

EPA's Comments on Turf Use of MSMA

Editor's Note: The following excerpt is taken from the 70-page EPA Decision on Organic Arsenical Herbicides.

The full document is available from the URL address in Dr. Phil Busey's report also in this section. The FGCSA along with other turfgrass researchers and associations have sent comments to EPA regarding their decision. Be sure to inform your club officials if the loss of this product will affect your weed control program.

From the EPA Decision Document, page 41:

2. TURF

"Turf uses for the organic arsenical herbicides include grasses grown for seed, lawns, ornamental turf, sod farms, turfgrass and turf grown for sod. Many alternatives exist to control

weeds on turf including fluazifop and dithiopyr for postemergence control and dithiopyr or pendimethalin for preemergent control of crabgrass. The primary manner in which grass weeds such as crabgrass and dallisgrass can be effectively controlled is through the maintenance of a high quality turf such as is the case in almost all golf courses. However, when chemical control of weeds is needed, typically, two or more alternative chemicals would be required to achieve weed control comparable to the organic arsenicals. Preemergence products are typically highly effective at controlling crabgrass seedlings. However, the post emergent alternatives for the organic arsenical herbicides either control a narrow spectrum of weeds, or they are not effective on the more difficult grass weeds like dallisgrass (*Paspalum dilatatum*). Thus multiple herbicides used in combination can be considered a direct replacement. Alternatives vary in price from slightly

less expensive to considerably more expensive than the organic arsenicals.

"Because there are both chemical and non-chemical alternatives available and any additional costs of using the alternatives will be borne by those using and benefiting from the improved turf, EPA concludes that the benefits of organic arsenical herbicide use on turf are not compelling in light of the possible cancer risk to the general population from drinking water contamination due to the use of these compounds."

MSMA Declared Ineligible for Reregistration

By Philip Busey, Ph.D.

(via e-mail to turfgrass professionals)

On Wednesday, August 9, 2006 the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a reregistration decision that MSMA, DSMA, CAMA, and Cacodylic Acid (organic

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