Wintertime Safety Check

Spray Rigs:

Being familiar with the following storage techniques will help assure that your spray equipment will be in good shape next spring:

- Select a ground site where harmful residues will not affect land use, either at cleaning location or by run-off.
- Flush and drain pump, then fill with permanent anti-freeze and plug to keep filled. (Follow storage directions recommended by pump manufacturer.)
- Flush and drain all parts (tank, lines, nozzles) with solution recommended by your county agent, depending upon the last-used pesticide substance.
- Rinse thoroughly with water to remove cleaning solution.
- Hang hoses until drained dry. Coil neatly and place on flat surface (no NOT hang) in dark, cool area.
- Drain tanks and leave vented until dry; close.
- Inspect nozzles, then store according to size. Store metal nozzles in clean, light oil. Discard worn nozzles.
- Support boom so it won’t be damaged by other machinery. Don’t leave aluminum boom material in contact with soil or manure accumulations.

Pesticide Storage:

Bedding down your pesticide supply for that “long winter’s nap” requires adhering to a number of safety guidelines. To do the job safely and wisely, follow these pointers from experts:

- Store all pesticides in original containers, following storage directions on labels. If labels are hard to read, request new ones from your dealer; if they are missing, dispose of the chemical.
- Don’t allow pesticides to freeze, as they may “salt out” and become useless. Also, don’t store liquid chemicals in glass containers in unheated rooms, as the container may break if the liquid freezes.
- Store all dry material on shelves off the floor so they won’t become moist and “cake.”
- Store pesticides away from areas where fires may be present.
- Keep pesticides stored under lock and key, out of reach of children, irresponsible adults or pets. Storage area should be marked as such to warn firemen in case of fires.
- Store herbicides and insecticides separately so they can be easily distinguished from each other.
- Check containers for cracks and make certain containers are sealed tightly before storing.
- Analyze your pesticide supply and think about what you’ll need for next year’s planting.

Following are tips on safe disposal of waste pesticides:

- Drain remaining pesticides into an 18-inch hole dug in sandy soil, preferably. Be sure the area is away from wells, buildings, streams, crops and livestock. Follow label instructions for reducing poisonous effect of the pesticide.
- Rinse glass or smaller metal containers several times, then store in a locked area until they can be disposed of safely.
- Large metal drums can be properly disposed of by returning them to the supplier or selling them to a cooperage firm equipped to handle toxic materials. Empty containers can also be safely disposed of locally at public dumps. However, first notify the person in charge so that he can take any necessary precautions.

If suitable public disposal facilities are not available, select an area away from homes, crops and streams that will be used specifically for pesticide and container disposal.
- Burn combustible containers, but be sure the smoke won’t drift over nearby homes, people or livestock.
- Metal and glass containers may be decontaminated by burning. Remove lids and punch holes in metal containers before burning.
- Do NOT burn weed containers. They will volatilize and produce dangerous vapors that may explode. Instead, bury them, using the same precautions as with liquids.