Crackdowns expected against underground tank law violators

By John G. Casanova, Ron Steg and GNC Staff

Federal and state agencies are beginning to talk tough as deadlines for installing leak detection devices on underground storage tanks come and go.

"If your tank leaks you're going to get caught," warned federal Environmental Protection Agency scientist Michael Kalinski, whose agency can fine the owner of a non-conforming tank up to $10,000 per tank per day.

"At the point you have a leak, you're in real trouble. Leaks don't go away. They can take from one to five years to discover and cost millions of dollars to clean up. It's better to confront the issue now rather than pay for it later."

Confronting the issue involves several steps. Federal law required all USTs to be registered with the appropriate state environmental agency beginning in May 1986. Newly installed systems must be registered within 30 days.

Kalinski estimated 90 to 95 percent of all tanks have been registered. Ignorance of the law is likely responsible for most of the non-registered tanks, although a small percent-age are probably ignoring the law in the hopes they won't be caught, he acknowledged.

"We have fined tank owners in a couple of cases where (non-registered) tanks have leaked," Kalinski said.

"At some point, ignorance of the law won't be a defense," added Chris Schult, public information officer with the Ohio State Fire Marshal's Office, which is responsible for

CCA beats winter kill before it hits

By Frances G. Trimble

The extensive winter kill suffered at Texas golf courses last year may have a positive side.

One group of Southwestern superintendents intends to put the devastation in the past by taking a giant stride forward into the future.

Charles Fabian, regional superintendent for Club Corporation of America's 22 golf facilities in Texas and Oklahoma, calls CCA's recent decision to buy green covers at $700 apiece "a tough decision to make."

"Tough, because Fabian's region could just as easily not experience killer cold conditions this year. Or, the area — known for freakish weather — might have another damaging cold spell before April.

Lingerings memories of "the hassle of re-planning and re-planting 142 putting greens" at a cost of $250,000 led Fabian and CCA to buy protective blankets for all 22 facilities.

He added, "The ones Quenton covered

Environment dominated Faubel's presidency

By Peter Blais

Gerald Faubel hopes people will remember his term as president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America as a time when the entire golf industry focused on the importance of the environment.

"We've polled ourselves, we're truly concerned and we will act," said the outgoing GCSSA president. "You don't see many industries that do their own research, find fault and make changes without government forcing them to do it.

Faubel said he has thoroughly enjoyed his year as president, which ends during this month's GCSAA Annual Conference and Show in Las Vegas.

"It's been a real pleasure to represent an organization dedicated to teaching its members relevant subjects. We've gotten tremendous cooperation from everyone in the industry, (PGA Tour Commissioner) Deane Beman has even recognized the importance of the golf course superintendent in getting the environmental matter taken care of."

Faubel has stressed the need for cooperation rather than confrontation between the golf industry and environmentalists.

During the past year, EPA administrator Anne Leslie was named to the United States Golf Association Environment and Research Committee; GCSAA secretary/treasurer Bill Roberts testified before a U.S. Senate hearing on the environment; the USGA and the New York Audubon Society started a program that will make golf courses bird sanctuaries.

"(EPA Associate Administrator) Lewis Crampton said at the Golf Summit how much he appreciated the GCSAA's effort to work with government agencies," Faubel said.