

# GOVERNMENT

## UPDATE

### Senate panel votes for chemical cleanup

The Senate Environment Committee recently approved a tough hazardous waste bill which would force chemical companies to annually contribute \$700 million to a new federal superfund.

The bill would open chemical companies and their customers to a new round of government and private lawsuits over damage caused by toxic waste spills around the country. It is much tougher than an earlier bill proposed by the House Commerce Committee.

The measure would impose "strict liability" for damages—which means that plaintiffs wouldn't have to prove that negligence was involved in a waste spill—on companies that contributed to a hazardous emission. Such suits could be filed against the owners or operators of dump sites, the companies that generated the waste or contracted for its disposal, or the concerns that transported it.

A spokesman for the Chemical Manufacturers Association said that the Senate is asking the chemical industry to cover for 17 industries, such as hospitals, and steel mills, and others involved with chemicals. A new company would have to contribute to cleanup of pre-existing spills.

### Mondale, Bergland dedicate herb garden

Joan Mondale, honorary chairwoman of the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities, and Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland dedicated the new National Herb Garden at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Arboretum in Washington, D.C.

In the dedication, Mondale placed the final plant, a dwarf blue cypress, into an intricately patterned knot garden, one of the major features of the garden. The herb garden covers about two acres in a meadow of the 444-acre arboretum.

Bergland said the Herb Society of America raised over \$300,000 for the garden, which was then supplemented by \$200,000 in federal funds.

### Senate acts to perk interest in patents

To stimulate both production and innovation, the Senate recently passed a measure that would allow small businesses to retain title to inventions they develop using federal research funds.

Under current law, the government owns more than 28,000 patents, but of that number, only 4% have been commercially exploited. Business owners complain that investments in new product developments are unattractive without exclusive rights to the patents. While some government agencies award exclusive licenses, others do not.

### EPA asks ban on most uses of lindane

The Environmental Protection Agency has proposed to ban most uses of lindane, a pesticide used in a number of household products, in agriculture, and for treating hardwood logs and lumber.

The agency has invited Hooker Chemicals and Plastics Corp. of Niagara Falls, NY, the only U.S. manufacturer of lindane, and other interested parties to comment on the proposal.

Some of the areas EPA would ban lindane use are: all seed treatments, Christmas trees, home applications on ornamental plants and trees, in forestry, and on hardwood logs, lumber, and in structures.

Stauffer Chemical Co., as its new chairman of the board. It also honored The Dow Chemical Company, Midland, MI, and Virginia Chemicals, Inc., Portsmouth, VA, for the 1980 Safety Awards at its annual meeting in White Sulphur Springs, WV.

William G. Simeral, senior vice president of E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Company, was elected vice chairman of the board.

Paul F. Oreffice, president and chief executive officer of the The Dow Chemical Company, was elected chairman of the executive committee.

Robert A. Roland was re-elected president of the association, and 19 members were newly elected to the board of directors.

The awards are made to CMA member companies that show the greatest percentage reduction rates of occupational injuries, deaths, and illnesses in a five year span. The Dow Chemical Company led the larger company category with 57 percent injury reduction, and Virginia Chemicals had 38 percent reduction in the smaller company category.

CMA is also presently planning for the 1981 awards to high school, two-year and four-year college chemistry and chemical engineering teachers. United States and Canadian teachers with a minimum of 10 years teaching experience are eligible for the national awards.

Nominations must be received by CMA by Feb. 1, 1981. For further information contact Dr. Robert E. Varnerin, CMA, 1825 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington D.C. 20009.

## PLANTS

### GCA Survey shows foliage plant sales up

Overall sales of foliage plants increased last year, according to the 70 firms responding to a management survey taken by Garden Centers of America (GCA) in February.

Thirty-seven percent of these firms showed increases between 10 and 25 percent; however, 59 percent of the respondents said such sales represent 10 percent or less of their total 1979 sales.

When asked by GCA members what size plants make better sales items, the retailers' response was: plants in 6-10 inch pots are 26 percent; 3-6 inch pots 21 percent; 3 inch

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