

Our weapons are being fired upon

When you've got one of your most powerful aircraft carriers patrolling your own waters, and the enemy nukes it with an ICBM, do you just stand around sucking your thumb, or do you alert your people at Cheyenne Mountain?

If you've got any guts—or common sense, for that matter—you don't just stand around. You defend yourself.

That scenario is a gross exaggeration of what's happening on the pesticide front, but it serves its purpose.

The Environmental Protection Agency has recently demanded supplemental data on some old tried-and-true turf chemicals, and it's also taking a close look at the toxicity of others. Witness the problems the industry is experiencing with mecoprop (MCP), an effective broadleaf weed-killer, and diazinon, a trusty insecticide (see "Green Industry News").

In the case of the former, the producers of MCP simply can't justify the multi-million dollar expense to comply with the data call-in the EPA is demanding. In the latter case, Ciba-Geigy promises to do everything in its power to convince the EPA that diazinon is perfectly safe if applied according to label directions.

But, more than these isolated instances, the problem will continue to grow as the EPA buckles down on the landscape manager's most effective weapons against insects, weeds and even diseases.

It's gratifying to see pro-pesticide concerns coalescing into effective defensive groups like the Pesticide Public Policy Foundation and Rational Approach to Pesticides. They, however, are just the cornerstone. They need building blocks upon which to expand.

You, reader—if you apply pesticides to turf or landscape plants—represent those building blocks. You can help your own cause by joining pro-pesticide groups in your area, by donating your time and by donating your money.

You are the ammunition in the green industry's arsenal.



Jerry Roche

Jerry Roche, editor

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