Turfgrass Producers International

E-Newsletter

Volume 4 Issue 3 March 2011

IN THIS ISSUE

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

Commentary—Jim Novak

The EPA wants to regulate this and that . . .

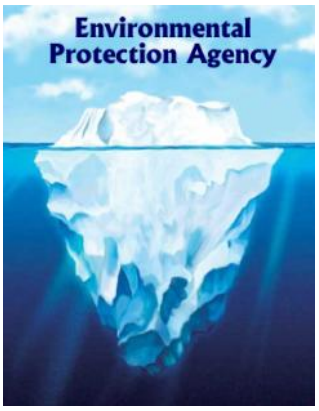
. . . but do they know what this and that is?

It seems as if the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is making rules and regulations on just about everything. Of concern is the perception that some EPA decision-makers and regulators sometimes seem a bit remiss when it comes to doing their homework or consulting with members of the scientific community prior to making far-reaching decisions that impact business and commerce. Many of their rules, regulations or guidelines have a direct impact on the green industry. It also appears that some of these decisions may be influenced by uninformed outside interests, well intentioned but misinformed environmental activists or others who appear to have personal agendas. Often times the scientific community is not consulted. On some occasions the solicitation for responses to proposed EPA guidelines prior to their implementation seems to be nothing more than a mere exercise and submitted input seems to be brushed aside.

Do EPA decision-making officials really know the subject matter for which they establish regulations? Do they have more than a general knowledge, if that, of key issues from which they formulate their opinion and their follow-up course of action; decisions that in the end can impact all of us? For example, do EPA decision-makers really have a thorough understanding of phosphorous runoff, the impracticality of one size fits all water mandates, the economic consequences of implementing rural dust regulations*, or the gray areas when it comes to establishing outdoor landscaping guidelines for their *"WaterSense"* program that don't take into account regional differences, warm season and cool season grass varieties, and other variables such as annual precipitation?

cont'd on page 2

The EPA wants to regulate this and that . . . (cont'd from page 1)



These issues are just the tip of an ever-growing iceberg of concern that bring into to question what the EPA knows and what they need to know before proposing and especially enacting rules and regulations that affect all of us. And now it seems we can add their limited knowledge of CO^2 to that chunk of ice that's submerged under that proverbial tip of the iceberg.

Imagine how ridiculous it would be if an EPA administrator was to propose the need for CO^2 regulations but was unaware of current atmospheric CO^2 levels. Sounds a bit unlikely doesn't it? How can anyone propose to regulate something when they don't really know what it is they are regulating?

Though it's hard to believe an environmental bureaucrat, speaking about the need to regulate CO^2 emissions before Congress, would not know current atmospheric CO^2 levels that was recently the case.

During the House Energy and Power Subcommittee hearing on EPA's job killing greenhouse gas regulations on March 1, 2011, Rep. Joe Barton (R-TX) asked panel witness Gina McCarthy, Assistant Administrator, Office of Air and Radiation, Environmental Protection Agency and chief of EPA's air programs, (including the agency's greenhouse gas regulations) whether she had any idea what the atmospheric level of carbon dioxide currently was. Her response surprised just about everyone:

Rep. Joe Barton: "*Do you know what the level of CO^2 is right now, generally speaking, in the atmosphere?*"

Gina McCarthy: *"Actually I don't have that figure."*

This wouldn't be so shocking if (1) Ms. McCarthy wasn't the white house expert on greenhouse gases, (2) if she wasn't there to propose the need for regulations regarding CO^2 levels, and (3) if she didn't represent an agency that has repeatedly been asked to seek scientific council and review reliable research before establishing any sort of rules and regulations.

To think the EPA wants to regulate CO^2 emissions but doesn't know what the current level of CO^2 in the atmosphere is should raise cause for concern. After all, one would think that if the EPA really wants to regulate this or that they should, at the very least, know a little something about what it is they want to regulate.

Let's just hope the EPA knows what they don't know before they put together rules and regulations based on what they think they know.

To see a brief video of the exchange between Rep. Joe Barton (R-TX) and witness Gina McCarthy of the EPA visit: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0nm0N5rmdtg

As a follow-up note: Ms. McCarthy's response should have been approximately 390 parts per million (ppm) and growing at a rate of about 2 ppm per year. The answer is readily available from numerous sources including the U.S Department of Commerce, National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration - NOAA Research and CO^2Now.org. But then again, why should the EPA care what others might know, the "others" aren't the ones who will be developing the proposed CO^2 regulations - - the EPA will be handling that all by themselves!

* Related story on page 5 — **Now the EPA wants to regulate farm dust too!**

Synthetic turf helps the environment

"Keeps more than 105 million used tires out of landfills. Most of the synthetic turf sports fields and landscape applications in use incorporate crumb rubber infill recycled from used tires, keeping more than 105 million used tires out on landfills." - Rick Doyle, Synthetic Turf Council

Landscape Management, March 7, 2011— Athletic Turf News
http://www.landscapemanagement.net/athletic-turf-core-pages/synthetic-turf-helps-environment

Can someone explain this?

Okay, put on your thinking cap because this is going to be a challenge. Can someone explain the logic of the above quote to us?

Imagine seeing over 105 million tires. I know that's hard to do, but give it a try. Okay, got the picture? Good. We don't really want all those tires in some landfill do we? Of course not! They're not good for the environment.

But wait! Rick Doyle of the Synthetic Turf Council sounds enthusiastic because he says the synthetic turf industry came up with a great solution. Just mulch all those tires (all 105 million of them) into itsy bitsy pieces of crumb rubber and spread that crumb rubber all over the place. And now, thanks to the foresight and ingenuity of the synthetic turf folks, those tires aren't in landfills, no sir, now they're spread all over the place - - in sports stadiums, on athletic fields, scattered in our parks, covering some school and community playgrounds and you'll even find crumb rubber in some backyards.

Now here's the challenge because we must be missing something . . . can someone explain how this is good for the environment? If the tires aren't safe in landfills because they're bad for the environment, how does spreading them everywhere else help the environment? One would think that 105 million tires equals 105 million tires no matter how you cut it! - J. Novak

State landfill regulations:

- 38 states ban whole tires from landfills.
- 35 states allow shredded tires to be placed in landfills.
- 11 states ban all tires from landfills.
- 17 states allow processed tires to be placed into monofills.
- 8 states have no restrictions on placing scrap tires in landfills.

(Source: Rubber Manufacturers Association, 2003)

TABLE OF STATE LEGISLATION OF SCRAP TIRES

http://www.rma.org/publications/scrap_tires/index.cfm?PublicationID=11507

Now the EPA wants to regulate farm dust too!

Photo: Jim Novak

Chicago Tribune

Kudos to the Chicago Tribune for the following article that appeared on March 7, 2011 regarding the EPA's farm-dust initiative.

Take a deep breath: After years of argument and litigation, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is poised to regulate farm dust. Yes, farm dust. That is, ordinary dust produced through ordinary farming operations.

Ever heard that old saying, "Plant in the dust and your bins will bust?" Pretty soon anyone who plants in the dust could be busted for it.

The EPA's farm-dust initiative has roots stretching back to 1987, when the agency cracked down on soot and other small particles in the air. As the agency revised those rules in 2006, farmers recognized that farm dust might be swept up under the same standards applied to the traffic and industry of dense urban areas. Their advocates sued, saying the EPA should distinguish between particles concentrated in crowded cities, where protection is needed, and "nonurban" particles that pose no proven threat. But clean-air advocates prevailed, in a ruling that cleared the way for the EPA to step in even if the impact on human health is "inconclusive."

Although the agency hasn't issued a new proposal yet, farm-state lawmakers from both parties have been bracing for something disruptive and impractical. Even if it were possible to pave all the dirt roads in all the rural byways coast to coast, how are corn-and-soybean farmers supposed to harvest their crop dust-free? And are ranchers supposed to walk their feedlots with pooper scoopers to dispose of manure before their cattle kick it up?

Banning farm dust because it might cause a respiratory hazard is like asking farmers to mop up the morning dew because the droplets might be contaminated.

Unfortunately, few expect the EPA to deal with this matter in a reasonable manner — and that's too bad, because agriculture needs sensible regulation to reduce bona-fide threats to public health.

Farming lacks the federal safety rules and inspection regimens that have reduced the death toll in mining, construction and other dangerous industries over the years. Fatalism, self-reliance and economic pressure make farmers especially resistant to even the most practical life-saving measures, such as requiring rollover protection on older tractors still in use. The prospect of government control threatens deeply held values, so farmers take their chances with machinery entanglements, livestock assaults and other rural risks that safety advocates have struggled for decades to systematically reduce. What a shame if the EPA, as many lawmakers expect, unveils the sort of regulation that gives regulation a bad name.

Dust is a fact of life on farms, and the agency must distinguish between legitimate, controllable hazards and the inevitable byproduct of working with dirt.

##

http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2011-03-07/news/ct-edit-dust-20110307_1_dust-epa-particles

We would also like to extend kudos to Gene Hall of the Texas Farm Bureau for his comments related to proposed EPA regulations regarding farm dust:

EPA Dust-Up: To exist is to regulate

"If this effort is "successful," EPA can move on to regulating hurricanes, tornados, flash floods and tilting at windmills. Draconian regulatory efforts to stifle the dust that's been part of rural America since colonial times could eventually result in the offshore production of our supply of food and fiber. It will be grown in places where the citizens and their governments have not lost track of common sense."

Gene Hall - Public Relations Director, Texas Farm Bureau

TurfSide-UP

How old is the proverb —*"The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence?*

A. 500 years old
B. 300 years old
C. 200 years old
D. As old as Mattel's Barbie Doll

While there may have been variations of the proverb over the centuries, researcher, James Pomerantz, claims that the term first appeared in a play written by Hugh and Margaret Williams' titled "*The Grass is Greener"* (1959) with the addition of "[on] the other side of the hedge" as a modern variant. So if you were one of the very few who guessed "D" you were correct. By the way, the Barbie Doll was launched by Mattel that same year, the average U.S. home cost $12,500, and average annual earnings was a hefty $5,000.

SOURCE: James Pomerantz in a scientific article on "'The Grass is always Greener': An Ecological Analysis of an Old Aphorism" (1983).

Golfpreserves

The Lawn Institute

UPDATE: Supporting turfgrass carbon storage research

From L to R Noble Hendrix - Golfpreserves, Michael Chaplinsky - Turf Feeders, Ron Dodson - International Sustainability Council, Eric Dodson - Audubon Lifestyles, **Kirk Hunter** - The Lawn Institute.

KEY LARGO, Fl., March 10 – On Thursday, February 10, 2011, Golfpreserves® presented a check for $12,000.00 to the Golf Foundation of Colorado to fund research. The funds represented carbon sequestered from 1,800 acres of the more than 2,000 acres of turfgrass donated by golf courses participating in the Colorado Golf Carbon Project. Golfpreserves® assessed, verified, and calculated the amount of carbon sequestered using scientific research developed at Colorado State University and the USDA/ARS in Fort Collins where this donated check will help to continue the research in turfgrass carbon storage, carbon footprint of turf systems and their environmental stewardship.

The United States Golf Association, ***The Lawn Institute***, Audubon Lifestyles, The International Sustainability Council, Turf Feeding Systems, and Golfpreserves® are leading this effort by being the first to purchase *Carbon Certificates* representing a total of 1,800 metric tons of carbon dioxide, removed from the atmosphere by photosynthesis and stored in the soil by turfgrass, at verified sites in Colorado.

Where in the world is TPI represented?

EVERYWHERE!

An on-going series featuring photos and copy from TPI member websites.

Anco Seed & Turf Pty, Ltd

Cranbourne West, Victoria, Australia

http://www.ancoturf.com.au/

Melbourne and Geelong's Largest Turf Supplier

For 30 years Anco Turf has been growing and supplying quality Instant Turf to Victoria's home owners, landscapers, golf courses, racetracks, sportsfields and home gardeners. We grow a wide variety of grass types that will suit the requirements of any site. With turf farms located across Melbourne at Cranbourne West, Clyde, Five Ways and Torquay, we can supply and deliver your turf typically within 48 hours. A pick up service is also available.

Proud Member of Turfgrass Producers International

anco Melbourne and Geelong's Largest Supplier of Instant Lawn.

We deliver all around Melbourne including Geelong and Mornington Peninsula.

At our retail stores in Cranbourne West and Geelong you will find a wide range of fertilizers, spreaders, grass supplies, seed, turf chemicals and other turf related products. Both sites also have our turf varieties on display for you to view.

Instant Turf and Instant Grass Supplier

At Anco we grow our instant turf on fumigated sandy loam soils producing a weed free, well drained turf, suitable for use in every situation. It is important to select the correct instant grass type for the site as some varieties are harder wearing or more shade tolerant than others. The high quality of turf produced by Anco does not happen by accident. We spend approximately $7,000 per hectare or 70 cents per square meter sterilizing the soil prior to sowing the seed. So when you are comparing turf prices for your lawn, ensure you are comparing equivalent standards of quality and service.

To see videos of ANCO Seed & Turf click on the link below:

http://www.youtube.com/user/AncoTurf#p/u/0/w-2VsiNmOm8

Grow Your Business

TURFGRASS PRODUCERS INTERNATIONAL

We have the tools to help you promote your business, reach your customers and give them great information about natural turfgrass.

Available brochures include:

- Benefits of Turfgrass
- Establishing a Lawn
- Why are Most Lawns Sodded?
- Measuring for Turfgrass Sod
- Turfgrass Installation Guide
- Turfgrass Watering Guide & Post Installation Care

We've done all the work to help you promote your business!

Order your products today!

Orders placed in March and April will receive a complimentary
Mow Food, Please Cookbook
(Minimum order $100.00)

2 East Main Street
East Dundee, IL 60118
Phone: 847-649-5555
Fax: 847-649-5678
E-mail: ghannah@TurfGrassSod.org

TPI TURFGRASS PRODUCERS INTERNATIONAL

Dr. Ali Harivandi *Turfgrass Management* lecture series is now available as a **FREE** download on iTunes.

http://itunes.apple.com/us/itunes-u/uc-agriculture-natural-resources/id382095215

UC Agriculture and Natural Resources (Audio) by UCTV

Turfgrass Management Part I

Released Jan 24, 2011

Dr. Ali Harivandi, UC Cooperative Extension Horticulture Advisor, introduces a class of UC Master Gardeners to Part I of a lecture on turfgrass management. Topics include the basic grass structure, grass varieties including cool versus warm season grasses, and irrigation practices.

Series: "California Master Gardener Lecture Series"
[Agriculture] [Show ID: 7398]

Turfgrass Management Part II

Released Jan 24, 2011

Dr. Ali Harivandi, presents Part II of a lecture on turfgrass management. Topics include irrigation, fertilization, mowing, de-thatching and aeration.

Series: "California Master Gardener Lecture Series"
[Agriculture] [Show ID: 7400]

Worth revisiting

Israel Environment Bulletin Autumn 1997-5758, Vol. 20, No. 4

THE VALUE OF OPEN LANDSCAPES AS LIFE-SUPPORTING SYSTEMS

by Zev Naveh
Professor Emeritus, Lowdermilk Faculty of Agricultural Engineering, Technion -Israel Institute of Technology, 32000 Haifa, Israel

" . . . we have to take into consideration that each patch of land covered by grass increases by 10 times the physical absorption and infiltration capacity of bare land or asphalt . . . "

Photo: Jim Novak

"In Israel, as in California, the protection and regulation function of the vegetation covered mountainous areas are of vital importance in the narrow, densely populated coastal strip. It would be worthwhile to calculate the replacement value of the conversion of this living sponge of soil and vegetation and their supporting physical air, water and rock systems into asphalt highways. This includes not only the actual loss of clean rain water for the coastal aquifer, but also the direct economic damage caused by the accelerating floodings which affect urbanized coastal plains almost every winter. These costs should be included in environmental impact statements and in the cost/benefit calculations of highway construction, along with the damages caused by air and water pollution which would have been prevented by these natural vegetation covered lands.

In such calculations, we have to take into consideration that each patch of land covered by grass increases by 10 times the physical absorption and infiltration capacity of bare land or asphalt, each patch of shrubland about 100 times and each patch covered by trees 1000 times. Moreover, these figures have to be raised by several powers in order to calculate the biological and physico-chemical surface activity of the canopy of shrubs and trees, functioning as powerful biological filters and "green lungs." (Petsch, 1972).

"Of no less importance are the air filtering and dust and pollution absorption functions of this living sponge."

Zev Naveh
Professor Emeritus
Israel Institute of Technology

It just might be criminal not to encourage the use of GREENSPACE!

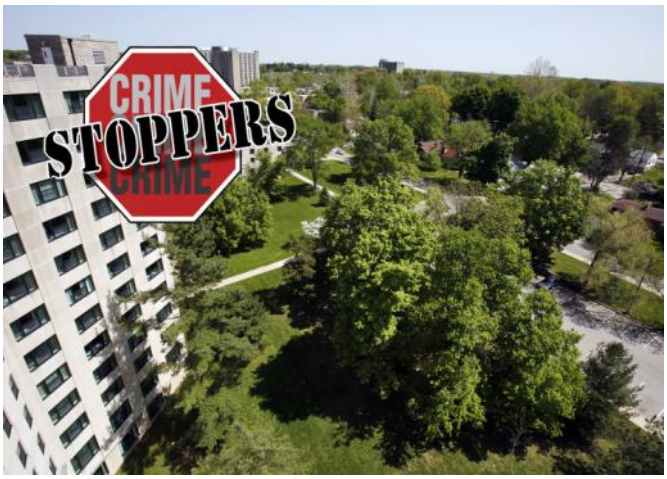


Photo: Courtesy of Indiana University

When it comes to crime prevention we often think of motion detectors, cameras, surveillance equipment, neighborhood watch groups, etc. — but there may be another deterrent to crime — Greenspace.

A research study conducted by the George Morris Centre in Canada reported the following:

"As a rule, people often believe that vegetation facilitates crime because it hides perpetrators and criminal activity from view. However, in 2001, Kuo and Sullivan published research suggesting that high-canopy trees and grass may actually work to deter crime in poor inner-city neighborhoods. The study used police crime reports to examine the relationship between vegetation and crime in an inner-city neighborhood in Chicago, Illinois. Crime rates for 98 apartment buildings with varying levels of nearby vegetation were compared. The findings of the analysis revealed a negative relationship between the density of trees and grass around the buildings and the number of reported crimes per building. Therefore, the greener a building's surroundings were, the fewer crimes reported. This pattern held for both property crimes and violent crimes (Kuo and Sullivan, 2001a)."

> "High-canopy trees and grass may actually work to deter crime in poor inner-city neighborhoods."
>
> - George Morris Centre
> Guelph, Ontario, CANADA

Source: *Review of Documented Health and Environmental Benefits Derived from Ornamental Horticulture Products Literature* — GEORGE MORRIS CENTRE

Authors: Cher Brethour, Garry Watson, Beth Sparling, Delia Bucknell and Terri-lyn Moore

To see the complete report visit::

http://www.agrireseau.qc.ca/horticulture-arbresdenoel/documents/Reports_Ornamentals_Health_Benefits.pdf

GEORGE MORRIS CENTRE

Founded in 1990, the George Morris Centre is a Canada-wide, not-for-profit charitable organization. As an *independent think tank*, the Centre provides industry decision makers with critical information and analysis on issues affecting the Canadian agri-products sector. The Centre's products and services assist public and private sector clients who are adjusting to change, and those leading the change.

Putting' on the Ritz

Using a Porsche Cayenne Turbo in lieu of a tractor is definitely a bit Ritzy!

At one point in his career Ferdinand Porsche designed and manufactured farm tractors (photo left), but we suspect even he would have been surprised to see a Porsche Cayenne Turbo automobile pulling a 21-ft. sod roller in a field.

With its unique aerodynamics and impressive V8 engine, churning out 450 hp and 620 nm of torque the Porsche was true to its name and proved to have more than enough power to pull the roller around.

Credit goes to an enterprising Dutch* farmer who reportedly made just a few modifications to make it work.

The Porsche Cayenne could cover six acres of land in one straight run of 3.8 kms (23.6 mph) in less than 3 minutes. This would be the most modern practice in agriculture if only the farmer could have installed hydraulics to lower and raise the sod roller.

Doing fieldwork in a plush Porsche might beat a tractor cab but it sure wouldn't be cheap. The cost of a 2011 Porsche Cayenne Turbo will run you between $100,000 to $120,000 U.S. dollars.

* Although the above photos of the Porsche Cayenne Turbo pulling the sod roller are available on dozens of reputable websites there seems to be a discrepancy on whether the farmer in question was Dutch or Danish. In the event any of our readers know with certainty who this farmer was please let us know.

Mark Your Calendar

TURFGRASS GOLD
2011 TPI SUMMER CONVENTION & FIELD DAYS
July 18-21, 2011
Grand Sierra Resort
RENO, NV
Field Day at Western Turf