

RISE: the D.C. connection

by ALLEN JAMES, RISE

The specialty pesticide supplier industry needs an effective association to address its needs and concerns, and to serve as its representative and voice at the national, state and local level.

To fill that need, RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment) was established seven years ago in Washington, DC by a small group of company representatives.

RISE membership now totals more than 125 active and associate members and continues to grow. Members represent not only manufacturers and formulators, but distributors and other industry leaders involved with pest control products used in turf, ornamental, aquatic and terrestrial vegetation management and other non-food/fiber applications. Companies and associations with related interests form the group's associate membership.

Positive influence on opinion

The association was created to provide a strong, unified industry voice; to be a positive influence on public opinion; to promote use of industry products as valuable pest management tools that enhance the quality of life and the environment; to promote the safe and responsible use of all industry products; and to protect the specialty industry from unwarranted regulation.

Over the past several months RISE has:

- ▶ Helped organize and participate in EPA's advisory group on improved consumer labeling of specialty pesticides;
- ▶ Worked with EPA on implementation of the Food Quality Protection Act and other regulatory concerns;
- ▶ Advised on drafting and helped distribute the EPA initiative on Integrated Pest Management for public school superintendents;
- ▶ Developed an awards-winning CD-ROM on specialty pesticides and its industry which was distributed widely to key news media, garden writers

and environmental journalists;

- ▶ Responded to numerous editorials, articles and news media contacts on issues concerning industry, pesticide uses, and consumer concerns;
- ▶ Established the *Formulators Work Group* to address issues important to this industry segment;
- ▶ Conducted regional seminars for specialty products industry members and end users, addressing concerns about idiopathic environmental intolerance (multiple chemical sensitivity—MCS.);
- ▶ Worked with allies to address a number of state and local legislative and regulatory issues related to specialty pesticides and their use;



James: control products are useful tools.

- ▶ Worked with Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, and the Professional Lawn Care Association of America to establish an Ambassador speakers program in a number of states.

Along with PLCAA and TruGreen/ChemLawn, and in cooperation with the National Association of County Agricultural Agents, established an annual study tour and workshop on pest management for

urban agents; and continued sponsorship of NACAA's awards program promoting responsible urban pesticide use.

A major challenge

All of us within the green industry have a challenge: Sustain and improve upon the benefits to home and community markets with the products and services that enhance quality of life, protection of health and preservation of environment. RISE, and its members, is committed to being an active partner in meeting that challenge.

—Allen James is executive director of *Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment*.