

**D**an Rosenbaum won't lie to you. Bring on the grassroot-eating bugs and turf disease, he says with a laugh. But, hey, what do you expect from the man who wears the hat of director of the specialty products business for FMC Professional Solutions?

But allow Rosenbaum to don another hat — that of the chair of the RISE Governing Board — and it's time to get serious. RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment) is a national not-for-profit trade association representing producers and suppliers of specialty pesticides and fertilizers. The organization serves as a resource and advocate on pesticides and fertilizers, and monitors legislative and regulatory issues.

Rosenbaum's job is about to get more interesting because the Obama administration is expected to get tough on pesticide manufacturers and users, wanting to make them jump through more hoops than the tigers do during a month's worth of Barnum & Bailey circuses.

Not surprisingly, the administration is listening to the environmental activists. Alas, you might soon see restrictive pesticide legislation on the books at the federal, state and municipal levels.

"I don't want to sound like an alarmist," Rosenbaum says, "but we're starting to see a level of challenge we haven't seen in the past eight to 10 years."

Hence, pesticide and fertilizer manufacturers and users — that means you, golf course superintendents — rely on people like Rosenbaum to defend their image and its actions. And Rosenbaum, as well as others who represent RISE, will do that gladly and leave everything on the field, as the athletic metaphor goes.

However, RISE is not a large organization and its people can't be everywhere at once. So RISE needs the people in the trenches — that means you, golf course superintendents — to help in its efforts, especially at the grassroots level. Rosenbaum says the need for superintendents to get involved and promote themselves and their industry for using pesticides and fertilizers responsibly has never been greater.

During a RISE meeting at the Golf Industry Show in February, the organization's Jim Skillen updated attendees on a list of proposed regula-

## The Potential to Impact Livelihoods

BY LARRY AYLWARD



**"WE'RE STARTING TO  
SEE A LEVEL OF  
CHALLENGE WE  
HAVEN'T SEEN IN THE  
PAST 8 TO 10 YEARS,"  
DAN ROSENBAUM SAYS**

tions that have the potential to impact the golf course industry. The news wasn't good. Halfway through his talk, Skillen said to attendees, "You look depressed."

If some of the discussed regulatory issues are passed, superintendents will be busier with more paperwork and oversight, not to mention having a lot more pressure on them to abide by the new legislation or face legal implications. And who knows what else could be coming, especially from an administration that likes big government.

Rosenbaum knows most superintendents went into the business because they're environmentalists at heart and use fertilizers and pesticides carefully. But those environmental activists who believe golf courses are as toxic as Chernobyl don't know this.

But rather than dig in their heels to get ready to defend their practices, Rosenbaum suggests superintendents go on the offensive. Here's an idea: Superintendents could invite members from local Sierra Clubs to their courses for tours and lunch. Sure, the Sierra Club members will be skeptical about visiting, but it's your chance to get in front of them and tell them what you really do, like provide havens for wildlife. It's your chance to change their thinking.

And by doing so, you're getting out in front of the issues. And to Rosenbaum's point: If restrictive legislation does get passed, it's difficult to revoke it. So it's vital not to let it pass in the first place.

Rosenbaum says environmental activists are adding to their agendas. He expects the Environmental Protection Agency to take a more politicized view of what they want to achieve.

"This has the potential to impact livelihoods across the industry," Rosenbaum says.

That means you, golf course superintendents.

*Aylward can be reached at [laylward@questex.com](mailto:laylward@questex.com).*