



Schwarzenegger, Lawmakers, Reach Compromise on Workers' Comp Plan

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and legislative leaders cut a tentative deal on workers' compensation reform and worked into the night on details of the landmark plan designed to save California businesses billions of dollars a year.

A six-member bipartisan legislative conference committee was scheduled to begin deliberating over the agreement. If approved by the committee, the reform bill will face votes on the Assembly and Senate floors, with passage representing a major political triumph for Schwarzenegger.

"It saves billions of dollars, it reforms workers' comp and will allow jobs to be attracted to this state -- which was the campaign promise this governor made six months ago," said Rob Stutzman, Schwarzenegger's communications director.

Although many details remain to be worked out, officials said Schwarzenegger succeeded in keeping regulation of insurance rates

off the table. Agreement also was reached on a second key point he sought: allowing insurers and employers to create pools of doctors injured workers must use.

State law requires businesses to carry workers' compensation insurance to cover medical and disability costs for employees hurt on the job. In recent years, premiums have tripled, even in the midst of declining accident rates and improved safety standards.

Schwarzenegger has threatened to take his reform plan to the Nov. 2 ballot -- enough signatures have been collected to do so -- if the Legislature does not act.

The governor and like-minded lawmakers are moving to stop firms like Larsen Supply Co., a 130-employee plumbing-supply wholesaler in Santa Fe Springs, from moving out of state. The company employed 140 people in 1999, but has reduced its work force since -- and could be headed toward more layoffs this year -- because premiums have soared from \$30,000 annually in 1999 to \$467,000 this year.

Alan Holderness, the firm's controller, was unconcerned with the political arguments over how to achieve reform. He just wants his company to realize significant, immediate savings so that it can afford to remain in Southern California, where it has been for 70 years.

"Businesses are really, really hurting," he said. "It's not as though we don't want to stay here, because we really, really do."

The administration, and some legislators familiar with the package, say it will provide the rate-relief businesses are looking for -- though Stutzman, when asked, could not provide an estimate of how many "billions of dollars" the plan would save.

The final components of the bill are continuing to evolve. But among the many factors causing rates in California to be unusually high, that have been resolved, are:

--Permanent Partial Disability: This term describes an employee who, because of an injury sustained on the job, is classified as partially disabled on a permanent basis. Steinberg said steps would be taken to end the abuse caused by classifying workers as such who should not be.

He also said additional, tentatively agreed-upon reforms would allow injured employees to get immediate medical attention, and facilitate their getting "back to work sooner rather than later."

--Apportionment: Employers are often held liable for 100 percent of an injury even when a worker's job is not responsible for causing all of it, as the employee might have had previous injuries or non job-related injuries. McCarthy said he is pleased that the proposed reforms to deal with this key issue would address this unfair practice.

Steinberg acknowledged that some workers-rights advocates were disappointed with the compromise, but noted that the package would not result in lower benefits. Stutzman agreed, saying the real losers in this process were the trial lawyers and unscrupulous doctors.

"This is part of the special interests that need to be booted out of the (Capitol). And they're being served notice through this reform ... that they don't have the influence here they had before," Stutzman said.

Inland Valley Daily Bulletin, Calif. Knight Ridder/Tribune Business News 4-15-04
By David M. Drucker

STATE NEWS

California Lawmakers Seek to Clarify Leaf Blower Legislation

Assembly Bill 2128 would require the State Air Resources Board to regulate the use of, and emission of the air contaminants caused by, leaf blowers in the state. The state board currently regulates non-vehicle engine categories including utility engines. Regulating leaf blowers has been an issue in California over the

past years and many cities throughout the state have developed their own leaf blower regulations. Some cities have banned their use altogether. A.B. 2128 would attempt to create a uniform solution to stop the patchwork of regulations being enacted by cities on leaf blowers.

In The News

TheSCOOP

by Media Relations Consultant,
Emmy Moore Minister



Bob Costa

GCSANC Past President

CGCS, takes a moment for a television interview at Pebble Beach, CA, sharing his thoughts about current trends in the industry. In addition to his daily responsibilities overseeing the maintenance operations at Laguna Seca GC and Rancho Canada GC, Costa serves on the GCSAA Environmental Programs Committee and chairs the Water Use Task Force Sub-committee. He is also a member of the California Allied Water Task Force Committee.



Dave Davies

GCSAA Conference

Dave Davies, CGCS, stands before a directional sign at the GCSAA conference. If you ask Dave where he's headed, in his mind all signs point to the new Calippe Preserve Golf Course in Pleasanton, CA, where he now serves as golf course superintendent.

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Letting the Numbers Tell The Story On Cart Damage

David L. Wienecke, Agronomist,

February 23, 2004 - Southwest Region, USGA Green Section

"Why can't I drive my own cart on my golf course! It seems to me that one golf cart per golfer will cause less damage compared to two golfers per cart (an additional 250 pounds!)."

This is an actual question received recently from a golfer wanting to know why it was better for the golf course to have two golfers in each cart instead of one golfer for every golf cart driven on the golf course.

Cart damage defined – Turf wear damage caused by golf carts includes: **1) turf and soil compaction due to the weight of the golf cart, 2) abrasion and wear caused by repeated and concentrated traction including stopping, starting, and driving, and 3) impact damage from the golf cart.**

Compaction damage - is typically an indirect problem commonly resulting in soil compaction. The following list detail actual compression calculations in pounds per square inch:

- 200 lb golfer heel of foot (walking) = 25 pounds per sq. in. (psi)
- 200 lb golfer ball of foot (walking) = 16.6 psi
- 200 lb golfer full foot (standing) = 10 psi
- 200 lb golfer both feet (standing) = 5 psi
- hand pull golf cart (17 lb) 2" wide tires = 2.1 psi (two tires)
- hand pull golf cart 3" wide tires = 1.4 psi (two tires)
- hand pull golf cart 4" wide tires = 1.1 psi (two tires)
- electric golf cart (empty, i.e. 950 lb) with four 8" wide tires = 3.7 psi
- electric golf cart with one person & gear (1,200 lb) = 4.7 psi
- electric golf cart with two people & gear (1,450 lb) = 5.7 psi
- Maintenance pickup truck (3,000 lb) = 25 psi

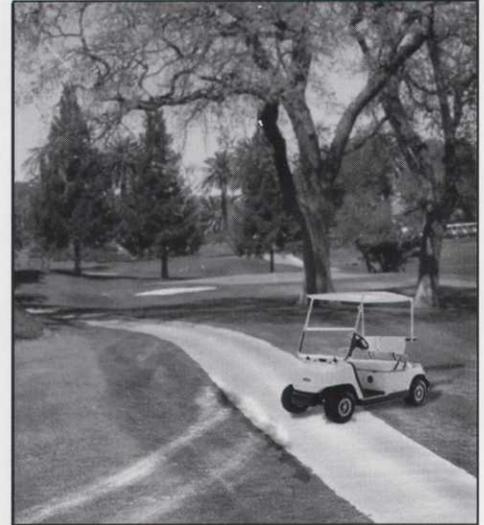
Based on compression pressure, we would expect to see most golf course damage caused by walking golfers yet we see predominantly see golf course traffic damage caused by four wheel motorized golf carts.

Let's examine area impacted by different play types to understand why four-wheel golf carts impact the golf course so dramatically. The following list shows the estimated average area impacted when playing a normal 6,200-yard golf course:

- Walking golfer with golf bag (9 holes) = 15,500 sq. ft.
- Walking golfer with golf bag (18 holes) = 31,000 sq. ft.
- Walking golfer with 3" wide wheel pull cart (9 holes) = 111,600 sq. ft.
- Walking golfer with 3" wide wheel pull cart (18 holes) = 223,200 sq. ft.
- Riding golfer with motorized cart (9 holes) = 2,380,800 sq. ft.
- Two golfers sharing motorized cart (9 holes) = 2,380,800 sq. ft.
- Riding golfer with motorized cart (18 holes) = 4,761,600 sq. ft.
- Two golfers sharing motorized cart (18 holes) = 4,761,600 sq. ft.
- Two golfers each using a motorized cart (9 holes) = 4,761,600 sq. ft.
- Two golfers each using a motorized cart (18 holes) = 9,523,200 sq. ft.

Lessons learned – The take home lessons these numbers show backed up by my experience visiting golf courses are listed below:

- Walking a golf course impacts a golf course far less than pull or motorized carts do when considering area impacted.
- Walking carts impact the golf course less than motorized carts but all carts



impact the golf course more than walking does.

- The rules of golf require hand pull and motorized golf carts to follow the same rules designed to minimize cart impacts on golf course playability and turf health.
- Wider cart tires result in more floatation and therefore less compression pressure compared to narrower tires because they spread the weight out over more area. (e.g., a 2" wide pull cart tire exerts twice the pressure of a 4" wide pull cart tire.)
- If you really care about your golf course, share a cart rather than taking your own. When using a cart, keep it away from approaches, collars, putting surfaces, and green surrounds.
- Another way to minimize cart impact is to stay on the cart path when possible and avoid stressed turf when driving around the golf course.
- Refer to Trolley Follies in the USGA Green Section Record publication dated Sep/Oct 2002 for more information regarding cart impacts on golf courses.

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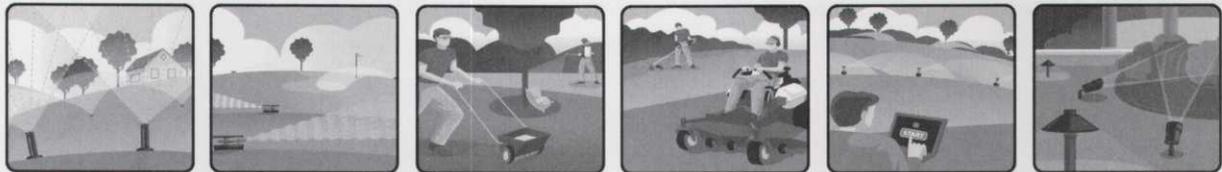
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