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EPA Announces Comment Period for Drift Labeling

EPA has released a draft Pesticide Registration Notice (PR-Notice) on drift labeling for pesticide products. The agency is seeking public comments until November 20, 2001. An electronic version of the PR-notice is available at: http://www.epa.gov/opppmsd1/PR_Notices/prdraft-spraydrift801.htm

Drift is the number one complaint handled by many departments of agriculture pesticide regulators throughout the country. This effort is to strengthen drift statements so that stronger enforcement actions can be taken.

The drift labeling will be for products used outside, including agricultural, industrial, home and garden. In the proposed labeling, the first sentence will state a prohibition against allowing drift from the application site to contact people and the specified sensitive areas. EPA is considering stating specific application conditions in the labeling statement and is working to determine the enforceability and practicality of these statements. The proposed labeling statements include specific limitations for application conditions, including maximum wind speed, application height and nozzle placement.

Some of the proposed label statements are:

"Do not allow spray (or dust) to drift from the application site and contact people, structures people occupy at any time and the associated property, parks and recreation areas, non-target crops, aquatic and wetland areas, woodlands, pastures, rangelands or animals."

"The applicator also must use all other measures necessary to control drift."

For products applied as sprays (except home and garden products):

"For ground boom applications, apply with nozzle height no more than 4 feet above the ground or crop canopy and when wind speed is 10 mph or less at the application site as measured by an anemometer. Use (registrant to fill in blank with spray quality, e.g. fine or medium) or coarser spray according to ASAE 572 definition for standard nozzles or VMD for spinning atomizer nozzles."

"For orchard/vineyard airblast applications, do not direct spray above trees/vines and turn off outward pointing nozzles at row ends and outer rows. Apply only when wind speed is 3 - 10 mph at the application site as measured by an anemometer outside of the orchard/vineyard on the upwind side."

For products applied as dusts (except home and garden products):

"For ground rig applications, apply product no more than 4 feet above the ground or the crop canopy and only when wind speed is 10 mph or less at the application site as measured by an anemometer."

"For orchard/vineyard ground applications, do not direct dust above trees/vines and shut off application at row ends and toward outer rows. Apply only when wind speed is 3-10 mph at the application site as measured by an anemometer outside of the orchard/vineyard on the upwind side."

Hand-applied products (including home and garden products):

"Do not allow spray (or dust) to drift from the application site and contact people, structures people occupy at any time and the associated property, parks and recreation areas, nontarget crops, aquatic and wetland areas, woodlands, pastures, rangelands or animals. Apply only when wind speed is not more than 10 mph. For sprays, apply largest size droplets possible."

No-spray zone:

EPA will determine products that require a no-spray zone through the human health and environmental risk assessment. Drift from the products may have adverse effects to humans, plants and wildlife or contamination of surface water. The proposed label for no-spray zone product is: "Do not apply this product within ____ (distance to be determined) of ____ (sensitive areas to be determined for the product). Under no

circumstances apply this product within ____ (distance to be determined) of people or these areas."

To submit comments about the PR-Notice, visit <http://www.epa.gov/fedrgstr/EPA-PEST/2001/August/Day-22/p20798.htm> This document contains addresses for submitting questions as well as specific issues EPA would like addressed in comments regarding the proposed labeling.

Thiophanate-Methyl Risk Assessments

Usage of the fungicide, thiophanate-methyl (TPM) is expected to increase as DuPont cancelled registration for the fungicide benomyl. The trade name for benomyl was Benlate, which was used on a variety of food crops. This increased use of TPM may further threaten the product as it proceeds through the re-registration process under FQPA (Food Quality Protection Act).

EPA recently released a revised preliminary risk assessment for TPM. TPM is classified as a "likely carcinogen," and along with its major metabolite, carbendazim (MBC), has raised a variety of initial concerns.

TPM is a general-use fungicide with a wide range of applications. In addition to its uses for food and feed crops, TPM is registered for residential and turf applications. The largest uses of TPM are soybeans, sugar beets and wheat.

- A synopsis of the aggregated risk assessment findings for TPM is:
- The acute aggregate risk exceeds EPA's level of concern for infants, children and females age 13-to-50 exposed through diet and drinking water.
- The short- and intermediate-term aggregate risk were not estimated because many of the non-occupational exposures for both residential handlers and post-application activities already exceed the agency's level of concern.
- The chronic aggregate risk exceeds EPA's level of concern for children and females age 13 to 50 because of concerns raised by surface water screening-level estimates of TPM and MBC.
- The cancer aggregate risk of the lifetime exposure risk when factoring in dietary and selected residential uses exceeds EPA's level of concern.

TPM may be in jeopardy, reducing the available arsenal of more broad-spectrum fungicides. The notice of thiophanate-methyl is available at <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/reregistration/tm/> Comments must be received on or before October 9, 2001. (Source: *Pesticide & Toxic Chemical News*, August 13, 2001)

Pesticide Security is Important

In the weeks following September 11, agriculture aerial applications were grounded after the FBI discovered that terrorists involved in the hijacking had also visited small, rural airfields to obtain information on crop dusting airplanes and equipment. Security experts were concerned the equipment could be misused for releasing biological or chemical agents, according to news reports. Any suspicious people or activities should be reported to authorities.

Taking measures to keep pesticides secure to avoid misuse or vandalism takes on new meaning in light of these events. The following security measures should be taken with pesticides at anytime:

- Pesticides should be stored in a locked building or cabinet that can't be accessed by children or people not associated with the farm. This also extends to commercial agriculture businesses.
- Vehicles used to transport or apply pesticides should be kept locked.
- Sprayer tanks should be empty when left unattended in a field or barnyard area. In previous years, vandals have targeted pesticides left in sprayer tanks overnight in parking lots and open areas.

Spraying of pesticides according to the label is not the security issue. Only the licensed applicator or supervised employees and family members should use pesticides. The concern is theft or vandalism of pesticides and applicator equipment. Keeping pesticides secured is important on the farm or in the commercial agriculture business.

Also keep in mind that certain fertilizers can be used for bombs. Any large purchases or inquiries about obtaining fertilizer that are suspicious should also be reported to authorities.

Upcoming Events

January 8, 2002 - PAT New Agent Inservice

January 9-10, 2002 - PAT Agent Inservice, Holiday Inn on the Lane, Columbus

Recertification Schools

Cleveland Holiday Inn/Independence Conference Center

Agriculture - November 19, 2001

Urban & Public Operators - November 20, 2001

Dayton Dayton Convention Center

Urban & Public Operators - December 13, 2001

Agriculture - December 14, 2001

Perrysburg Holiday Inn French Quarters

Urban & Public Operators - January 16, 2002

Agriculture - January 17, 2002

Columbus Columbus Convention Center

Urban & Public Operators - January 30, 2002

Agriculture - January 31, 2002