

# Pesticide Waste Collection To Include Turfgrass Industry

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The new year will bring many changes to hazardous waste collection in Wisconsin. Foremost is the opportunity for small businesses to use clean sweeps for waste disposal. The opportunity arose this past summer when Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Secretary George Meyer signed a guidance document governing NR 600 series rules (hazardous waste management).

Seeing this chance to help agricultural small businesses dispose of unwanted chemicals, DATCP's Bureau of Agrochemical Management began to prepare background policies and procedures for 1996. While final details are being worked out, agricultural small business, including the turfgrass industry, will be able to bring chemicals to 23 county sponsored Agricultural Clean Sweeps in 1996.

## What chemicals will the clean sweep collect?

The focus of this new program is unwanted pesticides. These are the chemicals that cause the greatest public concern. If we reduce the amount of

unwanted pesticides stored on business sites, we reduce the chances of ground water contamination, worker health threats and accidental releases.

## Is there a cost involved?

Yes, but to encourage small business participation, the Department will offer a 50 percent cost share on pesticide disposal and small businesses must pay the remaining balance. The fee that businesses pay will be based on the amount and type of chemicals brought to collection sites. Businesses may bring other chemicals such as solvents, cleaners, paints, and boiler treatments to collection sites, but the Department will not cost share these items.

## Which counties will be hosting a clean sweep?

Many of the counties that will be participating have already established times and dates. They include: Ashland, Bayfield, Buffalo, Burnet, Calumet, Clark, Columbia, Dodge, Door, Douglas, Iron, Manitowoc, Outagamie, Richland, Rock, Rusk, St.

Croix, Sauk, Trempealeau, Washburn, Washington, Waupaca, and Wood. If the county your business is located in does not appear on this list, you can bring your chemicals to a neighboring county, but residents of that county will be considered first for resources.

## How can we participate?

Green industry businesses will have to register with the county coordinator at least 14 days before the clean sweep. A certified check for the 50 percent cost-share fee will need to accompany the load. Times and dates of the 1996 county clean sweeps will be announced in February and March. For information on these times, contact your county agent or myself at (608) 845-6536.

Clean sweeps offer us, the professionals in the "Green Industry", the opportunity to prove to the Paul Harveys that we really care about what chemicals we use, and that we are conscientious about the environment. As an industry, we need to take this step to demonstrate our commitment to protecting the environment. ♣

