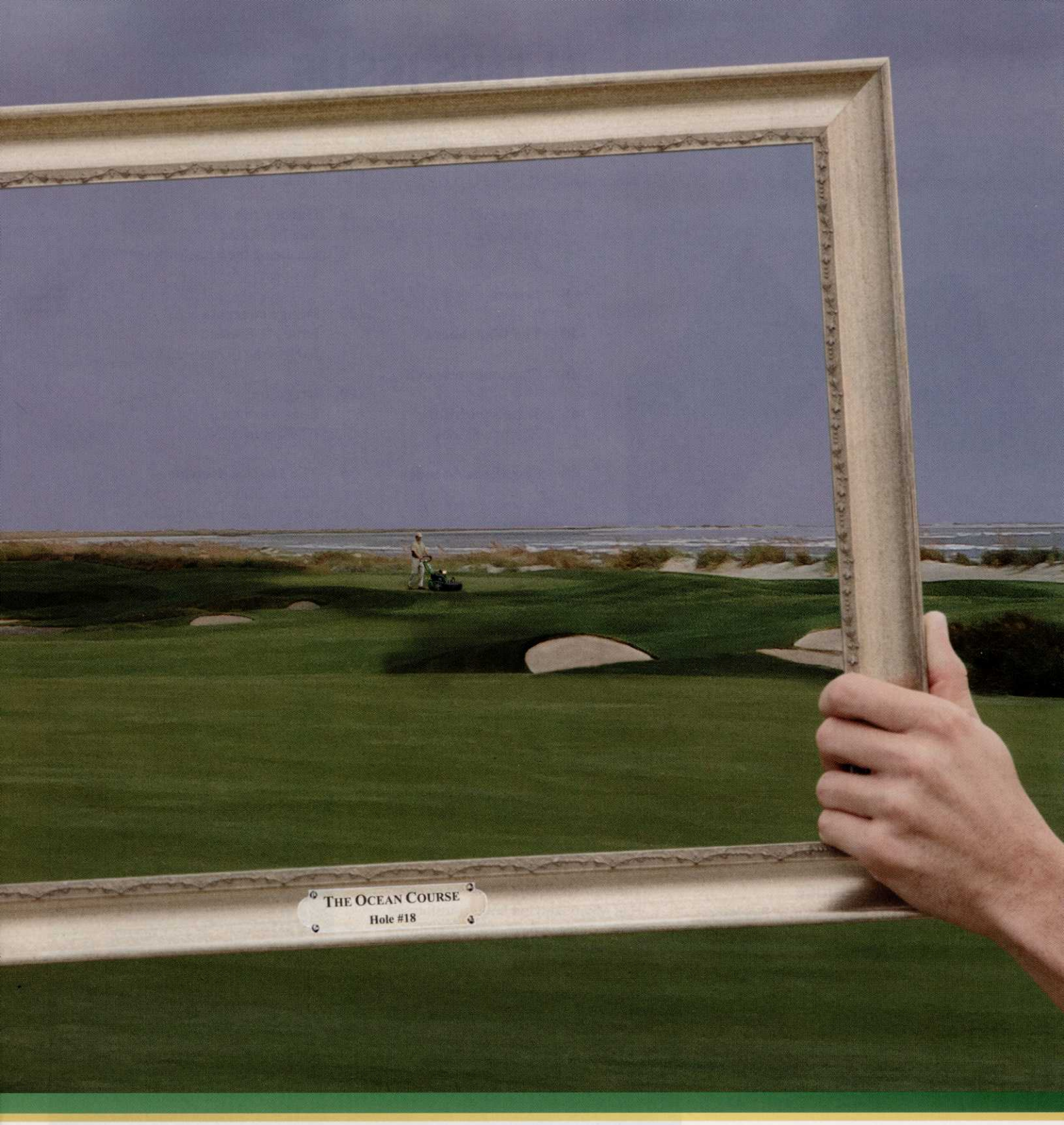

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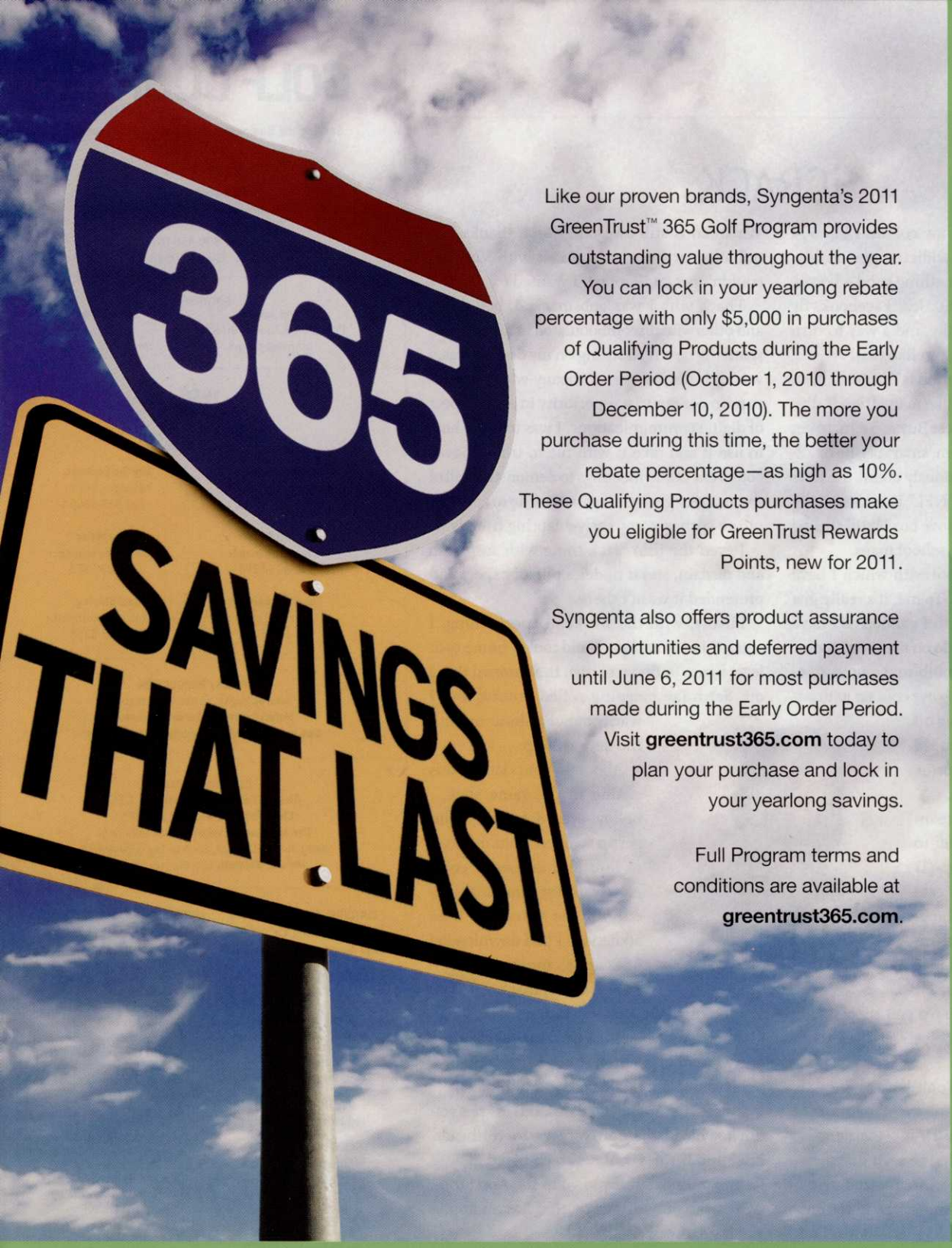

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Syngenta also offers product assurance opportunities and deferred payment until June 6, 2011 for most purchases made during the Early Order Period. Visit **greentrust365.com** today to plan your purchase and lock in your yearlong savings.

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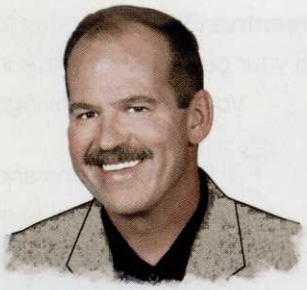
iCRACK

As regular readers of my columns know, I have a wee bit of an addictive personality.

Give me a taste of something good – booze, cigarettes, crossword puzzles, Facebook, fly fishing – and I'll generally find a way to turn it into an obsession. I'm fun like that.

Thankfully, one exception is I've never been a technology junkie. Unlike many friends, I've never stood outside of Best Buy at 5 a.m. to get the newest gaming system, smart phone or 72-inch HDTV. I don't anxiously count the days until the new "Madden NFL" is released. My car is GPS-free but the glove box is still stuffed with badly refolded, old-school maps.

My BlackBerry is a tool with which I have a love/hate relationship. To me, it's really just a phone with e-mail on it. I cannot, as I have witnessed younger folks do on many occasions, multi-task by blindly thumb-replying to an e-mail while never breaking eye contact with another person and carrying on a lucid conversation. I am old as dirt and my cerebral cortex just isn't wired that way.



Pat Jones
Editorial director and publisher

As the father of two teenaged boys, I did succumb to the scourge of texting. (It was that or not communicate with them at all.) I do, however, insist on annoying them by using standard grammar and spelling. Instead of "R U home?" I will text "Have you successfully arrived at your residence yet?" Drives them absolutely nuts.

I don't own a TiVo and only have basic cable. That's fine because, with the exception of sports, my only must-see TV is "Hoarders."

Oh…dear…Lord. If you've seen this show, you're nodding your head in amazed agreement right now. If you haven't seen it, the only way I can describe "Hoarders" is that it's about people who are so crazy that they purposely live in their own filth and will argue for hours when a sane person tries to help them by throwing away their 6-foot-high pile of "Cat Fancy" magazines. It's a wonderful, awful train wreck guaranteed to make even the goofiest amongst us feel superior. I adore it. But I digress…

As a techno-skeptic, I've never been very impressed or interested with any of the much-ballyhooed Apple products. Never had a Mac – always a PC. Never owned an iPod – my Walkman is still awesome. And, thanks to a million-year ironclad contract with Verizon, couldn't get an iPhone if I wanted to.

That's why I was gobsmacked, befuddled and otherwise discombobulated to find a brand spanking new iPad sitting on my desk. It was, I was told later, part of a company-wide program to promote our vast superiority in every aspect of digital communications. I was to learn how to use it and take it with me to trade shows, conferences and meetings to demonstrate all of the amazing geeky things we can do to communicate with you, my early-adapting friends.

I eyed the thin black thing with suspicion and disdain, slid it under a pile of papers and pretended it wasn't there.

Finally, with the weekend approaching, I stuck it in my backpack and took it home to at least figure out how to turn the damned thing on. Saturday morning rolled around and I warily punched buttons until the device lit up.

About 96 hours later, I was sitting in the same spot… hollow-eyed, dehydrated, fingertip swollen from millions of taps and swipes… completely, utterly and unabashedly in the throes of iPad addiction. I had downloaded 652 apps, most of which were freebies that create fart sounds or make cartoon kittens talk. I had invested a rent check (or two) in downloading every David Hasselhoff song ever recorded.

I had smoked the iCrack… and I liked it.

Curiously, among the thousands of apps you can download, there are very few for turfheads. I did find BASF's cool new web-based disease ID app online, but if you go to the App Store, GCI is the only magazine that has an app… and it's damned good.

Anyway, the current dearth of maintenance apps will undoubtedly be filled soon. It seems logical that little helper apps BASF's that you can use in the field are perfect for these devices. Need quick info on how to change a belt on an XYZ brand fairway mower? There will be an app for that. The iStimp? Gotta have it.

The point is the world is coming to our hands via iPads and smart phones whether we like it or not. The question is not whether we will be using them, but how. **GCI**

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We'd like to hear from you.

E-mail us at gci@gie.net with your thoughts and opinions.

Fitting tribute

Pat, I just finished reading your tribute to Mike Pock ("Bon Voyage," September 2010, page 58). It was something special and appropriate for a "special" man.

Bill Emerson, CGCS
Retired

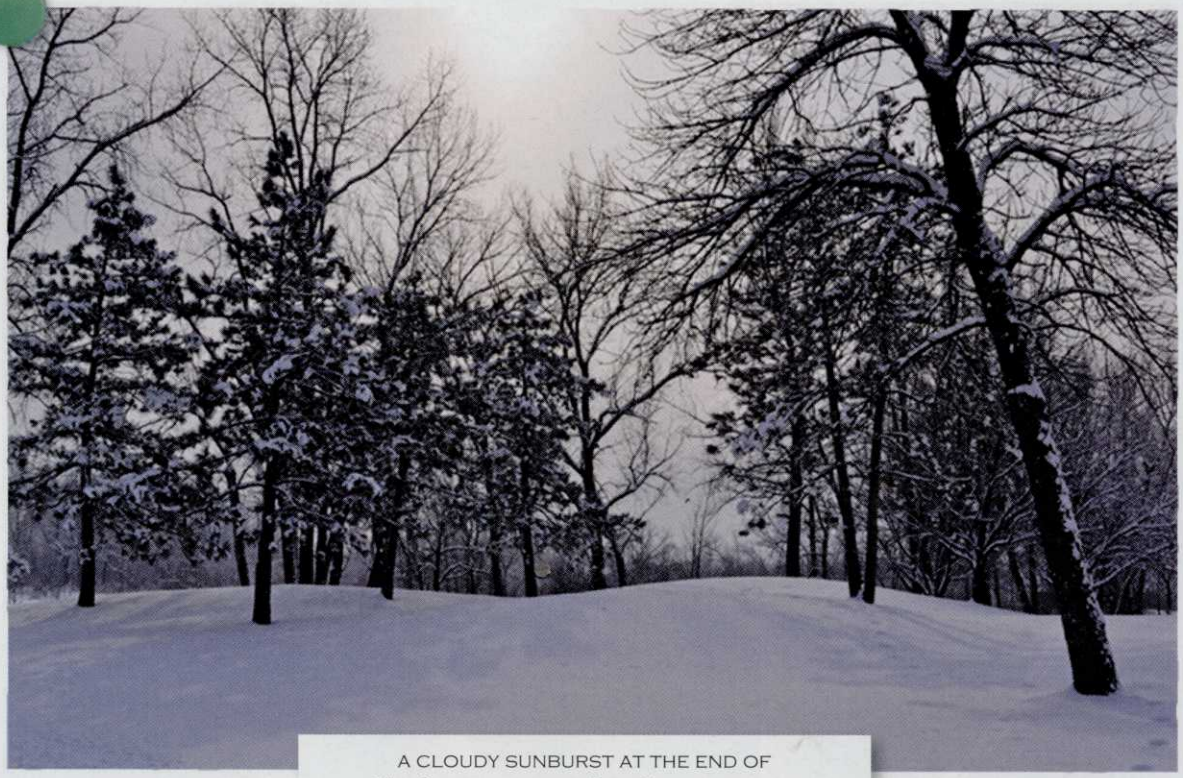
Editor's Note: Mike Pock passed away in early November surrounded by family, friends and memories of a great life in golf.

Full disclosure

Editor's Note: The response to Pat Jones' August column ("Catharsis") continues to pour in. We'd like to share some more of them with you. We've decided not to identify the letter writers since many included personal comments. Readers seeking info about alcoholism and addiction can find out more at the Alcoholics Anonymous site: www.aa.org.

"I just finished reading your column in the August issue after digging it out from under the pile of trade mags I've been carefully stacking on my desk since June. I don't mind saying there was a tear in my eye as I finished reading your piece. Kudos for having the guts to put that in print for all to see! I agree that our industry has more than its fair share of 'alcoholics' who come to depend on a buzz to get them through the twists and turns of this highly stressful career path. Just as we would share with each other what growth regulators work best on what turf at what time of year, so should we allow ourselves the vulnerability to lay out more personal issues and to seek help, love and support from our trusted peers. After all, who else can come closer to knowing and understanding within the length of a gnat's eyelash what all we struggle with professionally than our very own peer set? I applaud your honesty and courage to bare all of this to your readers and sincerely hope that it will serve as a wake-up call to those who are only fooling themselves with even the slightest addiction to alcohol, or any other drug. As you so eloquently put it – 'Life's too short and too beautiful to be viewed through the bottom of a bottle.'"

"I was catching up on some trade pub reading, and as I often do, I went directly to my favorite publication and my favorite publication feature; Pat Jones' GCI column. Wow! Your August column caught me off guard with your personal disclosure and confession. Hats off to you for sharing your story and reaching out to others! As a frequent bar fly, I agree with your assessment that the booze flows pretty freely in our industry and you are not alone in facing the challenges it brings. It warmed my heart to hear of the peace, healing and satisfaction being clean has brought to you!"



A CLOUDY SUNBURST AT THE END OF NO. 9 RED FAIRWAY. RON FALASCHETTI – CLUB MANAGER – BRIAR RIDGE COUNTRY CLUB, SCHERERVILLE, INDIANA. THANKS! RON

E-15 UPDATE

Last month, The U.S. EPA announced it now will allow up to 15 percent ethanol to be blended with gasoline in motor fuel – but only for use in cars and trucks built since 2007.

The current allowable limit is 10 percent, and remains so for older vehicles, all motorcycles, heavy-duty vehicles and non-road engines – everything from leaf blowers to mowers.

However, this sets up potential confusion at the gas pump. Buyers could have to choose not only among octane ratings but also between E-10 and E-15. And while E-10 now is fairly common, stations are not required to offer it or the new E-15 – and some already say they are going to sit out E-15 for now.

Even though the E-15 blend is intended for cars and trucks – indeed, it's technically illegal to use it in other engines – the small-engine lobby figures it'll nevertheless wind up in the hundreds of millions of chainsaws, leaf blowers, lawn mowing equipment, boats, all-terrain vehicles and the like.

The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI) recommends the following measures to protect your equipment and avoid voiding warranties:

1. Read and follow the owner's manual. The owner's manual will clearly explain what fuels can be used to ensure a properly functioning product.

2. Do not put any fuel containing more than 10 percent (E-10) in small engine products, unless otherwise stated.

3. Be aware of gas pumps at local gas stations that offer both E-10 and E-15 or any other mid-level ethanol fuels dispensed by blender pumps for "flex-fuel" automobiles. Higher ethanol fuel (E-15) may be less expensive than regular (E-10) fuel. However, putting E-15 into an E-10 approved product could cause product failure and void its warranty.