

Government Relations: Jay Nalls

“Hurry up and wait” is often the tone for Government Relations, and it continues again this year. There are two items on the horizon that will directly impact golf course superintendents that are still up in the air. They are the fertilizer reporting requirements for the Fertilizer Use Act of 2011, and the potential Pesticide Ban in Montgomery County, MD.

In the next month or so we should receive Beta Testing for the reporting part of the Fertilizer Use Act of 2011. This program will require licensed commercial fertilizer applicators and businesses to report their nitrogen and phosphorous applications based on watershed for the calendar year 2014. This will be more of a challenge for landscape companies which tend to stretch out over several watersheds. As soon as the beta testing begins, we will inform you of its progress and any changes that we recommend. When the program is established, we will also send out information to assist you in reporting this data.

On September 24th several members of the community went to meet with Councilman Berliner in Montgomery County in a series of ongoing discussions about the potential Pesticide Ban. Councilman Leventhal is supposedly planning to introduce legislation expanding the program to include a ban on private property also, not just County properties. This would stop people from applying pesticides in gardens and lawns, though golf courses may still be considered exempt. There is the strong possibility that clubhouse lawns and gardens would not be exempt, however. The proponents of the bill have asked for a second hearing on this issue to present testimony from medical professionals, though it has not yet been granted. RISE would love the support of any Superintendents living in Montgomery County, MD to speak about the products and methods of pesticide control that we use. Also, if you have customers / members at your facilities who live in Montgomery County, and they do not want the County banning all use of pesticides in their home, please contact me at jnalls@norbeckcc.com and I will connect you and them to the RISE action network about this issue only. Currently Seattle City is facing similar legislation. Takoma Park, MD is just the

start of an issue that will become nationwide. With involved community we can show how pesticide use can be used in an environmentally responsible way.

There was good news from the GCSAA about a three year extension for the use of Namacure through October 6th, 2017! GCSAA officials and superintendents across the nation asked for an EPA extension for the use of Namacure. Namacure is crucial for controlling nematodes in turfgrass. This is another example of the EPA and industry working together to phase out potentially harmful chemicals without complete bans on product use.

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