

GOVERNMENT

UPDATE

Small businesses exempted from OSHA logs

Small businesses would no longer have to keep logs about occupational injuries or illnesses under an agreement reached in a congressional conference committee on the Small Business Authorization Bill.

Businesses with 10 or fewer fulltime employees would not have to keep the logs for the Occupational Health and Safety Administration unless the company owner was part of a survey of small businesses.

A committee staffer who worked on the bill said, "Businessmen should like this provision because we know they really hate to keep records."

Another provision of the amendment to the Small Business bill would prohibit OSHA from imposing civil penalties against a company with 10 or fewer fulltime employees on first-time OSHA inspections, which found 10 or fewer nonserious violations.

The conference committee report must be voted on by both houses and signed by the president before becoming law. Congress is expected to act on the legislation before the session recesses in October.

Although the amendment would limit some of OSHA's regulations, some congressmen felt the bill did not go far enough.

U.S. Sen. Dewey Bartlett (R-Ok.) proposed a tougher amendment which was defeated in the conference committee.

One of the senator's aides said, "Because the amendment says, '10 or fewer violations,' I think you'll see a lot of inspections where they find 11 violations. Sen. Bartlett will vote against the bill, I think."

FIFRA approved by Congress

With the passage of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act by both Congressional houses, the bill is expected to be signed by President Jimmy Carter.

Congressional staffers, who worked on the bill, expect the president's approval because the Environmental Protection Agency worked closely with the drafting of the bill.

"We worked so closely with EPA that it is unlikely there will be any problem," said a spokesman for U.S. Rep. Floyd Fithian (D-Ind.). Fithian drafted amendments to the bill.

An EPA spokesman said, "While we don't agree with everything in the bill, we are not going to ask the president to veto it."

The bill was passed by voice vote in the House on Sept. 19 and in the Senate on Sept. 18.

FIFRA would make states the primary enforcers of the law rather than the EPA. It would make these exceptions in the applications:

- using a pesticide at less than label concentration;
- mixing pesticides with fertilizer not specifically prohibited by the label;
- applying a pesticide for a target pest not listed on the label providing the application is to a labelled crop, animal or site and the label does not specifically prohibit use against that target pest;
- using a method of application not listed on the label.

DBCP restrictions made permanent

The Environmental Protection Agency has made permanent its temporary restrictions on the pesticide Dibromochloropropane, DBCP, which is used on lawns, golf courses and ornamentals.

DBCP is used against nematodes. The permanent restrictions are subject to a hearing, which must be requested by mid-October. Even if a hearing is requested the temporary restrictions would remain in force.

somes has been marketing a range of rotary mowers manufactured by Wisconsin Marine.

Wisconsin Marine sales have doubled each year since 1975 and projections show a continuing substantial growth for the next five years. To support expansion plans the company recently acquired an option to purchase 40 acres in Johnson Creek, Wis. Construction will begin this year on a 90,000-square-foot manufacturing plant, which will more than double the present facilities.

SEED

Pickseed to market two new ryegrasses

Pickseed West, Inc., Tangent, Ore., has introduced two new turf-type perennial ryegrasses — Fiesta and Blazer — to be available for distributor sales this year.

The two new ryegrasses are characterized by fine texture, low growth, rapid germination, excellent seedling vigor, disease resistance and winter hardiness, the company said.

Fiesta is earlier in maturity and has a medium dark green color, while Blazer is a later variety with a truly dark green appearance.

Both of these ryegrasses perform well in bermudagrass overseeding, in turf mixtures, or in monoculture seeding. They are also available in Pickseed's new turfgrass mixture, Futura.

According to marketing manager Mike Robinson, Fiesta, Blazer and Futura will be distributed by Pickseed West, and also by Otto Pick & Sons Seeds, Ltd., Richmond Hill, Ontario.

MARKETING

Lofts establishes new sod division

Lofts Pedigreed Seed, Inc., Bound Brook, N.J. has established the Lofts Proprietary Turf Division to cater to the special needs of sod growers.

The new division will handle every available proprietary grass seed and blend, regardless of the producer, from its distribution points across the United States.

The new division will be staffed by men and women specially trained in every phase of sod production, with special backing by Lofts director of agronomy Richard Hurley.