

# Government News

Regulation of pesticides by the Environmental Protection Agency and, less directly, industry data supporting pesticide registrations and tolerances have been sharply criticized by a Senate subcommittee staff report, the result of an intensive study of the agency conducted last year.

An agency official said "it is probably the most devastating report to hit EPA since it was formed."

The draft report, "The Environmental Protection Agency and the Regulation of Pesticides," stated the inquiry has led to the "unfortunate but clear conclusion that pesticide regulation in the United States is fundamentally deficient."

The report continued:

"Pesticide regulation has failed to include many obvious, necessary and prudent steps that would have better protected the public health and the environment. Moreover, the failure of pesticide regulation is not attributable in any significant way to deficient legislation. Rather the cause lies clearly and unmistakably with the poor administration of the program by the EPA itself. In an almost classic example of poor Government regulation, the EPA's handling of pesticide registration has sacrificed effectiveness at the altar of bureaucratic neglect. For six years, EPA has paid too little attention to warnings of Government investigators, congressional reviews, and even some of its officials."

The staff concluded that a large part of the millions appropriated for pesticide regulation by EPA have been wasted.

EPA issued a USDA exemption to use dimethoate, Guthion, and malathion to control citrus blackfly in Florida's Broward, Dade, and Palm Beach Counties. Maximum allowed use is 45,000 gallons of 95 percent malathion; 1,000 pounds of dimethoate; and 450 pounds of Guthion. Application sites are limited to nursery stock, urban areas, and, if necessary, commercial citrus groves. The exemption expires October 1, 1977.

A recent District Court decision that allowed an employer to require an OSHA inspector to fill out a questionnaire before inspecting the premises has been reversed by the Appeals Court. The Appeals Court says the questionnaire is "patently designed to delay inspection." OSHA inspectors need only to present credentials to be admitted.

The petition for rehearing in the Heptachlor/Chlordane suspension appeal was denied by the U.S. District Court of Appeals. The petition was submitted by Velsicol Chemical Co. In the meantime, cancellation hearings continue.