Old pesticide law now being applied to California courses

Recommendations in writing required before applications

California golf course superintendents are being subjected to a 16-year-old pesticide law that until now has been applied only to agriculture. Since 1975, California golf courses have been required to have written recommendations for all applications. However, the local agriculture commissioners have not enforced this section of the code. City, county and state government agencies have had exemptions from needing written recommendations.

In 1989, however, a new law removed the exemption. All agriculture use pesticide applications - including golf courses - were affected.

Now, golf courses must have a written recommendation from an agricultural "pest control adviser" to receive an agricultural "pest control adviser" license from the state. This is required to register pesticides used in California.

Genetically engineered pesticides win conditional OK

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has given a conditional pesticide registration to two pesticides derived from biological organisms that have been genetically engineered using recombinant DNA techniques.

Both products, the M-One Plus Bioinsecticide and the MVP Bioinsecticide, are manufactured by Mycogen Corp. of San Diego, Calif. They will be used to control beetle and caterpillar pests.

Each pesticide consists of pseudomonas fluorescens genetically engineered to contain a different delta endotoxin (toxic protein crystal) of Bacillus thuringiensis (B.t.). The genetically engineered micro-organisms produce the delta endotoxin crystal during growth in a fermenter under controlled conditions.

Subsequently, the pseudomonas fluorescens organisms are killed, resulting in B.t. toxin crystal encapsulated by the dead pseudomonas fluorescens. The dead pseudomonas fluorescens serves to protect the B.t. endotoxin against ultraviolet light and therefore to lengthen the effective life of the B.t. toxin.

The toxins eventually kill the targeted insects by paralyzing their gut and releasing the toxin into the insect's body. The toxins become active when eaten.

EPA believes M-One Plus and MVP will not pose an unreasonable risk to humans, birds, mammals or other non-target vertebrates.

Some big names have already started arriving for the 1992 PGA Championship

Hosting one of golf's four major championships is a huge job. Just ask Superintendent Tom Van De Walle of St. Louis' Bellerive Country Club - site of the 1992 PGA Championship.

"I came here in 1986 with the major responsibility of getting Bellerive ready for the PGA," says Van De Walle. "Six years sounds like a lot of time, but we've rebuilt greens, tees, bunkers, fairways - even redesigned some holes entirely - and we still have a lot left to do."

"John Deere has played a big role in our success. We mow greens with the John Deere 22s, fairways with a 5-reel 3325 Turf Mower and tees and intermediate rough with a 3-reel 856 Reel Mounted Mower. The condition of the John Deere 3325 and 856 are the only mowers we've found that can handle it. Their cutting units stay true and don't let the turf get puffy. Plus, the single lever lift on the 3325 improves our fairways by allowing us to cross-cut more easily. In fact, the 3325 has done so well, we plan to buy another one next year."

Tom Van De Walle of St. Louis' Bellerive Country Club is using a fleet of John Deere reel mowers to help him prepare for the 1992 PGA Championship.

"I'm very happy with the John Deere mowers. We have the best grass in the area," says Van De Walle. "I don't think there's a mower that can do everything the John Deere 3325 can do."

For the name of your nearest distributor, call 1-800-544-2122 toll free or write John Deere, Dept. 956, Moline, IL 61265. We know, like Tom Van De Walle, you're going to like what you see.