



'We're learning how the game is played,' says Don Kurtz of Lawn Medic, Colorado.

area's three major airports, and an American Airlines jet slid off a National Airport runway (fortunately with no injuries).

That sealed Washington, and about half the LCOs spent an extra day there, an expense in time and money some of them didn't need (particularly since an eight-ounce draft cost \$2.30 at the hotel bar). Most operate businesses grossing \$500,000 or less annually and they don't, as a rule, have fat travel budgets. In fact, a few of the stranded LCOs fretted over snow-removal accounts waiting for them back home. Snow, it turned out, fell in the East everywhere there wasn't freezing drizzle.

But, it was the lack of an obvious legislative or regulatory threat that may have been the most unnerving of all for some of the LCOs.

—Ron Hall

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Kimm says administration wants more reduction in pesticide use

■ The lawn care operators didn't expect to find government officials asking them to use more chemical pesticides: they weren't disappointed.

"Many of us have long believed it is quite likely that pesticides are used more than they need to be used," said Victor J. Kimm, EPA Deputy Assistant Administrator, addressing 85 LCOs (from 24 states) and nine representatives of chemical product suppliers at the Professional Lawn Care Association of America's (PLCAA) Day on the Hill on February 7.

Kimm, in fact, said that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) met in June 1993 to begin mapping policies to:

- 1) encourage the growth of integrated pest management practices, and
- 2) promote, through licensing activities, replacement products that are just as effective as and "inherently safer" than classic hard chemicals.

"A good deal of attention is going into the general notion of trying to reduce the



EPA's Kimm says lawn care industry needs better data concerning applicator and customer exposure—and quick.

Kimm said the timetable for these, and all, pesticide-related issues isn't clear-cut, an observation coming into clearer focus when Kimm admitted that the EPA's re-registration of pesticides, begun several years ago, won't even be near completion by century's end.

"I do believe that there will be significant debate about pesticide legislation beginning in the next couple of weeks," he predicted.

—Ron Hall

presence of persistent toxic chemicals in society," he said. These efforts, mostly aimed at production agriculture, will increasingly include lawn care.

But Kimm's message to the LCOs was multi-pronged and included warnings of other approaching pesticide-related concerns.

For instance, he briefly touched on a National Academy of Science (NAS) study concerning the health implications of pesticide residues on children's diets. This particular five-year investigation, Kimm said, will likely grow into related studies dealing with the additive impact of other exposures to pesticides on children.

He urged the lawn care industry to initiate investigations of its own to determine and document homeowner, particularly children, exposures on treated lawns. "It's absolutely critical to get that work started quickly," Kimm said. A task force being readied by three trade associations and 17 product registrants may, in fact, already be moving in that direction, he reported.

Even within the EPA itself, reforms are being sought to better deal with pesticide issues, the most significant being a drive to replace the Delaney Clause (zero risk, zero tolerance for any chemicals that seem to cause cancer in man or animal) with a new standard based on "no reasonable certainty of harm"—as is the case in the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act as it relates to other food additives.

The EPA, Kimm said, is also looking for authority:

- ✓ to revise its pesticide cancellation/suspension process which, Kimm said, is "antiquated, takes forever, and doesn't work very well;"

- ✓ to institute "phase out or phase down" of a pesticide when concerns arise over its risk;

- ✓ to issue pesticide licenses that run out after 15 years so that re-registrations can be carried out on a more routine basis;

- ✓ to ask that all pesticide label changes become effective on one date each year.

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