

# WINDOW ON AGRICULTURE

## Office of the Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner

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Marilyn Vernon and Suzanne Ostrom

### A BUSY START FOR 2003

January and February have been busy. Biologists have been in the field performing application, fieldworker safety inspections, and headquarter record inspections. During January and February 44 application inspections, 3 fieldworker inspections, and 40 headquarter inspections were performed.

Our biologists routinely drive around the county and perform safety inspections on pesticide applicators and fieldworkers. These inspections verify the applicator is applying the pesticide safely, wearing the required protective equipment, and following all applicable laws and regulations. These inspections also ensure fieldworkers are provided with soap, water, and towels to wash after working in the field, and are aware of what actions to take if they become ill due to pesticide exposure.

### PLASTIC CONTAINER RECYCLE DAYS ARE COMING UP

The Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner's Office will hold it's annual spring plastic pesticide container recycle days in May this year.

#### Where and When?

**Sonoma** at the Corporation Yard located at 19722 Eighth Street East, **Tuesday, May 6, 2003**, from 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**Healdsburg** at the Transfer Station on Alexander Valley Road, **Wednesday, May 7, 2003**, from 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

This event is open to growers, nurseries, pest control businesses, golf courses, parks, and government agencies. Plastic containers ranging in size from 1 pint to 55 gallons will be accepted.

Containers must be:

- Triple rinsed, punctured and dry
- The plastic lids must be removed
- All label booklets and plastic sleeves must be removed from containers before recycling, all glued labels are ok
- If possible; No cardboard boxes
- **PLEASE- No PVC pipe, plastic tubing, or containers that have held motor oil**
- For up-to-date information on container recycling go to [www.acrecycle.org](http://www.acrecycle.org)

The Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner's Office, the Sonoma County Integrated Waste Division and Western Ag Plastic Recycle sponsor this event. For additional information call Pete Albers at 565-2371.

### CLOPYRALID AND COMPOST

On April 3, 2003 the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (CDPR) announced new pesticide restrictions to protect commercial compost from potential contamination.

## Clopyralid and Compost Continued

CDPR will restrict sales of the herbicide Clopyralid ("clo-PEER-ah-lid") to lawn and turf professionals, instruct those licensees to assure that green waste stays onsite when the herbicide is used, and require dealers to provide written notice of the restrictions when they sell some Clopyralid products. CDPR will immediately begin drafting regulations to enforce those restrictions; based on concern that Clopyralid residue in grass clippings could make compost toxic to non-target vegetation.

CDPR expects its restrictions to affect about 15 clopyralid products used in parks, playing fields, and cemeteries. Golf courses were exempted after CDPR determined that grass cycling onsite is a standard industry practice, and Clopyralid product labels prohibit use on tees and greens. Clopyralid products labeled for farm, rangeland, and forest use are not affected. CDPR took initial action on residential uses in March 2002.

Used to control broadleaf weeds, Clopyralid is a low-toxicity chemical that poses little hazard to people, animals, and most vegetation. However, even low levels of Clopyralid in compost may damage some plants. Some commercial compost facilities in California have detected Clopyralid residues, but no cases of non-target vegetative damage have been documented in the state.

## NEW GROUND WATER PROTECTION REGULATIONS PROPOSED

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation (CDPR) has given notice of proposed changes to regulations protecting ground water.

The proposed regulatory action pertains to ground water protection and would replace the current "Pesticide Management Zones" (PMZs) with a new system that identifies areas susceptible to ground water contamination based on soil type and depth to ground water. This new

system would identify two types of areas, leaching areas and runoff areas. Within these areas specific mitigation measures would be required when using certain pesticides that have been found to have the potential to contaminate ground water. Also included in the proposed regulation changes is a regulation that would establish wellhead protection requirements. The wellhead protection requirements would prohibit certain activities within 100 feet of a well unless the well was specifically protected from contamination. The activities that would be prohibited include: application of certain herbicides, storage of pesticides, mixing or loading of pesticides, and rinsing of pesticide equipment or containers. These new requirements will likely affect many growers in Sonoma County.

The Notice of Proposed Action and proposed text can be found on CDPR's website at: <http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/legbills/groundwaternotice.pdf> any interested person can submit comments about the proposed regulation changes to CDPR. Comments can be made through the CDPR website, by mail or by fax. Comments must be received by 5 p.m. on June 3, 2003.

Comments should be made to:  
Mark Pepple, Senior Environmental Research Scientist  
Department of Pesticide Regulation  
Environmental Monitoring Branch  
P.O. Box 4015  
Sacramento, California 95812-4015  
(916) 324-4086  
(916) 324-1452 (fax)  
E-mail: [dpr03001@cdpr.ca.gov](mailto:dpr03001@cdpr.ca.gov)