

from the sidelines

Green industry fighting back

With recent pesticide bans in Canada, New York and Minnesota, and regulations to control water usage and noise restrictions for equipment becoming more common, it's getting tougher to save and manage our green spaces. But now a group of green industry professionals are fighting back against activists' efforts through an organization called Project EverGreen.

This dedicated alliance of green industry end-user associations, suppliers, distributors, media companies, and other organizations are spreading the word about the many benefits of healthy landscapes and green spaces. Project EverGreen will use the resources and influence of a national green industry alliance to create a national marketing campaign to consumers throughout the U.S.

"Our mission is simple: raise the awareness of the environmental, economic and lifestyle benefits of landscapes and promote the significance of those who preserve and enhance green spaces at home, work and play," said Den Gardner, executive director of Project EverGreen. "The consumer marketing campaign that we are developing is designed to support that mission statement while defending the green industry from unwarranted attack."

Currently, more than \$450,000 has been raised from companies, associations, contractors, and suppliers. Project EverGreen continues to seek financial commitments from all facets of the industry. "Project EverGreen was created in response to unfavorable regulations in many parts of the U.S. and Canada," said Gardner.

"Green industry employees both big and small are the stewards of the environment and need to step forward and help to educate consumers. If the services our industry offers are restricted, regulated or made illegal, we will all lose revenue and customers. Every facet of the business is at stake here in the U.S."

The consumer campaign will feature grassroots tactics including the development of messages and educational materials for green industry companies, professional research, public relations efforts and an in-depth consumer Web site to educate consumers about the importance of green spaces.

Through the development of the consumer campaign, many of Project EverGreen's messages will clear up the misinformation among consumers and focus on the positive healthy landscapes and other green spaces.

Project EverGreen needs additional help in proactively promoting the green industry to everyone. To make a donation or share your ideas and support, please contact Den Gardner at dengardner@projectevergreen.com or call 877-758-4835.

The Turf Research Center at the University of Massachusetts has been named in honor of Joseph Troll. Troll was a long-time faculty member who led the expansion of university's turf program, which began in 1927 making it the first turf program in the U.S. Plans are proceeding to build a new 3,300-square foot building at the Joseph Troll Turf Research Center. Those wishing to donate to the \$1 million fund-raising effort should contact Rick Robar at 413-577-1692.



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