Head protection pushed in Minnesota; rolling out the grass carp-et in California

According to a letter circulated to superintendents and other turf groups in Minnesota, the state OSHA plans to re-double its efforts with regard to head protection and roll-over enforcement:

"Rollover protection and seat belts are required on all motorized, self-propelled vehicles and mowers that are equipped with a 20 horsepower motor and above," reads S. 182.653, Sub. 2. "Four-wheeled vehicles and mowers operating on flat terrain only will be exempt. Three-wheeled vehicles have no exemption."

"Any employee exposed to flying objects or subjected to possible injury by flying objects needs to wear head protection (such as a hard hat). Employers are required to provide this head protection for their employees."

The letter also makes it clear that golf courses are a primary focus of the two enforcement initiatives. Meanwhile, superintendents in California are leading efforts to legalize the use of grass carp as an aquatic weed control method on Golden State courses. The California GCSA successfully pushed for introduction of SB 157, which would make it legal to introduce triploid (sterile) species of white amur, commonly known as the grass carp, into golf course ponds and lakes. Use of the fish in impound-ments that feed into the Sac-ramento or San Joaquin riv-ers would be delayed until 2001, assuming no harm comes from use of the white amur in other areas before that time.

Also in California, hovering mower di-stributors received an emissions setback from the California Air Resources Board (CARB), whose written directive denies a request that hovering mowers be ex-empted as a hand-held, two-stroke de-vice. CARB spokesman Jerry Martin indi-cated the Flymo was not a "true necessity" for golf courses because of the availability of string trimmers.

Also, Kawasaki USA's Engine Division has announced the receipt of certification by CARB for its FB460V engine; bringing the total number of Kawasaki engine mod-els certified to meet the emissions require-ments to 12. The Kawasaki FB460V, a 12.5-horsepower, four-stroke vertical shaft engine, has been certified under the rigid California standards, which are expected to be adopted nationwide in the future.

DowElanco settles
Continued from page 39

were concerned to learn that we had not met agency expectations in the case at hand. We have made a careful evaluation of the reporting process by which we provide information to EPA and have committed additional re-sources in order to avoid a rep-etition of these issues in the fu-ture."

According to EPA, DowElanco reported 249 incidents to EPA after the 30-day time period specified in EPA guidance. EPA's review of these incidents indi-cated DowElanco had not been reporting adverse effects inci-dents that it learned of through personal injury claims and law-suits. After EPA sent DowElanco a "show cause" letter, the com-pany submitted information on additional incidents. The bulk of the information arose from personal injury claims filed against DowElanco relating to chlorpyrifos. Re-ported adverse effects, which span about a decade, included cases of alleged peripheral neuropathy and other chronic neurological effects. Peripheral neuropathy involves the nerves of the arms and legs.

"EPA asserts," the company statement continues, "that DowElanco was late in submit-ting reports providing notice of allegations drawn from its claims and litigation files. DowElanco voluntarily disclosed allegations from these files and has cooper-ated fully in providing informa-tion in response to EPA requests. This information has been pro-vided even though it is drawn from allegations of individuals seeking compensation and is not regarded by DowElanco as fac-tual information."

"Along with our submission of claims-related allegations, DowElanco also provided the Agency with a safety assessment related to these claims. Based on this assessment, we remain confident of the wide margins of safety that exist for our products under conditions of use."

EPA's Dr. Lynn Goldman noted that the incident reports obtained in this actions are par-ticularly important because EPA is currently reviewing the registra-tion for chlorpyrifos.

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