

LCOs "just don't think it makes sense to further regulate them for using the same products as the homeowner."

"The answer is not at the federal level," says Duncan. "We can't count on a change in FIFRA. We have to go to the states."

Duncan says RISE is counting on the agricultural lobby "to lead the effort" in convincing state legislators to be prudent.

## The RISE Action Plan

- Defend the marketplace, and minimize burdensome legislation and regulation.

- Provide education and training tools.

- Rights-of-way program, in cooperation with USDA and EPA

- LCO training, in conjunction with PLCAA

- Resolve federal, state and local issues as they arise.

- Federal/state pre-emption (*Casey vs. Wisconsin*)

- National Lawncare Notification (Senate Bill 849)

- Site remediation

- Container recycling

- Water quality

- Minor use re-registration

- Defeat Ohio's Proposition 65 initiative

- Support grassroots organizations.

- Fund state legislative issues

- Provide seed money for new alliances. \$15,000 has been approved for this activity. RISE recently donated \$3000 to the newly-formed Iowa Alliance for Environmental Concerns.

## From the field: Grassroots efforts at work



**New Jersey:** Ilona Gray, executive director of The Alliance for Environmental Concerns in Wayne, is a horticulturist by education, but she's become a green industry activist by necessity.

Gray and others like her have one overriding concern: that pesticide legislation makes sense, and is not duplicated or changed drastically from one city to another.

## Local laws: what to say

■ Here are some timely tips offered by the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) for arguing against local regulation of pesticide application.

If local legislators are considering such actions, be sure to notify the PLCAA at (404) 977-5222. If you so desire, the PLCAA will also offer further assistance.

**When a local ordinance is proposed or about to be proposed:**

- Make sure legislators know that current federal and state laws, developed by regulators with scientific and technical expertise not available on the local level, already afford sufficient protection.

- If your state laws require posting and/or pre-notification, make sure the locals know of their existence.

- If health issues are raised, let locals know that a long-term study of a major lawn care company whose employees were exposed to pesticides at their full-strength concentrations, showed no adverse health effects. Offer to provide them a copy of the study, available through the PLCAA.

Let them know that substances applied on lawns are greatly diluted and contain about 93 percent water, six percent fertilizer and just one percent pesticide.

- If environmental issues are raised, point out Dr. Tom Watschke's work at Penn State University that concluded "the impact of well-managed turfgrass on water quality appears to be positive in nature." Offer to supply copies of Watschke's study, also available through the PLCAA.

- If only commercial services are covered by the proposed ordinance(s), point out that 85 percent of all lawn care is performed by the do-it-yourselfer, who uses exactly the same products as professional lawn care companies.

**If authorities still want to move ahead with the bill:**

- Offer to work with local government to pass a state lawn care bill containing PLCAA-endorsed provisions.

**If authorities reject to work on state bill, still want to move ahead:**

- If **posting** is being considered, suggest the points listed below as part of a compromise bill, so some semblance of conformity with other possible localities can be maintained:

- \*Posting for all applicators

- \*Signs to be posted at the primary point(s) of entry at the time of the actual application, in a color that contrasts to background colors

- \*Allow residents or owners to remove signs one day after application

- \*Signs measuring 4-by-5 inches containing not less than 18-point type using the wording: "Landscape Care Application—Please Avoid Contact"

- \*Signs bearing the company name and telephone contact number

- If **pre-notification** is being considered, suggest the points listed below as part of a compromise bill:

- \*Advance notification of customers upon request

- \*One day's notice of application upon request of the owner or owner's agent of abutting properties

- \*Pre-notification of all residents within a specified distance of an application (meaning they could receive multiple notifications, with the effect of rendering them meaningless or of creating unwarranted alarm)

- If **written contracts**, having the effect of a contract, are being considered, suggest they contain the following items, as part of a compromise bill:

- \*Brand name of the product to be applied;

- \*Cost of the basic services to be performed;

- \*Chemical type (natural or synthetic fertilizer, pesticide or soil conditioning agent) of the product;

- \*General reason for the product's use as stated on the label;

- \*Concentration of the end-use products and rate of application;

- \*Special instructions related to the customer's use of the lawn after application;

- \*On request, a copy of the label of the product(s) applied.

"What we have found is that the local municipalities are completely unaware of what type of regulations there are in the state, and sometimes the concerns they

have already been addressed.

"Maybe what (has happened) is a misapplication on the part of some applicators in their district that can be taken care of

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**Gray: State associations need financial backing.**



**Grooms: Better understanding than outsiders.**

already."

Gray says that, generally, once town leaders hear the advice and concerns of the professional applicators, they either drop the ordinance idea or write it to be practical.

Gray stresses the importance of awareness and support for association activity.

"We're asking (association) members to watch the newspapers and attend town meetings to keep track of any indication that there's going to be activity to restrict pesticides significantly. If they find out, notify us immediately."

Gray says the state lawn or landscaper associations need all the help they can get, both informationally and financially.



**Oklahoma:** Although the city of Edmond is the only Oklahoma town we know of operating under local pesticide regs, Brad Johnson, president of Green Up! in Tulsa is playing it smart from a public relations point-of-view: he advises do-it-yourselfers on proper lawn care via a weekly AM-band radio program.

Although Johnson admits to receiving a few calls on the heels of the latest 2,4-D report, he says the anti-pesticide feeling in Tulsa is "nothing like it is on the East Coast."

He credits the lack of public worry to the agricultural state's dependence on disease- and insect-free crops.

To the callers who did question the effect of 2,4-D on dogs, Johnson says he explains that the product has been exhaustively researched, has been in use for 40 years, and has the blessing of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Though notification is not a mandate in Tulsa, Johnson takes the initiative and calls neighbors of customers beforehand, just to do what he thinks is right and fair.



**Iowa:** Since becoming communications point-man for the Iowa Professional Lawn Care Association (IPLCA) about two years ago, Mike Grooms has had plenty to keep him busy. The state is full of activists out to ban or limit pesticide use, but the association has proven itself capable of banding together to bring about fair and practical change, or at the least, a continuance of a workable status quo.

In February of this year, the IPLCA rallied its membership to attend a critical public hearing on sign regulations. The opposition wanted 12-inch signs; IPLCA wanted to stay with the 4-by-5-inch size.

"Letters of support were written by pesticide user groups," remembers Grooms, including structural pest control operators. "We had 18 members of the association speak publicly versus three people

from environmental groups.

"From that standpoint, I think we can muster a public support policy. That is probably the most critical."

In January, about 70 state legislators will be invited to attend the association's second annual legislative reception. Grooms says it's the perfect time for user groups to tell their story.

"Lawn care operators, sod producers, superintendents, people who make their living in the industry will invite state legislators to dinner. We get to know them and give them a chance to gain a better understanding of what we do in Iowa, not only to earn our living, but also with a concern for environmental issues.

"I think we have a better understanding of our role in turfgrass and the environment (than do outside activists)," says Grooms, who predicts that even if some legislators show up just for a free meal, many will keep an open mind.

The Iowa Alliance of Environmental Concerns is a new coalition of urban and rural pesticide users.

"We feel we would be best regulated on the state level rather than in 900 Iowa towns," says coalition director Mona Bond.

According to Bond, 98 percent of all pesticides applied in Iowa are in the ag sector.

The Iowa alliance, like RISE, is not concerned with regulating do-it-yourselfers.

"At his point," says Bond, "I don't feel it would be in our best interest to go after the homeowners. Home rule is very important, and individual freedoms are sacred."

—Terry McIver

## LM REPORTS

# The art—and science—of snow blowing

**Snow blowers and throwers—in walk-behind, rider and tractor attachment models—easily cast aside what Old Man Winter casts your way.**

■ Snow throwers, and the ability to attack the white stuff with gusto, can add a winter service dimension for landscapers and LCOs, who must also enlist 1/2- to 8-foot plows to tackle and satisfy commercial accounts. And snow removal as an auxiliary service needs careful consideration beforehand to insure profitability.

Like all powered equipment, the starting rule is to fit the right machine with the task at hand. Over- or under-powered



**Cushman Hansen**

snow blowers are of little value. The message: shop around to compare features, operating specifics and cost. Decide what you're seeking to accomplish and purchase accordingly.

Snow blowers and throwers come in