

## Make your peace with change

“Death by a thousand cuts” is how Allan James describes efforts to limit specialty pesticides. The executive director of Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment should know. The push to ban pesticides shows up everywhere from school boards to Capitol Hill.

We hear reports of long-time products coming under fire at EPA, with manufacturers now confronted by impossible standards to attain. The market continues to offer new products, but it's forcing change upon us.

How is this changing your operations? Most of you use some form of pesticide and use them skillfully. But continuing efforts to limit pesticides have had effects.

We got a glimpse of how these changes are reality when we visited Tom Tolkacz, president of Swingle Tree & Landscape Care in Denver. As he walked us through his clean, large loading area, he explained one reason why his tree and lawn care trucks have customized injection retrofits.

“In the last six to seven years, we've reduced our pesticide use 40%,” he said. “We're using more injection (for trees) and inspections.”

Swingle sells “Plant Health Care,” a system based on lots of inspections and spraying as needed. Pesticide changes are causing Swingle to its business.

Tolkacz explained: “The difficulty with the (new) pesticides is that many are not as persistent. In some cases, they may not be persistent even through an insect's hatch cycle. Therefore, we have to go out and apply them more often.” They might end up applying the same amount of product as they did in the old days.

The irony is not lost on Tolkacz. “It used to be a three-time application, but now with products active for only 30 days, we're making five applications. That's a real issue with us,” he says.

I bet it is. It must affect productivity, profitability, scheduling, labor, customer relations — the whole ball of wax. It complicates his operations, and maybe it does yours. And it's also hard to explain to customers.

That's change for you. It's time to face up to a new market, where:

- ▶ new products are more specific, less long-lasting, less toxic to the environment, more expensive.
- ▶ manufacturers are consolidating and changing their distribution making some products harder to find.
- ▶ heavy registration costs are making some companies reconsider, maybe withdrawing some products and keeping others to build market share. Which ones? That's a \$64-million question.

▶ a new generation of applicators (and managers) is coming out of schools wary of pesticide use.

Are you ready for this?

### It's Your Life

What do you get from your work? Are your rewards worth your efforts? Can you balance work and free time and still achieve what *you* want? Our new column, “It's Your Life” (page 16), explores making your rewards and your professional life grow.

Bob Baird's look at focus is our first. He should know about focus. His career started as a Navy Seal and now includes financial planning, competitive athletics, parenthood, writing and more. Let us know what you think — if you can make the time!

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