

FOR SAFETY'S SAKE

# Store pesticides properly

by Neil Ogg

Proper storage of pesticides and pesticide containers is considered by federal law to be part of the total picture of pesticide use by golf course superintendents and others.

State regulations concerning pesticide storage primarily address pesticide dealers, and the federal law dealing with pesticide storage makes recommendations only — but if a pesticide label bears specific storage statements, these must be followed. Superintendents' attention should then be directed at state pesticide storage regulations for pesticide dealers and those federal EPA recommendations for pesticide storage as guidelines for the best storage procedures.

For example, South Carolina's pesticide storage regulations call for storage in well-ventilated rooms, well away from food. Pesticides should be segregated according to type. Herbicides, insecticides, and fungicides should be separated in the storage facility to prevent cross-contamination.

All pesticides should remain in their original containers. If an original container leaks, the pesticide may be stored in a container which held the same pesticide and still bears the appropriate label. In a situation involving dry formulations of a pesticide in a damaged box or bag, the box or bag should be placed in a sound container that can be sealed. Pesticides should be stored 25 feet from food which may absorb odors from the pesticides. (Examples of absorbent food are bread, pastries, cheese.) All pesticides should be stored a minimum of 4 feet from canned foods.

Federal recommendations deal only with the moderately toxic and

highly toxic pesticides; these bear the human hazard signal words WARNING and DANGER, respectively. These storage recommendations do not apply to CAUTION-labeled pesticides, which may be stored securely as one would any slightly toxic compound. Namely, storage should prevent access by persons not fully responsible for their actions (such as children) with due consideration for nonreaders. Storage sites should be located where flooding is unlikely.

Pesticides should be stored in a dry, well-ventilated separate room where fire protection is provided. A storage facility should be kept locked to prevent unauthorized entry. Identification signs should be placed on rooms, buildings, etc., to warn of their hazardous contents.

Pesticide containers should be stored with the label visible. Pesticides should be stored off the ground

in an orderly way to permit ready access and inspection. A complete inventory containing the number and identity of containers in each storage place should be kept.

Containers should be checked regularly for leaks. Materials such as absorptive clays, hydrated lime, and sodium hypochlorite should be kept on hand for detoxification of spills or leaks.

Do not drink, eat, smoke, or use tobacco in areas where pesticides are stored. Wear rubber gloves while handling containers. Do not put fingers in mouth or rub eyes while working. Wash hands before eating, drinking, smoking, or using toilet and immediately after loading or transferring pesticides. Persons working with carbamates or organophosphates should have periodic physical examinations, including cholinesterase tests. □



*How the professionals do it: The pesticide distributors warehouse above gives golf course superintendents an example to follow. Pesticides are stored neatly in their original containers, with all labels easily visible.*