

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



January 30, 2008

**Green Industry Council mobilizing forces to save industry**

**Contact:**

Doug Berlin, President  
NC Green Industry Council  
336-665-0291 (office)  
[dberlin@newgarden.com](mailto:dberlin@newgarden.com)

Sheryl Bynum, Executive Director  
NC Green Industry Council  
919-372-1586  
[sheryl@ncgreenindustrycouncil.org](mailto:sheryl@ncgreenindustrycouncil.org)

**Raleigh, NC** - - - Brown lawns, drought stressed trees and a ban on outdoor watering do nothing to produce oxygen, fight global warming or filter polluted storm water run-off.

This message is being sent by landscapers, nursery producers, irrigation contractors and other green industry representatives to elected officials and government agencies statewide. The NC Green Industry Council has launched a major communications and educational effort to explain the economic impacts the industry has suffered due to severe water restrictions.

Many landscape and irrigation contractors, nursery producers and other related businesses are reporting workforce reductions of more than 30 percent and decreases in revenue of more than 40 percent due to water restrictions associated with the drought.

“Everyone has a responsibility to conserve water during extreme drought conditions and our industry is prepared to do its share,” said Doug Berlin, NC Green Industry Council President. “We certainly want to be part of the solution during these times of limited water resources, but we expect everyone from homeowners to major industries to other large water users to share in this burden together,” Berlin added.

Many leaders in the green industry have expressed concern and frustration that governments have failed to adequately plan for increased demands for water.

“Pointing fingers at government’s failure to plan for infrastructure needs is not a productive approach,” said Berlin. “Our focus needs to be on changing the way we design, install and maintain landscapes in order to minimize the need for potable water,” he added. “We simply want to work together with policy makers to develop water allocation programs that will allow us to continue as a viable industry in North Carolina.”

According to industry professionals, maintaining and improving the environment is *not* a waste of natural resources. Plants, trees and groundcovers stabilize soils, help reduce run-off that clogs waterways and reservoirs, filter pollution and produce oxygen. In addition, plant material helps cool the environment and fight global warming while providing valuable habitat for wildlife.

As part of the campaign, members of the NC Green Industry Council will be attending all local and state public hearings on water related issues, getting heavily involved in this year’s political campaigns and working to improve best management practices for water use in the green industry. During the last several weeks representatives from the Green Industry Council have attended and spoken at public hearings in Raleigh, Cary, Charlotte and Wilmington on water related issues.

Composed of representatives from the irrigation, landscaping, nursery and other ancillary businesses, North Carolina’s green industry contributes more than \$8.6 billion annually to the state’s economy and employs more than 151,000 people according to a recent economic impact study done by NC State University and the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

###