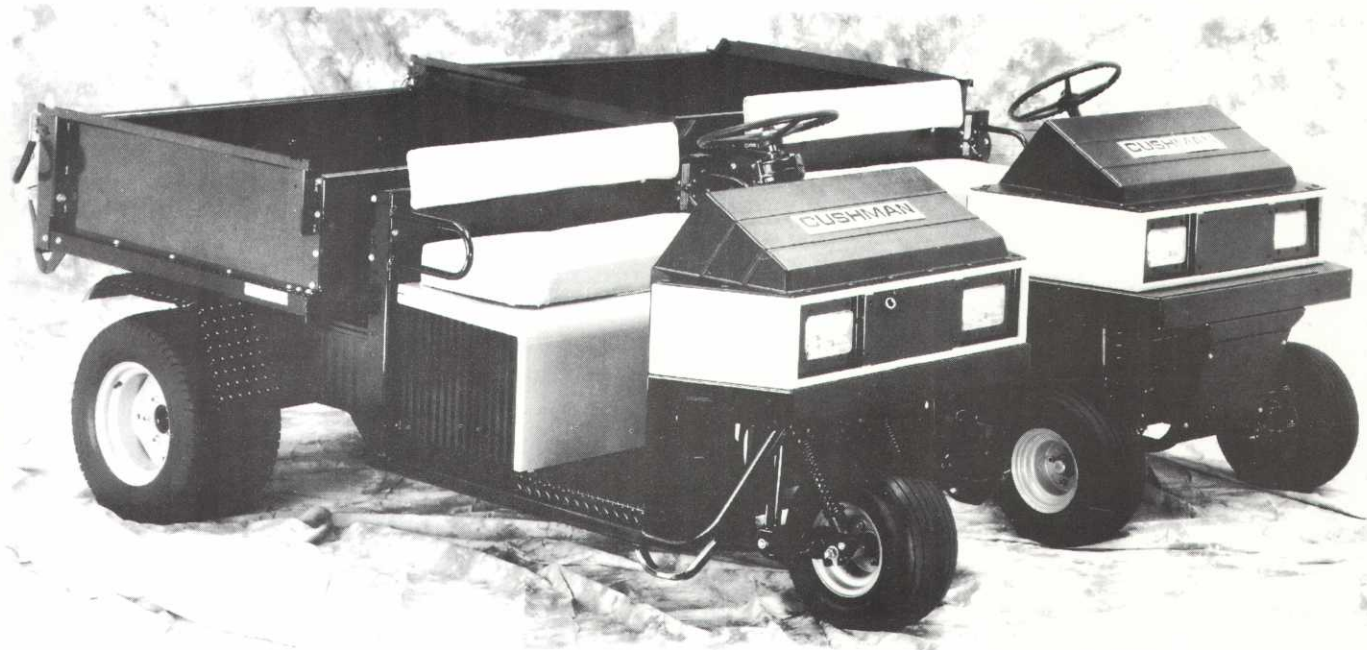


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EPA Okays Phaseout Of Methyl Bromide

By Ron Smith

Methyl bromide has been added to the Environmental Protection Agency's "hit list" and will be phased out by the year 2000.

Former EPA Administrator William K. Riley announced the phaseout on his last day in office, adding the soil fumigant and agricultural chemical to a list of materials linked to ozone depletion.

Riley said the action was justified under The Clean Air Act Amendment of 1990 which requires EPA to phase out production and import of five ozone depleters: CFCs, halons, carbon tetrachloride, methyl chloroform (all class I substances) and hydrochlorofluorocarbons or HCFCs (class II). The Amendments also gave EPA the responsibility to add other ozone depleters to the list.

Losing methyl bromide could pose a hardship on the turf industry, says Auburn University Extension turf specialist Coleman Ward. "Methyl bromide has been a lifesaver for many years, and we don't have anything else that has been used much in turf. We don't have a tried-and-true substitute."

Ward said sod farmers often use methyl bromide in certified turf fields to eliminate noxious weeds and other pests. "Sod probably accounts for the largest volume of use," Ward

said. "But the fumigant also is used extensively for golf green construction or renovation. Normally, contractors will fumigate the green complex to kill weeds, stem pieces from turfgrass, insects and nematodes. Golf course construction and renovation will be hampered by the loss."

Ward said he had never known of anyone being harmed by methyl bromide, although it is very toxic.

Carlton Lane, with the EPA public affairs office in Atlanta, said methyl bromide has been closely scrutinized because of its link to ozone depletion. "That characteristic puts it under the Clean Air Act."

Florida and California are the biggest users of methyl bromide, according to EPA.

In addition to turf, uses include fumigation for fruit and vegetable crop seedbeds. It also is used for tobacco transplant beds.

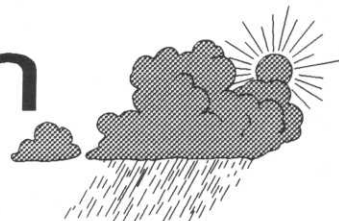
The EPA proposal allows companies to produce certain ozone depleters in excess of EPA allowance if necessary to supply basic domestic needs of developing countries, under Article 5 of the Montreal Protocol. Article 5 countries have a grace period until 2010 to meet production and import phaseout commitments.

American manufacturers, however, must provide adequate assurance to EPA that developing countries will not re-export those ozone depleters to another country, according to an EPA press release.

The rule may also require labels warning the public that a product contains an ozone depleting substance. And states may supersede EPA rules to set more stringent regulations for ozone depleting substances.

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GCSAA President Cites Concern For Economy, Environment, Labor

By Ron Smith

Randy Nichols accepts his post as president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America knowing that industry, association and personal concerns will create some of the biggest challenges he's ever faced.

Nichols, CGCS, Cherokee Country Club, Sandy Spriggs, Ga. (an Atlanta suburb), cites the economy, the environment and labor as the biggest concerns for the golf industry.

"This environment is still number one," he said, "primarily because of environmental terrorists who don't know the facts," but cause the industry a lot of trouble.

The association is fighting back, however, by promoting the benefits from golf courses, the professionalism of superintendents and with a new study that may lay to rest some of the misconceptions about long-term pesticide use.

Nichols says a toxicological exposure study could determine what effect, if any, pesticide use has on superintendents. "We think this research will help alleviate some of the concerns. We believe results will prove what we've said all along: that pesticides, properly used, at correct times, rates and with proper equipment and clothing, do not pose an unreasonable risk. And if there are risks involved, we can address them."

The economy also concerns Nichols. "Companies are still cutting back and eliminating jobs. People have less money to spend." That could affect golf courses, possibly with cuts in maintenance budgets.

"We may need to pare back some," he said. "But it is going to be important that superintendents communicate with greens chairmen and club managers. A good superintendent is worth a lot to a golf course. Management must know that."

Nichols sees no decline in golf popularity, even in an economic

slump. "Play will not decrease, at least not in the short run. Typically, number of rounds increase during a short recession. Members play home courses, where their membership dues are already paid, rather than travel and pay to play elsewhere.

"A long-term slump could result in lost members, but that's not as likely with private clubs. The investment is too high."

Nichols says the demographics of the game will change. "More women will play," he said. "Women account for the largest growth segment among golfers. Women are moving into executive positions in business and play golf for the same reasons many men have played, to make contacts and to conduct business."

The labor force also will reflect changing demographics as more women enter the profession, at both crew and management levels. "I expect to see women working in landscape areas on golf courses, but interest among women is increasing from crew level through superintendent training."

Nichols says the number of qualified female employees may not be enough to offset what appears to be a reduction in the golf industry work force. "Qualified labor is getting more difficult to find."

Retaining good help is a continuous challenge, he says. "GCSAA has instituted training programs that will help. A better educated employee will be more valuable. That helps the superintendent and ultimately benefits the club and the individual golfer."

Nichols says the higher education level of superintendents has elevated the profession. "We get more respect. Members understand that we perform important functions and appreciate the job superintendents do."

Nichols sees other positives for the golf industry in general and GCSAA in particular.

"We've developed a closer working relationship with key government agencies. The Environmental Protection Agency, for instance, often asks for our input on impending legislation.

"They know our track record, they see that we're educated and that we're trying to protect the environment. They are aware of how well we train our people, too."

The industry's affiliation with the Audubon Society of New York State also has been a boon to both organizations. "The Audubon sanctuary program has been good for our industry," he said. "It's been responsible for some positive public relations. But it's a two-way street. Audubon gets new memberships through golf course participation in its sanctuary program."

Nichols says the certified sanctuary program demands little of most golf course superintendents that they are not already doing.

GCSAA presented its President's Award for Environmental Leadership to the New York Audubon group during the International Conference.

Nichols faces some daunting personal challenges as well as he balances two full-time jobs this year. "The balancing act will be the biggest chore," he says. "Meeting all the GCSAA obligations and doing an adequate job here will be tough. It will demand a lot of extra effort, a lot more weekend work than I'd otherwise put in.

"More planning, more delegation and better communication will be critical. Fortunately, I have two outstanding superintendents working the two 18-hole courses here. Bryan Holshouser and Jim League have been with me for three years and they both do exceptional jobs. I couldn't take on the GCSAA responsibility without them."

(Continued on Page 35)

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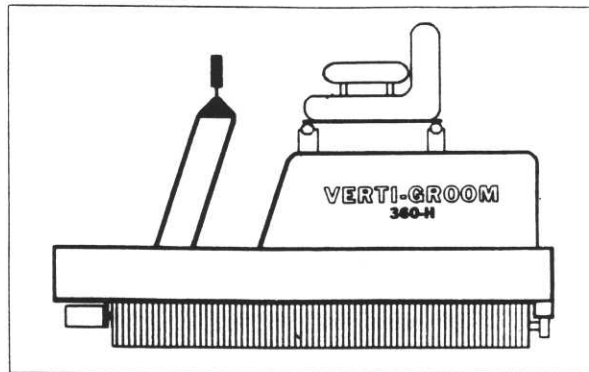
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Economy —

(Continued from Page 33)

Nichols says GCSAA business takes some 120 days a year, much of that on weekends. And Cherokee Country Club is a private, highly maintained facility that sees heavy play from its 2,000 members.

"Member demands are high, but I have had tremendous support for participation in GCSAA. Fortunately, most of our meetings are scheduled

for spring, fall and winter. We don't do much during the summer when our course demands the most work. We have bentgrass greens and summer is the most stressful time for them."

Nichols has been on the GCSAA board of directors since 1987 and was active with the Georgia Superintendents Association for 10 years before that. He's accustomed to extra work and balancing the demands of two or more jobs.

But he's convinced that the sacrifice

is justified. "I've gained a lot personally from GCSAA responsibility," he said. "I've met a lot of people: superintendents, folks from USGA, PGA, the Club Managers Association and some from other parts of the industry.

"I've traveled to other parts of the country and to other nations. I understand golf from a broader perspective because I have sat down and talked with superintendents from all over the world. The more I understand the problems they face, the better I can do my job here.

"The worst thing a superintendent can do is spend too much time looking at his own course. Visiting other courses teaches us a lot."

But he adds that working for GCSAA is more than a personal goal. "I'm doing this for the industry," he said. "It's important that we get involved."

That involvement may take him away from his course a good many days a year, but the things he learns, the perspective he gains and the people he meets will make him a better superintendent and will benefit his members.

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Wayne Dally, Minn. Department of Agriculture, speaks on MDA Certification requirements.



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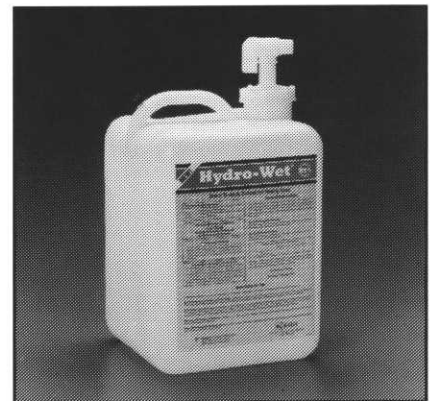
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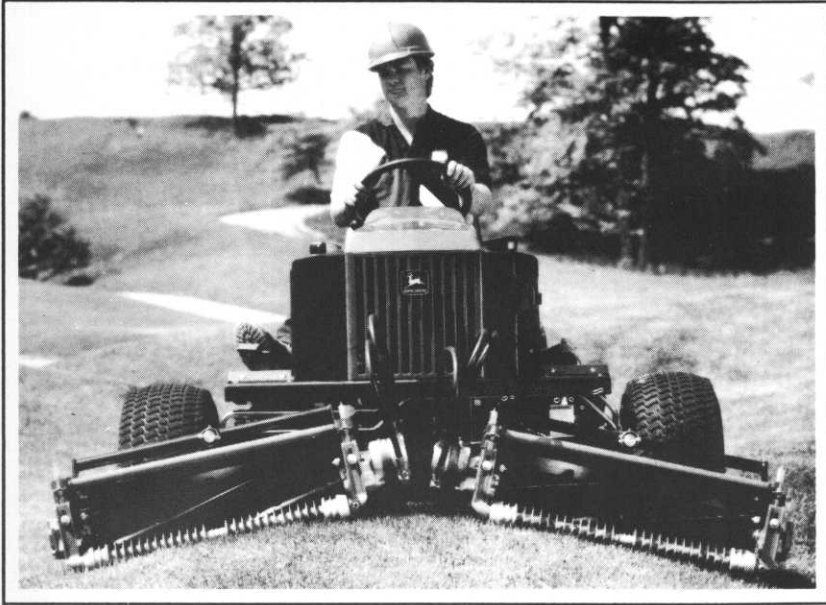
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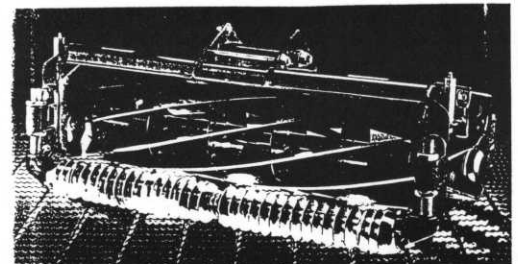
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EDITOR'S CORNER

By John Harris
Lafayette Club



By now most of you have opened your facilities and are well into spring clean-up and tidying up any loose ends of last fall. I wasn't quite sure if the seasons were ever going to shift gears with the sub-zero weather we experienced in March.

In retrospect, the month of March 'twas the season for an education. The Pesticide Application re-certification held at the Northland Inn was attended by 272 members. I would like to thank Wayne Daly and his staff for making this program available to the M.G.C.S.A. on an annual basis. It is a convenient and timely method for us to obtain re-certification of our pesticide applicators' licenses.

Robert Muir Graves and Geoffrey S. Cornish made an appearance the following week to present their ever-popular "Golf Course Design Principles." Bob had the first day on his own as Cornish got hung up on the East Coast by the storm of the century.

The U.S.G.A. put on a seminar at the Town & Country Club. Host Superintendent Bill Larson along with the clubhouse staff are to be commended for a relaxing atmosphere and fine luncheon.

The agenda included a little of everything from turf tips to golf club research. If I understand the research that's being done in Far Hills, New Jersey on clubs and balls correctly, I should probably invest in a new set of woods and stop paying so much attention to compression in balls.

At this writing the Spray Tech Seminar at Midland Hills, Host Superintendent Scott Austin, is yet to be held. Be sure to drill those that attended for what is sure to be some valuable information.

The Baker Park Leachate study is in and will be presented in a two-part series beginning with this issue of *Hole Notes*. Read it carefully and wait for the follow up in the May issue to get all the facts.

My apologies to Bill Johnson and Paul Mayes for not reporting their successes at the G.C.S.A.A. Championship held in San Diego. Bill was runner-up in the Senior Flight with scores of 79-78 while Paul roughed it out in the first flight placing 8th with scores of 82-76.

As you know, our April Meeting site is at the Mankato Golf Club. Our hosts, Fred Taylor and the soon-to-be-retired "Boots" Fuller, will prepare a fun-filled afternoon complete with a swap meet and retirement banquet in Mr. Fuller's honor. I know this is a busy time of year for everyone. However, with the opportunity to buy and sell a few items for or from your facility along with the celebration of a long term professional within our association deems extra special attention.

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