

# BRIEFS



## EPA LAX ON GOLF DECISION

The EPA has still not made a "final" decision on whether the Worker Protection Standard will apply to golf course turf and ornamental nurseries and greenhouses that are used strictly for internal purposes on the course. The standard definitely will not apply to the playing area or grounds of the course. It will apply to any course that operates a nursery or greenhouse that sells products to off-site customers. The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America has written the EPA urging them to issue a final rule exempting nurseries and greenhouses used for internal purposes.



## ATLANTIC CONFERENCE MOVES

DARTMOUTH, Nova Scotia, Canada — The Atlantic Turfgrass Research Foundation, in cooperation with the Atlantic Golf Superintendents Association (AGSA) will host the Atlantic Turfgrass Conference here, March 21-23. The event has been held in St. John, New Brunswick, the past 16 years. More information is available from the AGSA at 287 Lacewood Dr., Unit 103-156, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3M 3Y7.

## NORTHWEST TRADE SHOW PLANNED

SPOKANE, Wash. — The Inland Northwest Turf and Landscape Trade Show is scheduled for Jan. 26, here at the Spokane Interstate Fairgrounds from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Turfgrass industry vendors will be on hand to show equipment, products and supplies for the trade. Admission is free. Exhibit space is still available. For more information call Julie Byce, the show coordinator, at 509-535-8305.

## AVIARA PITCHES IN FOR WILDLIFE

CARLSBAD, Calif. — Aviara Golf Club, an Arnold Palmer-designed course that skirts the Baticuitos Lagoon, is helping in a \$55 million restoration of the lagoon that will enhance the natural habitat for plants, birds and animals. The ambitious restoration project calls for dredging 3.4 million yards of sand that will be siphoned through 15,000 feet of pipeline to a nearby beach. There are also plans for an information kiosk near the lagoon and a 1.5 mile hiking trail.

# USGA pushes for soil lab certification

By MARK LESLIE

FAR HILLS, N.J. — Striving to assure that golf courses are served by "competent" laboratories that are putting their full effort into it, the U.S. Golf Association (USGA) is proceeding full-steam ahead toward instituting an accreditation program.

The USGA is working with the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (AALA), a Washington, D.C.-based organization which has accredited more than 800 labs of various kinds. The 15 or so soil labs which test root-zone mixes for golf course construction, have never had an accreditation program to pass, and reaction among them is mixed.

"I've gotten good feedback from [lab representatives] happy to see it," said Jim Snow, national director of the USGA Green Section. "I just want the people who are serious about doing good work to get accredited. It has a lot of good purposes."

Dr. Norm Hummel of Cornell University, who studied the lab situation for the USGA two years ago and who himself runs a lab, said the requirements of accreditation "will immediately shake out some of the labs."

Saying he was intimidated at first and that one lab is "suspicious that anybody can be bought," Hummel added: "There will be some resistance because it will force everybody to do things according to protocol, to have an



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— Jim Snow

internal quality-control program."

Indeed, one of the leaders in the industry, Turf Diagnostics & Design (TDD) in Olathe, Kan., takes exception to the accreditation, though for other reasons.

"Who's got the level of expertise to tell us we're accredited or not?" asked Vice President Steve McWilliams. "We can document what we do but, frankly, we don't see anyone qualified out there to tell us we're doing it right or wrong."

Saying his lab follows protocol and more, and adding that several changes in the USGA specifications were derived directly from TDD's procedures, McWilliams said: "I'm not sure it [accreditation] is going to fly... This is not an easy issue."

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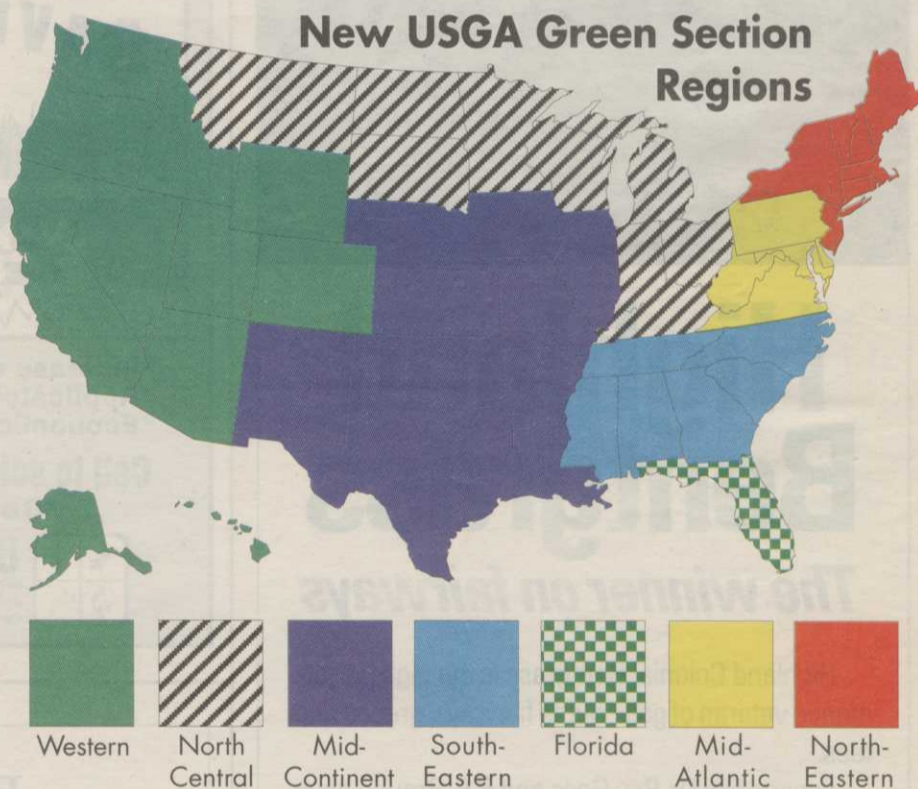
# Regions are reorganized to better serve course clients

By JIM SNOW

FAR HILLS, N.J. — The United States Golf Association's (USGA) Green Section has reorganized several of its regions in an effort to provide better service to clubs and courses in its Turf Advisory Service.

Starting in the East, Ohio and Kentucky will become part of the new North-Central Region. The North-Central Region will include Kentucky, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North and South Dakota, and Montana. These states will be serviced by newly-appointed regional director Bob Brame, in Kentucky, and Bob Vavrek, near Milwaukee.

The Mid-Continent Region will gain Illinois and Iowa in the reorganization. Colorado and Wyoming will move to the Western Region. Jim Moore will remain regional director from his office in Waco, Tex., and Paul Vermeulen will be moving from the Western Region office to



establish a new office in central Illinois.

The Western Region will pick up Colorado and Wyoming. Larry Gilhuly will remain as regional director from his office near Seattle.

Pat Gross and a new agronomist yet to be named will serve the southern part of the region from their office in

southern California.

The USGA Green Section is hoping that by establishing more than one office in a region — as was done in the Northeastern Region 10 years and in the Western Region in 1993 — it can provide better service.

# ESPN to broadcast Par for the Course

Stossel joins Dodson, Erusha, Pyle in environmental general session

LAWRENCE, Kan. — ESPN will launch a golf "block" of programming that will air on Sunday mornings, and will broadcast *Par for the Course* as part of its package.

Produced by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA), *Par for the Course* takes an innovative look at the world of golf from the view of what goes into making the game enjoyable.

The segments will air on 19 Sunday dates and 11 Thursday/Friday dates

throughout the year.

GCSAA will also be producing a series of feature segments for ESPN that will air during the network's coverage of PGA Tour and Senior PGA Tour tournaments. These short segments will highlight issues and trends in golf course management.

ABC-TV newsman John Stossel will make an encore appearance at the association's International Golf Course Conference and Show in San Francisco

on Saturday, Feb. 25.

Stossel, who appeared at GCSAA's 1991 conference, will be a panelist in an Environmental General Session, "Changing Perspectives," focusing on the public image of golf courses and how they are maintained.

Other panels will be Dr. Kimberly Erusha, director of education for the U.S. Golf Association Green Section; Ron Dodson, president and chief executive officer of the Audubon Society

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## GCSAA NOTEBOOK

See pages 26-31 for news on candidates, award winners and the international conference & show.

# USGA laying ground work for lab accreditation

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It will be very difficult to do, and who do we empower for this [deciding which labs get accredited]? Many labs aren't following the protocol. And many don't have the equipment to do so."

McWilliams suggested the USGA "back away from this whole lab issue and say, 'Listen, industry, You're all big boys. You're using all sorts of different laboratories. You

certainly don't need us to tell you who to use or who's qualified.

"Why does the USGA feel it has to make some sort of statement about the labs when, internally, they really don't have any qualifications, which means they're going to lay it off on somebody on the outside? Leave it alone. Forget about it. People know where to find us all."

Nevertheless, he added: "We

would support and be involved in any program that would responsibly advance any lab accreditation program as it relates to science and professional laboratory operations."

The Golf Course Builders Association of America two years ago instituted an accreditation procedure for builders. Adding soil-lab accreditation will make construction safer for

developers, Snow said.

"It will be more secure in getting good results from beginning to end," he said. "The lab is just one step. You have construction and other areas to go through where problems can occur. But the more factors you can take out of the equation, the better off you will be."

From the labs' standpoint, they will be more secure if



*'I think it's bringing about a very positive change in the way things are done.'*

— Norm Hummell

they must defend their work — if they are accredited. They must have a quality assurance program, and "if they get involved in a lawsuit, it will be a lot easier to defend their position and the quality of their work if they're accredited," Snow said. "It will help them as well as the client. I think everybody's going to win once we get it rolling."

"No question, there's going to be a significant cost involved," Hummel said, "from preparing the required documentation — the SOP [standard operating procedure] and QC [quality-control] manuals — to the up-front fees to pay for a consultant to come in your lab for two days and make sure things are being done, and the added record-keeping..."

"But, even though it's been a lot of work and hassle, I think it's bringing about a very positive change in the way things are done."

The USGA will set up an open meeting with AALA at the annual conference of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America in San Francisco at the end of February.

"We want labs to feel comfortable with the idea, and provide them an opportunity to ask questions," Snow said.

Dealing with paperwork and other factors may take six months or more to accredit labs, he said, adding, "We will have some sort of phase-in period."

One outgrowth of the procedure is that the USGA will no longer list labs in its USGA Greens Specifications booklet itself. Instead, a sheet, which will be continually updated, will be inserted.

...

Because of continuing controversy over its specs, the USGA hired Hummel to study the soil labs involved in golf. Hummel's work led to specific procedures so that work between labs was more comparable — and exact.

The USGA sent "blind tests" to 13 labs and found the majority were very close on all soil characteristics — except pH, which disturbed Snow.

Hummel said the new test protocol has no test procedure for pH, but "maybe it should. There are a couple ways to do it. But that doesn't explain the disparity [of the blind tests]."

No other changes are planned, he added.

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