



Action Plan on Urban Use Pesticides



Pest Management Regulatory Agency
Agence de réglementation de la lutte antiparasitaire

Canada 

The Action Plan on Urban Use Pesticides

Recent public concern over the use of pesticides in the urban setting has emphasized the need to take action. The federal government, the provinces and territories have developed an Action Plan to help Canadians reduce their reliance on pesticides in the urban setting. The key is to be aware of the many alternative ecological solutions that are available and adapt them to the urban environment. PMRA, the provinces and the territories have established a Working Group through the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Committee on Pest Management and Pesticides to implement this Action Plan.

The Action Plan includes a Healthy Lawns Strategy that will help reduce Canadians' reliance on pesticide use for lawn care. Based on Integrated Pest Management principles (IPM), the Healthy Lawns Strategy will place particular emphasis on pest prevention, the use of reduced risk products and the application of pesticides only when necessary. Integrated Pest Management or IPM is an approach to pest control that utilizes pest prevention as a primary tactic. Initiatives under this strategy will include the development of education materials and programs on healthy lawn practices, including a "Healthy Lawns" web site.

The Action Plan for Urban Use Pesticides also includes priority re-evaluations, to be carried out by the PMRA, of the most common chemicals in lawn care pesticides. The intent of these re-evaluations is to aggressively apply the most modern risk assessment principles, including additional safety factors to protect children, to products used in the urban setting. A re-evaluation involves a comprehensive review of the scientific data available on the pesticide to determine whether any further restrictions need to be made to its conditions of registration.

The Action Plan on Urban Use Pesticides will focus initially on the outdoor use of pesticides and is based on the following three key elements:

1. Healthy Lawns Strategy for Urban Pesticide Risk Reduction

The objective of the Healthy Lawns strategy is to reduce reliance on pesticide use for lawn care through the application of IPM principles, with particular emphasis on pest prevention, use of reduced risk products and application of pesticides only when necessary.

2. Registration of New Reduced Risk Products

PMRA will continue to facilitate access to reduced risk products through harmonization activities including priority joint review of reduced risk chemical pesticides and biopesticides.

3. Product Re-evaluation

The re-evaluations of the seven most common active ingredients used in lawn care products are targeted to be completed in 2001. Changes to registration or withdrawals of lawn care products resulting from these re-evaluations will be implemented in the same time frame in Canada as those made in the U.S. All the organophosphate insecticides used in homes, home gardens and public buildings such as schools are targeted to have the re-evaluation completed in 2002. This includes insect control in home gardens and on ornamental plants; insect control in homes and public buildings.

As per current PMRA standards, the re-evaluation of all of these lawn care products will target child specific exposure and will incorporate additional safety factors and aggregate exposure, similar to the EPA. Incorporation of cumulative risk assessment will be synchronized with the EPA as methodology for doing so is completed.

Scope of the Action Plan

The Action Plan focuses on urban use of herbicides and insecticides for lawn care as a priority for 2001.

Other indoor and outdoor urban uses of organophosphorous insecticides are targeted as a priority for 2002.

Details of the Action Plan

1. Healthy Lawns Strategy for Urban Pesticide Risk Reduction

Objective

- To reduce reliance on pesticide use for lawn care through the application of Integrated Pest Management principles, with particular emphasis on pest prevention, use of reduced risk products and application of pesticides only when necessary.

The PMRA, the provinces and the territories will achieve this by:

- assessing which type of products should be available to homeowners;
- narrowing the existing domestic category and establishing a new category for products for more controlled domestic use;
- improving product labelling so that the use of lawn care pest control products is compatible with enhanced risk reduction practices;
- developing training materials and programs:
 - to educate homeowners on healthy lawn practices which minimize the need for pesticides,
 - for vendors of domestic products,
 - to facilitate adoption of healthy lawn practices by working with organizations to enhance the training of lawn care and landscape service providers and green space managers;
- establishing a “Healthy Lawns” web site to disseminate information on healthy lawn practices, to receive input from stakeholders on the development of risk reduction programs, and to report on training programs and progress.

Considerations

- The five main target groups are homeowners, lawn and landscape service providers, municipal parks managers, golf course managers and grounds keepers of school playing fields. A key early step will be development of a mechanism to provide information to these groups on “Healthy Lawns” practices.
- To be effective, changes in product classification, labelling, use and registration at the federal level will need to be reflected in and complemented by provincial and territorial training and certification programs. Recognizing the role of the provinces and territories in training and certification, and recognizing the potential for regional differences and solutions, it will be critical to work closely and continuously with provinces and territories, as well as stakeholders, in order to develop and implement these programs.

2. New Reduced Risk Products

PMRA has developed a number of approaches through harmonization activities to facilitate access to reduced risk products including the establishment of joint review programs with the U.S. for both reduced risk chemical pesticides and biopesticides. PMRA encourages companies to submit jointly to the U.S. and Canada in order to take advantage of the priority review status available through these joint review programs.

- PMRA has harmonized most data requirements and test protocols with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for a number of types of pesticides including biopesticides.
- Both the U.S. and Canada now accept a common international format for submissions for chemical pesticides.
- A Program of Joint Review for Reduced Risk Chemicals is in place with U.S. EPA, with a priority review of one year.
- A Program for Joint Review for Biopesticides (Microbials and Pheromones) is in place with U.S. EPA, with a priority review of one year.
- PMRA will continue to build on existing priority review processes for reduced risk products and look for additional ways to encourage development and submission of reduced risk pesticides.

3. Product Re-evaluation

Re-evaluation involves a comprehensive review of the scientific data available on each pesticide using modern scientific standards to determine whether any restrictions need to be made to its conditions of registration. Although re-evaluations have been underway over the years for many products, the PMRA is undertaking a priority re-evaluation of the lawn and turf uses of the insecticides diazinon, carbaryl, and malathion and the herbicides 2,4-D, mecoprop, dicamba and MCPA. The result is that the most recent additional risk assessment factors will be applied to the products most likely to be used in the urban setting. The re-evaluation of chlorpyrifos has already been completed and there will be restrictions on its urban uses that are identical to those recently implemented in the U.S.

The PMRA will complete the re-evaluations of the seven products most frequently used for lawn care in 2001. As per current PMRA standards, the re-evaluation of all of these lawn care products will target child specific exposure and will incorporate additional safety factors and aggregate exposure, similar to the U.S. EPA. Incorporation of cumulative risk assessment will be synchronized with the U.S. EPA as methodology for doing so is completed.

- The modernized databases which include studies on carcinogenicity, teratogenicity, neurotoxicity and reproductive toxicity and recent reviews by other regulatory agencies will provide the basis for the PMRA to re-evaluate these chemicals and update the registration status and conditions.
- The PMRA is currently re-evaluating the organophosphate insecticides (including diazinon, malathion) and the herbicides 2,4-D and MCPA.
- The PMRA will immediately initiate a re-evaluation focussed on lawn care uses for carbaryl, mecoprop and dicamba.

The PMRA will ask companies to coordinate any voluntary requests to withdraw registrations or restrict uses for lawn care products they make in the U.S. with Canada.

- Companies are making a number of voluntary changes to U.S. product registrations in response to U.S. re-evaluation activities. In some cases these changes are being made before the re-evaluation process is completed.
- To date, those changes have not usually been requested for Canadian products at the same time. The PMRA is asking companies to do so.

The PMRA will continue harmonization of the re-evaluation of all organophosphate insecticides with U.S. EPA

- Other indoor and outdoor urban uses of all the organophosphate insecticides are targeted to have the re-evaluation completed in 2002 and any necessary use restrictions to be implemented. These uses include insect control in home gardens and on ornamental plants and insect control in homes and public buildings (e.g., cockroach control in homes and schools, flea control on pets and in homes).