

# Florida superintendents lead U.S. in environmental audit program

BY LARRY KIEFFER

LAWRENCE, Kan. — The GCSAA's Environmental Compliance Assistance program introduced at the 1989 show is progressing "about as we had expected," according to Steve Wharton, project manager for Hall-Kimbrell Environmental Services Inc. which developed the program.

The self-audit kits are intended to give superintendents a means to identify areas of operations affected by environmental regulations and identify changes that should be implemented to achieve compliance.

As of Aug. 31, seven Florida superintendents — more than any other state — had bought the kits, which sell for \$725, Wharton said.

"This is an important program for every golf course in America because no course can afford not to assess every area of its operations," said Dennis Lyon, CGCS, GCSAA president. "Our main goal is for superintendents to develop a high degree of industry involvement — but there's also a very real payoff in dollars that superintendents will realize in improved management efficiency and reduced liability ex-

posure."

Lyon added that one fine or incident would vastly overshadow the cost of the self audit, which he termed "nominal."

The Hall-Kimbrell package does not provide any legal protection — audits in which the consultant assumes some liability for compliance can cost \$10,000 or more — but it does give superintendents an opportunity to evaluate their own practices.

"It all comes down to integrity and credibility," said the manager of one Florida facility taking part in the GCSAA program. He asked not to be identified.

"We view the self-audit as the first step. We want to be squeaky clean so we'll probably follow up the self-audit with an on-site audit."

Hall-Kimbrell will conduct on-site audits, generally for less than other consultants "because our analysis of the self-audit enables us to focus on some of the problems immediately," Wharton said. He estimated the price range at \$4,000 to \$8,500.

The company also will train employees on site for \$1,500 to \$2,500 per session, depending on the number of employees,

and subject matter.

The self-audit is a book containing more than 500 questions that allow the superintendent to report easily and concisely his practices in an answer booklet which is forwarded to Hall-Kimbrell, where it is scanned by computer.

Also included is a 30-minute video tape which outlines eight common areas of regulation and explains the audit.

Completion of the self-audit generally requires about eight hours, according to Hall-Kimbrell. Most superintendents have found it better to split the time over a week or so rather than complete the whole process in one session.

Once the computer has tabulated the data from the answer booklet, Hall-Kimbrell scientists and environmental experts prepare a detailed report on the course's practices in relation to applicable regulations. The report also contains concise overviews of regulations, phone numbers and addresses for federal and state agencies that issue and enforce the regulations and information on state programs that vary significantly from federal requirements.

The report not only tells superintendents if they are in compliance, it also helps them evaluate procedures and management practices.

The audit is not a fault-finding tool, but rather a fact-finding tool, explains Wharton.

"People may have a natural tendency to provide what they expect are the 'desired responses' rather than the honest answers. The value of the package is in the superintendent's review of the resulting reports based on actual situations."

The audit serves as a prerequisite for follow-up services that include annual update procedures. By periodically updating the audit, it becomes a management tool for continual evaluation of practices, taking into account new products, regulations and training requirements.

## Hall-Kimbrell offers seminar in Orlando

Hall-Kimbrell will conduct its second annual conference in Orlando Nov. 7-9, including a trade show for environmental protection and hazardous materials industries.

Although the conference is aimed at seven different industries, Nov. 8 will include a full day of sessions designed specifically for the golf industry, including safe pesticide handling, water quality assurance, respiratory protection program and environmental protection through self auditing.

Among the speakers will be Cecil Johnston, FGCSA immediate past president, and Steven Dwinell of the Florida Department of Environmental Regulation.

Registration fee of \$195 includes a three-hour general session Nov. 7, admission to all seminars all three days, including the golf sessions Nov. 8, lunch all three days, a cocktail party Nov. 8 and breakfast Nov. 9 and admission to the trade show.

To pre-register, contact Hall-Kimbrell in Lawrence, Kan., at 800-346-2860 or 913-841-8034. Walk-in registration will be accepted on a space-available basis for \$245.