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PROPER CLEANING AND STORAGE OF SPRAYING EQUIPMENT

by Stanley Rachesky
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It's getting about that time of the year, in certain areas of the country, to hang up some of your spray equipment till next spring. Many golf courses engage in weed control and the application of other pesticides as well as insecticides. Ask yourself this question, "Did you store your spraying equipment properly?" If you didn't, you can bet your bottom dollar it's going to cost you money next spring.

The following steps should be taken to properly clean and store your equipment:

1. **Empty spray materials** after each use. Excess spray material should be disposed of in a safe area where contamination of water, children or animals will not occur.

2. **Flush out** all parts of the equipment with clean, clear water to prevent clogging.

3. **Clean with detergent and water.** Circulate this through all the hoses and nozzles.

If the chemical is water soluble this flushing and rinsing will be sufficient. If phenoxy herbicides such as 2,4-D or 2,4,5-T or brushkillers have been used, then a rinse with household ammonia or charcoal must follow.

Ammonia rinse — Fill your equipment 1/3 to 1/2 full with a solution of one ounce of household ammonia per gallon of water. Circulate a portion of this mixture through the hoses and nozzles. Allow the remainder of the solution to stand overnight then run it through the nozzles. Rinse thoroughly with clean, clear water.

Charcoal rinse — Fill your piece of equipment to

approximately 1/3 to 1/2 full of water. Use about one ounce of activated charcoal and one ounce of soap powder to three gallons of water. Agitate this mixture vigorously to distribute the charcoal in the water. Pump some of this solution through the hoses and nozzles. Then drain and rinse the equipment with clean water.

4. **Drain the equipment thoroughly.**

5. **Clean all parts thoroughly.** Nozzles should be broken down and the screens cleaned. The parts can either be stored dry or in fuel oil.

6. **Using a rust-proofing material** such as oil or an automobile rust inhibitor coat the inside and exposed parts of the equipment.

7. **Store the equipment** where damage will not occur to it during the off season.

8. **All hoses should be removed,** wiped clean of oil and stored inside. They should also be stored neatly coiled in a large pail or placed neatly on a shelf. Do not bend or hang the hoses over a nail.

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