

Be Prepared—Be Our LINK: “Lawn & Landscape Industry Network Keeper”
Introduction to a new PLANET Initiative That Involves YOU

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Most everyone knows the motto “be prepared” by the Boy Scouts of America. This could be the same motto for lawn and landscape contractors and employees. Being prepared is a key factor in safety training and in almost everything we do. When we train new employees, we stress that “if this particular situation occurs, this is how you respond, and this is what we want you to say or do.” We help them “be prepared.”

We teach by example and learn by mistakes. Sometimes responses can be clear-cut, and other times we need to analyze the responses and pick the best one. This is true when dealing with the media, legislators and regulators, especially on sensitive issues like pesticides, fertilizers, water, and immigration.

Because of the representative type of government we have at local, state and federal levels, we need to work with elected representatives and, in turn, they need to rely on us for feedback on our position on certain issues. In order for our industry to be successful in dealing with this type of process, we need to have as many representatives of the green industry—especially in the lawn and landscape sector—as we have elected representatives. At least one person for each federal district would be ideal.

How do we do this? PLANET has a plan and a new program called **LINK** and you are the key player. Read on!

First, we need to identify a person for each state senate district and assembly or representative district, or the same person can serve in dual roles. If you don’t know what district you are in and the corresponding elected official, then use [PLANET’s Legislative Action Center \(provide hyperlink\)](#), and enter your home address and zip code. It will identify them for you. You can also enter your local office address and see if it gives you different elected officials. They should be interested in the importance of your business location and where most of your customers are located.

Representatives of government and industries cannot know all the issues equally well. Nevertheless, they must educate themselves or rely on staff, or other entities with more expertise like associations, to keep them informed.

The key to our program—LINK—is having a person like you committed to help. YOU are the key ingredient. We can all relate to what is happening in Canada where the banning of pesticides in many communities for all users is fact not fiction. Our counterparts there can only wish that they had been better **prepared**. The United States is not immune...there are many government entities in the states that are already making decisions for stringent regulations, or are doing outreach with negative or misleading information about pesticides, fertilizers and water use.

We need to be prepared and involved before individuals and groups with their own agendas influence government representatives to the detriment of the green industry. Large numbers of green industry members are needed now to be our **LINK**: a “**Lawn & Landscape Industry Network Keeper**.”

We must be able to network. For example, at the Breakfast of Champions at the GIC we need to get people to share information—to **LINK** with each other for a common goal. We need to make sure we know who our representatives are and that they know who we are, what our industry is about, and what issues affect us in a positive or a negative way.

We will especially need assistance from our state and regional associations to encourage members and non-members to become our eyes and ears, and be willing to contact their representatives with information we provide to advocate our industry positions.

PLANET will direct the network and provide the information—but we need YOU to *be prepared* to help.

Please contact me at tomdelaney@landcarenetwork.org if you are willing to be a vital **LINK** and **BE PREPARED**. Please consider signing on today for this new, important initiative!