

'Win-win' GCSAA-sponsored pesticide study due next January

LAWRENCE, Kansas — The occupational pesticide exposure study being done among superintendents for the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America Scholarship and Research Foundation will be complete next January, according to the GCSAA director of development.

Pat Jones said Dr. Burton Kross of the University of Iowa's College of Medicine should have preliminary findings done in time to be presented at the international golf course conference and show.

The final report would be ready by spring, after it is published and subjected to peer review, Jones said.

Kross deferred all questions to foundation for official comment.

But the foundation has reported that Kross and his team will try to determine whether superintendents have higher-than-average rates of cancers or other illnesses that could have been caused by long-term occupational exposure to pesticides.

The initial study will focus on superintendents because they are typically exposed to

both concentrated and diluted pesticides.

"It's a win-win situation," Jones said. "If there's information that our members need to know about that will preserve their health, that's good to have. If there is no indication of problems, then that's something that could be important to the public, government officials and our own members."

GCSAA President Randy Nichols, Vice President Joe Baidy and board of directors member Paul McGinnis are all involved in the GCSAA S&R operation.

Ga. EPA urges precautions on underground storage systems

ATLANTA, Ga. — The Georgia Environmental Protection Division has urged all underground storage tank owners and operators to take safety precautions on storage systems to safeguard state environmental and natural resources.

The EPD was alerted to possible contamination risks in underground systems when a company's routine inspection found deteriorated seals in spill containment devices.

Spill containment devices are large, bucket-shaped metal basins attached to fill pipes on underground tanks to catch any gasoline that spills from tanker truck hoses.

Seals are devices that close off the opening of the catch basins to contain any spilled fuel.

"During routine maintenance and inspection of underground tanks a major convenience store chain discovered the seals in containment devices at some of its Georgia locations had deteriorated," said Randy Williams, manager of EPD's Underground Storage Tank Management Program. "The deteriorating seals could result in the release of petroleum products into soil and groundwater. However, the company is addressing the problem responsibly."

EPD has not yet determined the cause of the deterioration of seals. But, division staff believe possible causes might be problems inherent in the seals, corrosive additives in gasoline, and/or improper installation.

The deterioration seems most pronounced for gasoline-exposed devices, while seals subjected to diesel and kerosene contact show only minor deterioration.

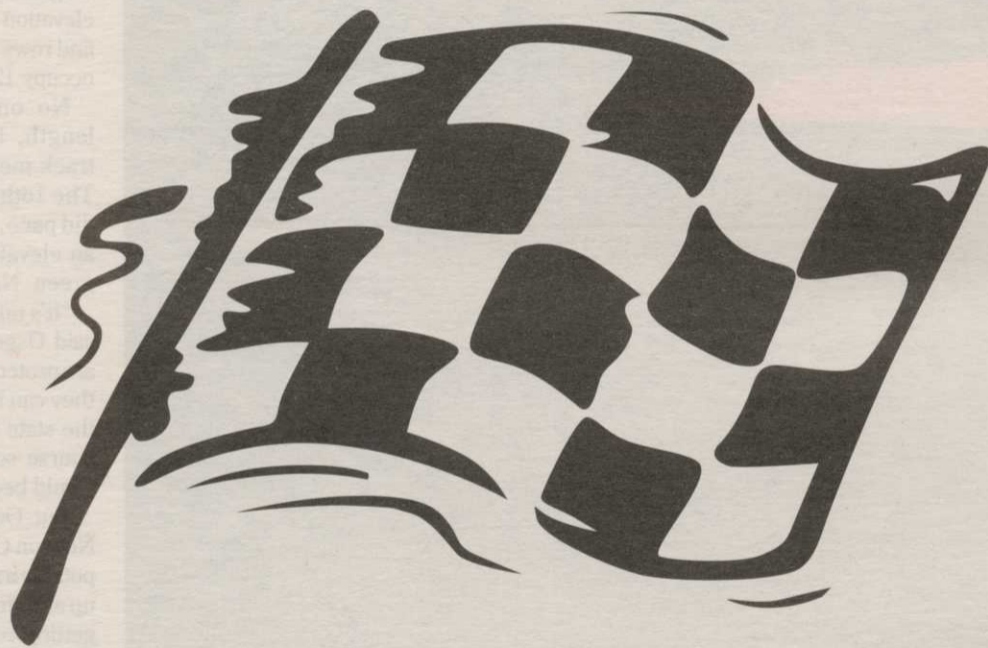
Further investigation by EPD revealed the seal material carried in the identified stores' tanks may be common to several brands of containment devices. Some seals are easy to inspect and others are not.

"Therefore, owners of underground storage tanks would be wise to inspect seals, for both types of devices, to ensure they are operating properly and to replace them as necessary," continued Williams.

The UST Program recommended that underground storage tank owners and operators begin regular inspections of containment devices at least annually.

By failing to heed recommended safety precautions, owners or operators could face enforcement actions, penalties and/or denial of Georgia Underground Storage Tank (GUST) Trust Fund coverage in the event of a severe leak.

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