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Industry roundup: Montgomery County upholds ban on pesticide usage on private lawns

[Jill Odom](#) | July 15, 2019



After a long, drawn out battle with Montgomery County in Maryland, legal options to challenge the county's ban on pesticide usage on private lawns have been exhausted.

Since 2015, a coalition of county lawn care, tree care and landscape professionals, as well as individual residents and homeowners associations, have strived to educate the county council on the fact that state and federal pesticide regulations ensure public health is not at risk.

The county had passed the legislation back in 2015 and was set to ban the usage of pesticides on private properties starting Jan. 1, 2018, but Montgomery County Circuit Court Judge Terrence McGann [struck down](#) the ban, citing it exceeded the county's power.

The National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP) and the Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE) praised this ruling. The county appealed this 2017 ruling and on May 2, 2019, Maryland's Court of Special Appeals upheld the county's ban of landscape pesticides on private property.

Maryland's Court of Appeals denied the petition of *Complete Lawn Care, Inc., et al, v. Montgomery County* seeking judicial review of the court's decision to uphold the ban.

"We continue to believe the residents of Montgomery County should have the option of using state-approved pesticide products to treat pest and plant health problems on their private property," says Karen Reardon, RISE vice president, public affairs. "It will now be illegal for county residents to treat lawn and landscape pest and plant health problems on their own private property with state and federally approved pesticide products they can buy from retailers, and state-licensed lawn and landscape professionals will not be able to apply these products either."

Residents in other counties will still be able to treat their lawns with the products they purchase or can hire a landscape company to treat their property.

"We believe the law will have a negative effect on pest control," Reardon say. "It also potentially will create a market for unlicensed applicators to treat lawns in the county. Such applicators do not participate in the training and certification required of licensed applicators. Unlike previously lawful applications, these applications would not have the recordkeeping required by Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) as part of its compliance tracking, and state-required signage may not be displayed. The county's ban apparently will rely on neighbor on neighbor enforcement, rather than the usual systematic regulatory and enforcement program at MDA."

NALP initiates search for next CEO

The National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP) has initiated a national search to identify its next Chief Executive Officer. The organization's Board of Directors has identified the experiences and competencies that will be sought in the new staff leader and created an extensive position description to recruit candidates interested in serving the professional lawn and landscape industry, those prepared to strategically address its trends, challenges and opportunities.

Heidrick and Struggles, a Chicago-based executive search firm, has been retained to facilitate the selection process. Expressions of interest should be sent to [Heidrick & Struggles](#).

A complete position description can be found [here](#).

NALP is a national trade association based in Fairfax, Virginia, representing nearly 100,000 landscape industry professionals in the United States, Canada and overseas. NALP is a \$7 million 501 (c)(6) organization, with a \$4 million 501 (c)(3) charitable foundation. NALP's 4,000 members specialize in lawn care, landscape design and installation, landscape maintenance, tree care, irrigation and water management and interior plantscaping. Members also include students, consultants, industry suppliers and state associations.