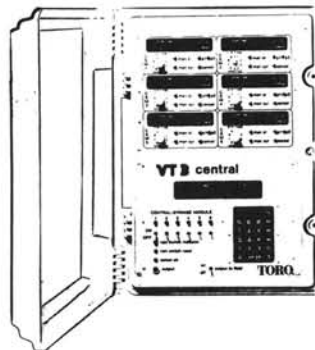


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## RESEARCH COMPLETED ON ELECTROSTATIC SPRAYING

Electrostatic spraying equipment could help golf course superintendents do a better job of applying pesticides and also save them money, according to Loren Bode, Agricultural Engineering Dept., University of Illinois. Despite the fact that this relatively new equipment isn't on the market today, the basic research and development has been completed and patented.

Other industries have used electrostatic spray equipment for years to paint appliances. The charged spray particles are attracted to the grounded appliance and form a very even paint coat on the appliance surface.

Trying to adapt this principle to crop spraying without the controlled industrial conditions, created several problems.

Recent research has identified and solved many of these problems, creating a new life for electrostatic spraying of living plants, including turf.

Early attempts of electrostatic crop dusting in the 1960's were unreliable in regards to testing.

Ed Law, University of Georgia agricultural engineer, says he believes his newly designed and patented system overcomes the problems of earlier electrostatic machines, giving consistent results. Law's system uses electrostatic induction to charge the spray drops. Air transports the charged drops to the plants.

Each nozzle has a washer-like electrode embedded in a conventional air-atomizing spray cap device. The electrode is connected to a miniaturized built-in power supply, converting ignition battery output to 1000-2000 volts at a low amperage. The electrode sets up an intense electrical field in the insulated nozzle.

The spray droplets in the nozzle take on a negative charge. A stream of compressed air carried the spray toward the plant. The air stream also keeps the electrode dry to prevent discharges within the nozzle.

The negative charge of the spray increases paint coverage two ways. First, because like charges repel, the spray cloud drives the plant's negative ions into the ground, leaving the plant with a positive charge. Because opposite charges attract, the negative spray particles are drawn onto the plant.

At the same time, the negatively charged drops in the spray repel each other, expanding the cloud and drawing it to any grounded surface. The spray is distributed under emerging leaves and stems, covering the plant more evenly than uncharged sprays can.

**Credit - The Cactus Patch**

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