

Report compares risks of granular pesticides to birds

The EPA has released a report comparing the **risk to birds posed by different granular pesticides** and announced a new approach to evaluate those posing the highest risk.

Dry granules pose a particular risk because they are consumed by birds as grit or with food elements.

Of the 99 compounds tested, 14 pose a high risk of killing birds, according to the "Comparative Analysis of Acute Avian Risk From Granular Pesticides."

The 14, all of which are carbamate or organophosphate insecticides, include aldicarb, bendiocarb, carbofuran, chlorpyrifos, diazinon, disulfoton, ethoprop, ethyl parathion, fenamiphos, fonofos, isofenphos, methomyl, phorate and terbufos.

All but one are registered for use on corn (the single largest use of granular pesticides) or turf.

EPA has already canceled diazinon for use on golf courses and sod farms and reached an agreement with the registrant of carbofuran to phase out more than 99 percent of its granular formulation by 1994.

Before taking additional regulatory action on any of the 14 chemicals, EPA will further evaluate their effects, along with other pest control alternatives, on both corn and turf.

Before beginning the reviews, EPA is allowing registrants of the 14 pesticides 90 days to propose voluntary risk reduction measures, such as lower application rates, fewer applications per year and better soil incorporation.

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As part of the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) procedures, EPA has transmitted a **list of pesticides that are banned in the United States** to the United Nations Environment Programme.

PIC is a voluntary U.N. information-sharing program to promote safe management of chemicals. Member countries can use the data to determine whether to allow, restrict or prohibit future imports of specific chemicals. As of February, **109 countries were participating in the program.**

EPA's submission contained 53 pesticide compounds and 13 additional pesticides for the 1A-Plus list, chemicals considered very toxic. The environmental agency will hold public meetings soon to explain PIC.

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EPA will not place used oil destined for disposal on its list of hazardous wastes under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.

Used oil destined for disposal is already subject to full regulation as hazardous waste under RCRA and other statutes if certain contaminants exceed regulatory levels. Used oil for recycling is exempt from most hazardous waste controls.

An EPA science panel has established a **significant new policy on assessing human health risks from environmental exposure to chemicals.**

Generally, risk assessments assume that any chemical causing tumors in test animals also may cause cancer in humans. However, a new report by the EPA Risk Assessment Forum recommends, for the first time, that agency risk assessors not use

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animal data under specific conditions for trying to predict whether certain chemicals may pose a cancer hazard for humans.

The report cites studies that found chemically induced kidney tumors in male rats. Certain of the tumors resulted from excessive accumulation in the kidney of alpha 2u-globulin, a protein, following exposure to high doses of chemi-

cals such as 1,4-dichlorobenzene, isophorone, d-limonene and 2,2,4-trimethylpentane.

The cancer does not occur in the female rat or any other animal species. Consequently, these findings are probably not relevant for trying to determine whether such compounds pose a human cancer risk, according to the report.

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Industrial releases of toxic chemicals into the nation's environment declined by 600 mil-

lion pounds, or 11 percent, from 1989 to 1990, according to the agency's 1990 Toxic Release Inventory. Total releases and transfers decreased 26 percent since 1988.

The top five states in total releases were, in order, Louisiana, Texas, Indiana, Tennessee and Ohio.

The top six industries for releases, also in order, were chemical manufacturing, primary metals, paper manufacturing, transportation, plastics and fabricated metals.



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