

industry almanac

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Petition to put pesticide restrictions on ballot

SPRINGFIELD, MA —

Lawn care, tree care and pest control companies in Massachusetts are closely monitoring the progress of an initiative petition aimed at restricting the use of chemical pesticides in and around schools and day-care centers.

The petition, entitled "An Act to Protect Children From Exposure to Pesticides," is being circulated by a consumer-action group known as MassPig. Professional applicators, including the Massachusetts Lawn Care Association, say that the petition is faulty.

Proponents must gather 57,100 signatures by Dec. 1 before sending the petition to the state legislature in January. The legislature has three choices: 1) approve the peti-

tion, 2) disapprove the petition or 3) take no action.

Although a similar bill has been languishing in a legislative committee the past several years, it's unlikely the lawmakers will disapprove the petition. A legislator probably

wouldn't want to be perceived as being against anything that would promote child safety, green industry sources tell LM.

More likely the legislature would take no action, and applicators in Massachusetts are bracing for the measure to be on the November 2000 ballot.

Among other things, the

Act: requires written notification of schools employees, pupils and their parents at least two days prior to a pesticide application, requires posting in a common area of the facility and along the perimeter of the property at least two working days prior to an outdoor application and for at least 72 hours following the application, requires that

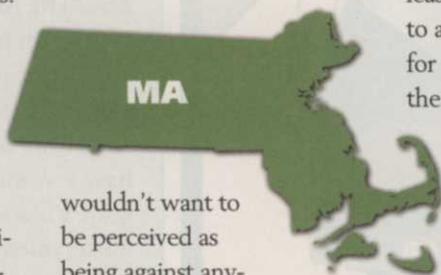
each school or day care center in the state adopt and implement an integrated pest management (IPM) plan, forbids the use of any pesticides classified as known, likely or probably human carcinogens for outdoor applications and forbids the application of pesticides outdoors for aesthetic purposes.

Any person, including school personnel, who violates any of these provisions could be fined up to \$5,000 per day.

Edwin McGuire, owner/operator of The Lawn Co., South Dennis, MA, tells LM that he expects the measure to eventually end up on next fall's ballot.

"The question is: How do we work to defeat this?" he adds. "The concern is that a year from now we're going to be in a big battle or, worse yet, no battle at all."

— RON HALL



OPEI's Dix retires, Harley joins

Alexandria, VA — After 27 years leading the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute, President and CEO Dennis Dix has retired, effective March 31, 2000. Dix's key programs during his long tenure were the establishment of the International Outdoor Power Equipment Expo, held annually in Louisville, KY; legislative work on issues such as liability, emissions and noise; expanded member services; and purchasing OPEI's headquarters building in Alexandria.

He will be succeeded by William Harley, who will join OPEI in early January, 2000. Harley's background includes 18 years as CEO of the National

Utility Contractors Association.

William Harley



Did You Know?

Recovering landscape dollars

Landscape work appears to be a more dependable investment than a new kitchen, according to *Money* magazine. A survey of recovery value at selling time for homeowners shows landscaping recovers at least 100% of its value, and sometimes more. Here are the other results:

