

# NEWS+VIEWS

GREEN INDUSTRY EVENTS, TRENDS AND TIPS

## CLIPPINGS

### Heritage G fungicide receives EPA registration

GREENSBORO, NC — The EPA has registered Syngenta Professional Products' Heritage G fungicide for use on a variety of turf, including golf courses, sod farms, athletic fields, and residential and commercial lawns. Heritage G is a systemic strobilurin fungicide in a granular formulation that controls more than 21 diseases during a 28-day window. The products has been tested and proven effective against brown patch, red thread, Pythium, Anthracnose, gray leaf spot, snow mold, take-all patch, leaf spot, summer patch and necrotic ring spot, to name just a few turf diseases. The fungicide has the same efficacy as the sprayable versions, Heritage WG and Heritage TL.

### STIHL sponsors Tour des Trees

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA — Outdoor power equipment manufacturer STIHL is the title sponsor of this year's cross-country cycling and education event to benefit the Tree Research and Education Endowment Fund.

## H-2B regulation changes

**W**ashington, D.C. — The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Department of Labor (DOL) have released new rules governing the H-2B visa guest worker program. Effective Jan. 18, the key changes include:

▶ If the employer has laid off U.S. workers within 120 days of the H-2B worker's start date, the firm must document it notified each laid-off worker of each job opportunity, and that it has and will consider each U.S. worker interested.

▶ The employer must offer, and pay throughout the H-2B guest worker's period of employment, a wage equal to or higher than the prevailing wage. Competitive terms and conditions must not be worse for U.S. workers than for H-2B workers.

▶ The employer must keep documents related to advertising, recruiting, prevailing wage determination, supporting documentation, and additional attestations for three years.

▶ DOL now has enforcement authority over the H-2B program. Violations can result in debarment from the program for up to three years, as well as other penalties.

▶ DHS will require an approved temporary labor certification in connection with all H-2B petitions filed; employers will have the ability to request review with DOL if an

H-2B visa application is denied.

▶ Beginning Oct. 1, 2009 (FY 2010), the employment start date indicated on Form I-129, Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker, must match the date of need on the approved temporary labor certification.

▶ DHS has published a list of countries designated as eligible for participation in the H-2B program. For the list, visit [www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov). (Special requests can be submitted.)

▶ The employer may file for unnamed workers except for workers currently in the U.S.

▶ The employer must notify DHS within two work days when the worker either: has not come to work within five days of his/her start date designated by the employer; completes his/her contract 30 days before the petitioned end date; or is fired/laid off. The employer must retain evidence of DHS notification in such situations for one year.

▶ New rules also: reduce from six months to three months the time an H-2B worker who has spent three years in the U.S. must reside and be physically present outside the U.S. before he or she is eligible to re-obtain H-2B status; and prohibit H-2B employers and recruiters from imposing certain fees on prospective H-2B workers as a condition of employment or passing along application and other costs to H-2B workers participating in the program.

## WORD ON THE STREET

Overall, are you raising your prices, lowering them or keeping them the same in 2009 and why?



"BIO Landscape, a member of the Yellowstone Landscape Group, will be holding existing pricing during 2009 for landscape maintenance work. Given the current economy, and the financial state of our existing customers, a raise in pricing would be suicidal. New work, for the most part, will be bid with tighter margins."

— **Robert Taylor**, president of Houston-based BIO Landscape & Maintenance



"Our philosophy and practice is to raise prices and hourly rates 3% to 5% every year. In 2009 we are being more conservative and selective with increases. Departments that met 2008 gross profit goals will have no increase. We will strive to gain additional margin through improved efficiency."

— **Tom Shotzberger**, general manager, of Lancaster, PA-based Tomlinson Bomberger Lawn Care, Landscape & Pest Control



"For 2009, we have decided to put a freeze on price increases. However, we do hold multi-year contracts that will increase in the second and third years at around 2% to 3%. We are working harder than ever to become a lean company to maintain profitability."

— **Tony Sposato**, president of Milton, DE-based Sposato Landscape Co.



## Irrigation Association participates in Congressional Water Caucus briefing

Irrigation Association (IA) staff recently attended the January briefing of the Congressional Water Caucus. The event was the first meeting of the Water Caucus for the 111th Congress.

The educational event was moderated by IA External Affairs Director Andy Smith. Fifty people attended the briefing, with the audience comprised of senior Congressional staff and water industry professionals. Attendees discussed the history and current issues facing the nation's water infrastructure, and viewed the PBS documentary "Liquid Assets: The Story of Our Water Infrastructure."

"Educating members of Congress on national water policy is imperative to our

Irrigation Association (IA) External Affairs Director Andy Smith moderated the recent Congressional Water Caucus briefing.



mission of promoting efficient irrigation," said IA's Federal Affairs Director John Farmer. "It's an honor for the Irrigation Association to moderate the inaugural briefing of the Water Caucus and Andy did an excellent job advancing the IA's message and credibility amongst key leaders of the U.S. House of Representatives."

The Congressional Water Caucus was founded in 2007 in response to the growing need for Congress to address the nation's water woes. The group established "Twelve Principles of Water Policy," a set of goals for the caucus that includes achieving a sufficient water supply for urban and rural areas; considering all available technologies for increasing water supply efficiently while safeguarding the environment; and implementing strategies to improve efficiencies.

The Irrigation Association is the leading membership organization for irrigation equipment and system manufacturers, dealers, distributors, designers, consultants, contractors and end users. Originally founded in 1949, IA includes more than 2,000 corporate and technical members and is dedicated to promoting efficient irrigation. For more information, visit [www.irrigation.org](http://www.irrigation.org).

## BELIEVE IT

OR NOT ...

### X-Ray spectacles for Super Landscaper Man



Underhill International recently unveiled its TurfSpy detection glasses designed to help landscape managers see the future by revealing potential problems before they are visible to the naked eye. TurfSpy lenses work by blocking out the green spectrum reflected from chlorophyll



in healthy vegetation. Stress conditions, such as disease, drought, pests or

poor nutrition, are revealed with glowing colors (red, coral, pink) and reportedly can be detected two to 10 days before they are visible to the unaided eye. For more information, visit [www.underhill.us](http://www.underhill.us).

PHOTOS BY COURTESY: MARTY WHITFORD (FAR LEFT); UNDERHILL INTERNATIONAL (TURFSPIY)



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