

HOT TOPICS

Green industry faces uphill battle in Washington, AAN official says

'The more Congress does, the more likely it'll be doing it to you.'

OXFORD, Ohio—Ben Bolusky of the American Association of Nurserymen (AAN) thinks that the green industry has its hands full in the coming months.

"We have a lot of positive momentum in Washington, but we may run out of time this election year," Bolusky told members of the Professional Grounds Management Society (PGMS) and the Midwest Association of Physical Plant Administrators (MAPPA) here last month.

"The reality is, we may need to start all over in January with a whole new Congress," Bolusky pointed out that at least 71 members of Congress are retiring and—given the current unrest of American voters—many more incumbents could be voted out in November.

"The green industry will have a big re-education effort come January," he noted.

According to Bolusky, 110 cities and counties have already imposed their own pesticide application laws, following the *Wisconsin Public Intervenor v. Mortier* Supreme Court decision last summer.

"The potential for chaos is mind-boggling," Bolusky said. "Our pesticide regulatory system is in jeopardy if regulations are fueled by emotion. Few localities are qualified to regulate pesticides."

He said H.R. 3850 approved by the House Agricultural Subcommittee last

month would keep pesticide regulation at the federal and state levels: "The house bill has attracted 93 co-sponsors, and 23 senators have added their names to the Senate version (S. 2085) of the bill."

Another proposed pesticide bill, being readied by Sen. Joe Lieberman (D-Conn.) has been amended. The re-draft, if passed, would:

1) Force individual states to establish a registry of pesticide-sensitive individuals.

2) Force pesticide applicators to notify everyone on the list (within 800 yards), plus immediate neighbors, of the season's first pesticide application.

3) Force posted notices three days before, remaining three days after, pesticide applications.

4) Would apply to all pesticide applications, including those done by homeowners. Stores where pesticides are sold would also sell appropriate signage.

In addition, Bolusky noted, "The EPA's Lawn Care Advisory Committee is considering an *à la carte* menu of pesticide regulations."

Not all the news from Washington is bad, Bolusky admitted. Sen. Don Nickles (R-Okla.) has introduced S. 2319, which

will require an economic impact analysis on subsequent federal legislation. Such a bill could affect proposed pesticide regulations. "He's seeking some degree of accountability," Bolusky said.

Also, President George Bush has penciled \$31 million for urban tree plantings into his 1993 budget request. This is about 15 times what was spent in 1992, much of which will go to landscapers who are contracted to plant trees in urban areas.

The AAN executive made his remarks as part of a keynote at the Midwest Grounds

Management Conference sponsored by MAPPA and PGMS at Miami University.

Bolusky concluded that he is sometimes frustrated by "the seemingly never-ending gridlock and grandstanding in Congress...but I happen to believe in the system."

"The green industry is perfectly poised to be the environment's white knight in shining armor in the '90s. Despite the troubles, I'm optimistic about the future of our industry."

—Jerry Roche



Bolusky: Lieberman bill is 'outlandish'

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