News

Acid rain becoming conservation issue

Speaking before the Symposium on Acid Rain in Wisconsin, M. Rupert Cutler, Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, told the group, "We know enough about acid rain and other forms of atmospheric deposition to be seriously concerned about the long-term effects on these resources. This is quickly becoming one of the great conservation issues of our time."

Speaking about federal acid rain programs, Cutler outlined the two principles shaping the federal outlook. "First", he said, "Acid deposition is a symptom, rather than a cause. Acid rain is one of many symptoms of air pollution, specifically of the sulfur and nitrogen oxide components of polluted air.

"To alleviate those symptoms, we must address the cause of air pollution. To stop acid rain, for example, we need to control sulfur and nitrogen oxide emissions, instead of liming lakes and streams.

"Second, acid rain illustrates an adaptation of the old adage that 'What goes up, will come down—somewhere else'. Sulfur emissions from the coal burning power plants and smelters of the Midwest and the Ohio River Valley come down as acid rain elsewhere, perhaps over northern New York State, New England and Ontario."

Acid depositon probably is most severe in the Northeast. The natural pH of rainfall is around 5.6, but precipitation in many eastern states now registers an annual mean pH between 4 and 4.5. Many areas experience rainfall with a pH less that 4.0, some as low as 3.0.

Cutler cited several federal research projects underway to analyze acid rain's effect upon forest ecosystems. The Science and Education Administration is examining the mechanisms of plant resistance and susceptibility to acid rain and developing acid rain-resistant plants. A study is underway in St. Paul to determine the correlation between acid rain and the occurrence of plant diseases. Acid rain could make vegetation more susceptible to disease, insects and drought.

The National Atmospheric Deposition Program, established in 1977, monitors acid rain through a network of over 50 sampling sites throughout the United States.

2,4-D makers given 90 days for data

If manufacturers of 2,4-D fail to notify EPA within 90 days that they will provide information that EPA has requested, the agency will use a stringent new provision of the pesticides law, Section 3(c)(2)(B), which allows the agency to stop all uses of the pesticide, according to Barbara Blum, Deputy Administrator of EPA. Blum said, "We have made this decision (to request additional data) following a review of health effects studies of 2,4-D. The review showed that significant information gaps exist on the effects of 2,4-D, preventing a definite conclusion on the safety of the herbicide.

If however, the manufacturers comply with the data request, Blum said that EPA will allow 2,4-D to continue to be used while studies are underway. If, however, any of the new studies demonstrate a major health or environmental problem, EPA would take appropriate regulatory action without waiting for completion of all the studies.

Much of the concern that 2,4-D has adverse qualities comes from its association with 2,4,5-T, especially the mixture known as Agent Orange used in Viet Nam. However, Blum said, "There is no evidence at this time that 2,4-D contains any form of dioxin, the contaminant in 2,4,5-T associated with cancerous tumors and birth defects."

The EPA is requesting additional data in the areas of oncogenicity (tumor inducing), reproductive effects (particularly effects to the fetus), and metabolism in animals. EPA also plans to conduct certain reproductive studies on 2,4-D in its own laboratories while awaiting the industry results.

EPA does say that toxicity studies which were found to be scientifically valid indicates that continued use of the pesticide does not pose an imminent hazard or unreasonable adverse effect. The acute toxicity is regarded as low to moderate and the majority of mutagenicity tests have been negative.

Buckner bought by Royal Coach Sprinklers

Royal Coach Sprinklers, Inc., a Fresno, California irrigation equipment manufacturer, has purchased the Buckner Irrigation System Division from Johns-Manville. James Coson had purchased the Buckner firm in 1961 and was president until he sold it to Johns-Manville in 1972. In 1975, Coson opened Royal Coach Sprinklers, Inc., and introduced the first video computer system to the turf irrigation field in 1978. Now, Bucker is back in the fold.

Speaking of the purchase, Coson said, "The two product lines will be combined into one brand, Royal Coach-Buckner, making the total package one of the most complete in the industry. We plan to keep all of the Buckner distributors who wish to join our firms. The addition of these firms to the Royal Coach distributors gives us excellent distribution and service throughout the United States and the world. This should strengthen the irrigation industry."

Plans are underway to move the inventory and manufacturing equipment to the Royal Coach facilities as soon as possible. Plans are also being made to expand the manufacturing facility. Royal Coach completed a new automated brass foundry two years ago and also a complete screw machine facility which gives them total autonomy in the manufacturing of sprinkler irrigation equipment.

Beavers joins staff of GOLF BUSINESS

Bob Beavers, pictured above, has joined the staff of *Golf Business* magazine as Northeastern regional sales manager. Bob has a long history of involvement with the golf industry. He was with the Sports Division of Dunlop Tire and Rubber Corporation for 11 years. His area of responsibility included 10 Southeastern states and ranked number one in profit and sales goal achievement three out of six years.

Bob received his education at West Virginia University in Morgantown and was a self-employed golf professional for nine years. He has been involved in golf course construction and has a good an excellent working knowledge of golf course maintenance, management and retail sales.

Desert Horizons is two-for-one course

While there is just one physical presence, a 6,600 yard, par-72 layout, it can be played in two distinctly different ways. One is as a membership course for the enjoyment of the average country club golfer; the other is as a championship course challenging the top pros on the PGA Tour.

Architect Ted Robinson explains by taking a green as an example. The right side of it is fairly wide and there are no obstacles to the front or rear. Put the pin out in the middle and you've got a fairly easy approach shot. The upper left side of the green is narrow with traps front and rear. Put the pin in a corner and you've got Lee Trevino sweating.

"We can make a similar change at every hole, creating a facility for all caliber of golfers," says Robinson. Robinson, one of the few golf course architects who is also a land planner, took nine months to plan and design the Desert Horizons course, located in Indian Wells, California. In order to get away from the typical flat course, one million cubic yards of dirt were moved. Five lakes were dug out and shaped to form part of the design and to create, along with streams and waterfalls, a pleasant oasis atmosphere.

$1.6 billion loss forecast for fed contractor payment ban

The National Club Association (NCA) has demanded that the Department of Labor retract proposed regulations banning federal contractor payments to selective admissions organizations. The NCA estimates that the rules would result in an average of 21 to 32 percent revenue loss, totaling $1.6 billion for the industry.

NCA also cited survey figures warning of the elimination of 87,250 club jobs and a contractor compliance cost of over $150 million. NCA presented statistics from one of their surveys showing the proposed labor regulations would cost an average $307,580 for country clubs and $447,144 for city clubs.

NCA maintains that the proposed rules are invalid, since the Labor Department failed to conduct a regulatory analysis of the proposal's impact on the private sector of the economy, as required by law.