



In Ontario, Canada  
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use of pesticides.

by Andrew Hardy

# The Road I(PM) travel (I hope you won't have to)

Over the years in the turf industry, there has been many a political war waged at all levels. Private club superintendents have fought to have a much-needed renovation done, semi-private clubs have battled one another for the almighty golfer's dollar and public golf courses can be forced to fight for survival from season to season. In the province of Ontario, Canada, all levels and calibers of golf facility have bonded together to fight for the essential use of pesticides. The reason for the formation of the Ontario Allied Golf Association (OAGA) was the impending scrutiny that all provinces in Canada are going to face going forward.

I focus on Ontario due to the fact my club, Pheasant Run Golf Club is located there. The conflict being waged is more of an annoyance than a true battle. But the fact is that the Ontario government implemented the Earth Day Act on April 22, 2009. Essentially this law was a ban on the cosmetic use of pesticides. Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty felt "pesticides to control weeds and insects was purely a cosmetic use and that we were putting our families at undue risk."

## "The program is taking many superintendents off the golf course and putting them behind a desk."

So how was golf going to cope with maintaining a high-maintenance turf stand without pesticides? Fortunately, the Ontario Golf Superintendents Association (OGSA), National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA), Golf Association of Ontario (GAO), Ontario Professional Golfers Association (OPGA) and Croplife Canada formed the OAGA. The mission of OAGA was to have the golf industry be exempt from the pesticide ban. The formation of OAGA was a big deal because of the fact that these groups had always worked so hard to gain an independent profile.

With all of the points made thus far, where does Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as it exists in Ontario become so high profile? The IPM program had been a fully voluntary program since 2004. All the stakeholders (golf, landscape, forestry, public works) that were using pesticides were able to come up with their own version of an IPM program. The IPM program for golf was a very user-friendly setup which included the writing and passing (75 percent score) of an IPM exam, the registration of your golf facility with the IPM

council, submitting annual desk audit review, successfully passing of and on-site audit performed by an independent third-party auditor and maintaining eight continuing education credits (eight CEC's) per year.

The program as it existed until the end of 2009 was user-friendly, easy to understand and because it was voluntary not really a panic document to finish. Cue the Earth Day Act of 2009. The pesticide ban was less friendly to the landscape industry than it was to the golf industry. Home owners were completely shut down for pesticide use while golf was granted an exemption based on the IPM program. But the catch was that the IPM program the 53 fully accredited golf clubs had gotten used to was to be revamped and drastically changed. So my thought when electing to enter the voluntary program was that Pheasant Run would have a leg up on the other clubs that hadn't entered the program. Becoming a fully accredited Level-2 golf course in 2008 did not offer any advantage. The fact is the clubs that were "ahead of the curve" were lumped in with everyone else. Though the process to becoming a Level 2 facility remained the same as before, the program as I learned it

was going to change.

Changes to the documentation and the amount of paperwork with the new IPM desk audit were significant. My 2008 desk audit was about 20 pages in length, while my 2009 desk audit was more than 300 pages. Yet the two documents did basically tell the same story. The biggest difference was the Annual Report, which was a part of the new IPM desk audit. The report was a cumulative account of the actual active ingredient in kilograms for each product used within the given golf season. And this report is to be uploaded on the IPM Council of Canada website and placed in a high-traffic area in the clubhouse of your course. To the average golfer or member these numbers really don't mean much. In fact to a fellow superintendent they probably don't mean much other than a possible comparison. Also to be added to the IPM website is the map that is created that shows where on our properties we have



Hardy

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applied pesticides. This is a little easier for the average person to decipher based on the colors and outlines used. Though easier to read, it may also paint a negative picture of what is being done on a specific property. We at Pheasant Run really don't spray very much at all. But looking at our map you'd get the impression we do. In the court of public opinion I believe the maps do more negative than the annual report.

The last element to meet the conditions of the golf exemption is the holding of a public meeting. The public meeting is to be advertised in a newspaper and all inhabitants living within 100 meters of the golf course are to be personally invited to the public meeting. For a facility like mine this meeting does not really strike fear as we have six neighbors. There are a number of golf courses in Metropolitan Toronto (population about 4 million) that have as many as 350-500 dwellings within the prescribed 100 meter zone not to mention the potential for "environmental activists." With fire codes of clubhouses and potential member participation some of these clubs may have to rent outside of the club to accommodate the numbers. And there are at least two clubs I know of that will do up to two or three separate meetings in one night to meet the guideline. The OGSA in conjunction with Croplife Canada have produced an informational video that highlights the positive benefits of golf to be presented the night of your public meeting. The OGSA has also developed a guideline for running a successful meeting with the hopes that member clubs will follow these for symmetry within our industry. Essentially, the meeting is the reading of the annual report and fielding potential questions.

**SO WHAT DOES ALL OF THIS MEAN FOR GOLF IN ONTARIO?** For the time being the exemption is in place until 2013. At that point Ontario's Ministry of the Environment (MOE) will review the program and move forward from there. There is somewhere in the neighborhood of 1,300 golf facilities in Ontario. It seems a little farfetched at this point to think



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**IPM ANNUAL REPORT - PEST CONTROL PRODUCT USAGE**  
for the year 2011

Golf Course: Pheasant Run Golf Club | IPM Agent: Andrew T. Hardy

Area	Product Name	Rate	Quantity Applied	Comments
18th Green	History of pest activity in treated area	2.400	1.800	Little less product used this year
18th Green	Evidence of pest activity in treated area	2.400	224.000	
18th Green	Major grub damage in the spring. Turf has damaged in areas through the course.	8.776		

Mapping and public notices are part of Ontario's IPM program.

that all are going to fall in line with the legislation (less than 40 percent participation, so far). And there is one small club that I am aware of that, based on the costs of being in the IPM program (\$905/season plus the \$85 agent fee), have decided to stop using pesticides. They made their membership aware of what was coming and they essentially live with the issues that arise.

The golf industry in Ontario has lived through the first phases of the exemption. For some of my colleagues in other Canadian provinces – such as British Columbia, which has always been a very political province – I fear the government is going to throw the book at golf. The presence of the NAGA in British Columbia will hopefully allow cooler heads to prevail. And as the chips fall for two provinces, it isn't going to be long before others will have an IPM program to work with.

I have always based my maintenance on an IPM program with the environment and strong stewardship at the fore. So falling in line with this new IPM program has been easy

and difficult all in the same breath. The easy part is the spraying aspect, as we don't spray a lot and do use other means of fighting disease as well. The more difficult aspects are the reports and work to complete annual reports and paperwork now take me in excess of 70 hours to complete. The in-season scouting reports can take up to two hours to complete with all the follow-up and cross-referencing with spray applications. The program is taking many superintendents off the golf course and putting them behind a desk. But the Ontario government, no matter who is in power, is never going to eliminate this pesticide ban. So we grin and bear it and trudge through the paperwork and meet the stringent guidelines set upon us because it could have been worse. In fact, it could have been much worse. **GCI**

*Andrew Hardy, CGIA and Diploma Turfgrass Management, is superintendent at Pheasant Run Golf Club, Sharon, Ont., Canada.*

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# WIN-WIN with Environmental Stewardship

By  
Dan Mausolf  
and Paul L. Scott

**E**nvironmental stewardship is a win-win practice for the golf industry and the environment. It helps the bottom line, reflects positively on the golf industry, and offers the public the chance to experience nature. At the University of Michigan's Radrick Farms Golf Course, environmental stewardship has been rewarding on so many levels. At its most basic definition, environmental stewardship is the responsible management of our natural resources. For us, it is much more. It represents an ethical value that defines our operational culture. Environmental stewardship helps us accomplish our mission of offering an exceptional golf experience at an exceptional value.

From the inception of Radrick

Farms, environmental considerations have been a priority. Frederick Matthaei, Sr., an alumnus and former regent, donated the property to the university in the 1960's. However, Matthaei was already implementing environmental stewardship practices in the 1930's when he purchased the property and converted it from a gravel mine into a farm. He practiced the innovative science of arboriculture while growing at least one of every tree indigenous to the state. University of Michigan President Harlan Hatcher suggested building a faculty golf course with then little-known golf course architect Pete Dye. Agreeing with the plan, Matthaei stipulated that the construction left as many trees undisturbed as possible. Radrick

Farms is now an 18-hole championship layout set on 275 acres of beautiful, rolling terrain.

The staff of Radrick Farms continues to embrace Mr. Matthaei's pioneering environmental stewardship vision. As part of our comprehensive approach to environmental stewardship, we have partnered with the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program, the Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Program, Groundwater Guardian Green Site program, and the Washtenaw County Community Partners for Clean Streams program. Through participation in these programs, Radrick Farms has garnered recognition from professionals within the golf industry, policy makers and citizens. These efforts help prove that a golf course can have a positive impact on the environment as well as participate in the university's goal of "going green, staying blue"

Some of these programs require the reporting of environmental data. Through careful planning and fiscal responsibility, we have been able to invest in technology that improves course conditions while gathering that data. Moisture meters, infrared thermometers, compaction meters, weather station data, and soil, water and tissue sampling give us the information necessary to make intelligent decisions. The accuracy of this data allows us to use best practices for chemical applications, water use and cultural regimens. Given the fluctuation of the economy and governmental regulations, superintendents need to be efficient with all of the resources they have at their disposal. Environmental stewardship programs can be a catalyst for identifying wasteful practices, making proper adjustments, and tracking the efforts that often result in better play-

ing conditions while saving time and money. These programs are a win-win for golf and the environment.

These programs also involve educational efforts that have resulted in unexpected benefits. To accurately and effectively promote environmental stewardship, the superintendent and the clubhouse manager have collaborated in many ways. The two parts of the operation must work together to promote and to educate the public about our program partners and their certification requirements. These efforts promote team work and appreciation between the two parts of the operation.

For example, our environmental stewardship guide was created to achieve full Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary certification. To create this guide, extensive collaboration was necessary. Photos were contributed from both ends of the operation. Computer and turf science knowledge was shared. The drafting and proofing process resulted in mutual respect and pride.

The golf industry is at the forefront of implementing and promoting environmental sustainability and stewardship in the burgeoning "green industry." Much research and unwavering dedication are required to reach the best solutions for any particular property. What may seem to be a daunting task is a rewarding experience that results in better course conditioning, sound financial decisions, satisfied customers, and ultimately a better place to live and work. Definitely a win-win. **GCI**

*Dan Mausolf, superintendent and Paul L. Scott, clubhouse manager, are from Radrick Farms Golf Course, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.*