



## President's Message

# ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY



By Bill Roberts

The May, 1986 issue of "Golf Course Management" magazine included an article entitled, "Personal Respiratory Protection: Developing an Effective Program." The June issue follows up with a piece devoted to "Personal Protective Clothing: Developing an Effective Program." Both are good, solid articles with timely information and reminders.

Around the first of May I received a call from Lois Latham. A public relations firm from Minneapolis was searching for a location to do some filming, the product to be a "pesticide safety training videotape" being developed jointly by the PLCCA, GCSAA and American Cyanamid. At the end of May we spent a 14 hour day "shooting" location footage. The "video" will be available later this summer. It is an effective, inexpensive piece of training material.

Diazinon registration has been or is about to be cancelled, effectively removing the product from the inventory of any professional Golf Course Superintendent. The focal or "flash point" of the EPA hearings on Diazinon was an alleged incident of abuse of the pesticide in an Eastern state. The alleged incident involved a golf course, a "Golf Course Superintendent" and approximately 100 Canadian geese. The geese are

gone and so is that so-called "Golf Course Superintendent."

These instances are just a few examples of a very confusing climate that has been developing over the past couple of years. On the one hand it would appear that the golf course industry has "gotten the idea," to some extent, on the whole issue of proper pesticide usage and is beginning to act instead of reacting to every pseudo-environmental whim expressed at whatever level by whoever with usually a background in who knows what.

Training and education are available through trade magazines and other publications, through a variety of seminars, videotapes and so on. Of course we have all been through the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Pesticide Certification Training programs. New golf course maintenance facilities are designed and built with the pesticide issue in mind; ventilated, segregated storage areas, appropriate waste removal efforts and so on. One would begin to think we had come a long way since Rachel Carson's *SILENT SPRING*.

But it would also appear that we have a long way to go when one begins to hear stories about "midnight dumping," going "after wildlife and waterfowl," "burying" old and unused materials. We've all heard those stories. And we all know that those activities are unlawful, unethical and, simply, irresponsible and have no place in our profession. Perpetrators should be aware that their actions are at their own risk and will receive no sympathy and even less support from the responsible segment of the industry.

The "bottom line" is that our position to date, both individually and collectively, has not been enough. Although we aren't reacting to the dictates of those who would eliminate our pest management tools any longer, we haven't stepped into the lead on this issue either. We need to go that extra length if we are to control our use of pesticides and, ultimately, our ability to produce the best playing conditions possible.

Among the steps to be taken in order to make a difference, I would

suggest several that have already begun to evolve in the national forum including:

- a.) support by Golf Course Superintendents to place any and all appropriate materials on EPA's "restricted list;"
- b.) increasing educational opportunities for pesticide users, specifically staff members, even if it does cost a club a couple of hundred bucks more each year;
- c.) support for enforcement of regulations governing the purchase, application and disposal of all pesticides;
- d.) placing greater emphasis on Integrated Pest Management and more specifically defining economic thresholds before applications are made, and
- e.) ultimately supporting that long-term research at the state and national level that will lead to pest tolerant turfgrasses.

It is our professional obligation to insure a safe, cost-effective and environmentally clean approach to pesticide usage. Abusers of pesticides have no place in our business but they will survive as long as we don't take charge. They will control our destiny as long as we hold back. Think about it. Let's talk about it. Isn't it time to get out in front?

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