

## In the Crosshairs

# Network Expansion Opportunities

By ELIZABETH GROTONS

Grassroots Manager, RISE  
(Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment)

### *Network Expansion Opportunities*

One of the 2008 goals for the RISE grassroots program is to increase the number of people in our network to 1,000 individuals. I need your help! Please pass the word to your colleagues, competitors and customers. Interested individuals need to just send me an email at [egrotos@pestfacts.org](mailto:egrotos@pestfacts.org) to be added to the list.

RISE is also looking to engage former members of our industry in our grassroots efforts. If you know someone that has retired or moved away from our industry, but might be interested in engaging in local advocacy efforts, please let me know.

Does your company or association have a conference coming up where a grassroots advocacy message is a good fit? Please contact me. I am available to provide presentations about industry trends, local activities and promotion of the RISE grassroots program.

### *Lessons Learned*

As we dive into the third year of our industry grassroots program, I want to briefly discuss some lessons I have learned so far in my position. First, the rules of engagement are very different in local politics. Proposals move quickly, science often does not prevail and industry representation can make a difference! Second, some grassroots advocacy efforts involve just a few phone calls while others require a full-fledged campaign over several months. Finally, no situation is the same.

### *Here Are Some Examples:*

When one of our advocates called about a community in Michigan considering an herbicide spray ban, we learned from a state ally that state pesticide preemption law prohibited such action. We were able to gain commitment from the state Department of Agriculture to write to the town commissioner about the state law.

In Suffolk County, New York, despite months of active local industry involvement, the legislature passed a fertilizer reduction proposal. However, viewpoints expressed by local industry representatives did result in some positive changes to the final proposal. Continued engagement in this community is needed to make sure that educational materials being developed by county staff will remain focused on best management practices and proper use.

We were alerted to an environmental activist's online campaign to eliminate herbicide spraying in and around area parks in a North Carolina community. We contacted local park personnel, industry representatives and the utility contractor to help thwart this effort from influencing control decisions.

A community in Illinois passed a fertilizer restrictive ordinance. We read about it in the paper the next day. If we had been alerted, we might have been able to influence the outcome of the vote.

RISE can not influence local proposals if we don't know about them! Please contact me with news about efforts in your area to ban or restrict pesticide and fertilizer use. Together, we can educate local elected officials about the benefits of our products.

### *Resources Available For Grassroots Advocacy*


In response to a request from one of our network members, RISE developed the attached "Freedom to Choose, Freedom to Use" brochure, which can be personalized with your business name and included with customer invoices. The piece focuses on the benefits of well-maintained turf and landscapes.

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## In the Crosshairs-

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Environment & Climate News published an article focused on scientific research showing that phosphorous fertilization reduced the amount of phosphorous run-off. The article (visit [www.heartland.org/Article.cfm?artId=22224](http://www.heartland.org/Article.cfm?artId=22224)) cited research results that banning phosphorus in fertilizer does not reduce phosphorous runoff into water bodies. Lawns treated with phosphorous fertilizers produced less phosphorous runoff than those where no phosphorous was applied.

On average, runoff was 78% greater from unfertilized plots than from fertilized plots.

Please feel free to use these resources in your efforts to address restrictive local proposals.

\* \* \* \* \*

(Editor's Note: Elizabeth Grotos is Grassroots Manager for RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment). Elizabeth may be reached at (202) 872-3869 or [grotos@pestfacts.org](mailto:grotos@pestfacts.org).)

## It's in the Hole .....

### January 31 Was Special In Orlando, Florida...

One-hundred fifty two members of the MGCSA gathered at the Tommy Bahama Tropical Cafe in Orlando, Fla. for a hospitality night gathering. The event was sponsored by 22 MGCSA Affiliate members' companies.

### ...and in Minnesota, too

While MGCSA members were having fun in Orlando, Jessica and Ben Just were having a very special time in Minnesota.

The Justs happily announce the birth of Hannah Just. She was born on January 31 (MGCSA Hospitality Night in Orlando) weighing 8 lbs., 4 oz. and 21" long. She pretty much eats and sleeps. Both Jessica and Hannah are doing great. Ben is Superintendent at Midland Hills Country Club in St. Paul.



Hannah Just

### Brian Brown Appointed To MGCSA Board

Brian Brown, Superintendent at Chisago Lakes Golf Club, graciously accepted the board position vacated by Paul Diegnau's advancement to Vice President.



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