

# GCSAA Addresses Act That Will Affect Golf Course Quality

GCSAA is leading the golf industry's efforts in seeking relief from the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA), which became law in August 1996.

The legislation to be implemented by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), changes the method of determining human exposure to chemicals. Prior to enactment of FQPA, risk from pesticide use was measured only from

residues from dietary exposures. Under FQPA, the EPA must consider the aggregate exposure for each pesticide, including non-dietary means (i.e., residential, lawn and garden uses). Additionally, the previous legislation required a separate evaluation for each pesticide. The law now requires the evaluation to include all those pesticides sharing a common mechanism of toxicity.

Under FQPA, the EPA must reassess all existing pesticide tolerances (more

than 9,700) within the next 10 years. Concerns for the golf course maintenance industry include a plan to eliminate all organophosphates (OPs) by August 1999. OPs currently offer broad-spectrum control of infestations of mole crickets, soft-bodied larvae, fire ants and other insects that can mean economic and environmental disaster for a golf course.

"We do not oppose any legislation that removes a threat to human health as long as it is based on sufficient data," says GCSAA President George Renault III, CGCS. "Our concern is the EPA is the using 'default assumptions' in risk measurement that are often overly-conservative, inaccurate and unreliable. Under provision of the law, the EPA can use "data-call-in" to acquire the actual scientific information, but indications are the agency will ignore that option. The potential consequences are enormous."

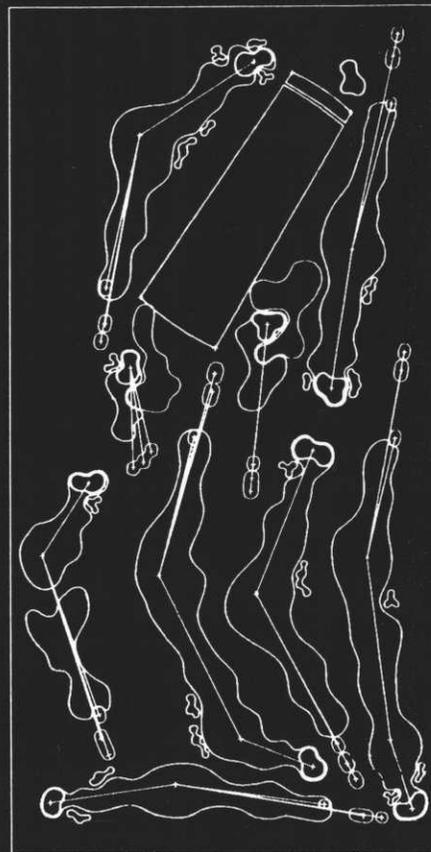
According to Renault, golf course superintendents support the EPA's efforts to find alternatives to OPs. However, arbitrary elimination would be counter productive if it results in the need to use less effective products in greater amounts, thereby increasing risks to the environment. Renault also indicated pesticide manufacturers could meet requirements of the law if decisions are based on scientific data and actual pesticide use; allow for development of scientific methodology to meet the new safety standards and revised objectives for protecting human health and the environment and establish and communicate open, uniform and scientifically practical policies to guide consistent implementation.

Among the 'default assumptions' the EPA can make in applying the law is the contention applicators (including golf course maintenance personnel) will use a product the maximum frequency and in the maximum dosage allowed by law.

GCSAA has embarked on an extensive membership education and communication plan to address the issue, and has joined forces with numerous groups to work with lawmakers on the implementation of the law.



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