

Ontario Allied Golf Associations

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ONTARIO GOLF COURSES ABOUT THE PESTICIDE BAN

Bill 64, that bans the use of pesticides for cosmetic purposes in Ontario, was passed in June 2008. The Bill allows golf courses to continue to use pesticides, but only if they comply with additional conditions. The conditions will be laid out in regulations. The draft regulations have now been posted on the Environmental Bill of Rights (EBR) website. **It is imperative that all golf course superintendents review the draft regulation and submit their comments before December 22, 2008.**

The Ontario Allied Golf Associations (OAGA) has been working cooperatively with the MOE to find reasonable conditions for the continued use of pesticides on golf courses. Under the draft regulation IPM accreditation will be mandatory. In addition, golf courses will be required to submit a report that includes:

- the quantity of all active ingredients applied each year in kg.;
- how these amounts differ from the previous year and why;
- how IPM minimized pesticide use this year and how it will reduce the amounts to be used next year, and;
- a map of the golf course showing where pesticides were applied.

This report will be submitted to the IPM Council for posting to a public website and a printed copy must be made available to anyone that requests a copy. These conditions were generally agreed to by the OAGA representatives.

Of concern is a provision in the draft regulation that would require every golf course to conduct an annual public meeting to discuss the pesticide usage report. The public meeting would need to be advertised in a local paper and invitations would be required to be sent to all property owners within 100 metres of the golf course. Also, the regulation would require all golf courses to post a copy of the report in a building that is accessible to the public and to post that report for a period of five years. These requirements were not part of our discussions with the Ministry and were only introduced as a possibility at the last of several meetings with Ministry staff over the past year.

Since Integrated Pest Management (IPM) has been scientifically proven to reduce pesticide use on golf courses, the OAGA supports the requirement for all Ontario golf courses to become IPM accredited, recognizing that full accreditation may take up to three years to complete.



The OAGA also appreciates the government's desire for transparency and, as such, it supports the documentation of this use in the report described in section 20 of the regulations and the posting of this report on a public website.

However, we know from municipal pesticide debates that annual public meetings conducted by the club will only serve to encourage an emotional debate with respect to this matter every year. The meetings may also create an annual forum for anyone with an issue of any kind with the golf course.

It is imperative that the public meeting requirement be removed from the draft regulation. If it remains, it will only result in additional costs, public confusion over who is responsible and the reduced effectiveness of the legislation. The only way to ensure that this issue has further review at the Provincial Government Cabinet is for every Ontario superintendent to send their comments to the EBR posting. We have attached a sample letter that can be submitted to the MOE. To read the draft regulations and to submit comments electronically go to: <http://www.ebr.gov.on.ca/ERS-WEB-External/> and type in the posting number **010-5080**.

You can also send your comments via fax to:

Robert Bilyea
Senior Policy Advisor
Ministry of the Environment
Integrated Environmental Planning Division
Strategic Policy Branch
135 St. Clair Avenue West
Floor 11
Toronto Ontario
M4V 1P5

Fax: (416) 314-2976

If you have any questions or if you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact Teri Yamada, OAGA (416) 919-3832, Ken Cousineau, CGSA (905) 602-8873 ext. 222; Julie Dionne, RCGA (905) 849-9700; Jarrod Barakett, OGSA (519) 650-5310 or Vince Kishimoto, NGCOA (905) 826-6790.

