



Environmental issues becoming politicized

ALEXANDRIA, Va.—"Environmental issues will be focused on by both parties," predicts David Crow, a Washington-based political consultant to RISE, Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment.

"We need to work the regulatory process a lot harder than we have been," Crow contends. "Our issues have become politicized in a way we didn't want.

"We don't expect to get much work done [in Congress] in 1996," says Crow, because politicians will be posturing for the election year. "In a lot of ways, the system isn't built to work better."

Crow was one of a raft of speakers at RISE's annual meeting here last month.

"We think we can get FIFRA through this year," he said, "and maybe a water bill that we can live with. If we can get these two things done, we'll have had a great year. But we have to stay focused on our issues, and make them good bipartisan

Manufacturers file suit against the U.S. EPA

BETHESDA, Md.—On September 5th, the Portable Power Equipment Manufacturers Association (PPEMA) filed suit against the U.S. EPA.

The PPEMA is challenging the EPA's recent approval of California's Tier II exhaust emission regulations for portable power equipment which, according to an independent study, will virtually eliminate the market in California for portable gasoline-powered equipment.

The suit requests judicial review of the EPA's decision. It charges that the EPA failed to comply with the requirements of the Clean Air Act, which mandate that it conduct a comprehensive feasibility study of the California regulations before granting approval.

If the Tier II regulations are, indeed, enacted, several major user groups will be affected, including landscape contractors, arborists and parks & recreation departments.

efforts."

"(We can probably expect legislation in September" on the Safe Drinking Water Act, the newest press release from RISE says.)

Delaney—Congressmen, generally, are recognizing that the Delaney Clause to FIFRA is outdated because of definitions that have not evolved with technology.

If passed, H.R. 1627, now in committee, would:

- replace the Delaney Clause with a negligible risk standard;
- require tolerances that protect the health of infants and children;
- streamline EPA's authority to remove certain pesticides from the market by requiring it to cancel and suspend dangerous pesticides within one year;
- provide uniform pesticide tolerances; and more.



Despite a Republican majority, the 'Senate didn't really embrace the Contract with America,' David Crow says.

"I'm skeptical that the whole package of FIFRA can make it through," observes Kate DeRemer of the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee, "but the 'minor use' portion could."

She notes that Sen. Pat Leahy (D-Ver.) believes that "some sort of stewardship should be legislated rather than voluntary" on the part of manufacturers.

Predictions—National legislation will continue to move slowly, several speakers noted, because the country is divided over most issues.

"There's no real consensus in this country" said Crow. "It's as confusing a time as I can re-

member. What's happening in Washington is absolutely as clear as mud.

"I would bet that in 1996, Clinton will be re-elected, but the House and Senate will pick up more Republicans."

Other major programs at the meeting focused on the President's Council on

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L.A. continues attack on power leaf blowers

LOS ANGELES—Councilman Marvin Braude of Los Angeles has proposed the third bill in nine years aimed to ban the sale and use of gasoline-powered leaf blowers.

"They merely blow one person's dirt and leaves onto someone else's yard or onto their car or under their door and into their living rooms," Braude contends. "Simply blowing debris from one place to another accomplishes nothing, except polluting the air and making people angry."

Section 112.05 of the current Municipal Code allows leaf blowers if they are no louder than 65 decibels at a distance of 50 feet.

"If we had a law which simply banned... these machines, we would not have to

worry about having specially trained [noise abatement] officers using expensive, sophisticated equipment to handle enforcement," Braude said in a press release.

The press release went on to mention that:

- "one hour's use of a leaf blower produces as much volatile organic compound pollution as 100 miles of driving an automobile" and

- "by generating air currents...twice the speed of a hurricane, the blowers kick up clouds of dust, insecticide, animal waste and debris which can be harmful to people with respiratory problems."

Similar legislation was also up for review in Greenwich, Conn., at presstime.

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Sustainable Development and Multiple Chemical Sensitivity.

MCS—Dr. Janette Sherman, author of "Chemical Exposure and Disease," contended that Multiple Chemical Sensitivity is a bona fide disease, which is in direct conflict with a position paper by the American Medical Association.

"Pesticides are contaminating much of the world," she said. "The intellectual and educational ramifications of pesticide use are enormous. Registries are quick fixes, but they're not long-term answers."

Taking the side of the AMA, Dr. Suellen Pirages of the Environmental Sensitivities Research Institute noted that "MCS doesn't follow the principle of toxicology and causation. We need carefully designed and controlled medical studies on this phenomenon."

RISE's approach—Issues like MCS mean a change in philosophy for RISE.

"We will become activists for our industry," RISE executive director Allen James promised. "Defense is no longer adequate."

—Jerry Roche

GRASS CLIPPINGS

Unusual news & notes from the turf & ornamental world

'Silverdome West' decked out

■ The research dome known as "Silverdome West" is decked out in new outerwear as part of ongoing research to learn more about growing grass indoors.

Dr. Trey Rogers says that the Sheerfill IIA Architectural Membrane allows roughly twice the amount of sunlight through than the material that currently covers the real Silverdome.

The Michigan State University research facility at East Lansing was constructed to mimic conditions at the Pontiac Silverdome, where MSU's turfgrass scientists perfected the portable indoor turf on which the 1994 World Cup soccer games were played.

Low light is the greatest challenge to growing durable grass indoors. "The theory is that this new membrane will allow turfgrass to stay indoors without supplemental light for a long period of time," says Rogers.

Interesting uses of grasses

■ Author Craig Tufts, in his book "The Backyard Naturalist," urges people to consider more interesting uses and varieties of grass.

"Tall, graceful, murmuring grasses look great all year round (with once-a-year cutting), and others can be plucked to make dry-grass arrangements," he writes. "As a bonus, most grasses are highly attractive to wildlife (especially to birds and butterflies) for both food and shelter."

Tufts, who also directs the National Wildlife Federation's Urban Wildlife Division, recommends hardy native species to add texture to the landscape, help control erosion, attract wildlife and look pretty.

For more information on native grasses available for landscaping, Tufts recommends "Grasses, an Identification Guide" by Lauren Brown.

Around the world on a lawnmower

■ Ben Garcia, listed in the "Guinness Book of World Records" for longest lawnmower ride, plans to break his own record by riding around the world, beginning March 13, 1996.

In 1986, he drove the "Woofmobile" from Maine to California, riding for W.O.O.F. (World Order of Friends) and ended up in the national media. Before he begins his current around-the-world itinerary, he and Sister Rosalie Curran, Ph.D., are asking for sponsorships. Sister Curran is W.O.O.F. president.

"An amateur seven-minute action-filled video from Ben's initial transcontinental lawnmower ride is available, on request, for your inspection and pleasure," Sister Curran writes. You can contact her by phoning (201) 292-6300 or by writing W.O.O.F., Tiffany Village, Summit Lane, Old Orchard Beach, ME 04064.

GREEN INDUSTRY EVENTS

NOVEMBER

1-Jan. 10: Arboriculture Skills Workshop, Kent (Ohio) State University. Phone: Chris Carlson, (216) 332-0361 or Anita Linde, (614) 433-0045.

2: 2,4-D Reregistration Status Report, O'Hare Airport Marriott Hotel, Chicago. Phone: (800) 345-5109.

5-8: National Institute on Park and Grounds Management, Toledo, Ohio. Phone: (414) 733-2301.

11: International Hong Kong & China Golf Exhibition & Conference, Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Center. Phone: 011 (61-9) 322-3222.

7-9: Penn State Golf Turf Conference, Nittany Lion Inn, University Park, Pa. Phone: (814) 863-3475 or Dr. Peter Landschoot, (814) 863-1017.

7-10: New York Turf & Grounds Exposition, Rochester Riverside Convention Center. Phone: (800) 873-8873 or (518) 783-1229.

12-14: International Irrigation Exposition & Technical Conference, Phoenix Convention Center. Phone: (703) 573-3551.

12-14: Golf Courses on Landfills Conference, Industry Hills (Calif.) Sheraton Resort. Phone: Bill Burbaum or Judy Thompson, (407) 744-6006.

14-16: Midwest Turfgrass & Ornamental Seminar, Lafayette, Ind. Phone: Bev Bratton, (317) 494-8039.

16-18: Tree Care Expo, Indiana Convention Center, Indianapolis, Ind. Phone: (800) 733-2622.

16-19: International Golf Show & Golf Course Europe, Pabellon de Cristal, Madrid, Spain. Phone: Charles Duff, (510) 526-6922.

25-28: Forum on Golf Course Building at the International Trade Fair for Design, Equipping and Care of Amenity Areas, Cologne (Germany) Exhibition Center. Phone: Dr. George Heim, 011 (0221) 971-3021.

27-29: North Central Turfgrass Exposition, Pheasant Run Resort, St. Charles, Ill. Phone: Jack Lagershausen or Nancy Jones, (312) 201-0101.