

**T**he breakfast buffet held by the Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE) at the Golf Industry Show in February included bacon, eggs and a call to action. The bacon was crisp, the eggs were delicious and RISE's call to action was clear: Pesticide makers and users need to get on the offensive in the battle against reform environmentalists who could put the industry out of business.

Of course, these reformers would contend that they only want golf courses to stop using pesticides. Imagine if all golf courses stopped using pesticides. That would be like McDonald's taking hamburgers off its menu. Both actions would ruin both businesses.

Nothing against the few courses that use little or no pesticides, but an industry-wide pesticide ban would put the golf industry out of operation faster than you can say propiconazole. Do you think the average Joe Country Club — the guy who reveres lush green fairways and impeccable greens and spends thousands to expect them — would tolerate weeds on the tees, brown fairways and diseased greens?

Back to the RISE breakfast. If you don't know, RISE is the lobbying organization that defends your use of pesticides on golf courses, not to mention pesticide use in homes and schools. A no-nonsense gentleman named Allen James is president of the group, and its members include the companies that manufacture and market the products that superintendents use.

RISE has a full agenda these days, considering that Democrats are now in control of the House of Representatives and the Senate. "If there's a dream team in basketball, there's a dream team in Congress as far as environmental activities go," James said, citing Sen. Harry Reid (D-Nevada), Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Rep. Harry Waxman (D-Calif.) as thorns in the pesticide industry's side.

Considering their views on pesticides, some of those Democrats must have lousy-looking lawns and mice running around in their basements. But enough about them.

This issue is about the people who sell and use pesticides. It's time to stand up and be heard. It's

## RISE and Shine and Take Action

BY LARRY AYLWARD



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all right for you to grumble among yourselves about the pesticide detractors, but it's also time to take your message to the streets.

And you don't have to go to Capitol Hill to voice your opinions, as Allen points out. You can do it at the city council or township meetings in your hometowns. You can educate others — from local government leaders to think-they-know-it-all homeowners — that pesticides can be used safely and beneficially. Why will they believe you? Because you are the educated experts when it comes to pesticide use. You use facts, not rhetoric.

Stacey Pine, RISE's manager of Grassroots Issues, is in charge of combating the activists at the local level. Pine says it's easier for activists to advance their anti-pesticide message at that level because they face less bureaucracy. But with 85,000 local municipalities in the country, Pine needs your help to monitor and combat anti-pesticide activity in those areas. Give her a call to see how you can help.

But this isn't just about helping Pine and RISE. It's about helping yourself and the golf industry. It's about proving that you manufacture and use pesticides sensibly.

There's one thing that irks me about this issue more than a telemarketer's call during an episode of "24." It has to do with our second-guessing politicians. On one hand you have a government entity — the Environmental Protection Agency — endorsing pesticides for use after a seemingly painstaking approval process to make sure they are safe. On the other hand you have members of Congress contradicting the EPA's decisions by bashing pesticides.

This is where you come in. This is where your knowledge on the topic can hush the fast-talking politicians.

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