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# EPA to place emphasis on enforcement

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has said that it will place greater emphasis and devote more resources to the stricter enforcement of existing environmental laws, such as the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). Any environmental law violator

and fined \$15.5 million dollars and ordered to pay \$3.7 million in restitution to former clients. Additionally, 14 former employees were given either probation, weekend prison terms, or were made to do community service and were issued fines that ranged from \$10,000 to \$30,000.

The EPA said that the employees had systematically falsified lab notebooks and fixed scientific testing equipment to produce erroneous results which were then submitted by the pesticide manufacturer to the EPA in the pesticide registration process.

In Arizona, an aerial pesticide applicator was sentenced to a one year prison term for treating, storing, and disposing of hazardous wastes without a permit. Additionally, Mark Steven Stewart, the applicator and owner of OMNI Applicators, Inc., was ordered to refrain from employment in the application industry for five years. His company was prohibited from operating in the aerial application field for 25 years. Finally, the company's two crop dusting planes were sold to help pay for the estimated \$70,000 in

## EPA planned actions:

- consolidate its many different enforcement activities into one
- change the emphasis of prosecutions from companies and to individual violators
- increase the number of EPA enforcement agents from 64 now to 200 by 1996
- train state and local law enforcement officials to recognize environmental crimes
- issue new guidelines to enforcement agents to outline those factors that they should use to determine whether a case should merit criminal investigation
- improve the enforcement agencies' capabilities to target repeat violators by combining the many EPA databases to develop repeat violator's histories and identify those individuals for closer enforcement monitoring
- eliminate the practice of allowing voluntary environmental audits as a means of avoiding prosecution for past environmental violations.

would be subject to possible criminal trial with possible heavy fines and jail terms, depending on the severity of the violation.

## Two examples of increased enforcement

In federal court in Texas, Don Allen Craven, owner of Craven Laboratories, was sentenced to five years in prison and given a \$50,000 fine for falsifying pesticide residue test results. The company was put on probation for five years

clean-up costs resulting from the illegal activities.

*TGT's view - The EPA is finally putting some teeth into an enforcement program. Turf managers must be aware they can no longer deal with meeting environmental regulations at a later date. This increased emphasis on compliance indicates that time has run out. The December 1993 issue of Turf Grass Trends lists many of the agencies that can help turf managers become better informed. -CS*