

Off The Fringe

NEWS WITH A HOOK

Business briefs

2,4-D verdict: no risk when used appropriately

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) concluded that the herbicide 2,4-Dichlorophenoxyacetic acid (2,4-D) does not present risks of concern to human health when users follow 2,4-D product instructions as outlined in EPA's 2,4-D Reregistration Eligibility Decision (RED) document.

The agency's announcement and release of the RED on 2,4-D completed a 17-year EPA review process. 2,4-D is a phenoxy herbicide discovered 60 years ago and is used worldwide for a variety of applications, including golf courses.

Over the course of 17 years, the Industry Task Force II on 2,4-D Research Data developed and submitted to EPA more than 300 Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) toxicology, environmental and residue studies that EPA scientists reviewed to assess the herbicide's safety under the Federal Insecticide Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) and the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA).

Task Force members hold technical 2,4-D FIFRA registrations and include Dow AgroSciences, Nufarm Ltd., Agro-Gro and PBI/Gordon.

"The EPA's assessment of the human and environmental scientific data reinforces a growing number of regulatory decisions and expert reviews that conclude the use of 2,4-D according to product instructions does not present an unacceptable risk to human health or the environment," stated Don Page, assistant executive director of the Industry Task Force II on 2,4-D Research Data.

In 1947, 2,4-D was registered for use in the United States on crops and turfgrass. The EPA initiated an assessment for a toxicology review of 2,4-D in 1980, and reregis-

Briefs continue on page 21

Groups Wanted to Stay in New Orleans

BUT GCSAA, NGCOA HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO MOVE SHOW

By Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief

The brass at the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) and the National Golf

Course Owners Association (NGCOA) wanted to keep the February-scheduled Golf Industry Show (GIS) in New Orleans even after Hurricane Katrina had flooded and devastated most of the city. They wanted to keep the show there, says GCSAA CEO Steve Mona, for a good reason — to pump some money

into the ravaged city's economy. But when city leaders announced that all conventions through March had been canceled, Mona and NGCOA Executive Director Mike Hughes announced a few days later that the show would go on in Houston during its original dates, Feb. 9-11.

"We definitely wanted to support New Orleans," Mona said.

"Our first consideration was to host the event in New Orleans because we know the convention

industry will be vital to the city's recovery," Hughes added.

Mona says GCSAA's members felt the same way. Their collective message — mostly through e-mails sent to the organization — was to figure out a way to stay in New Orleans.

"In the last week or so we received more member feedback about any issue that I can recall in the almost 12 years I've been here," Mona said on Sept. 9.

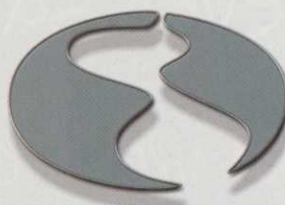
Carey Spence, president of the Louisiana-Mississippi Golf Course Superintendents Association and superintendent of Ellendale Country Club in Houma, La., about 50 miles southwest of New Orleans, said in mid-September that it had been difficult to contact the chapter's

members because of damage to the region's communication structure.

"Communications around New Orleans and the Mississippi Gulf Coast are spotty at best and nonexistent for the most part," Spence said. "Those areas there are totally devastated. It's just a horrible situation."

Mona said the GCSAA has been in contact with some members who live and work in the Gulf coast area affected by the storm. He said about

Continued on page 22



golf industry show

Off The Fringe

Continued from page 14

180 members are from the region.

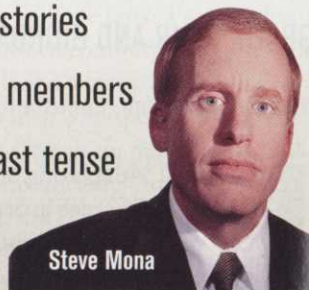
"We've heard reports that range from people who came through the fury of the storm OK to stories where golf courses that some of our members worked at — and I have to use the past tense — are basically unrecognizable now."

Mona said he hadn't heard of any members and their kin who had been killed. "We've heard of people who can't get back to their homes, so they're living in different places," he added.

Mike Tinkey, the NGCOA's deputy director, said golf course owners have stepped up to help their fellow owners whose courses were battered by the storm. Tinkey said many phone calls came from Florida owners who had endured the rash of hurricanes that ripped through that state last year. They empathized with what owners on the Gulf coast had gone through and wanted to help them, even though their courses hadn't recovered fully from the Florida hurri-

We've heard reports that range from people who came through the fury of the storm OK to stories where golf courses that some of our members worked at — and I have to use the past tense — are basically unrecognizable now."

Steve Mona



canes. "I thought that was very moving," Tinkey said.

It's not certain how many jobs in the golf industry will be lost because of the hurricane. Typically, insurance doesn't cover lost employee income, Tinkey said, so employees could be out of work if courses shut down for a long period.

Spence said he's worried that golf course workers won't be able to make a living. "That's the main concern we have is how these people are going to live," Spence says, noting that U.S. superintendents who want to help dis-

placed workers can contact him at 985-851-1376 or csecc@bellsouth.net.

This is the first time GCSAA has been forced to move its show so close to its date. Mona says it will take extra work, effort and money to do. "We're attempting something that's never been done, but we're very confident we can do it," he added.

The GCSAA and other golf organizations have established a relief program to assist the public and its members effected by the hurricane. For more information, contact the GCSAA at 800-472-7878.

Continued from page 21

The Old Course was being prepared for the Championship well before Grant came on board in 2004. But under his guidance the majority of the 112 bunkers were rebuilt in the last year, many of them restored to their former configurations.

The famed Road Hole Bunker was completely done over with the foreknowledge that the golfing world would be scrutinizing the efforts. The fact that no players complained about the alteration may be the highest praise.

Giordano, who's now on the crew at Bam Hollow Country Club in Tifton Falls, N.J., was ecstatic about her return to the Old Course. With her mother along to enjoy the experience, she was glad to be back to the epitome of minimal maintenance.

"I don't agree with what we do in America — lush, high input," she said. "You look at the conditions and ask, 'Is this necessary?'"

Giordano's goal is to become superintendent at a low-input layout. And for a week she was back mowing fairways and syringing greens on such a course, which is also her favorite course.

"It's dreamland," Giordano said, probably not the first time that has been said about the Old Course.

Quotable

"Reality is reality, and Mother Nature wins all battles. Just like today, I wanted rain . . . but not an inch and a half."

— Paul Galligan, superintendent of Grand Traverse Resort in Traverse City, Mich., on dealing with the weather

"Never have so many poorly skilled people spent more money on an activity that makes them swear and hate themselves."

— Comedian and writer Jay Mohr on the great game of golf (*Sports Illustrated*)