

SAFETY FIRST: A List

■ *Being in the lawn care business isn't easy, especially if you follow all the rules of safe, common sense procedures.*

Here's a list of safety tips by Dr. Austin Frishman, well-known expert in the structural pest control profession. They all apply to the LCO.

SPILL CONTROL

1. Does each vehicle have appropriate spill control material, and does each technician know how to use it?

SPRAYERS

1. Has each applicator demonstrated to his or her superior how to apply control products properly with each piece of equipment you have issued?
2. Do you have a working pressure gauge for the compressed sprayer?
3. Can the applicator make simple repairs on the compressed sprayer?
4. Does the applicator carry repair tools and spare parts for sprayers?

DATA SHEETS

1. Are all Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) up to date? Do you have a copy of a letter sent to your distributor requesting such?
2. Has each technician been given a written quiz on each pesticide label and MSDS sheet you have? Is the quiz in his or her file, and is it updated as needed?
3. Does each truck and each wallet carry the phone number of the local poison control center?

TRAINING

1. Are all applicators certified, even if not required?
2. Is there, in fact, an introductory training program at your company, including strong emphasis on safety storage?
3. Are technicians aware of state regulations that are stricter than the EPA label statement?
4. Are new employees who worked for

other lawn care applicators mandated to complete your own training program before being allowed to do the work on their own?

EQUIPMENT

1. Do employees know how to properly use a respirator?
2. Are you making at least monthly unannounced vehicle inspections, looking for safety features and proper storage?
3. Do all workers have the proper gloves, based on his or her duties? Are they checked weekly for holes and replaced as needed?
4. Have you issued the proper fire extinguishers and had one attached to each vehicle?
5. Does your required dress code include appropriate shoes?
6. Is there a policy on how often to clean the inside of your company vehicles, including the steering wheel?
7. Have you issued disposable hand towels for each vehicle?
8. Have you issued enough uniforms to allow for daily washing? Do employees know how to properly wash uniforms or work clothes?
9. Are you familiar with all Department of Transportation regulations as they pertain to your trucks? Do all vehicles have required Bill of Lading papers? Are you carrying the minimum amount of materials to be under the amount which requires extra paper work and safety procedures?
10. How's truck visibility when it comes to mirror placement?
11. Are vehicles cleaned and free of product odor before being sold or sent out for repair?

PUBLIC RELATIONS

1. Has the applicator been schooled in how to answer a customer's questions regarding pesticide safety?
2. Are accounts spot checked to see that the technicians have followed instructions and are solving control problems?
3. Are extra pesticide labels instantly avail-

able for customers as needed?

4. When you receive a call-back based on poor results, do you simply schedule an individual to treat again, or do you have your technician evaluate what went wrong? Maybe more product is not the answer.

CONTROL PRODUCTS

1. Do your control products have the highest LD₅₀ values and present the least environmental hazard?
2. Are new control products given a trial run by key people, in selected accounts and locations before you decide to use it regularly?
3. Are all service containers properly labeled, in good shape, and replaced as needed?
4. Do you check the empty containers regularly to see that triple rinsing is practiced?
5. Have you developed a walk-about check list that technicians must review before applying control products? Example: areas frequented by children, pets; chemically-sensitive listings; wind conditions; non-target plants.

PERSONNEL

1. Are new applicators given a medical examination, including a check of their cholinesterase level?
2. Have you checked the recommendations listed by an applicant *before* you hire him?
3. Are you aware of workers on your crew whose health problems could alter your pest control procedures?
4. If applicators cannot identify an insect, weed or disease problem, do they bring a sample to the office for proper identification before applying a product?
5. Are office staff who speak to customers properly trained to answer technical problems?
6. Are key supervisors given refresher courses?
7. Do you check driver's licenses every year to make sure they're up to date?