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Michigan Program Receives National Environmental Award

Turfgrass stewardship program recognized for innovative pollution prevention

LANSING, MI—The Michigan departments of Agriculture (MDA) and Environmental Quality (MDEQ) are receiving national recognition for their cooperative efforts in the Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Program (MTESP). Staff from MDA, MDEQ and the turfgrass industry accepted the National Pollution Prevention Roundtable's Most Valuable Pollution Prevention award in Washington D.C. this week.

“Receiving national recognition for Michigan’s MTESP demonstrates an organized effort of the turfgrass industry, state agencies, Michigan State University and environmental advocacy groups,” said Mitch Irwin, MDA director. “This unique partnership provides a solid foundation for continued success, and the increase of environmental protections statewide.”

“This award recognizes the tremendous success of this partnership,” said MDEQ Director Steven Chester. “The MTESP program encourages environmental stewardship across Michigan, and helps keep our waters clean.”

The MTESP, a voluntary self-assessment program, allows golf property managers to evaluate and improve their level of environmental protection by partnering with state and local initiatives designed to enhance the environment, prevent pollution and protect natural resources.

To date, 234 golf courses statewide voluntarily participate in the MTESP certification process, which requires regulatory compliance and implementation of practices that prevent pollution and protect water resources. As part of the program, an environmental action plan is established as a management tool to prevent potential threats from pesticides, fertilizers, fuel, and hazardous materials from negatively affecting natural resources with a special focus placed upon the protection of groundwater, which is often the source for golf course irrigation and drinking water.

The Most Valuable Pollution Prevention award are made in conjunction with National Pollution Prevention Week, September 18-24, to promote initiatives that seek to avoid, eliminate, or reduce pollution at the source. For more information about this national effort, go to www.p2.org.

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