EPA settles on nat'l emissions standards for small engines

By Hal Phillips

ASHINGTON, D.C. — Small engines may cost $5 to $7 more to manufacture come 1997, when the federal Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) new regulations on small-engine emissions take effect.

The EPA has finalized the first national set of regulations affecting small, gasoline-powered engines used primarily in the turf and lawn and garden industries. Under the new guidelines, all small engines — anything at or below 19 kilowatts (about 25 horsepower) — manufactured after Jan. 1, 1997, are expected to conform. EPA expects the new guidelines will result in a 32-percent reduction in hydrocarbon emissions and a 7-percent reduction in carbon monoxide emissions.

"This goal was announced in the Clean Air Act amendments of 1990," explained EPA Environmental Scientist Mary Walsh. "We had a timetable whereby these changes had to be completed by a certain time. This rule change was delayed for a time, but eventually there's a lawsuit brought by the Sierra Club that furthered this along."

Repercussions in the golf industry will be widespread, as the engines used in mowers, utility vehicles, hand-held blowers and trimmers, golf cars and pumps among others will be expected to fail in line. According to Walsh, the $5 to $7 increase will represent a 2-percent cost hike for non-hand-held equipment (6 percent for hand-held) relative to current production costs.

All those engines produced for the 1997 model year must comply. All existing inventory is grandfathered and, "As long as there is no evidence of stockpiling of engines produced prior to Jan. 1, 1997, they don't have to be taken out of service," Walsh explained.

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NGF buying program attracts second firm

JUPITER, Fla. — Scorecard Plus, which specializes in custom-designed booklets that serve as both yardage guides and scorecards, has become the second company to join the National Golf Foundation's (NGF) "Advantage Buying Program." The NGF is developing for its golf facility members to provide exclusive discounts from preferred suppliers of golf products and services. As a result of the partnership with Scorecard Plus, NGF facility members can annually receive a year's supply of advertising-supported booklets free of charge, a potential savings of $1,250 per facility, per year. The Miamibased Thor Guard Co., which developed a lightning prediction system, was the first member of the NGF's new program. For more information on the NGF's "Advantage Buying Program" call 407-744-6006.

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