Diazinon Phase-Out Beginning

In a December 5, 2000 news release, EPA announced an agreement to phase-out diazinon, one of the most widely used insecticides in the United States, for indoor uses, beginning in March 2001, and for all lawn, garden, and turf uses by December, 2003.

Carol M. Browner, EPA Administrator said, "The action we are taking today is another major step toward ensuring that all Americans can enjoy greater safety from exposure to harmful pesticides. Today's action will significantly eliminate the vast majority of organophosphate insecticide products in and around the home, and by implementing this phase-out, it will help encourage consumers to move to safer pest control practice."

Diazinon is the most widely used insecticide by homeowners on lawns, and is one of the most widely used insecticide ingredients for application around the home and in gardens. The agreement reached with the manufacturers, Syngenta and Makhteshim Agan, will eliminate 75 percent of the use which amounts to more than 11 million pounds of the insecticide used annually.

EPA is taking this action under the Food Quality Protection Act, signed into law in 1996. Since then, EPA has targeted a large group of older, riskier pesticides called organophosphates for review because they pose the greatest potential risk. In August of 1999, for example, EPA announced action against methyl parathion and azinphos methyl. The Agency reached an agreement to halt by December, 2000, the manufacture of chlorpyrifos (Dursban) for nearly all residential uses. Diazinon—used in homes, on lawns, and gardens—is the latest organophosphate to be phased-out. Specifically, the terms of the agreement implement the following phase-out schedules:

- For the indoor household use, the registration was canceled on March, 2001, and all retail sales will stop by December, 2002.
- For all lawn, garden, and turf uses, manufacturing stops in June, 2003; all sales and distribution to retailers ends in August, 2003. Further, the company will implement a product recovery program in 2004 to complete the phase-out of the product.
- Additionally, as part of the phase-out, for all lawn, garden, and turf uses, the agreement ratchets down the manufacturing amounts. Specifically, for 2002, there will be a 25 percent decrease in production; and for 2003, there will be a 50 percent decrease in production.
- Also, the agreement begins the process to cancel around 20 different uses on food crops.

Organophosphates affect the nervous system. The effects from diazinon (and other organophosphates) vary depending on the dose, but symptoms from over-exposure can include nausea, headaches, vomiting, diarrhea, and general weakness. Today's action also represents an important step for the environment.

It is legal to purchase and use diazinon products according to label directions and precautions. Consumers should take special care to always read and follow the label directions and precautions. If consumers choose to discontinue use, they should contact their state or local hazardous waste disposal program or the local solid waste collection service for information on proper disposal. (From: EPA Press Release, 12/5/2000) (DJ)

Acreage Insights

Lincoln Iris Society

The Lincoln Iris Society is looking for youths age 12 through 15 years for their sponsored youth program. If you love to garden and would like to know more about growing and hybridizing beautiful flowers you may be just who they are looking for. For more information call 423-7172 ask for Opal Wulf.

Aerate Lawn to Improve Air Flow

Aerating a lawn can improve air flow in the sensitive root-zone area. The most common and effective aeration technique is core aeration.

Core aeration is less damaging to a lawn and more beneficial than power raking for improving air movement and relieving soil compaction. This method, also known as plugging, increases oxygen movement into the root zone and promotes the microbes that help to break down thatch. Leave cores on the lawn for best results; as they disintegrate and filter back into the holes, loose soil will be mixed with organic matter to improve water and nutrient-holding capacity of the soil.

Turfgrass aeration should be performed only early in a good growth period. This is usually early spring or early fall for cool-season grasses.

Proper timing allows the turf plenty of time to recover from mechanical injury associated with aeration.

SOURCE: Roch Gaussion, Ph.D., turf specialist, NU/IANR (DJ)

How to Drive a Staple

The tension on fence wires can put a lot of stress on staples. If staples are the wrong size or driven incorrectly, they can pull out and cause other problems.

Staples for high tensile fences should be longer than staples used for conventional barbed and woven wire fences. Use galvanized nine gauge staples 1 3/4 inches long. Tests conducted by U.S. Steel show that 1 3/4 inch staples hammered into wood posts have 50 percent more resistance to pull-out than 1 1/2 inch, nine gauge staples driven into the same posts.

Staples on high tensile fences should never be driven all the way in. Enough room must be left so that the wire can move freely. This way the strain from wire contraction during cold weather (or slack from expansion during hot weather) and strain from stock running into or leaning on the fence will be distributed over the entire fence. Driving staples all the way in increases friction and will result in shorter wire life. It also makes it difficult to tension wire uniformly on long runs, and results in fences less able to absorb heavy livestock pressure.

A lot of potential strain on staples can be avoided by setting posts in a straight line. If a post is slightly out of line, do not use the staple to pull the wire to the post. Instead, push the wire against the post before driving the staple.

Wires should be strung on the outside of corners. The problem of friction from wires rubbing against posts can be avoided by slipping a staple over the driven staple between the wire and the post (Figure 1).

Wire should be strung on the livestock side of perimeter fences. This way if livestock lean on the fence, it will not put strain on the staples.

With the exception of curves or corners where wire is passing around the post, staples should not be driven vertically (with the staple points parallel to the grain of the post). This tends to separate the grain and reduces the staples holding power. Rotating staples 20 to 30 degrees off vertical can increase their holding power.

Wire on posts in low spots will put upward strain on staples. Wire on posts in high areas will put downward strain on staples. A few simple techniques can increase the amount of up or down strain a staple can handle. For minor dips, drive staples in at an upward angle (Figure 2). For rises, drive staples in at a downward angle.

Steeper rises and dips may require double stapling. There are two basic double stapling techniques. The first method consists of driving two staples side by side at an upward angle for dip posts, or downward angle for rise posts.

The second method consists of driving a staple parallel to the wire. On dip posts the staple is driven above the wire so that the wire pushes up on the staple. A second staple is then driven over both the wire and first staple(figure 3). The procedure is identical for rise posts except the first staple is driven below the fence wire. (DJ)

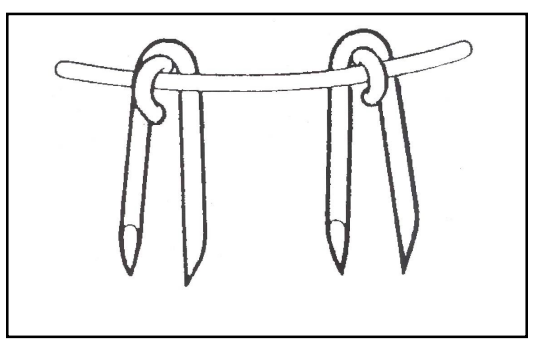


Figure 1.

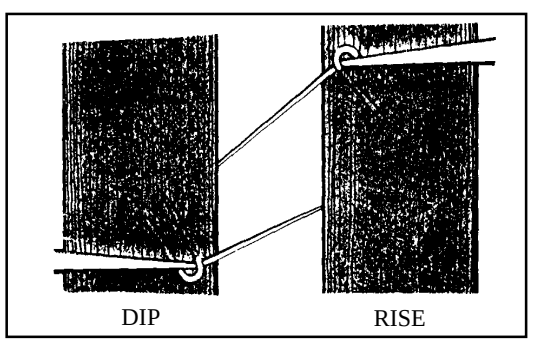


Figure 2.

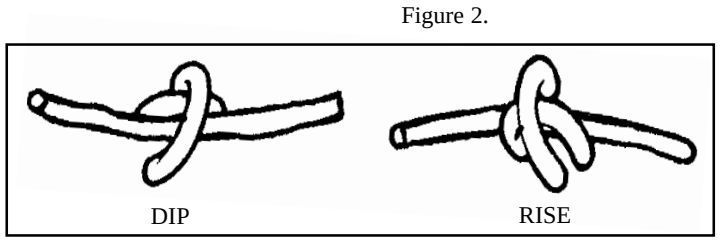


Figure 3.

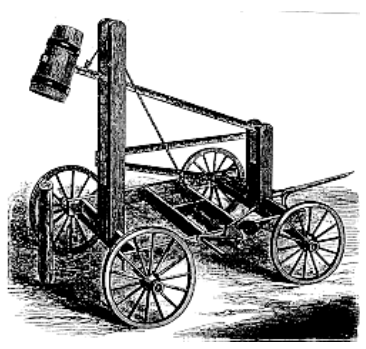
Composting Workshops and Demonstrations for 2001

Workshops (All workshops scheduled from 7-9 p.m.)

Recreation Centers	April	September
Belmont (1234 Judson)	17	11
Calvert (4500 Stockwell) (start at 6:30 p.m.)	19	13
Irving (2010 Van Dorn)	24	18
Easterday (6130 Adams)	26	20
Air Park West (3720 NW 46)	April 12	25

Composting Demonstrations (50th and Colby)
Third Saturday of each month from April through October. Time – 8:30 a.m. (DJ)

Anderson's Post Driver



"The setting of fence posts is a wearisome and laborious business, whether holes are dug for their reception or they are driven by repeated blows of the beetle. The device herewith illustrated greatly reduces the labor and facilitates the operation. A very few blows with this device will suffice to drive a post sufficiently deep into the hardest soil."

From the Scientific American, 1867.

The iron bound hardwood hammer, weighing about 100 pounds, is lifted by a crank and then released by means of a slip clutch. Mounted on a wagon, the small pile driver could easily be pulled to each new post location. John Anderson, of Waukesha, Wisconsin, patented the post driver on Feb 27, 1866. (DJ)