

The EEC, new directives on pesticides, the handling of loads – and how all this affects **YOU**

In addition to the changes within the UK on pesticides reviews, registrations and withdrawals – expected in 1992 – there are also some changes expected as a result of EEC Directives. The Pesticides Directive is expected to be available in the spring and will contain the expected list of substances permitted – and not permitted – to be sold and used within EEC Member States. The EEC will also be conducting reviews of pesticides in addition to the individual reviews of Member States. It seems very likely that the decisions of the EEC Parliament regarding pesticides reviews will be imposed upon Member States.

Nobody is sure just how this will work in practice, but it is possible that the EEC might overturn a UK decision following our own review of a substance. The new Directive on personal protective equipment will have far reaching consequences for those not supplying the correct equipment for the job, and it must be understood that PERSONAL means just what it says. The new standards of quality – the CE mark – will also apply from 1992 and purchasers of protective equipment should specify that the garment will comply with EEC standards.

EEC and the manual handling of loads

The Health and Safety Commission has issued a Consultative Document entitled 'Manual Handling of Loads, Proposals for Regulation and Guidance'. This has appeared in response to EEC Directive 90/269/EEC 'on the minimum health and safety requirements for the manual handling of loads where there is a risk, particularly of back injury, to workers'.

The document states that more than a quarter of the accidents reported each year are due to the manual handling of loads. In addition

Thou shalt not...

An update on recent and forthcoming directives,
by JON ALLBUTT



there is an unquantifiable number of cumulative, unreported injuries that result in some form of disability and sometimes permanent disablement.

As with all the modern workplace legislation recently introduced, these draft proposals will require employers to assess the risks to staff when manually handling loads. The hierarchy of decision making steps proposed is similar to that used in COSHH Regulations:

- Avoid hazardous manual handling operations where possible.

- Assess any hazardous operations that cannot be avoided.

- Remove or reduce the risk of injury, using the assessment as a basis for action.

The requirement under the existing Health and Safety at Work Act to establish 'safe systems of working' forms an important part of this process.

The emphasis is on the controlling of manual handling (which may cause) injury and not on the weight of the load. In fact the proposed Regulations state:

- 'Each employer shall so far as is reasonably practicable, avoid the need for his employees to undertake manual handling operations which involve a risk of their being injured; or where it is not reasonably practicable to avoid the need for his employees to undertake manual handling operations which involve a risk of their being injured; make a suitable and sufficient assessment of all such manual handling operations to be undertaken by them. (b) To take appropriate steps to reduce the risk... (c) To provide information and training on the manual handling of specific loads at work...'

It is quite clear that many of the old ways of man-handling work and the acceptance of the fact that we all have a bad back must change – and about time too!

One of the more obvious ways of reducing the strain and 'exposure' to back injury is to have mechanical equipment such as fork-lift trucks or similar, for tractors. If fork-lift trucks are purchased, separate regulations apply and a Certificate of Competence is required.

Comments on this important document are required by March 9th 1992. Copies can be obtained free from: Sir Robert Jones Memorial Workshops, Units 3 and 5-9, Grain Industrial Estate, Harlow Street, Liverpool L8 4UH.

Intensive week of training will bring greenkeepers up to date with pesticide regulations

Association moves quickly to boost pesticide certification

Recent seminars and conferences, together with the Management Training Programmes held recently at Aldwark Manor, have revealed some interesting training needs. The very low number of head greenkeepers and course managers who have pesticides certificates of competence (PA2A) is worrying. Equally, it is worth noting that a full certificate (PA1 & PA2A) is ten credits toward Master Greenkeeper status. Some have openly confessed to hiding behind the so-called 'grandfather' clause and this mistaken belief – that experience is an excuse for competence – needs clarification.

Regulations state quite clearly that 'all who use pesticides' will be competent to perform their duties. To be competent the operator of a pesticides applicator must be fully familiar

with the Regulations and the Code of Practice.

It is not possible to be up to the new standards of competence without attending the Foundation Module and the Ground Crop Sprayer Course. Since a certificate is required to supervise a non-certified operator (and it must be understood that to supervise means to keep the operator *within sight* at all times during the operation), how can a greenkeeper be expected to do his job to a good professional standard? If we are to raise and maintain high standards, the full certificate of competence to apply pesticides must be one of the basic qualifications to be a course manager.

One thing is certain, we cannot rely on the 'grandfather' clause as it seems likely that it will be removed as an option in the near future.

To meet this obvious need, David Golding is arranging a special one week course at Aldwark Manor, March 16th-20th inclusive. The total cost of the course will be £495 (inclusive of VAT). This includes accommodation, meals, training and examination fees. This will be an intensive week of training and testing for experienced greenkeepers. Jon Allbutt will be taking the pesticides section and arrangements will be made through the County Proficiency Test Committee to have testing carried out at the end of the course. It is also possible to take the test back at your own course by arrangement with the local Test Committee. Further details: Telephone David Golding on 03473-581.

- From Head Greenkeeper to Course Manager – turn to Page 9.