

Mower Engine Maker's Tactics on Hill Assailed

By Eric Pianin
Washington Post 9/18/2003

Edited for length

A Senate committee, acting on a Missouri lawmaker's request, recently voted to block California from adopting tough new air pollution standards for garden equipment. The key rationale: A lawn mower engine manufacturer with two plants in Missouri warned that the measure would cost tens of thousands of jobs.

But the company, Briggs & Stratton Corp., later told the Securities and Exchange Commission that it "does not believe" the proposed California rule "will have a material effect on its financial condition or results of operations" because the Golden State represents a relatively small percentage of the company's engine sales.

Some Senate Democrats and environmentalists now say Briggs & Stratton misled lawmakers and the public.

Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) said yesterday she has asked the SEC to investigate whether Briggs & Stratton officials violated securities laws by issuing contradictory statements in a 10-K SEC filing and to the media and senators. She said she will oppose the amendment when the spending bill reaches the Senate floor later this month.

Briggs & Stratton officials denied lying about the potential



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Factor 3) Determine Annual Payroll Costs

Determine the annual payroll cost for each technician including regular and predicted overtime wages, then add in the costs of mandatory and discretionary benefits. Total them together.

Step 1) Multiply his/her hourly rate by the number of hours worked per week. Add in any expected overtime.

Step 2) Add the costs of mandatory and discretionary benefits for each technician. Mandatory benefits vary by state and may include Social Security, Medicare, Unemployment, Worker's Comp, etc. Discretionary benefits include such things as medical insurance, uniforms, retirement, bonuses, training, etc.

	Annual Wages	Mandatory Benefits	Discretionary Benefits	Total
Joe	\$33,450	\$3,786	\$2,190	\$39,426
Kevin	\$27,500	\$2,695	\$2,190	\$32,385
Peter	\$10,400	\$1,144	\$190	\$11,734
Service Department's Total Payroll				\$83,545

impact of the proposed California pollution regulation and said their statements to the SEC and the public were not contradictory.

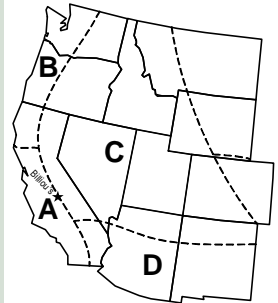
Thomas R. Savage, senior vice president of administration, said Briggs & Stratton never suggested that the California regulation would harm the company financially, only that the company would have to relocate some of its plants overseas to minimize the cost of retooling. Savage said his company did not raise the issue of job transfers or losses in its SEC filing because the subject was not germane to a discussion of the company's long-term financial health.

"We never said that we would lose money, and we never said that in our filing with the SEC," Savage said. "What we said [publicly] is this California action would have terrible effects on the employees."

"Can Briggs & Stratton live with California's proposed regulation? Yes," said Ernie Blazar, the spokesman. "But that would require moving almost 2,000 good-paying jobs from Missouri to other countries, and Senator Bond believes that is too high a price for Missouri's working families to pay."

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Billiou's Marketplace Weather Forecast



Region A (California):
Avg. Temp: 56.5° (2° > avg.)
Precipitation: 1.5" (1" < avg.)
Nov 1-9 Showers, warm, then cooler
Nov 10-17 Sunny, seasonable
Nov 18-21 Low clouds and fog
Nov 22-30 Sunny, warm

Region B (Pacific NW):
Avg. Temp: 45.5° (0.5° < avg.)
Precipitation: 6.5" (2" > avg.)
Nov 1-7 Cloudy, light rain
Nov 8-10 Partly sunny, chilly
Nov 11-16 Rain, mild
Nov 17-18 Colder, rain and snow
Nov 19-22 Partly sunny, cold
Nov 23-30 Light rain, warm, then cool

Region C (Rocky Mtns):
Avg. Temp: 44° (2° > avg.)
Precipitation: 0.5" (0.5° < avg.)
Nov 1-4 Sunny, warm
Nov 5-7 Rain, cool
Nov 8-12 Cold, snow, then sunny
Nov 13-20 Sunny, mild
Nov 21-30 Snow showers, then sunny, mild

Region D (SW Desert):
Avg. Temp: 60.5° (3.5° > avg.)
Precipitation: 0.4" (0.2" < avg.)
Nov 1-4 Sunny, warm
Nov 5-8 T-storms, then sunny
Nov 9-12 Very cold, rain and snow
Nov 13-19 Sunny
Nov 20-30 Showers, then sunny, warm

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Humor Is, As Humor Does

While attending a marriage seminar on communication, Wally and his wife Carolyn listened to the instructor declare, "It is essential that husbands and wives know the things that are important to each other."

He addressed the men, "Can you describe your wife's favorite flower?"

Wally leaned over, touched Carolyn's arm gently and whispered, "Pillsbury All-Purpose, isn't it?"

And thus began Wally's life of celibacy.

New Definitions

BEAUTY PARLOR:

A place where women curl up and dye.

CANNIBAL:

Someone who is fed up with people.

CHICKENS:

The only animals you eat before they are born and after they are dead.

DUST:

Mud with the juice squeezed out.

EGOTIST:

Someone who is usually me-deep in conversation.

GOSSIP:

A person who will never tell a lie if the truth will do more damage.

HANDKERCHIEF:

Cold Storage.

INFLATION:

Cutting money in half without damaging the paper.

RAISIN:

Grape with a sunburn.

SECRET:

Something you tell to one person at a time.

SKELETON:

A bunch of bones with the person scraped off.

TOOTHACHE:

The pain that drives you to extraction.

TOMORROW:

One of the greatest labor saving devices of today.

YAWN:

An honest opinion openly expressed.

WRINKLES:

Something other people have. You have character lines.



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