

FTC, EPA Crack Down on Misleading Product Claims

Cooperative efforts between the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are resulting in a crackdown on false or misleading advertising claims for turfgrass products.

The two agencies joined forces recently to develop advertising guidelines that take into consideration everything from product performance

claims to alleged environmental benefits imparted by the products. EPA is defining the guidelines and the FTC is enforcing them.

Already, the cooperative is producing results.

Orkin Exterminating Co. recently agreed in a government order to stop advertising that its pesticides were as safe as shaving cream and suntan lotion.

The settlement will halt brochures that advertised certain Orkin lawn-care products as "neither harmful to

you or your soil," and "practically non-toxic."

No fines or penalties were assessed, and Orkin does not admit to violating the law, according to the agreement.

For more information about the advertising claims guidelines, contact GCSAA's government relations program.

EPA Outlines Recall Proposal

Pesticide recall procedures under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) have been issued in an EPA proposed rule.

The proposed rule would establish procedures for voluntary and mandatory recalls, criteria for acceptable storage and disposal to be eligible for reimbursement of storage costs, and procedures for indemnification of owners of suspended and cancelled pesticides.

EPA Moves Ahead With Reduced Risk Policy

One of EPA's primary objectives this year is to launch a pilot reduced risk pesticide program through the Office of Pesticide Programs' registration division.

Larry Culleen, acting director of the division, says the goal is to accelerate the agency's review of applications for registration of pesticides that may pose a lower risk to public health and the environment than products currently on the market.

Under the pilot program, EPA would test how the agency would deal with risk issues. Several product registration applications accompanied by justification for reduced risk status already have been received, Culleen said.

He said EPA is not looking to issue a blanket set of criteria and warned that risk tradeoffs involved in registering the products will not be easy to evaluate. However, he added that it is critical to begin implementing the policy on a case-by-case basis.

A pesticide registration notice will be mailed to registrants soon.

EPA has refused to define the term "reduced risk."



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