

LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

LAWN CARE

Organization formed to address industry concerns

WASHINGTON — More than 30 members of the recently-formed Council for Lawn Care Information (CLCI) met here early last month with officials of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Significant points that came out at the meeting:

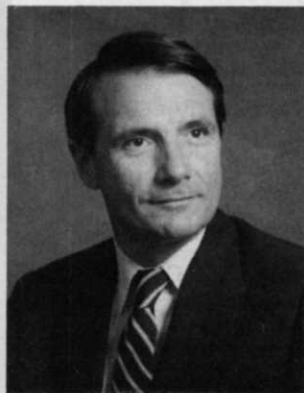
- Can the EPA's new directives include serious attempts to "de-mystify" the agency's workings and communicate better?

- Is re-registration worth it? Because of the recently-initiated EPA re-registration process for pesticides, their manufacturers might feel it is not worth generating data for minor-use products that don't have profit potential. This might include many products presently registered for lawn use.

- Will LCOs be included in agricultural worker protection standards currently being promulgated? The lawn care industry would like input on these standards, and would also like distinctions between mixers, loaders and applicators.

- How about three levels of pesticide certification? Some products would be applied only by certified applicators, some would require an on-site supervisor and some would require that a supervisor be available within "a reasonable time."

- Is a movement afoot in the Maryland legislature to ban the use of granular insecticides—perhaps even all granular pesticides—be-



Wilkinson: a busy month for legislative matters

cause of avian exposure problems? According to some members, yes.

- Is the lawn care industry getting a bad rap on integrated pest management

(IPM)? LCOs say that the industry has been in favor of it for years. However, the consumer demands "picture-perfect" lawns that can only come with the use of pesticides. IPM is a methodology within the arsenal to control urban pests, but not the whole answer.

Dr. James F. Wilkinson, director of environmental and regulatory affairs for the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA), headed up the meeting. Present were LCOs; university researchers; pesticide manufacturers, formulators and distributors; and members of the trade press, including LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT group vice-president Bob

Earley.

The organization's main objectives were established. They are:

1. Provide and share information about lawn care issues within the industry.

2. Establish positions and policies for lawn care issues.

3. Establish safety standards for the professional lawn care industry.

4. Give direction to PLCAA so it can proactively address issues such as posting, pre-notification, contracts, local jurisdiction, regulation authority, re-entry, watering-in, safety, etc.

The CLCI was formed by the PLCAA to advise and help establish standards and policies. □

ASSOCIATIONS

PLCAA responds swiftly to its critics

MARIETTA, Ga. — The Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) wasted no time recently in rebutting a report which blasted lawn care pesticides.

In its newly-published report, "Keep Off the Grass," the consumer watchdog group Public Citizen singled out as dangerous 40 different pesticides used by the industry, and implicated 12 as carcinogenic. The report was given coverage in the April 18 issue of *USA Today*.

Dr. James F. Wilkinson, the PLCAA's director of regulatory and environmental affairs, requested and was granted equal time to respond in the paper's April 20 issue. Subsequent media appearances by both groups were broadcast by the CNN-TV news network, numerous local television and radio stations and newspapers.

"Public Citizen chose not to use scientific or medical experts in its report," said Wilkinson. "The truth is that the Environmental Protection Agency has been reviewing the chemicals for years, and a 1987 report by the American Council on Science and Health, written by independent scientific and medical experts, concluded that lawn care chemicals, when used as directed, pose no known hazard to human health."

Public Citizen plans to continue its attack, rallying for stricter state regulations and limited use of chemicals by homeowners. "Ultimately, the best way to protect ourselves from the dangers of pesticides is not to use them," said "Keep Off the Grass" author Laura Weiss.

PLCAA has advised its members to direct all media inquiries about the report to the association at (404) 977-5222. □