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TVMA QUARTERLY CLIP

March 2008

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38th Annual Vegetation Management Conference a Great Success

The TVMA, in conjunction with Texas AgriLIFE Extension Service-Harris County, held the 38th Annual Vegetation Management Conference at the Baytown Community Center on January 16, 2008 and at the Bear Creek Extension Auditorium on January 17, 2008. The conference got off to good start immediately when attendees found that the roads were not covered with ice as they were for the 37th Annual Conference. Over 252 applicators received continuing education training with five excellent sessions offered to attendees each day. Available CEU's included 5 from TDA and 5 from SPCB. TDA credits issued were 2 General, 1 Laws & Regs, 1 Drift Minimization and 1 Integrated Pest Management. The programs targeted pest management for roadsides and rights-of-way.

Speakers and topics included:

Wayne Thompson	“Pesticide Losses”
Randy Rivera	“Laws and Regs Update”
Bill Ree	“Insect Pests of Trees”
Dr. Barron Rector	“Invasive and Noxious Weeds”
Aaron Sumrall	“Feral Hog Management”

All speakers were well received and each had new and current information that most applicators have not heard before.

Mr. Rivera with the Texas Department of Agriculture discussed continued changes in TDA policies which included the discontinued waiver of renewal fees for non-commercial licensees working for governmental agencies. He also discussed the continued effort that TDA is making to incorporate the former Structural Pest Control Board requirements into TDA's authority.

See Vegetation Management Conference on page 2

Presidential Update

Dear TVMA Members:

The season is upon us again. Another Texas winter has come and gone even though sometimes it is hard to describe a “Texas winter”. Nevertheless, it’s time to get back to work. With that I want to wish everyone a safe and productive year.

The TVMA is also back to work. We have started preparing for the 2008 conference, evaluating potential future conference sites, completed various trainings throughout the state, and many other tasks involving the Association.

The board and I are always working to better serve the Association and welcome any suggestions the membership may have. Please feel free to contact me at bennettr@helenachemical.com with any questions or comments.

I am honored to be the TVMA president and look forward to continuing to work with the Association. Once again I want to personally thank all the membership for your continued support for the Association and the vegetation management industry.

Rick Bennett

Vegetation Management Conference Continued From Page 1

Dr. Rector presented his audience with a thought provoking talk about how we have changed the landscape of Texas from a mostly tall grass prairie to one that includes many foreign and invasive species. He challenged each applicator to notice and understand how the things we do on a daily basis change the environment we live in.

Mr. Sumrall talked about a subject that most had not heard talked about at previous training sessions—the feral hog . He discussed the history of the feral hog population in Texas and how much of a problem it has become. He also shared information on how quickly they multiply and how difficult they are to control. He pointed out that there are only 2 groups of people in Texas with respect to feral hogs—those that are currently affected by them, and those who will be affected by them.

The attendees were treated to a catered 3 meat barbecue lunch, and each day ended with the awarding of door prizes and CEU certificates.

The TVMA would like to thank all of the excellent speakers listed above, the Steering Committee for all of their hard work, and the City of Baytown for the donated use of their Community Center. The Committee members are Camille Borowiak and Scott Johnson with the City of Baytown, Corrie Bowen and Wayne Thompson with Texas AgriLIFE Extension Service, and Eugene Hinze and Amy Cobbley with TDA. The group also includes TVMA members Ron Held of Houston Spraying Company, David Jalowy of Fort Bend County Drainage District, Myron Rabalais of Dupont Crop Protection, and A.J. Thibodeaux of UAP Distribution.

The TVMA would also like to thank all of those who attended the training, and to extend an invitation to all applicators in the Houston/Harris and surrounding counties area to attend next year’s 39th Annual Conference.

CenterPoint Energy Vegetation Management Department Receives 2007 QVM™ Project Habitat™ Award for Responsible Vegetation Management

Conroe, Texas, March 12, 2008 – CenterPoint Energy, located in Conroe, Texas, has been named as a winner in the 2007 [QVM Project Habitat Awards](#), announced at the second annual awards banquet on Thursday, January 31, 2008 in Peachtree City, GA.

The QVM Project Habitat Awards is an annual awards program designed to honor quality vegetation management programs across the U.S. It rewards vegetation management professionals that uphold high standards of vegetation management and work by the [QVM Principles and Practices](#).

Entrants competed in 16 categories, including Forestry, Utility, Roadside, Invasive Vegetation Management, Aquatic and Specialty. Submissions were judged on criteria including a description of their vegetation management problem, the solution and the results of their application. They were also asked to evaluate the success of their program and the impact of using a [QVM Certified Applicator](#) or other partners.

Entrants had to explain how their project exemplified the QVM Principles and Practices and how they achieved the following:

QVM Principles & Practices

- Restore and improve plant, animal and human habitats
- Seek out and support professional certification and technical training
- Strive to always make a positive environmental change
- Apply herbicide responsibly, using the appropriate amount to achieve the desired results
- Protect threatened and endangered species
- Support industry research and development
- Follow label recommendations

The winner in the Specialty – Other category, CenterPoint Energy looked for a new way to effectively manage vegetation, especially in sensitive high profile easement areas. By implementing herbicides, CenterPoint was able to develop a cost-effective program to manage undesirable and overgrown vegetation. In addition, the program – which was one-third the cost of the former mowing program - helped establish beautiful urban green spaces and received many positive comments from local homeowners. CenterPoint Energy partnered with SprayCo, a herbicide applicator, to reach their vegetation management goals in the Conroe-area.

“CenterPoint Energy’s work in Conroe is a great example of an organization that is able to make a positive environmental change through their daily work. By simply making a commitment to maintain a higher standard, they are showing the rest of the industry how you can be successful and responsible at the same time,” said Amie Dunn, communications manager for BASF Professional Vegetation Management. “We are so excited to give this award to CenterPoint Energy for their QVM project!”

For more information on the 2008 QVM Project Habitat Awards or QVM, please visit www.vmanswers.com.

Traffic Control on Public Roadways in Texas



Did you know that Texas law requires anyone working on public roads in Texas (county, city or state) to provide traffic control for the protection of the traveling public and the workers?

Did you know that when you work on public roadways in Texas, you incur personal and corporate liability in the event of an accident caused by your actions?

Did you know that *free training is available to city and county agencies?*

State law, (State Transportation Code §544.01) says that the Texas Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (TMUTCD) ... *“shall be recognized as the Texas standard for all traffic control devices installed on any street, highway, or bicycle trail open to public travel.”*

Anyone working on public roadway rights-of-way in Texas, whether trimming trees, mowing, spraying pesticides, or installing utility lines, is required by the TMUTCD to erect and maintain appropriate traffic control (signs, cones, barricades, etc.) before beginning work. The TMUTCD is specific on which signs to use, how far the signs should be spaced, how to use flaggers to control traffic, how to perform flagging operations, and many, many other items. Failure to follow the TMUTCD can open you and your company up to significant liability in the event of an accident.

Through a grant from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) is available to provide free training on the requirements of how to design and maintain work zone traffic control. Classes are provided free of charge to city or county governmental agencies and can be hosted at your office for convenience to your personnel. Classes are either 8 hours or 16 hours in length, and need a minimum of 10 students in order to be held at your location.

To inquire about the classes available, or to schedule a training class for your city or county agency personnel, contact Paul Northcutt, UTA Transportation Training Coordinator, at 512-657-4254, or email Paul at panorth@uta.edu.

Scholarship Applications Due April 1

Rob Brooks, Scholarship Committee Chairman, would like to remind those interested in vegetation management or related fields to apply for the TVMA scholarships available in the amount of 2000 dollars each. TVMA members or immediate descendants of TVMA members need to especially take advantage of the Craig Johnson and Family TVMA Leadership Award. Monies are available so please go to the TVMA website, www.tvma.net/scholarship.htm, for applications.

Remember, applications are due by April 1, 2008

Alligare Joins Makhteshim Agan Industries

Founders continue to lead Alligare with increased resources

OPELIKA, Ala. (Jan. 31, 2008) "Alligare, LLC, a growing supplier in the industrial vegetation management industry has completed a transaction transferring majority ownership to agricultural chemical giant Makhteshim Agan Industries.

Alligare, based in Opelika, Ala., will continue to operate under its own name. Its founders will retain their leadership roles. Jeff Welsh will stay on board as President, CEO and minority owner. Devlin Reynolds will continue to serve as Vice President of Product Development.

"The technical, back office and other resources provided by MAI will allow us to focus on the part of the job we love most – providing the best customer service of any supplier in the U.S. industrial vegetation management industry," Welsh said.

The transfer of ownership has been in progress since 2006 when MAI acquired 30 percent interest in Alligare. MAI now holds 70 percent interest. The merger provides Makhteshim Agan, a leader in agricultural chemicals, with an arm in the non-crop weed control market. For Alligare, a small company founded in 2002, it provides the resources of a corporate giant.

Makhteshim Agan Industries, based in Israel, is the parent company of U.S. agricultural chemical leader MANA. Alligare will operate as an independent unit of the MAI family of businesses.

"We've figured out what works best for our customers and we will continue to apply that knowledge and experience," Reynolds said. "That won't change, but our growth will. You can expect to see the Alligare name out there in a big way in the next 12 months."

Alligare specializes in the development, marketing and sale of herbicides for industrial, railroad, range and pasture, forestry and other applications in the non-crop weed control market.

Customer Contact: Doug Warrington 614-774-7880 dwarrington@alligarellc.com

Media Contact: Milo Ippolito 404-237-9945 mippolito@freebairn.com

2008 TVMA Board Members



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by
Kay Dippel, Editor
CHB Consulting, Inc.
145 West Travis
La Grange, TX 78945
979-968-5602
FAX 979-968-5624
E-mail: ddippel@cvtv.net

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TVMA Thanks All 2007 Sponsors, Supporters, and Exhibitors

Enough cannot be said in the way of thanks to those who helped defray costs allowing TVMA to offer something for everyone in attendance at the 2007 TVMA Annual Conference last October. Exhibitors also made the conference positive by making product information and service information available to attendees. For a complete list of all who contributed to make the conference a great success, go to www.tvma.net/conference.htm, and when you come in contact with contributors, tell them thank you for supporting our industry. The conference this year is October 6-8 at the Holiday Inn San Antonio Riverwalk.

Officers

President

Rick Bennett
Helena Chemical Co.
Clochester Ct.
College Station, TX 77845
979-268-5206
bennetr@helenachemical.com

Vice President

Rob Brooks
Dow AgroSciences
P O Box 968
China, TX 77613
409-752-7267
jrbrooks@dow.com

Secretary

Scott Dunham
Becker-Underwood
604 Clovis Court
College Station, TX 77845
979-255-3980
scott.dunham@beckerunderwood.com

Treasurer

Myron Rabalais
DuPont
21839 Blossombrook Lane
Katy, TX 77450
281-828-0921
myron.j.rabalais@usa.dupont.com

Immediate Past President

Jim Cruser
AEP
P O Box 2121
Corpus Christi, TX 78401
361-881-5738
jgcruser@aep.com

Board of Directors

Tee Cotten
Progressive Solutions LLC
P O Box 2638
Athens, TX 75751
903-262-5827
teecotten@aol.com

Don Fields
AEP
1519 W. Calton Rd.
Laredo, TX 78041
956-721-3178
dfields@aep.com

Michelle McAfee
Austin Energy
301 W. Ave.
Austin, TX 78701
512-322-6932
michelle.mcafee@austinenergy.com

Matt Churches
ACRT
116 Starlight Ln.
Royse City, TX 75189
972-358-5461
mchurches@acrtinc.com

Robert Lane
Advanced Applicators, Inc.
5696 E. Hwy 44
Alice, TX 78332
361-227-2719
robert.lane@advancedapplicatorsinc.com

Howard Pierson
Alligare, LLC
108 Lariat Trail
Ovilla, TX 75154
214-435-5152
hpierson101@aol.com

Ken Draper
Wright Tree Service
7925 Thompson Pkwy
Abilene, TX 79606
325-669-8902
kdraper@wrighttree.com

John Mason
Tx. Dept. of Transportation
125 E 11th. St.
Austin, TX 78701
512-416-3081
jmason@dot.state.tx.us

James Smith
Asplundh Tree Expert Co.
621 Diamond Cut Dr.
Corpus Christi, TX 78409
361-289-0052
jsmith@asplundh.com

Standing Committee Chairs

Editorial

Paul Northcutt

Historical

Bruce Moore
TXU Electric

Internal Audit

Ron Held
Houston Spraying &
Supply
1327 Judiway
Houston, TX 77067
713-868-0598

Membership

Scott Dunham

Nominating

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Parliamentarian

Ron Held

Delivery
611 E. Tyler
Athens, TX 75751
903-677-6213
bmore@txued.com

Scholarship

Rob Brooks

Training

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Programs

Rick Bennett

Special Committee Chairs

Advisory

David Wall
Xcel Energy
PO Box 1261
Amarillo, TX 79170
david.wall@xcelenergy.com

Awards

Jim Cruser

Budget

Myron Rabalais

Legislative

Rich Hendler
Dow AgroScience
4709 Colleyville Blvd #58
Colleyville, TX 76034

Research

Howard Pierson

Web Master

Paul Northcutt
Northcutt Communications
6402 Betty Cook Dr.
Austin, TX 78723
512-933-9930
pnorth@sbcglobal.net



TVMA
145 West Travis
La Grange, TX 78945

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 6, 2008
TVMA Board Meeting
Extension Office Hwy. 21
College Station

October 6-8, 2008
TVMA Annual Conference
San Antonio