Breaking down the myths

Did you know that 1 part per billion is equivalent to one bogey in 3-1/2 million golf tournaments? Well, that's hard to relate to, so let's try this: 1 inch in 16,000 miles, or 1 second in 32 years. OK, so after applying dicamba to a USGA-spec golf green, Drs. George Snyder and John Ciris of the University of Florida find 2.5 parts per billion of the herbicide in the leachate from that green. Are you ready to jump off the nearest four-story roof if that were in your drinking water? Do you want to take the nasty stuff off the market? And 2,4-D, for that matter, its leaching was similar.

Many are probably lining up now to say: “Call in Greenpeace.”

“Call in Earth First!”

“Call in Al Gore!”

No, hold on ... but hold that thought.

Tests found that 2,629 milligrams of dicamba per liter of water were necessary to harm a rat, and 1,000 milligrams per liter for rainbow trout and bluegill.

2,4-D is even less of a danger, having a toxicity somewhere between aspirin and caffeine. Trout and bluegill, ducks and quail would almost have to wash down their meals with 2,4-D to cause concern.

Keeping in mind that it's the feds who have determined allowable levels, perhaps it's better to call in ... the National Guard. Do I hear support? Cheers.

Hey, we need these good all-American peace-keeping folks to hand out food in Africa, control order at the voting booths in Haiti and build boat landings. Let's put them to use here in America. I'm sure we could find some good all-American college professors to volunteer to train the troops to take leachate readings — and they could eat the meek and the head of the class.

My point? When the media, and those who use the media, make public statements about this herbicide or that pesticide “being detected in” ground water or drinking water, they put the amount of that detection in perspective.

Is this a new message? No. But it is one that apparently needs repeating. A Rutgers University professor interviewed recently warned people not to lick their golf balls and tees, and golf's good friend Paul Harvey was only too willing to be the broadcasting mouthpiece to all America. He didn't even need any prodding from Mr. Gore.

For golf course managers/trend-watchers who want to be pro-active pioneers: You might consider assigning spaces in the “Who's Who” section. You'll be using the best collections of names in the business for Public Golf Forum. The structure is simple: Two days; three conference tracks — Management/Marketing, Development and Maintenance; 28 sessions including presentations by Billy Casper, Judy Bell and Michael Hurdzan; and a gathering of exhibitors who will call to order one the best collections of names in the business for Public Golf Forum. The structure is simple: Two days; three conference tracks — Management/Marketing, Development and Maintenance; 28 sessions including presentations by Billy Casper, Judy Bell and Michael Hurdzan; and a gathering of exhibitors who service the public golf arena (see ad on page 12 for more details). Within those two days, Public Golf Forum will play host to fresh ideas on how to stay profitable as your golf course continues to compete for America's leisure time.

But since chances are that your public course isn't free and clear of increased competition and pressures for improvement, attending a conference and expose strictly devoted to overcoming those exact business hurdles isn't such a bad idea — it might even bring you a little closer to that "ideal world."

On October 27 & 28 in Oak Brook Hills, III. (just outside of Chicago), Golf Course News will call to order one the best collections of names in the business for Public Golf Forum. The structure is simple: Two days; three conference tracks — Management/Marketing, Development and Maintenance; 28 sessions including presentations by Billy Casper, Judy Bell and Michael Hurdzan; and a gathering of exhibitors who service the public golf arena (see ad on page 12 for more details). Within those two days, Public Golf Forum will play host to fresh ideas on how to stay profitable as your golf course continues to compete for America's leisure time.

What Public Golf Forum can do for your facility is up to you. You can come, listen and interact and I'll personally share one war story or make one note inside your conference resources manual, you've paid for your trip.

So beat the heat and implement the policy yourself. Mind you, this may be mandated in a couple of States.