## On the Safety and Health Act of 1970

Sen. Harrison A. Williams, Jr. (Dem.-N.J.) and Rep. William A. Steiger (Rep.-Wisc.) have stitched together a new green flag with a white cross. Called the Williams-Steiger Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, this flag is currently waving a Federal safety signal in every state of the nation.

The act authorizes the Department of Labor to set and enforce occupational safety and health standards for businesses engaged in interstate commerce. This includes farmers and small businessmen who employ help, even those with only one employee. Four sets of safety standards for agriculture are embodied by the law. Two specifications went into effect last August 27, one for the design, application and use of the slow moving vehicle emblem and the other for the construction and maintenance of temporary labor camps. Two additional standards involving the pulpwood timber industry and the use, handling and storage of anhydrous ammonia will become effective this February.

The teeth to this law are sharp. Admittedly, it places a burden on the employer to keep additional records detailing each occupational injury and illness on employees. Enforcement is through

safety inspectors. The law permits them to enter all business establishments, large or small, to inspect structures, equipment, materials and to question privately the employer or any employee. We would predict that businesses involved in the handling, distribution and application of crop and turf protection chemicals will be among the first to be visited by inspectors.

Violators will be issued written citations and given a reasonable time to correct the situation. Accurate records are required on work-related deaths, injuries and illnesses. Employers may also be required to maintain records of employee exposures to potentially toxic materials.

Whether the law is good or bad is not the issue. Safety must be the watchword in every operation we undertake. Safety like a clean environment is not to be practiced by a few. Rather, it is the responsibility of every individual-emplover and employee.

We in the green industry must adopt the green flag of safety as our standard. The Occupational Safety and Health Act only establishes Government's authority to insure safety. The real responsibility rests with each of us.



FYLKING U.S. Plant Patent 2887

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