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Phaseout of the no-residue, zero tolerance concept of certain pesticides continues by the Environmental Protection Agency. The latest herbicide to receive the ax is IPC for use in weed control for grasses grown for seed. Products containing IPC for this use are cancelled April 9. EPA has further cancelled and suspended all registrations for use of sodium cyanide, 1080 and strychnine for predator control. Structural or urban pest control with these compounds is not affected. Thallium sulfate as an economic poison has been cancelled or suspended. Shipment and sale of thallium as a rodenticide will halt.

Benlate benomyl fungicide became official in early March as an aid in the control of Dutch Elm Disease. The Environmental Protection Agency granted Federal registration for use of Benlate as a foliar spray and trunk injection. The product, manufactured by the Du Pont Company, is considered by many as an important step forward in DED control. EPA has a kicker on the label, however. Benlate must be used by trained arborists. At press time, only one state, Wisconsin, has scheduled training. Consult with your state Land Grant university for more details.

Aquatic plants may hold the answer to reducing mercury levels in contaminated lake sediments. Research conducted by Dennis R. Keeney, soil scientist at the University of Wisconsin has shown that inorganic mercury can be changed to organic forms by micro-organisms in sediments. Organic mercury has been found to be quite mobile in sediments and readily available for plant uptake. This means that rooted aquatic plants theoretically could remove quantities of mercury. At an appropriate time these plants could be harvested, thus reducing dangerous levels of mercury contamination. Only laboratory tests have been made at this time, but Keeney believes it offers potential for scientists to investigate.

Nearly 200 suggested amendments to the proposed Federal Environmental Pesticide Control Bill of 1971 swamped a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Agriculture during two days of hearings last month. One suggested amendment incorporated in the Committee's work draft would allow use of restricted pesticides under supervision of a certified applicator who does not have to be physically present at the time and place a material is applied. However, David D. Dominick, assistant administrator for categorical programs at EPA poured cold water on this measure by saying, "I recommend against language that would preclude the Administrator (of EPA) from requiring that a certified applicator has to be physically present at the time and place that a restricted pesticide is applied."

Environmentalists are lobbying to toughen a water pollution bill being drafted by the House Public Works Committee. Some environmentalists believe the measure is weaker than one passed by the Senate which would prohibit industrial discharges into waters by 1985.