# *PESTICIDE USE, STORAGE AND INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT IN AND AROUND STATE-OWNED BUILDINGS AND PUBLIC K-12 SCHOOL BUILDINGS*

## A REPORT TO THE MN LEGISLATURE
## JANUARY 15, 2001

## PREPARED BY

## THE MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

**LEGISLATION:**

**MN Statute 121A.30 (Chapter 489 - H.F. No. 3800), Article 7**
**KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 12 EDUCATION NUTRITION AND OTHER PROGRAMS; FUND TRANSFERS Sec. 11.**

**[PESTICIDE REPORTING.]**

(a) The commissioner of agriculture, in cooperation with the University of Minnesota extension service; the commissioners of administration; children, families, and learning; health; transportation; natural resources; and the pollution control agency; and other interested parties, must review the use of pesticide and integrated pest management techniques and practices as they are applied to the use and storage of pesticides in and around a representative sample of buildings owned by the state and buildings and grounds used for kindergarten through grade 12 public education. Recommendations by the commissioner of agriculture on the use and avoidance of pesticides and comprehensive integrated pest management practices in state buildings and kindergarten through grade 12 public school buildings, including the training of building managers and school personnel, must be presented to the environmental policy and finance committees of the legislature by January 15, 2001.

(b) For purposes of the review and report in paragraph (a), the term "pesticide" has the meaning given in Minnesota Statutes, section 18B.01, subdivision 18, except that it does not include disinfectants, sanitizers, deodorizers, or antimicrobial agents for general cleaning purposes.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Purpose of Assessment

Legislation passed during the 2000 session, MN Statute 121A.30 (Chapter 489 - H.F. No. 3800), Article 7, Sec. 11. [PESTICIDE REPORTING], directed the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) to conduct a "Pesticide Use, Storage and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Assessment" project involving K-12 public schools and state-owned buildings and issue a report to the Environmental Policy and Finance Committees by January 15th, 2001.

### Methodology

In order to determine the current status of pesticide use, storage, and IPM techniques in K-12 public schools and state-owned buildings in Minnesota, the MDA constructed an instrument with which to conduct actual on-site, walk through assessments. Eleven Agricultural Chemical Investigators (ACI) from the MDA administered the assessment to the participating public schools and state-owned buildings. Each ACI was assigned a minimum of two sites based on their respective geographic work areas. The sites included twenty schools (nine elementary, two with both elementary and high schools, and nine high schools) and were located in Southeast, South Central, Southwest, Minneapolis/St. Paul Metro, Central, West Central, North Central, and Northwest Minnesota. Six of the sites included urban area schools located in Minneapolis/St. Paul, Rochester, and the St. Cloud area. In addition, four state-owned sites were selected. Participation was voluntary and assessments were conducted during October/November 2000.

The MDA compiled and analyzed the assessment data, and then distributed the data, along with draft findings and conclusions, for comment among the agencies and other interested persons listed in the law. A public meeting was held on January 4, 2001 to gather comments and/or suggestions from interested persons about the data, findings, and conclusions. In addition, those attending the meeting received a copy of MDA's draft recommendations. While no formal comments were offered or testimony given, a general discussion was held regarding the data, findings, and conclusions, and the MDA's draft recommendations.

### Findings

For the public school buildings assessed some of the findings included:

- Ninety five percent of all facilities assessed had a designated person assigned to coordinate pest management activities.
- Forty percent of all facilities assessed had a written pesticide use policy on how and when to apply pesticides in the building.

- Schools ranked health concerns followed by the environment and effectiveness of control as the most important factors in determining selection of pest management methods.
- Most schools were doing an adequate job of keeping the buildings and grounds maintained and most are aware of the pest problems in and around their schools.
- Application of pesticides was split 55%/45% between maintenance staff and contractors. Almost all contractors were licensed and trained, while less than 40% of maintenance staff were licensed or trained.
- Pesticide applications were made during non-business hours 80% of the time.
- Physical exclusion of children/staff/visitors from treatment areas was practiced about 50% of the time, followed by oral notification or posting 18% and 14% of the time, respectively.

- The time between an application and re-entry into treated areas ranged from 1-2 days for 84% of the sites.
- Contractors provided pesticide application records 70% of the time to on-site personnel immediately after the application or sometime later.
- To the extent that the MDA was able to determine, pesticide application frequency, pesticides used, and areas/pests treated were in compliance with M.S. 18B and the FQPA (FIFRA), 1996.
- 55% of the schools received questions about pesticide use.

For the state-owned buildings assessed some of the findings included:

- Seventy five percent of all facilities had a designated person assigned to coordinate pest management activities.
- Twenty five percent of all facilities had a written pesticide use policy on how and when to apply pesticides in the building.
- State-owned buildings ranked the environment followed by health concerns and effectiveness of control as the most important factors in determining the selection of pest management methods.
- State-owned buildings were doing an adequate job of keeping the buildings and grounds maintained and most are aware of the pest problems in and around the buildings.
- Application of pesticides was split 75%/25% between maintenance staff and contractors. All contractors were licensed and trained, while less than 50% of maintenance staff were licensed or trained.
- Pesticide applications were made during business hours 100% of the time.
- Fifty seven percent of the sites used posting and 43% used oral notification to inform persons about pesticide applications.
- The time between an application and re-entry into treated areas ranged from one day for two of the sites, two days for one of the sites, and two hours for one site.
- Contractors provided pesticide application records 100% of the time to on-site personnel immediately after the application or sometime later.
- To the extent that the MDA was able to determine, pesticide application frequency, pesticides used, and areas/pests treated were in compliance with M.S. 18B and the FQPA (FIFRA), 1996.
- Twenty five percent of the state-owned buildings received questions about pesticide use.

**Conclusions and General Recommendations**

Providing information and/or training to site personnel would provide them with the basic tools for understanding pests and pest management. The MDA maintains that it is important for sites where pesticides are used to educate on-site designated personnel regarding pesticide use and storage and integrated pest management techniques.

There was a high use of commercial pesticide applicators to perform pest management activities indoors. The MDA believes that awareness of proper and safe pesticide use and pest management practices could be improved through access by designated personnel to timely pest management information. Personnel who are provided with appropriate information should be better able to communicate with hired commercial pesticide applicator(s) and/or structural pest control companies regarding recommended or required pest management activities.