerce, hydraulic cylinders, 3 countries, CVD (Sept 14)

INFOGRAPHIC 2 / CYLINDER DUTY RISK
Alleged dumping margins on linear hydraulic cylinders, low to high, by country of origin

Petition allegations, percent, in Commerce's initiation notice of September 14, 2026 (91 FR 58060)

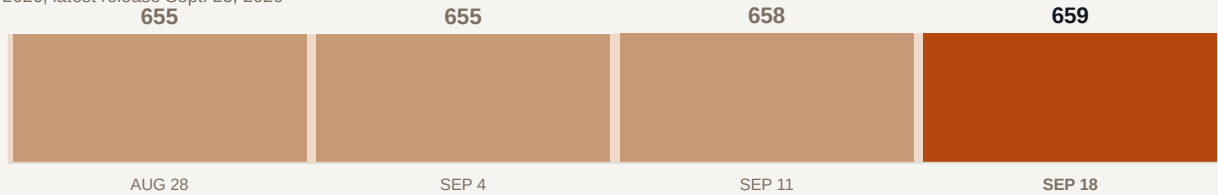


These are petitioners' allegations, not duties owed; Commerce sets the first real rate at its preliminary determination, due within 140 days of the September 14 initiation. Every band starts above 56%, so no listed origin is a hedge. Check origin on liftgate, tilt-bed and excavator cylinder orders now. **Certain Linear Hydraulic Cylinders: Initiation of LTFV Investigations, 91 FR 58060**

INFOGRAPHIC 3 / LAWN NITROGEN COST

Retail urea has moved only \$4 a ton in four weeks and sits 6% above a year ago.

Urea, average U.S. retail price, dollars per ton; DTN Retail Fertilizer Trends weekly survey, weeks ending Aug. 28 to Sept. 18, 2026; latest release Sept. 23, 2026



Urea, a common lawn-care nitrogen source, averaged \$655 a ton in the week ending Aug. 28 and \$659 in the week ending Sept. 18, and DTN said none of the eight fertilizers it tracks moved 5% or more from a month earlier. Urea is 6% above a year ago. For a lawn program, nitrogen is the steady input this fall; insurance renewals and truck costs are the lines to negotiate. [DTN Retail Fertilizer Trends \(Sept. 23\)](#)

THE BACKGROUND SIGNAL

The fraud that reads your invoices before it sends one

The FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center took 24,768 business email compromise reports in 2025, with losses of \$3.05 billion — a record, after dipping to \$2.77 billion in 2024 from \$2.95 billion in 2023. Across all internet crime it logged 1,008,597 complaints and \$20.88 billion in losses. Reported cases only, so read it as a floor.

Business email compromise, not ransomware, is the one that should concern a home services operator. Someone gets into a mailbox, reads until they understand how you invoice and who pays you, then sends a real-looking progress billing with different bank details. No malware, no warning — just a payment that never arrives and an argument about who eats it. A trade that emails estimates, service tickets and supplier invoices all day is the shape this is built for. The quieter number is adoption: under 20% of firms with fewer than 20 staff use AI at all.

What to do about it: You don't need a security program. You need multi-factor authentication on email and your accounting login, and one rule everybody follows: nobody changes bank details on the strength of an email or a call — you ring the number you already had on file and confirm. That covers most of it, and costs nothing. The part it doesn't — how the systems are set up — is the day job of our parent company, CyberSainya.

FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center, 2025 Internet Crime Report — reported cases only, rounded from \$2,946,830,270, \$2,770,151,146 and \$3,046,598,558. U.S. Census Bureau, Business Trends and Outlook Survey, May 3, 2026.

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2 SEE EVERYTHING — YOUR DASHBOARDS

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example view · this month

ANSWERED312BOOKED88CAPTURED124MISSED0

47 calls caught after hours — a 9-to-5 desk would have missed them

CERNO DEAL DESK · OWNER DASHBOARD

example view · this month

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