

Ongoing debate continues: posting for D-I-Yers or not?

MARYSVILLE, Ohio—The debate continues over whether do-it-yourselfers (in most cases, homeowners) should have to post lawn pesticide applications in the same manner that their professional counterparts must, in many areas of the U.S.

The most recent opinion was received at LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT in a letter from Dr. Michael P. Kelty, vice president of research and development for The Scotts Co. Here is what Dr. Kelty wrote:

"As the nation's largest supplier of do-it-yourself lawn and garden products, The Scott Company agrees that homeowners have every right to be fully informed of the products and services they purchase. We are opposed to mandatory D-I-Y posting and pre-notification, however, and present the following as support:

- "Products registered for residential application by LCOs or D-I-Yers are, to my knowledge, all 'General Unrestricted Use' products. This is EPA's most benign risk

category. Our experience in nearly 100 years of supplying the turfgrass market shows that EPA's classification scheme is appropriate.

- "D-I-Y consumers receive an EPA-approved and/or a state-approved label for the fertilizer and pesticide products they purchase. These labels fully disclose the product contents, etc. In the case of The Scotts Company (and other D-I-Y suppliers), a toll-free number is provided on all product packages so that assistance from trained technicians is readily available. To my knowledge, LCOs are not required to provide similar product/service disclosures under FIFRA, but several states do have disclosure standards.

- "With a good history of safe use and with a federally-mandated disclosure system already in place, we feel that posting and pre-notification for D-I-Y products is superfluous. Further, a consumer posting and pre-notification system is impractical

to implement and virtually impossible to enforce.

- "D-I-Y consumers continue to reside in the neighborhood after they've applied their products. It seems to me that a neighbor who wants to be notified of product application will receive that information more effectively by knocking on his/her neighbor's door than by instituting a costly and unnecessary consumer posting and pre-notification system.

"Scotts strongly endorses freedom of choice. If LCOs, notably the Professional Lawn Care Association of America, feel that posting and pre-notification laws are appropriate, they should be free to pursue them. It does not logically follow, however, that LCOs' endorsement of these laws makes them appropriate for consumers.

"Consumers should continue to have the choice of D-I-Y or LCO. Neither method is toxicologically or environmentally better, but a simple matter of choosing what is the best value for each individual. Both application methods and their related products have a role to play in serving customers."



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