

LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

LEGISLATION

Water woes on the horizon for golf supers in Georgia

ATHENS, Ga. — The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service reports that golf courses in the Peach State will soon need agricultural water use permits.

Golf courses and other recreational turf are included in the provisions of a law requiring a permit for all groundwater and surface water withdrawals of 3 million gallons per month for "agricultural" uses.

"If they're watering fairways, even nine-hole golf courses would probably use that much water," says Tony Tyson, irrigation specialist with the extension service. "If they water just the greens and tees," continues Tyson, "they probably don't use enough water to require a permit, although some 18-hole courses might need a permit even then."

According to Dan Rahn, news editor for the extension service, applications are automatically approved for any golf course or other recreational turf with a withdrawal system that was in place before July 1, 1988, provided the applications are sent in by July 1, 1991.

The dry weather situation is becoming serious in many southern states. Florida, for example, is in the second year of drought conditions, following 30 years of less than average rainfall.

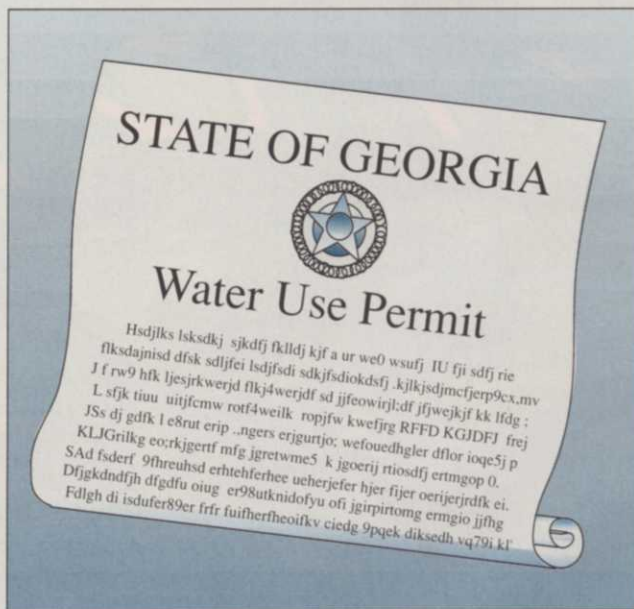
That merited a recent cover story in *The Wall Street Journal*, which quoted sources as saying the wetland drainage there has caused a "climate shift," making the state permanently drier.

"We in the metropolitan Atlanta area are feeling acute water shortages," says Rahn, "so there's a need—or feeling of a need—to get a handle on what our water resources are." Rahn says that the conservationist mood has extended through other parts of the state. "People pretty much see the need to (conserve)," admits Rahn, though he thinks the seriousness of the situation is a scary thought.

"This is the means to monitor and manage the water resource," says Rahn, "and we've got to make golf course and athletic turf people realize that they're included in this too."

There are exceptions to the law where recreational turf areas need "industrial" water use permits.

In other locations, however, if a golf course pumps an average of 100,000 gallons of water per day in any month from any single source—such as a well, pond, or creek—it must have an "agricultural" water use permit. According to Tyson, that equates to the amount of water needed to put two inches of



water per week on 14 acres.

The Environmental Protection Division warns that there will be strict adherence to the July 1, 1991 deadline.

"It's to their advantage to get permits now," says David Ashley, manager of the EPD Water Resources Program. "During this first phase we'll issue a permit for the full capacity of the system. But there's a chance the permit will be reduced after that. In some areas you may not get a permit for the maximum capacity of the system."

The EPD urges golf course personnel to apply for permits immediately, as it can process just 15 applications per day.

—Terry McIver □

LAWN CARE

ChemLawn is pleased with settlement

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — ChemLawn Services Corp. has settled a lawsuit in New York State Court over the wording of advertising in brochures published between 1985 and 1987.

ChemLawn challenged charges by the state attorney general Robert Abrams that the brochures contained inaccurate or misleading information. ChemLawn describes that information as "technical information that ChemLawn provided customers in response to their health,

safety and environmental questions."

Neither side is required by the settlement to concede or admit wrongdoing.

"We are pleased with the agreement we have reached," says Stephen A. Hardymon, ChemLawn's vice president of environmental affairs and media relations. "It incorporates current ChemLawn communications practices, in that when we discuss technical issues in any informational piece, we define technical terms in language that our customers can understand."

Hardymon says ChemLawn "is responsibly addressing consumer issues, and the information we currently give our customers demonstrates that."

In a show of cooperation, ChemLawn recently supplied the Environmental Protection Agency and the Federal Trade Commission with its written advertising guidelines. The company plans to introduce those guidelines to the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) at the association's board of directors meeting in August.

Tom Delaney, PLCAA director of government affairs, was to meet with the FTC and EPA officials on



Hardymon: addressing consumer-related issues

July 26, to lay groundwork for establishing advertising standards.

"Right now, the EPA doesn't have any regulations in regard to applicators," says Delaney. "The only people that can deal with (applicators) right now are with the Federal Trade Commission, and they don't know anything about pesticides."

Delaney is concerned over an apparent a double standard being followed by government agencies.

According to Delaney, the FTC and EPA use the words "safe" and "low-toxicity," in their own brochures on lawn care.

Ironically, it was that kind of wording that started Abrams's campaign against ChemLawn advertising. □

SHORT CUTS

TEXAS TURF...Dr. Milt Engelke, of Texas A&M University has high hopes for current research programs which center on zoysia and bentgrass. "Objectives are to reduce the maintenance and water requirements," says Engelke. "We're working in an environmental niche that reflects all stresses—hot, wet, dry, and cold. At some point, we want to be able to impose those stresses on plant species." If Engelke is correct, the research industry is light years ahead of the rest of us.

"We have the germplasm to give you a grass you'll never have to mow or fertilize, and that will look pretty good all the time," reveals Engelke. "But it will probably cost me \$1000 or \$1500 per acre to produce. And there's not a market out there for that. We have to look at delivering that to the consumer. It's one of the things we feel ties (research) in with commercial industries."

NEW POST...Dr. Charles Darrah was recently appointed president of Ag-Vantage, Inc., a Columbus, Ohio agricultural consulting firm. He also is chief operating officer of CLC Labs, the firm's independent soil testing laboratory. Darrah served as director of technical services at ChemLawn for the past eight years. His expertise in specialty fertilizer development is known throughout the green industry.

ALL-STAR ADVISOR...LM editorial advisor Dr. Kent Kurtz, of Cal Poly Pomona, was at Chicago's Wrigley Field recently to observe the field prep prior to the All-Star game. Kurtz says the field had what looked to be a little pythium. The solution was "a good shot of iron, and we mowed off the problem." Kurtz says Wrigley field looks better than it has for many years, thanks to the efforts of Lubie Veal, Roger O'Connor and Frank Caparilli.

NEW ADDRESS...The nation's oldest and largest organization of landscape contractors and their suppliers, the California Landscape Contractors Association, has relocated its headquarters to 2021 N. St., in Sacramento. Their phone number remains the same.

TAKING RESUMES...The Western Agricultural Chemicals Association (WACA) is looking for a new executive director. Anyone interested should contact Pat Kline in the WACA office at (916) 446-9222.

SEED

European market plays hard to get



Hurley: Selling European markets can be difficult.

MARTINSVILLE, N.J. — Many American products gain easy entry into European markets. Not so for grass seed.

According to Dr. Richard Hurley of Lofts Seed Co., lack of distinction eliminates many American varieties from the European market.

"This goes back to the earliest days of seed research and development," remembers Hurley, "when most of the tall fescues were developed at Rutgers University. Most of the

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germplasm can be traced back to the original Rebel program. A lot of the varieties on the market in the U.S. are very close in appearance. When they put them to the test over there, they quickly find this out. Any that are similar receive a distinction test. Any that show it's not distinct gets rejected. There are a lot of look-alikes in the U.S."

Loft brands currently being used in Europe include Palmer and Repel perennial ryegrasses and Rebel II tall fescue.

Hurley says a natural follow-up to European seed marketing has been a tremendous increase in interest from golf professionals. "It's a whole new ballgame when it comes to selecting grasses. The local people there quickly decide which species will and will not work. Licensing is important. Different countries have their own lists. Unless an American company is tied in with a big European company, they're not going

to do much business over there."

On the production side of the seed coin, company chairman Jon Loft speaks of the importance of Lofts New Zealand and Australia operations.

"It's getting to be where 25 percent of our proprietary grasses are grown in places other than the U.S., because our business is growing," admits Loft. "We are now growing seed in New Zealand and Australia, so we in effect get two productions each year."

Lofts New Zealand and Australia harvests take place in December and January. □

PRODUCTS

O.M. Scotts warns customers of tainted fertilizer/fungicide

MARYSVILLE, Ohio — In an open letter to their customers this summer, O.M. Scott & Sons warns of FF-II fertilizer/fungicide contaminated with atrazine.

"Unfortunately, last fall...a limited amount of contaminated product was released to the market," the letter says. "Our technical representatives were notified as soon as we learned of this issue. They are contacting each customer, individually, who received FF-II from the suspect produc-

tion."

According to the letter, golf course greens treated with FF-II came through the winter in excellent condition, but some courses began noticing small spots resembling dollar spot.

"Scotts took immediate action to insure that the golf courses were back in playing condition as soon as possible," the letter notes.

Scotts says that "the following actions to insure that this type of contamination never occurs again" are being taken:

- all products containing atrazine will be dyed a bright color for easy identification;
- the quality assurance department will increase checks on production runs; and
- bioassay tests will be conducted as an additional check. □

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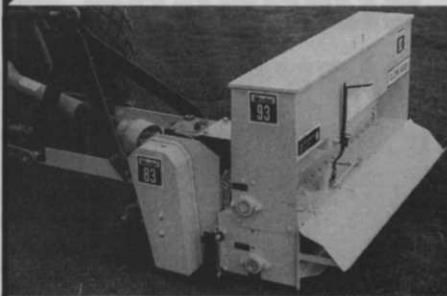
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Circle No. 126 on Reader Inquiry Card

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The great outdoors has a wide range of turf conditions. So where do you turn for one superior, yet economical feeding? Greenskeeper 20-4-10. This homogeneous fertilizer contains 40% organic nitrogen and is formulated for immediate turf green-up and sustained feeding. Yet it is cost-efficient for use on a diversity of turf areas. From your source for premium quality turf products.


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Circle No. 115 on Reader Inquiry Card

RESEARCH

Good news: pesticides leach less than originally believed according to Cornell findings

ITHACA, N.Y. — Findings to further indicate that pesticide leaching is not as pronounced as often believed are to be released by Cornell University researchers in October.

Dr. Marty Petrovic of the Cornell University horticulture department has completed research into the leaching properties of 2,4-D, dicamba, Sevin, and Daconil. Three media were used in the trials: sand, sandy loam and silt loam.

According to Petrovic, the research findings are improvements over standard, conservative leaching models used by government agencies to indicate leaching potential.

What's interesting to Petrovic is that the models "should have predicted a lot more leaching than we actually found; there's something 'unique' in the turf system that's reducing the amount of pesticide

moving down.

"If people do use these models (as guides), and (independent tests) are not showing any leaching, that's probably true. If they show some leaching, then we may have to question whether more research is needed."

Petrovic conducted his research in the fall of 1989, and again this summer. The different seasons provided contrasting climatic conditions.

Earthworm activity also seems to play a part in product movement. Petrovic indicates the tests done in silt loam showed that substantial amounts of pesticides followed earthworm channels. These passageways allow water and pesticides to move deeper and faster.

Petrovic will present his complete findings at an arborist's association meeting in San Antonio, Oct. 21-26. □

LETTERS

Don't knock Earth Day

To the editor:

I read the June issue and was happy to see articles about finding ways to use less pesticides and control the problems of water use. We are trying to do the same thing here at the arboretum.

Then I read your editorial ("Earth Day at 'the zoo'"). Unfortunately, Mr. McIver has written a piece that I can only describe as nonsensical, self-serving, and unprofessional. The description of the people selected for the article sounded like his self-image was being threatened by a few of the more extreme elements of the environmental movement, and he apparently thinks the

whole landscape industry feels the same way.

Mr. McIver is living and thinking in the past. His insecurity about changes that are happening in this world shows through. You should be encouraging the industry to forge ahead with environmental responsibility, not bashing Earth Day.

Here at Mercer, we cooperated with Texaco and others during our Earth Day celebration in order to exchange ideas and bring about change in a meaningful manner. Doing business in the oil and chemical capital of the U.S., we know how these companies operate. There are signs of significant changes.

The description of Earth Day as a zoo and, indirectly, as a communist plot, could

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