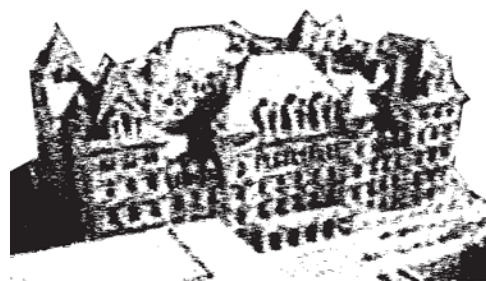


Turfgrass Advocacy

2005



New York State Turfgrass Association • February 1, 2005

Background

A. 2460 (DiNapoli)/ S.908 (LaValle) prohibits the use of certain pesticides, characterized by various EPA classification, for commercial lawn application, golf course application, residential application for ornamental purposes or turf pest control or for use by any state or local agency or school district for ornamental purposes or turf pest control.

NYSTA Perspective

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a scientifically proven system of turf and landscape management that results in a marked reduction in the use of pesticides. IPM is successful because it acknowledges and accounts for an environmental system that is ever changing and complex in its dynamic make-up and relationships between its various components. More importantly, IPM education is helping to change the concept of an ideal landscape from the "perfect" image of the past to a more "environmentally healthy" image with a high level of quality that accepts some non-harmful threshold levels of pests and diseases. IPM is widely adopted by turf and landscape managers. IPM encourages the landscape manager to evaluate and diagnose problems. The IPM approach is to look to cultural practices (mowing, nutrition, soil management, water management, etc.), and reduce reliance on pesticides.

Due to the lack of proven and reliable alternatives for pest management, this legislation, although well intended, could do more harm than good. The use of carefully selected lawn and landscape protectants by professionally trained and continually educated certified applicators, at recommended label rates, is sometimes the only means to prevent major loss of lawn and landscape plants from pest pressures. This is even more critical in an urban setting where more plant stress and decreased pest migration sites can lead to catastrophic results. Without the availability of these tools, major loss and deterioration of local ecosystems is a disastrous possibility.

Lawn and landscape plants are not purely "aesthetic." In fact, their importance in the ecosystem is greatly increased in urban areas. Labeling them as solely aesthetic shows the depth of misconceptions and lack of proper respect for these areas of the environment. Lawns and landscapes: 1) convert carbon dioxide (CO₂) to Oxygen (O₂), 2) provide a cooling affect, 3) trap dust and dirt, 4) prevent erosion, 5) prevent runoff and provide groundwater recharge, 6) trap soil particles and pollutants for microbial decomposition, 7) provide safe play areas for family fun and sports. In addition to the environmental benefits, a good landscape provides other functions such as traffic management, and important security measures.

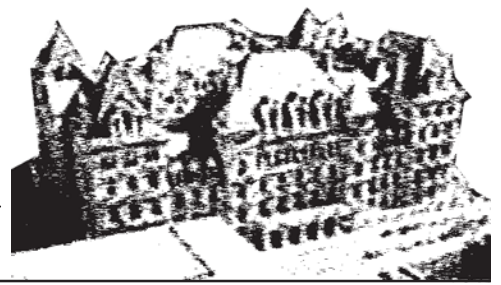
A lawn and landscape is part of what makes a house a home. Each has a unique and private quality that reflects the individual preference of its owner. Removing the accessibility of lawn and landscape protectants from these owners is an erosion of private property rights unprecedented in the USA. These products are tested and regulated by the federal and state governments. Every other state believes the public capable of making an informed decision on the use of lawn and landscape protectants. The people of New York State should be allowed the same freedom to make their own choice on the use of legally available regulated products.

Sound science should be the basis for environmental legislation and regulation. The supposed reason for the current pesticide reporting bill was to provide data that could be used to identify links between pesticide exposure and disease occurrences. In fact, an 8 million dollar study by the National Cancer Institute, led by Dr. Deborah Winn, showed conclusively that those women who got breast cancer were no more likely to be exposed to chemicals than those who didn't get breast cancer. Also, the studies cited in the report reveal that some pesticides can cause tumors

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in lab animals when fed excessively high doses throughout their lifetime. Many respected toxicologists agree that these doses are many times higher than any possible level of human or pet exposure.

Recommendation

- Oppose A. 2460 (DiNapoli)/ S.908 (LaValle)
- Maintain \$350,000 allocation for Community IPM Program
- Provide support for research through dedicated funds for the Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund

Note

NYSTA has provided over \$500,000 during the last ten years to help fund research and education on environmentally-responsible turf management. (ie: *Influence of Microbial and Organic-based Products on Putting Green Performance* by Frank Rossi, Ph.D., Cornell University and *Plant, Pathogen, and Soil Factors Affecting Performance of Microbial Inoculants for Disease Control* by Eric B. Nelson, Ph.D. and Frank Rossi, Ph.D., Cornell University.)