California EPA to consolidate its many environmental laws

By BARNABY WICHHAM

Sacramento, Calif. — The state Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has undertaken plans to consolidate California's myriad environmental laws into a single, unified statute.

This statute would organize laws along functional lines that cut across environmental concerns (such as permitting and enforcement), in place of the current divisions along lines of air and water quality, solid and hazardous waste, pesticides and scientific risk assessment.

Although the proposed consolidation of legislation would alter regulation use of reclaimed water; fertilizers and pesticides, Deputy Secretary of the California EPA Mike Kahoe said he was not aware of any changes that would adversely affect golf courses. According to Kahoe, the purpose of the change is intended to cut out duplicative and overlapping laws.

A more consistent set of requirements would allow more coordination among regulating agencies, Kahoe said. "This would allow us to be more focused on what are the true environmental risks," he said.

Golf course architect Ted Robinson, a veteran of design in the West, said consolidation of environmental laws to a singular source could be beneficial to the California golf industry.

"The major problem is we have laws that address the speed by which [pesticide] registration and reregistration is done," Scott said. "The law is a process that is to be more focused on what are the true environmental risks," he said.

A task force consisting of legal experts and environmental representatives is charged with developing a proposal by year's end. Kahoe said this proposal should be introduced to the Legislature in January 1995.

PVP legislation

Continued from previous page another variety, he must reach an agreement to pay a royalty for, in essence, using their research.

"As an example," said Skip Lynch, marketing director for Seed Research of Oregon, "if you have a Kentucky bluegrass like Midnight which took a lot of years and money to develop, say someone at another company or university took a gene for Roundup resistance and inserted it into Midnight, because of way bluegrasses operate... you would have all the turf characteristics of Midnight and protection from Roundup. You have a unique characteristic for PVP but are taking advantage of all the research for Midnight.

The new law is also expected to get rid of the Farmer Save Exemption. In the past, a farmer could save seed from his own harvest to plant his own fields with. "It turned into a gray market," Lynch said. "As long as his primary business was a farm, he could sell the seed to other farmers."

Companies now won't be allowed to save enough seed to plant on their own land.

"The seed industry has not had necessarily the best reputation in the turf industry," Lynch said. "We're sometimes the ugly sister of the turf industry, and anything that can be done to clean up and police the PVP is going to be good for the industry as a whole."