

and use in Maryland to set up Bay protection fund. A hearing was held on March 2. We feel that this bill will probably be given an unfavorable report. A major reason is the uncertainty over the overall changes in the tax structure—so introducing a special interest tax such as this in 1992 is unlikely.

I believe the turfgrass industry is in the public eye now. Thus, legislators and environmental groups look

at us as a target. I strongly feel that the entire industry including golf courses, sod producers, lawn care, hydroseeders and grounds maintenance business must be organized politically and fight for our interest. We must get our message out. It is important that you call your delegates and senators at 410-841-3000 (Baltimore) or 202-858-3000 (Washington) to register your opinion.

## Pesticide Perceptions

As an example of the bad perception that the media shows toward our industry, the following article submitted by Lary Ott is from the New Orleans *Times Picayune* on February 15. It "reports" on the Friday meeting of the GCSAA Conference on Environmental Issues:

*"Golf-course greens might be a little less so in the future, thanks to tougher regulation of the pesticides golf course superintendents use to help keep them that way," a pesticides expert said Friday.*

Jay Feldman, coordinator of the national Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticides, told the greenskeepers meeting at the New Orleans Convention Center that they'd better start replacing their select grasses with less spectacular but hardier local varieties that don't require intensive chemical treatment to kill chomping bugs and wilting fungi. Murmurs among the crowd of more than 1,000 members of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America showed they were not pleased with the message.

Victor Kimm of the federal EPA said that a federal law requiring manufacturers to prove existing pesticides aren't harmful probably will lead to many being taken off the shelves, including several that are popular on golf courses.

Kimm explained a key concern relates to the contamination of groundwater by pesticides that is being found throughout the country. While in many cases the problem is chemicals used in agriculture, golf courses also can be to blame.

Feldman urged the greenskeepers to do their own research to determine how risky chemicals were. He said he didn't expect them to throw away their pesticides immediately. Rather, he suggested they phase out pesticide use, replacing it with less toxic pest management programs and by careful selection of bug and fungus-resistant grasses.

Obviously the article is misleading and judgmental. Its use of phrases such as "chomping bugs and wilting fungi," and the term "greenskeeper" shows some of the limits of the writer. The writer assigns more authority to Mr. Feldman's comments than they perhaps deserve. He also fails to mention the

third speaker at the session, John Stossell, a reporter from the ABC network, who approached the pesticide issue as one of risk versus benefit, and who also discussed allowing the free marketplace to determine the limits of pesticide use.

For those of you who were there, is this how you would have reported the session?



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