

Turfgrass Advocacy

2008



New York State Turfgrass Association • February 13, 2008

Background

In the early 1990s, mismanagement of the pesticide product registration program in the Department of Environmental Conservation had created a backlog of applications for registration of pesticide products. In some cases product registrations were held in departmental offices for as long as two years before any action was taken on them. New York is one of only two states that conducts a second review of pesticide products after they are approved for use by the federal Environmental Protection Agency; this registration must be renewed every two years. Without an approved NY registration, these products cannot be sold or used within the state. The pesticide industry developed a system of specific time lines for each part of DEC's review of pesticide product registration applications, and agreed to pay an increased registration fee (from \$40 or \$20/registration to \$300/registration) that would be used to pay for additional staff in the Bureau of Pesticides to meet the new time lines. This system and the increased fee were passed into law by the legislature in 1992 with an initial four-year sunset, which has been extended for successive three-year periods since 1996. The product registration fee was increased to \$310 in 2002.

NYSTA Perspective

Turfgrass producers, lawn care companies, golf courses and horticultural industries use pesticides as one tool in growing and maintaining athletic fields, lawns, golf courses and horticultural products. If plant protectants are not available, these industries are placed at a disadvantage. The pesticide industry is constantly developing products with new modes of action that provide chemical controls that are more targeted and more effective. If the newer, better chemistry products are not available because the product applications have not been reviewed and approved by DEC, companies that use pesticide products and the public that uses the fields, lawns and golf courses maintained with them have been done a disservice. The 1992 system defining specific time frames for the review and approval of applications submitted to the Bureau of Pesticides has proven to be successful in minimizing delays in DEC action on pesticide product registrations. These provisions should be made a permanent part of the Environmental Conservation Law. Similarly, the current fees for the registration of these pesticide products should also be made permanent. Increased fees for pesticide product registrations are passed on to the users of these products by manufacturers and distributors. Increased fees in the pesticide program in recent years have increased the cost of doing business for commercial users of pesticide products.

Recommendations

Support that portion of the governor's budget contained in S.6809/A.9809 (Part FF) that makes permanent the time lines for DEC's review of pesticide product registration applications, and continues the current fee charged for these registrations.

Request continued legislative oversight of the pesticide registration program to address delays that prevent the use of pesticide products, including new formulations with improved modes of action, less potential for pesticide resistance, better efficacy and environmental compatibility with the goals of integrated pest management (IPM) programs.