

# The Vegetation Manager

Serving the vegetation management industry

SEPTEMBER 2012

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## A Milestone For Science Based Regulation

**2012 Spring AGM a success  
with updates from industry  
and stakeholders.**

2013 Spring AGM & Tradeshow - March 5 - March 7

**The Registries Program Continues Providing Quality Assurance**

Business Insight from Neil Thiessen

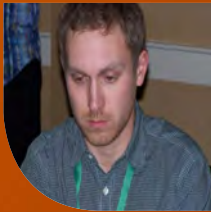
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**Fall Edition**



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## Featured Article

# Junk Science is No Substitute for Smart Pesticide Policies

**H**ave you ever heard the joke about dihydrogen monoxide? It's a dangerous chemical – fatal when inhaled, causes severe burns, used in nuclear power plants, and contributes to the greenhouse effect. Politicians and citizens around the globe have declared their support for a ban on dihydrogen monoxide after being approached by 'activists' with petitions and alarming factsheets about the dangers of the chemical.

The punchline? Dihydrogen monoxide (H<sub>2</sub>O) is just another name for water.

When many people hear the word 'chemical,' it sets off alarm bells. Never mind that everything we see and touch is a chemical of one kind or another. But what about manmade chemicals? In fact, as any farmer can tell you, manmade chemicals are absolutely essential to modern agriculture. Synthetic fertilizers and modern pesticides were an essential part of the Green Revolution, which has likely saved over one billion people from starvation since the 1940s.

Everyone knows that manmade chemicals can sometimes have unforeseen effects on the environment. That's why industrial, commercial, and consumer chemicals are today subjected to the greatest degree

of scrutiny in human history. Even when scientific evidence points to the safety and effectiveness of chemicals, many people are still wary. This is completely understandable – who has the time to read 20 scientific studies before going shopping? However, when governments have these sorts of knee-jerk reactions, the result is always bad policy.

This was recently highlighted by the editors of Maclean's magazine, who wrote in March that '(pesticide) bans, encouraged by lobby groups ranging from family physicians to environmentalists, rest not on competing scientific evidence, but rather a vague unease about chemicals in general.'

In fact, pesticide bans often produce unexpected results, sometimes with greater damage to the environment. Since the government of Ontario banned pesticides, the number of artificial turf fields in the province has exploded. Plastic grass is hardly environmentally friendly, and its lack of an ecosystem often leads to disgusting results – as sweat, blood, and other bodily fluids simply fester in the turf. Maclean's reports that regular disinfection with industrial-strength chemicals is currently recommended for all artificial turf fields.

*Continued on next page...*

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## Featured Article Continued...

# Junk Science is No Substitute for Smart Pesticide Policies

Or consider the weed-killer debacle in Quebec. The case centered on 2,4-D, the most widely used herbicide on the planet, which has been thoroughly studied since its development during the Second World War. It's used in well-known products such as Weed-B-Gon MAX, Trillion, and Killex. Various regulatory authorities – including Health Canada, the EPA, and the European Commission – have concluded that pesticides containing 2,4-D do not pose an unacceptable risk to human health or the environment, as long as they are used properly.

Nonetheless, the pesticide has been banned in many parts of North America, including Quebec. In 2009, the government of Quebec declared that weed killers containing 2,4-D were possibly carcinogenic, despite Health Canada's statements to the contrary. This sparked a ban on a number of non-crop uses, and manufacturer Dow

AgroSciences launched a NAFTA challenge.

Last year, in a balanced decision, the government of Quebec was finally forced to concede that its ban on 2,4-D did not rest on scientific evidence. Dow AgroSciences agreed to drop its suit for damages, while the ban was upheld on constitutional grounds. While it was a victory for the right of governments to regulate pesticides, it was also a step forward for science-based policy, instead of fearmongering and junk science.

Canada's vegetation managers are not opposed to government regulations that are genuinely intended to improve the lives of Canadians. However, government policies should be built on a foundation of scientific evidence, rather than knee-jerk reactions to bogeyman chemicals.



Alex Colgan, Freelance Writer for The Vegetation Manager.

# In The News

## **Cloned Ontario tree gives hope for Canada's decimated elms.**

Innovations in science have provided some clues on how Canada can save the elm tree. Cityscapes across Canada have been devastated by disease. Science may have the answer. [[Read More...](#)]

## **Marksman Vegetation's Brandon Tupper aids in research of new herbicides.**

Trials of new herbicides such as Sightline provide promising results. As Tupper explains a number of variables can lead to challenges in the industry. Chemicals with low usage rates have added benefits for field staff and being effective in sandy or dry showed positive results. [[Read More...](#)]

## **Newfoundland and Labrador Minister of Transport says some pesticides banned for use by homeowners only as toxic as table salt or vitamin A.**

An interesting discussion occurred on a Newfoundland radio show August 8, 2012 discussing a ban of five major pesticides for 'unnecessary cosmetic use' yet admitting it was not a health related issue. Toxicity was admitted to be less than table salt or vitamin A.

The real question? Then why the ban? [[Listen...](#)]

## **President of Dow Agrosciences Canada Jim Wispink's Address**

During the 2012 AGM the president of Dow AgroSciences Canada Jim Wispink reiterated the need for science based regulation and Dow Agro Science's successful efforts to reverse a 2006 ban in Quebec on products containing 2,4-D.

In the settlement agreement, Dow AgroSciences LLC will waive its legal actions and claims against the Government of Canada under NAFTA. In addition, Section 3 a) of the settlement agreement, states:

*'the Government of Quebec agrees that products containing 2,4-D do not pose*

*an unacceptable risk to human health or the environment, provided that the instructions on their label are followed, as concluded by Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency ("PMRA") in its May 16, 2008, decision on the re-evaluation of 2,4-D.'*

'This settlement is positive for our company, our value-chain partners and most importantly, our customers. Quebec has agreed with the federal government's findings as to the safety of our product when used correctly. This is consistent with regulatory findings in the United States and in the European Union' said Jim Wispink, President and CEO of Dow AgroSciences Canada Inc.

We also extend our appreciation to the Government of Canada in reaching this settlement which avoids a lengthy and costly NAFTA case," added Wispink.

To view settlement documents visit: [The Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada website's listing on this case.](#)

Some industry advocates believe this is the first of many reversals regarding non science based regulation on herbicides.

Evidence coming out of Ontario's experience shows mixed reviews and sometimes disastrous alternatives.

## **Mcleans - A Warning to Manitoba**

The detriments of allowing invasive species to prosper or substituting natural grasses for industrial plastics and disinfectants did not seem to be a better solution. A Mcleans article was also mentioned during Wispink's speech at the 2012 Spring AGM which can be read here: [[Mcleans - Manitoba should think twice before banning pesticides.](#)]

## **WSSA's "Our View" - A Warning for those Practicing Multi-Application Programs.**

The WSSA has released a journal article containing a clear message against multiple applications of glyphosate products in a single growing season. A noticeable escalation in weed resistance to glyphosate including that of Kochia in southern Alberta should be a clear reminder to cycle chemicals and switch to a single application program. [[Read More...](#)]



# Committee Reports

## Public Relations Committee

The public relations committee has presented a number of initiatives to the board that will be rolled out before the convention with the goals of Informing target audiences of what the IVMAA stands for and what we do as well as creating and fostering relations with other groups that will strengthen the IVMAA, the initiatives are:

- 1) Board Members will attend industry related association activities reporting back to the board.
- 2) Convention invites with free admission will go out to Chairpersons of related associations.
- 3) A special meeting will be held at the Convention with our Board and the Chairpersons of these associations.
- 4) Explore the Possibility of a yearly convention or a Joint Convention with other organizations every second yr.

Past activities such as the display, convention advertising and other promotional activities be reviewed and enhanced.

**Art Preachuk, Director in Charge**

## Government Liason

Over the past number of months, the winds of change have been prevalent. New faces and new initiatives are here, working towards positive progress in Alberta's vegetation management industry. First, I am pleased to introduce and welcome Laura Hammer as the new Pesticide Policy Advisor for Alberta Environment. Laura is taking over for Jock McIntosh who retired in the spring of 2012. Laura comes to Alberta

Environment from Strathcona County, and can be reached at 780-427-0031 or by email at [laura.hammer@gov.ab.ca](mailto:laura.hammer@gov.ab.ca). Welcome Laura!

Alberta Environment has released a new best practices document for weed control on industrial sites. This document will work to serve as framework for operators, applicators and stakeholders managing industrial sites. This document and further information can be found at the following: <http://environment.gov.ab.ca/info/library/8586.pdf>

Progress is also being made in updating federal requirements for pesticide applicators. Vivianne Servant is co-chair of the Federal, Provincial, Territorial Standing Committee on Pesticide Education, Training and Certification in Canada. The group is currently updating the Canadian Basic Knowledge Requirements (BKR) for industrial pesticide applicators. The Industrial and Forestry Pesticide Advisory Committee will have an opportunity to provide input, with hopes a first draft will be available for review in 2013.

**Mark Alberts, Director in Charge**

## Membership Committee

The following is the membership as of August 24th, 2012

Corporate	14
Group	51
Individual	44

There will be a thorough review of the membership structure and the bylaws pertaining to membership after the consultant's report on governance Sept. 25th, 2012. More to follow as we learn what changes may be needed to comply with the new 'Not-for-Profit' legislation that Neil Thiessen, our Executive Director is working on.

**Ron Standish, Director in Charge**

# Committee Reports

## Executive Director's Report

The summer is traditionally a very busy time for our members and industry. For the Administration team it is a slower time of year. Shannon continues to process UTW-UTT certification applications, respond to emails, and telephone inquiries. More and more inquiries about the Registries Program are a great sign that this program is catching on and becoming well known.

Both Shannon and I attend the Board of Directors Meetings and other active committee meetings as requested by the chairpersons. I can tell you that the committee work is a vital part of the work the IVMAA undertakes and adds a great value to members.

We have begun the promotion of the "Sustaining Sponsorship Program" for persons and organizations that want to support the IVMAA for a three year period at a cost of \$3,000/year grant that will contribute to ongoing and new initiatives. Current governance issues are on the table for the IVMAA pending re-application for "Not for Profit" status for the IVMAA. The laws governing Not-for-Profit groups have not been changed since 1917 and the government has set a deadline of Oct, 2014 to have all organizations "re-qualify" for this status. This will mean a complete review of our governance including, audits (financial and operational), bylaws, and structure of our membership.

I look forward to seeing you at the upcoming meetings and our AGM in March. Have a safe summer

**Neil Thiessen, Executive Director**

## Operating Protocol Committee

There is not much to report from this summer activities. At last report (March) we were awaiting the outcome of the provincial election before we arranged a meeting with Ab. Environment.

Post election as you all know by now, Jock McIntosh retired. Jock's replaced, Laura Hammer, has just been announced. At our next Board of Directors meeting will we discuss when we start the re-write of the Standards and Good Practices Manual.

**Darrell Chambers, Director in Charge**

## Seminar Committee

The seminars committee has been busy over the last couple of months. We have confirmed our speaker for this falls AGM at Silver willow Golf and Sporting club September 14th and have secured the location for our 2013 seminar.

We will be having our seminar at the Edmonton Marriott and River Cree resort in 2013 partially because of positive feedback from our 2009 seminar held there. Your committee has been busy meeting and trying to put together the best possible line up of speakers and agenda for our seminar. We met again August 22/12 and have roughed out a speaker line up and CEC/CEU's amount for the seminar. We will be requesting 9 CEC's and 6 CEU's for our current program if all speakers can be confirmed.

Stay tuned and follow along on our web site for continual updates as we approach the date. Thank you to all volunteers on your Seminars committee.

**Maurice Pelletier, Director in Charge**



# Committee Reports

## President's Report

Looking back on how fast this summer went by members of the IVMAA BOD had a really busy summer. We were able to meet once over the summer as a group and some of the committees met several times. There are some exciting new initiatives underway as well as continued work on last year's ones. Look through the other committee reports to get caught up on what has been going on!

We have been looking at evaluating our current membership structure and how it fits in today's non-profit groups. We have hired a consultant to review how the organization is structured and provide feedback on it. We look forward to the end of September when we meet with the consultant for a full day to discuss his suggestions. Look for a Industry Update in early winter on the results of this meeting.

The IVMAA was invited to sit on the AWAC (Alberta Weed Advisory Committee). I was able to attend and provide input. The first topic discussed was the pro's and con's of the current EDRR (Early Detection Rapid Response). The second topic was on the government's role in managing and containing herbicide resistant weeds. The third topic discussed was on funding methods for herbicide and other control methods. We just about ran out of time for the fourth topic - Weedy crops and ornamentals: Do we need a new approach? If anyone has any additional thoughts into the previous topics please feel free to send me an email.

I was invited to speak at the IVMBC fall meeting this November. So I will be headed out to Prince George to discuss some of the BOD's Albertan initiatives and how we implemented them. Looking forward to sharing some of our ideas with our neighbouring associations.

If anyone has any comments or concerns send me an email:  
Brandon.tupper@marksmeninc.com.

**Brandon Tupper, President**

## Awards Committee

A review was made of all the awards available through the IVMAA. The Larry Beaton Memorial Award is presented to individual or companies in recognition of outstanding service to the association. Honorary memberships are awarded to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to a science or practice related to industrial vegetation management, or to the association.

Our Bursary program is open to post-secondary students whose parents are members of the IVMAA. The IVMAA Scholarship is awarded to a student each year at the spring seminar with program information being distributed to local colleges we expect a large response by the Oct 31st deadline.

**Darrell Chambers, Director in Charge**



# A Message from the Executive Director

The IVMAA is a volunteer member organization. Like most volunteer organizations we are competing for volunteer hours from its members. As a result most members and board of directors are very busy most of the year and particularly busy during the summer months.

By nature, volunteerism means giving of your valuable time and resources. I have always been amazed at the amount of time and effort many contribute to these organizations. The IVMAA is particularly fortunate to have many who contribute very significantly to the industry. I work closely with the board throughout the year and can attest to the hundreds of hours that are willingly given to the IVMAA and its cause.

I have had the privilege of serving in a number of organizations over the years and can tell there is a great deal of personal satisfaction gained from being involved in the industry you work in.

I encourage those of you who are considering getting involved on a committee or a project to do so. For those that have been involved and are now enjoying the fruits of your labor, thanks for the contributions you have made. The strength of any organization is its active members.

You can make a difference.

**Neil Thiessen, Executive Director**

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# Business Insight

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*"This section will contain short articles for the small to medium sized businesses. We welcome 300 to 600 word articles that would be of interest of helpful to the IVMAA stakeholder businesses."*

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## GROWING YOUR BUSINESS WITH CONFIDENCE

If you have just started your own business recently, congratulations and I wish you much success. Most of us that have started a business have given a great deal of thought to why we want our own business and how we think we can build it into a successful enterprise over time.

It is essential to be clear on why you have started the business. Many of us wanted to be an independent entrepreneur; the ability to make critical decisions in a timely manner; build wealth and provide a good living for ourselves and families.

There are predictable growth stages most businesses go through and most require the owner-operator to make decisions that can determine the success or failure at each stage. In addition, these decisions invariably involve money and people, both of which you need in proper balance to achieve sustainable growth. Forecasting the business growth and knowing when to add new equipment and more people is, and always will be a challenge to 'do it right' and in a timely manner.

There are some fundamental business principles about debt servicing ratios that most accountants and financial institutions can give you guidance on when it comes time to make capital investments for equipment etc. The investment in human resources is usually driven by the physical capacity you are willing to take on yourself and where your value to the company lies. For example, if developing sales is your strength, then hiring a technically competent person to do the work may be a good business decision in time. Too many try to do it all and end up working 16 hours a day 7 days a week and that is the first clue the business is not sustainable in its present state!

Something we all know too well is that the IVM industry has seasonal swings which affect sales, cash flow and the ability to hire and retain qualified employees. I see this struggle throughout the industry small and large companies. Some have found ways to manage the highs and lows and remain profitable year round; others have found innovative ways to deal with the seasonality.

Some experts will say that growth is essential to sustain a business. While this may be true, making money is pretty important too. Knowing when to take the business to the next level is an art. I work with many companies that keep the growth and profitability in good balance. I also work with some that struggle with this balance. A business mentor and/or your accountant can help you if you are one that feels growth and profitability are out of balance. You need to know, you are not alone, many others have been challenged with this important business balancing act.

---

**By: Neil Thiessen, Able Business Consulting**

## Sustaining Sponsorship Opportunity

*The IVMAA's new website has a rotating SUSTAINING SPONSOR rotating logo opportunity . This space is reserved for those sponsors who commit to a three to five year sponsorship to ensure the IVMAA remains a strong voice for the membership and industry. The cost to sustaining sponsors is \$3000.00 per year.*

*It is only with the generous support of these sustaining sponsors, advertisers' and membership will the IVMAA be able to transform into a more relevant organization in the future .*

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Please contact Neil Thiessen, IVMAA Executive Director at [neil@ivmaa.com](mailto:neil@ivmaa.com)

Be a Proud Member of the IVMAA.

The logo for Fortis Alberta, featuring the word "FORTIS" in a large, bold, serif font above the word "ALBERTA" in a smaller, bold, serif font. A small yellow sun icon is positioned between the two words. The logo is set against a white rectangular background with a thin black border. A thin vertical line with a small square at the top and bottom extends from the left side of the logo box.

**FORTIS  
ALBERTA**

2013 Membership fees are due January 1, 2013. Please check the website for the new membership form.

Thank you to the County of Red Deer and Fortis Alberta for their generous support and use of facilities for committee and board of directors meetings.

# 2013 Spring AGM & Tradeshow

*March 5 - March 7, 2013*



The Marriot River Cree Resort

9 CEC's and 6 CEU's applied for in Professionalism, Health and Safety, Environment, Pest Management and Application Technology.

Early bird draw for all those registered for the seminar by February 1st 2013. A draw will be made from all names for 1 winner that will receive a LUXURY SUITE at the Edmonton Marriott for the nights of March 5th and 6th 2013.

Guest Speaker Terry Grant from the hit A&E TV show Mantracker is scheduled for the venue as well as photo opportunities with the Grey Cup and a CFL alumni. Additional Details will be posted on the events section of the IVMAA website. Early registration can be done [online](#).

## "The IVMAA Registry Program"

**B**e an "IVMAA Registered Company" The vegetation management industry needs more professionalism and accountability. The IVMAA registry is being offered to companies that believe in higher standards and the IVMAA "Code of Conduct".

This registry is for all companies in vegetation management - Herbicide, mechanical, arborists, consultants etc. Benefits of registering your company:

- Registration in the IVMAA Registries program
- Covers development costs of the program
- Costs incurred educating industry
- Aiding in the IVMAA branding initiatives
- A number unique to your company
- Enough decals to place (2) on each of your working units
- Includes one version of the IVMAA Standards and Good practices manual

Proudly display your own unique IVMAA Registration decal on your units! Please fill in the registration form and attach a signed code of conduct. Proof of insurance and service approval will be required for Truck Registry (if applicable)



**IVMAA**

**REGISTERED COMPANY**

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## To Our Readers...

THE IVMAA PROMOTES PROFESSIONAL AND RESPONSIBLE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS. MEMBERS ARE THE LIFEBLOOD OF THIS ORGANIZATION AND SPONSORS AND ADVERTISERS CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE PRINCIPLES UPON WHICH IT WAS FOUNDED.

THE IVMAA VALUES THE INDUSTRY SUPPORT AS IT ALLOWS FOR CONTINUED COMMUNICATION AND GROWTH.

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