

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

★ news release

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

343-5634

For Release to PM's, SEPTEMBER 4, 1964

STRINGENT RULES ORDERED IN USING PESTICIDES ON INTERIOR-ADMINISTERED LANDS

Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall today announced issuance of stringent rules regarding use of pesticides on the more than 550 million acres of public lands administered by the Department of the Interior.

The rules were developed after an earlier secretarial directive that the Department's standards should set an example for all others to follow.

The new guidelines, which apply to all Interior programs for the control of pest plants and animals, were developed by Frank P. Briggs, Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife.

The order directs that first priority be given to nonchemical methods in pest control. When chemicals are deemed necessary, safety will be the main consideration.

"Prior to the use of pesticides," Secretary Udall said, "there must be a determination of anticipated results and possible harmful effects. Only chemicals registered for use on a particular pest may be employed, and instructions for use must be carefully followed."

"It is of the utmost importance," he added, "that the proposed controls be limited to the target area to avoid contaminating lakes, streams, fish and wildlife, or adversely affecting other interests in the community."

Secretary Udall directed Interior agencies to inform State and local authorities, if their interests are involved, when proposed Interior pest-control activities are to be conducted. He directed that State and local laws be complied with in such programs.

The guidelines require the use of the most selective chemicals available, minimum dosages with the safest carriers, and application under conditions that leave no reasonable doubt that harmful effects will be minimized.

Interior agencies were told to avoid using compounds which are known to concentrate in living organisms, such as DDT, chlordane, dieldrin, and endrin.

Secretary Udall warned that even some of the comparatively safe pesticides, such as malathion, pose hazards to some sensitive species of fish, food organisms, and beneficial insects. He said particular care must be taken to avoid injury to pollenizing insects.

He said that while the acute toxic effects of most herbicides are minimal for birds and mammals, the chronic effects are largely unknown. And he noted that some herbicides are highly toxic to fish food organisms.

The order requires that advice be obtained from fish and game and health officials before there is any extensive field use of herbicides in close proximity to water areas.

Secretary Udall said that results of chemical pest-control programs carried out by Interior agencies must be appraised by specialists to assure minimum adverse side effects.

He thus assigned to the Geological Survey the responsibility of surveillance and study of pesticide effects on water resources of the Department's areas. The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife will appraise the effects on fish and wildlife and their food organisms.

Secretary Udall further ordered that all chemical pest-control programs planned by Interior agencies be first reviewed by the Geological Survey, the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, and the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife.

The proposed programs then will be forwarded to the Federal Committee on Pest Control, made up of representatives of the Departments of Interior, Agriculture, Defense, and Health, Education and Welfare. The Federal Committee reviews all chemical control programs that are financed wholly or in part with Federal funds, or are directed or supervised by a Federal agency.

Interior's representatives on the Committee are Robert M. Paul, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife, and Lansing A. Parker, Associate Director, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife.

Secretary Udall said Interior agencies not directly engaged in chemical pest-control programs are required to observe and report any significant contamination or residual accumulations caused by pesticides which may affect the Department's interests.

x x x