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Turfgrass Producers International
2 East Main Street
East Dundee, IL 60118
Tel: 847/649-5555
Tel: 800/405-8873
Fax: 847/649-5678
Email:
info@TurfGrassSod.org
Website:
www.TurfGrassSod.org
Comments & Submissions:
jnovak@TurfGrassSod.org

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TPI Commentary:

Would a 60% DROP in turfgrass sales get your attention? IT BETTER!



The last few years have been tough on everyone. The economy has gone through a tail spin. Some turfgrass producers who have weathered hard times before are finding new ways to cut costs and generate sales so they can handle the storm. As if you don't have enough on your mind the last thing you need is an unexpected surprise, and yet, the EPA's proposed "WaterSense" Program just might be the surprise nobody in the green industry wants to hear about or see reach fruition, especially turfgrass producers.

If there was ever a cause that required your immediate attention (because to do nothing might have a negative impact on your livelihood, your overall business and your family's future) the proposed recommendations in the EPA's WaterSense Program regarding "Water-Efficient Single-Family New Home Specification" might be the catalyst to do just that!

The EPA's Proposed "WaterSense" Program requires a call to action on the part of all U.S. TPI members and the involvement of every member of your state and/or regional turfgrass associations.

For the benefit of those who may not have received e-mails or notices from TPI and other responsible and concerned industry sources, here's some background information to bring you up to speed on current events.

Turfgrass Producers International (TPI) is an active member serving on the Board of National Turfgrass Federation (NTF). This coalition is comprised of other green industry associations such as PLANET, GCSAA, USGA, STMA, OPEI, Irrigation Association, Project Evergreen and many more. This group of over 90 stakeholders has been working to address the EPA's proposed "WaterSense" Program.

The EPA WaterSense "Water-Efficient Single Family New Home Specification" guidelines address both indoor and outdoor water usage. While there are no issues regarding the indoor water usage guidelines that have been proposed, there are concerns regarding the outdoor specification. For example, a WaterSense home cannot have turfgrass on slopes exceeding 4:1 and goes so far as to limit turf to account for only 40% of the landscaped area. If this proposal goes through you could see a portion of your turfgrass sales drop as much as 60%.

Cont'd on page 2



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TPI Commentary:
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Tom Delaney, Director of Government Affairs for PLANET (Professional Land-care Network) put it this way in a letter to all PLANET state and regional associations,

“The EPA WaterSense landscape specifications are a train wreck for the turfgrass industry nationwide but especially for areas that are challenged with limited or reduced water supply. The main problem is builders and local governments that want to meet the EPA WaterSense criteria for the landscape part of the program will more than likely choose the option to limit the amount of turfgrass area to 40 percent of the landscape. The problem is, no allowances were made based on location of the landscape, regional rainfall or areas that have warm season or cool season cultivars. It’s easy to see the ripple effect of these specifications, starting with impact on seed and turfgrass sod producers and ending up with mowers and lawn care sales in our industry.”

Kevin Morris of the National Turfgrass Federation (NTF) drafted a letter to C5 members requesting they become involved to help address this issue, he wrote,

“The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has proposed drastic new home building criteria that threatens the core of our enterprise - turfgrass. Under the WaterSense label, EPA is proposing landscape criteria that severely limits turfgrass coverage on new home sites and completely bans turfgrass on steep slopes. We need your help in stopping this now.”

Kirk Hunter, executive director of TPI, also drafted a letter to over 40 state and regional turfgrass/sod associations encouraging their involvement in addressing this issue. Kirk touches up on the matter in his upcoming column in the July/August 2009 issue of *Turf News*.

As currently proposed, a homeowner in Tucson, Arizona (average annual rainfall



eight inches) could actually have a cool season turfgrass such as Kentucky bluegrass installed to cover 40% of his/her landscaping; water it 24/7, and still be within the WaterSense “home” guidelines.



On the other hand, a home-owner in Seattle, Washington, known for its wet climate (36 inches of rain per year) would have the same 40% turfgrass restriction to qualify as a WaterSense home even though he/she would be doing much less irrigating compared to

other parts of the country. The 60% reduction in turfgrass coverage would certainly result in increased rainwater runoff going down sewer drains rather than into aquifers.

And what are the possible options the EPA might propose in lieu of turfgrass for those slopes that drop one foot over a four foot land mass?



The EPA identifies mulching material as being “organic and/or inorganic permeable materials that will retain soil moisture, suppress weeds, and allow free movement of oxygen into and out of the soil.” Could that mean mulch, rocks, stone, pebbles or artificial turf? All of which do little to contribute to water filtration, carbon sequestration, oxygen production, cooling of the atmosphere and helping to control erosion. They do have one thing in common – mild to extreme heat retention.

To address this concern, the National Turfgrass Federation (NTF) (www.turfresearch.org) and its partner organizations of which TPI is one, conducted a conference call on June 16th at 2pm (ET) to discuss the issue and propose a strategic plan.

Cont'd on page 3



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TPI Commentary:
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More than sixty individuals participated in the call representing all segments of the green industry. Participants included turfgrass producers, turfgrass and green industry association executive directors, extension specialists, seed company representatives, individuals from the USDA-ARS, landscape professionals, equipment manufacturers, representatives of the USGA Green Section, irrigation associations, grounds keepers, lawn care professionals, etc.

Issues of concern were addressed and a strategic plan based on a grassroots campaign was proposed.

The coalition is has drafted a sample letter so everyone who is directly and indirectly impacted by the proposed EPA WaterSense guidelines can write to their congressional representatives and encourage that science-based reason be taken into account and the proposed guidelines be modified, and/or request the landscape segment be removed entirely.

It should be noted that coalition representatives have already met with some congressional leaders and representatives of the EPA. The coalition has already submitted several proposals to the EPA on this matter without measurable success. One of these meetings included research specialists who supported the coalition's concerns and were prepared to present scientific support.

Perhaps **Kirk Hunter** said it best, "There is only so much we as representatives of our respective associations can do. We need all of our members and everyone else who will be impacted by the WaterSense Program to contact their congressional representatives by letter, e-mail or fax and let them know that the

"Water-Efficient Single-Family New Home Specification" as currently proposed by the EPA WaterSense Program. is ill conceived, poorly researched, absent of scientific-based research considerations and will prove to create more environmental problems rather than offer solutions to existing concerns."

The public comment period ends July 7 so there are a number of action steps that need to taken immediately.

DRAFT A LETTER

to your State Senator and House Representative stating your concern.

A sample letter and suggested talking points appear on pages 4 and 5 of this newsletter.

For the mailing address or e-mail address of you congressional representatives just click-on the links to the right..

We are also requesting that copies of all correspondence to Congressional leaders be sent to: Kirk Hunter, TPI's Executive Director:
khunter@TurfGrassSod.org



The proposed EPA WaterSense program can be viewed at:
http://www.epa.gov/watersense/docs/home_rev-draftspec508.pdf

**Get Involved.
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TPI Commentary:
Cont'd from page 3

SAMPLE LETTER



NOTE: Please use the sample letter below as a template to write your US Senators and House member. Please personalize the letter by including information about your own situation, how the proposed WaterSense draft specs

will adversely affect your business, etc. Please note that the letter is written from a seed/turfgrass sod producer perspective. So please, edit the information in the letter to make it relevant to your area and situation

Dear:

I am writing to bring your attention to a regulatory initiative that will have drastic consequences on my livelihood.

The USEPA has released a draft specification under the Water Sense label to guide new home construction throughout the United States. Within the one-size-fits all specification, there are landscape criteria that seek to severely curtail turfgrass on new home sites. As a turfgrass sod producer that grows and sells a product that has many benefits including sequestering and storing carbon from the atmosphere, controlling stormwater runoff and erosion, and reducing the urban 'heat island' effect, etc., I am extremely concerned about this initiative and am writing to seek your help in securing needed changes to the current draft.

The Water Sense landscape criteria proposes to limit turfgrass coverage on new home sites in two primary ways. One, they provide builders with two options on changing plant composition: cap the amount of allowable turf coverage to 40 percent of a home site's landscapable area, or utilize a complex water budget that lacks scientific basis. These approaches apply whether the home is built in Arizona, Oregon, Kansas or Maine, all within vastly different climatic zones illustrating the challenge of a national "one size fits all" standard. Further, weather is a dynamic, not a static, variable. Conditions within a state or region may be wet one year and dry the next, again illustrating the challenge a static standard would present. Trees and turfgrass are not engineered like a low-flow toilet or shower head but are natural, living things which require maintenance based on need at a given time, place and the surrounding environment.

Secondly, the specification bans turfgrass on so-called "steep slopes," which are defined as exceeding a one foot of drop per four feet of landmass. Given the acknowledged benefit that turfgrass plays in controlling soil erosion on inclines, this criterion undermines sound environmental practices.

EPA claims their specification is voluntary, however local governments have already begun efforts to codify the measure and there is legislation pending in both houses of Congress to authorize WaterSense. Our fear is that local governments and municipalities will require turfgrass reductions for new home construction, based on the lack of science inherent in the EPA WaterSense guidelines.

Congressman/Senator, efforts to conserve water by using the resource efficiently are worthy and should be supported. The indoor components of WaterSense, which require water efficient appliances in new homes, enjoy widespread support. However, numerous groups have expressed serious concerns about the landscape provisions—concerns that have gone unheeded by the agency. If EPA finalizes the specification in its current form, my operations/the turf industry in our state will suffer severely.

The agency is accepting comments on its latest draft until July 7 and plans to issue a final specification in November. We need your help in bringing our concerns to the EPA's attention. In May, Congressional Water Caucus co-Chairs Bart Stupak (D-MI) and John Linder (R-GA) sent a letter to EPA expressing concern with the proposed turfgrass deselection and requested revisions to the specification. Congressman/Senator if you would consider sending a similar letter to the agency asking that the landscape provisions be set aside to allow for a stakeholder process to improve the specification and advance the goals of water efficiency, we would very much appreciate your support.

Sincerely,

IMPORTANT

Please forward copies any letters/emails that you send to your US Senators and/or House members to Kirk Hunter, TPI's Executive Director, 2 East Main Street, East Dundee, IL 60118. FAX 847-649-5678 or E-mail khunter@TurfGrassSod.org so we know who was contacted and we can then follow up to encourage them to contact EPA.

Cont'd on page 5

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TPI Commentary:
Cont'd from page 4

SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS



Suggested Talking Points on EPA's Proposed WaterSense Specification for New Home Construction

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROPOSED SPECIFICATION

Reducing use of turf to 40% of a landscaped area will present negative environmental consequences and eliminate the known benefits of turfgrass such as:

- Cools the air
- Produces oxygen
- Filters the air
- Reduces pollution
- Suppresses dust
- Filters and recharges ground water
- Controls erosion
- Sequesters and stores carbon
- Reduced storm water runoff
- Dissipates heat
- And MUCH MORE

The economic impact of diminishing the landscaped turf area to 40% would have a significant and impact on a broad segment of the economy, including but not limited to:

- Turfgrass producers
- Seed producers
- Equipment manufacturers
- Small businesses
- Landscape specialists
- Home & Garden centers
- Nurseries
- Landscape architects
- Major retail outlets
- And MANY MORE

The "one size fits all" concept doesn't take into consideration:

- Regional weather differences
- Regional rainfall variables
- Location of the landscape
- Warm or Cool season grasses
- Use of drought tolerant grasses

The consequences of proposing that landscaped areas cannot have turfgrass on slopes exceeding 4:1 (exceeding a one foot of drop per four feet of landmass.) doesn't take into account:

- The scientific and acknowledged role turfgrass plays in controlling soil erosion on steep inclines
- Rainwater capture and recharge
- Substantially reducing runoff
- The environmental consequences of using other materials that don't offer turf's natural

WHAT THE EPA SHOULD DO

- Drive deployment of best technology solutions through WaterSense approved products.
- Support use of certified irrigation professionals for installation and audit, when practical.
- Support education of all stakeholders including homebuilders, landscape contractors, consumers, and others in the selection and management of appropriate turf and plants for a given location, utilizing Best Management Practices for water use, and understanding the importance of water audits.
- Enlist the greenscape industry to drive messages and results.
- Work with USDA to develop research leading to optimize water use for turf and landscapes
- Educate the public on water conservation
- Encourage and support research related to new varieties of turfgrass that are:
 - More drought tolerant
 - Require less water
 - Have high tolerance to salt
- Educate and promote the use of recycled water in appropriate locations



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First European Turfgrass Society Field Days



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More than a hundred people attended the 1st European Turfgrass Society (ETS) Field Days in Valencia, Spain, on April 21-22.

One of the goals of ETS, (founded in 2007) was to have at least one event per year. After the international conference in Pisa, Italy, in 2008, ETS organized, with the essential help of the Polytechnic University of Valencia, this first ETS field day in Spain. ETS members could listen to four high level speeches on the themes of water saving and water management of turf in hot, dry, Mediterranean climates. The speeches included four reviews, presented by two researchers (S. Baker - STRI -Sports Turf Research Institute and Bernd Leinauer - New Mexico State University) and two highly skilled breeders (Mr. Christophe Galbrun and Mr. Koos de Bruijn). The choice of having two researchers with two breeders was made to emphasize the role of "on-the-field" knowledge in the development of the turfgrass sector.

The field days also represented an important occasion for visiting, discussing and exchanging ideas. Guided by Professor Diego Gomez de Barreda, the participants assessed different turf uses in Valencia including turf for recreational purposes in the main public park (the Jardin del Turia), experimental trials at the Polytechnic University, turf in the sport surfaces in the Valencia Football Team training centre and a golf course, and see demonstrative trials on turf varieties and blends of a local seed company.

The next meeting is being organized by a committee led mainly by the Societe Francaise du Gazon: it will be an International Conference on Turfgrass in Angers-France, from 11 to 13 April 2010.

For more information on ETS, visit www.turfgrassociety.eu

DIVING into an old but interesting story!



Back in September of 2007 tourists and Londoners alike had an opportunity to see this large sculpture of a man swimming through the grass on the South Bank of the River Thames. The fixture, near Tower Bridge, shown in the background, was

commissioned by The Discovery Channel to promote the then new reality show, 'London Ink'.

The swimmer statue was made out of reinforced polystyrene and measured 35 feet long.



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A TIP OF THE HAT

to **Ron Schiedel** and **GREENHORIZONS GROUP** in Cambridge, Ontario for their commitment to education, innovation and their contribution to the turfgrass industry.

"The Schiedel family and their business Greenhorizons Group of Farms, were featured recently in an article on the cover of the business section of the Kitchener-Waterloo Record. Noted for their innovative and entrepreneurial approach to business the article provides a good overview of what is one of the most successful sod operations in the province, although their business is much more than sod. It is nice to see a positive article about the turf industry in the press."

- Guelph Turfgrass Institute & Environmental Research Centre

The Record.com



Chuck Howitt*
RECORD STAFF

Every fall, Rob Witherspoon takes his class at the Guelph Turfgrass Institute on a field trip to the Greenhorizons Group of Farms in north Cambridge, Ontario.

Many of his students are more interested in the glamorous world of golf courses, but Witherspoon, the institute's executive director, believes there's more to the turf business than putting greens and fairways. Greenhorizons is a "real opportunistic and innovative company," he says. Trips there really "open students eyes."

From modest beginnings in 1975, Greenhorizons has sprouted into one of the largest sod growers in Ontario, with 1,600 hectares under cultivation at three locations. The company, founded as Compact Sod, has a service area that stretches from Toronto to Fort Erie, and Windsor to Owen Sound.

Not content to rest on its laurels, it was among the first companies in Ontario to launch a topsoil delivery business that drops a bag of soil the size of a hot tub in your driveway; once the bag is empty, you can fill it with rubbish and Greenhorizons will come back and take it away. In a dozen short years, the soil business has surpassed the company's formidable sod business in revenues. To keep its trucks and forklifts chugging during slow periods, Greenhorizons added a mobile storage business last year through its acquisition of At Your Door Mobile Storage in Hamilton. The company will deposit a container in your driveway, take it away to a storage facility once it's full and return it when you need it.



Richard and Ron Schiedel in a field of their Green Thumb Black Garden Soil. (Photo: Phillip Walker—RECORD STAFF)

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH

GUELPH TURFGRASS INSTITUTE

Guelph Turfgrass Institute
338 Victoria Rd. S., RR #2
Guelph, ON N1H 6H5
Email: info@gti.uoguelph.ca
Phone: 519.767.5009
Fax: 519.766.1704

& Environmental Research Centre



Ron Schiedel (right) talks to University of Guelph turfgrass students during their field trip to his Cambridge, Ontario, turfgrass farm last fall.

As if sod, soil and storage were not enough, the company is now eyeing the franchising of its business model, marketing savvy and call centre service to customers across Canada and the U.S. "Ask any entrepreneur. If you're not growing, you're going backwards," says Ron Schiedel, the ebullient and affable president of Greenhorizons. The company has just moved into a new \$1.5 million office and storage building just north of Cambridge. The 28,000-square-foot facility is one of two bases of operation. The other is in Mount Hope near Hamilton.

Based on what he's been hearing at this winter's shows, 2009 will be a good year for the sod business, Ron says, especially with the jump in infrastructure spending. Although the company has annual revenues in the millions and thousands of acres of sod under cultivation, it hasn't forgotten its small beginnings. "We'll still deliver one roll of sod," says Ron.

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S.787 Clean Water Restoration Act

A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to clarify the jurisdiction of the United States over waters of the United States.*



Clean Water Restoration Act

One of the goals of TPI is to bring important issues to your attention in a timely manner. Such is the case with senate bill S.787 currently under consideration. Letters mailed by constituents directly to their Senators are much more effective because they represent "their" people's issues and also get the votes from their home state.

The U.S. Senate is preparing to consider S. 787, the Clean Water Restoration Act some time this summer or early fall. This legislation would dramatically alter the Clean Water Act by granting the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers extraordinary regulatory authority over federal and state waters. Under the bill, the federal government would have the power to regulate the "waters of the U.S.," an expansive term that includes every stream, creek, pond, ditch and wet spot in the country.

Moreover, the bill could require farmers and landowners to obtain Clean Water Act permits to perform routine land use activities. CWA permits are costly and time consuming to secure.

S. 787 is currently pending in the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, which has legislative jurisdiction over environmental issues. The Committee could bring up the bill for consideration at any time. If the Committee approves the bill, it will move on to the full Senate.

* WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES - The term 'waters of the United States' means all waters subject to the ebb and flow of the tide, the territorial seas, and all interstate and intrastate waters and their tributaries, including lakes, rivers, streams (including intermittent streams), mudflats, sandflats, wetlands, sloughs, prairie potholes, wet meadows, playa lakes, natural ponds, and all impoundments of the foregoing, to the fullest extent that these waters, or activities affecting these waters, are subject to the legislative power of Congress under the Constitution.



NOTE: On the following page you will find a sample letter that you can personalize and send to your state senator.

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S.787 Clean Water Restoration Act—Cont'd from page 1



The North Carolina Farm Bureau strongly opposes the bill. The following is a sample letter suggesting how you can address this important issue by writing to your state senator,

Dear Senator:

As a farmer, I am writing to express my opposition to S. 787, the so-called Clean Water Restoration Act and to urge you to vote against this measure should it come up for a vote.

Supporters of S. 787 claim the measure would restore Congress' original intent regarding federal authority to regulate water. However, the bill is really designed to expand the authority of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the EPA beyond what is reasonable. When Congress enacted the Clean Water Act, it used the phrase "navigable waters" to limit the federal government's power to regulate water. In contrast, S. 787 would strike this important term from the CWA statute and replace it with the expansive term "all waters of the U.S."

If S. 787 is enacted, the results would be severe for *(insert your state's name)* farm families. Farmers and landowners would be required to obtain permits for activities like moving equipment from field to field and placing a culvert in a ditch. Obtaining a CWA permit is time consuming and costly. The bill would also jeopardize several long standing CWA regulatory exemptions for prior converted cropland and waste treatment ponds. Finally, the bill would create a disincentive for farmers and landowners to implement good conservation practices, increase litigation and the influence of government bureaucracy.

Farmers believe protecting *(insert the name of your state)* waterways and drinking water is important, but we know there is a big difference between "navigable" and "all" in water policy. S. 787 would completely overhaul the Clean Water Act and give the federal government unprecedented authority to regulate private property and land use decisions. Therefore, I urge you to oppose S. 787 should you have an opportunity to vote on the bill this year.

Thank you for your work on behalf of farmers. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

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TurfSide-UP

What Happened To All The Wildlife?



Artificial turf draws flock of artificial birds.

Photoshop image: Jim Novak.

When residents of Why, Arizona protested because they heard their new neighborhood park, Sizzle Field, was to be covered with synthetic turf, that was one issue; but within weeks after installation of the artificial turf the protesters were at it again, complaining that signs of wildlife had all but disappeared. To settle the outrage of angry citizens the village fathers came up with what they thought was a brilliant solution - - artificial wildlife.

Nearby resident, Ugotta B. Kidding, said it was the dumbest idea he ever saw. "They put replicas of Great Blue Herons all over the park. When was the last time you saw a flock of these birds looking for fish, shrimp and crab in the heart of Arizona?"

Village Mayor, Knotmy I. Dea said, "It was either Dodos or Great Blue Herons; the village planning committee and park commission went with the Herons because Dodos are extinct, and the Herons were on sale and really cheap. We did consider a dozen plastic replicas of Arizona's black-footed ferrets but thought people might be



Black-footed ferret voted out!

tripping over those little buggers and the village might be liable for injuries."

TurfSide-Up is a satirical feature of the TPI E-newsletter. Any similarity to persons living or dead is purely coincidental except in the case of prominent public figures, where actions and characteristics are used for the purpose of parody and satire. *TurfSide-Up* does not necessarily reflect the opinions, beliefs and viewpoints of Turfgrass Producers International or its members. It is the satirical viewpoint of Jim Novak.



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Health advisory posted at two Ridgefield, Connecticut schools over artificial turf fields.



RIDGEFIELD -- Two artificial turf fields in Ridgefield, Connecticut now feature warning signs posted by the town's Health Department. Posted signs at fields at Ridgefield High School and the Scotts Ridge Middle School warn students and parents to follow some simple rules after playing on artificial turf:

1. **Wash hands and exposed body parts aggressively after playing on field.**
2. **Turn clothes inside out as soon as possible to avoid tracking dust to other locations.**
3. **Keep beverages closed and in bags/coolers when not drinking to minimize contamination from field dust and fibers.**
4. **Be aware of signs of heat-related illness and dehydration. Fields can get excessively hot on sunny days. Take all necessary precautions.**

Ridgefield is the second town in the state to post such signs. Ed Briggs, Ridgefield's health director, said his department posted the warnings after consultation with the Board of Selectmen. For opponents of artificial turf, the signs are important reminders that the fields may have health hazards. They claim the filler used to cushion the fields, crumb rubber made from chewed-up tires, can release toxic chemicals. One mode of release, they say, is gas that escapes when the sun heats the rubber. Another is the dust created when players grind the rubber to dust.

"We need more public conversation about this," Elizabeth Butler, one of the activists who have opposed construction of a new artificial turf field in Ridgefield, said Monday. "This is a public safety issue."

Ridgefield's First Selectman Rudy Marconi said results of different tests of artificial fields vary because rubber used in them isn't uniform. Some crumb rubber may have higher levels of toxins, some lower levels, because different tires have different levels of the chemicals.



The state Department of Environmental Protection is beginning a \$245,000 study of artificial turf.

As featured in:



Customer Service Equals Customer Satisfaction

Turf Grass Farms was established in 1985 with the sole purpose of providing environmentally friendly sod. In 1992, Kirk Walker purchased the farm starting a family tradition that continues today - providing customer satisfaction through quality sod and superior service. Turf Grass Farms recently expanded their business to include a retail outlet to better serve the area. **Mandy Walker Romero**, CEO, explains, "We feel that success can only be judged through our customer's eyes. It is for that reason that we grow a qual-

ity product, give our customers the personal attention they deserve and make certain our deliveries are on time." Another reason their customers return for business is because Turf Grass Farms is willing to meet with them to show their products and discuss care and maintenance of their sod. Turf Grass Farms is a member of the Louisiana Turfgrass Association, **Turfgrass Producers International**, Acadiana Home Builders Association, and NFIB. Turf Grass Farm, Inc. 16341 Turf Grass Rd Welsh, LA 70591



The staff and families of Turf Grass Farms in Welsh, Louisiana

<http://www.turfgrassfarms.net/about>



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REMEMBER TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

TPI Members

We appreciate your support in helping TPI achieve the following goals this past year. With your continued support we can strengthen the turfgrass industry and reinforce the benefits of turfgrass to your customers, educational institutions, consumers and the media. The following are just a few of our accomplishments over the last twelve months.

- New and improved TPI website at www.TurfGrassSod.org. Expanded to provide members with more resources, information, and user-friendly functions.
- TPI's ongoing efforts to educate your customers and consumers about the Benefits of Turfgrass with a new PowerPoint presentation and video on the TPI website.
- TPI's public relations effort focuses on communicating to a broad audience through various channels including print media, the internet and by means of PR releases and newsletters via e-mail. Media impressions through conventional print media alone (newspapers and magazines) exceeded 64 million in 2008 and have already surprised 35 million during the 1st quarter of 2009.
- Revised Natural Grass & Artificial Turf: Separating Myths and Facts booklet.
- New Turfgrass Lawn Guide sales/marketing brochures.
- The introduction of the monthly TPI E-newsletter designed to provide members with a wide assortment of interesting information about TPI events, programs and services, interesting stories, humorous items and more.
- Through TPI's lobbying efforts in Washington D.C. and collaboration with other groups, TPI was able to get "turfgrass" specifically defined as a "Specialty Crop" in the 2008 Farm Bill. Turfgrass sod was neither food nor fiber and therefore didn't have an identity and was not eligible for government programs. As a specialty crop, turfgrass is eligible for federal funds including research grants, state marketing grants and other future programs.
- TPI along with other green industry groups and Congress are working with the EPA to modify the proposed EPA "WaterSense" draft for new home construction program that has provisions that limit the amount of turf in the landscape by



making revisions that benefit the industry based on sound science. See cover story in this issue of the newsletter.

- TPI continues to make strides in our lobbying efforts for the benefit of turfgrass with the National Turfgrass Federation and other groups.
- Turf News magazine content and design enhancements to provide members with more tools to manage their turfgrass farm business.
- Through TPI, The Lawn Institute (your Foundation) awards up to \$10,000 in scholarships to eligible recipients of TPI member companies. The Lawn Institute also continues to fund turfgrass research programs to benefit members and the industry.

2009-2010 Membership Dues Renewal Statement

The annual membership dues renewal statement invoice was mailed twice to all members in early May and in late June 2009. **Please renew today!**

Need a copy of the membership dues renewal statement invoice emailed to you? Contact Susan Hall at 847-649-5555 or email at shall@turfgrassod.org and be sure to provide company name and member ID number if available.

How to Renew Your Membership Dues:

- Send payment by check (US Funds)
- Credit card - Visa, MasterCard or American Express
- International wire transfer - email shall@turfgrassod.org to request instructions for a wire transfer

Turfgrass Producers International is dedicated to providing members with valuable benefits and programs. Need a reminder of what TPI does for your company and the turfgrass sod industry? [Click here to learn about ALL the programs and services we provide!](#)



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