

# Off The Fringe

NEWS WITH A HOOK

## Business briefs

### Toro selling Riverside facility

Bloomington, Minn.-based The Toro Co. is selling its Riverside, Calif., headquarters and plant, and moving manufacturing operations to its facility in El Paso, Texas. Toro said its office staff will remain in a leased facility in Riverside. "The move is part of a strategy to reduce production costs and improve asset utilization, insuring long-term competitiveness and leadership in irrigation markets," the company said.

Toro began shifting its manufacturing of residential and commercial irrigation products to El Paso earlier this year, but was to retain the manufacturing of golf-related products in Riverside. "Consolidating the manufacture of all products in El Paso follows strategic moves by other industry competitors and maintains the company's position in response to unfavorable economic conditions and changing market dynamics," the company said.

About 440 jobs will be lost because of the plant closing and restructuring.

Previously, Toro announced it will close its Evansville, Ind., plant and shift manufacturing to its Tomah, Wis., and Windom, Minn., plants. Toro said the move is part of its long-term strategy to strengthen operations and leverage enterprise-wide manufacturing assets. The move will affect about 94 employees.

In related news, Toro reported record sales and profitability for fiscal 2001. The company said it beat analyst expectations for the year, with diluted earnings per share of \$3.86 compared to \$3.47 for fiscal 2000, an increase of 11.2 percent. Net sales were \$1.35 billion in 2001, an increase of 1.1 percent. Net income for 2001 increased 11.4 percent to \$50.4 million.

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## More Than a Mess

### GEESE DROPPINGS ARE MORE DANGEROUS THAN THOUGHT

By Thomas E. Williams

**R**esearchers from the Medical College of Ohio have discovered that Canadian geese may pose a more serious public threat than previously believed. The geese, which often congregate in large numbers on golf courses, are known for the mess they make.

It's not uncommon for a goose to produce up to a half-pound of fecal



MIKE KLEMMER

**Beware of the droppings that geese leave on your course.**

matter a day, and this is where the danger lies. According to the Medical College of Ohio study, the droppings often contain parasitic microorganisms that cause gastrointestinal illnesses. Among the parasites are *Giardia* and *Cryptosporidium*.

Brian Harrington, Ph.D., one of

the study's authors, says the parasites are found throughout the country and primarily transmitted via hand-to-mouth contact. While they may cause only minor stomach irritation to healthy individuals, Harrington warns that their infection can be fatal to elderly individuals or others with weakened immune systems.

The Medical College of Ohio is urging routine testing for the parasites in course maintenance workers and golfers who are exposed to geese droppings and suffer characteristic intestinal problems. The college also suggests workers wear protective clothing and wash thoroughly after work.

"People should take precautions wherever possible," Harrington says. "Washing equipment

and hands is important because the parasites are highly resistant to disinfectants. The parasites can become imbedded on shoes and transmitted to people who themselves have not even visited a golf course."

*This story is reprinted with permission of Golf Journal, the official publication of the USGA. Williams is a reporter for the magazine.*