



Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Golf Course*

Turf Clinic - Wrap Up (Part 1) - Legislative Update



Chava McKeel address the Turf Clinic audience.

The MAGCS Members met at the venerated Medinah Country Club for the 61st Midwest Turf Clinic and Annual Meeting. Curtis Tyrrell, CGCS MG and Staff were the hosts for the day.

Chava McKeel, GCSAA's Director of Government Relations made the first presentation of the day. Her topic was GCSAA Government Relations Update: What You Need to Know Now; Be An Advocate For The Profession. She has been with the GCSAA since 1997. As part of her responsibilities, Chava directs all activities of the Information and Public Policy Department of the GCSAA. She helps advance the overall image of the golf course management industry through advocacy-related programs and government relations activities. She provides regulatory compliance information to GCSAA Members to establish themselves as experts on managing risk at the facility. She serves as a liaison with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and collaborates regularly with Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment, Essential Worker Immigration Coalition, United States Department of Agriculture, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, National Alliance for Accessible Golf and many other organizations to advance golf's interests.

The GCSAA's Fundamental Principal in government relations is advocacy.

- Advocacy supports the GCSAA's mission and vision
- Grassroots support is the key to driving GCSAA advocacy efforts
- GCSAA is leading the way in making sure golfs voice is heard

GCSAA's Government Relations focuses on

- State, Federal and Local government activities
- Work guided by priority issues agenda
- Offers compliance support with one-on-one counseling, on-line tools, ombudsman
- Advocacy through grass-roots lobbying, direct lobbying,

educating law makers, regulators and coalitions

Chava went into detail to explain the GCSAA's current main priority issues.

The Americans and Disability Act (ADA Compliance)

- March 15, 2012, the U.S. Department of Justice adapted accessibility standards for golf courses.
- Accessible cars will be under a separate rule making
- Includes new construction and renovations
- Accessible routing on tees, greens, weather shelters is required

Chava indicated there is a tool kit available from the GCSAA to help explain more of the details of this issue.

Fertilizers

- Chesapeake Bay Watershed has become a fertilizer management model for rest of country
- EPA and States are "cracking down" on fertilizer use
- GCSAA is keeping an eye on Gulf of Mexico Hypoxic Zone

GCSAA messages to lawmakers:

- Golf turf is professionally managed
- Golf courses are valuable as green space in the watershed

Several states have been making headway with legislators when it comes to fertilizer use and regulation.

Virginia: Governor signs bill that all golf facilities are required to implement certified nutrient management plans by 2017.

Pennsylvania: Golf courses get credit in watershed modules for using BMP's.

Maryland: Golf is voluntarily complying early with regulations to demonstrate environmental stewardship. A state bill creates a training, licensing and certification program.

Florida: There are more local ordinances being formed to propose restrictions as opposed to statewide ordinances. At this time there are bans on certain fertilizer applications in over 40 counties. This has been confusing. Superintendents are advocating on golf's behalf.

Labor and Immigration

- Support for H-2B Visa Program
- This is a federal government program for businesses to get temporary visas for immigrant workers
- This has not been used very much in Illinois

Pesticides

The main concerns are:

- Safe and responsible use of pesticides
- Continued use and availability of effective products
- Methyl-bromide and chlorothalonil are products on the "radar" to eliminate usage



Value of Golf

- Activists have been "busy" with Endangered Species Act Litigation
- Example: Sharps Park Golf Club in California

GCSAA has taken part in an advocacy message program:

- WEAREGOLF
- Golf has a profound economic and charitable impact
- We are on the leading edge of environmental sustainability and stewardship
- Americans enjoy health and wellness participating in golf
- Golf provides a leading role in efforts to support our troops
- We want the golf industry to be treated "fairly and equitably" as a business

Water Management

- In Illinois we have the NPDES Pesticide General permit
- This is a permit required for any pesticide application made to "waters of the state"

Chava wrapped up her presentation with what the GCSAA Government Relations Program was going to be moving forward in 2014 and beyond. The key statements are:

1. Develop a "key contacts" program. This is an actual job that they are looking to fill. The goal is to create relationships with our members and all members of congress.
2. Create a government relations web portal on the GCSAA web site.
3. Create a government relations e-newsletter.

In conclusion Chava presented a list of upcoming "hot topics in government relations.

- FCC regulations - This pertains to mobile radio systems that will limit frequencies from a wide band to a narrow band

- Affordable Health Care Act - This is also known as Obama Care and will affect businesses that will be required to provide health care coverage to workers working over 30 hours per week.
- Globally Harmonized System of Pesticide Label - Creates changes to pesticide labels, MSDS (SDS) sheets & Written hazardous communications programs

Chava was very informative and provided a lot of information. She has been working on our behalf in government relations as a Staff Member of the GCSAA for quite a while. Government relations are all about networking and contacts. Although her physical stature does not cut an imposing presence, just to give you an insight on who we have working for us, her nickname on the "hill" is "the velvet sledgehammer." We all should feel pretty good that we have someone representing us that "has our back." Thanks Chava. @

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