

# NLA fights turf restrictions in Las Vegas

**Las Vegas** — The Nevada Landscape Association (NLA) has been busy successfully representing the green industry in an effort to affect a water conservation bill in Las Vegas. The bill sought to limit the amount of turf on commercial and residential properties. Water conservation is one of the NLA's biggest issues; in fact, the Reno chapter of the organization was successful in becoming a part of the strategic planning for water planning in Reno in the early '90s.

ter immediately swung into action. In spite of the late start, the NLA was instrumental in having the bill amended slightly in the green industry's favor. Initially, the bill stated that for new development, residential turf could not exceed 50% of the total landscapable area. This was amended to 50% of the "total front yard" which increased the amount of turf allowed, and which was more in keeping with the Coalition's original proposal. In addition, the bill banned turf completely on commercial projects. This was ultimately amended to allow 25% turf.

While the amendments were not as far-reaching as desired, Debra Drew, executive director of the NLA feels that the bill is liveable and that the involvement of the NLA is only the first step in representing the green industry in Las Vegas.

## BILL 98-35

Commercial/Industrial Districts	Limited to a maximum of 25% of total landscapable area
Public Facilities Districts	Prohibited, except for schools, parks and cemeteries
Golf Course Use	Limited to 5 acres/hole, with a maximum 10 additional acres for driving range
Residential Districts (single family)	Limited to a maximum of 50% of total front yard area
Residential Districts (multifamily)	Limited to a maximum of 30% of total landscapable area

The newly organized Las Vegas chapter of the NLA had hardly been established when it learned that increased turf restrictions were being considered for the city. The Southern Nevada Coalition 2000, a group of private-sector activists, had recommended turf restrictions for new homes only. The goal of the Coalition was to be "restrictive without being oppressive," and it had the backing of the Southern Nevada Homebuilders Association, which represents the construction industry.

The initial proposal was expanded upon to be an even more restrictive ordinance by the mayor of Las Vegas, Jan Jones. The proposed bill would have tightened the city's restrictions by banning grass in front of businesses and public facilities as well as allowing at least 20% less turf in front yards than the Coalition's initial proposal.

The progress of the ordinance was well under way by the time the new branch of the NLA learned of it. The newly minted Las Vegas chap-

## Schools like technician certification program

**Austin, Texas** — Vocational schools across the United States are embracing a certification program for teaching outdoor power equipment technicians.

Virgil Russell, executive director of the Equipment & Engine Training Council (EETC), based here, said, "the interest in schools to become certified is far better than our original projections."

These four schools have become EETC Certified to teach technical education for the outdoor power equipment industry: Lake County Area Vocational, Grayslake, IL; Ohio Technical College, Cleveland, Ohio; Madison Area Technical College, Madison, WI; and Anoka-Hennepin Technical College, Anoka, MN. EETC certification is pending for 14 other schools, said Russell.