



PMRA INFORMATION BULLETIN

Copper Sulphate (Granular) Use in Ponds and Dugouts

Background

Copper sulphate (granular) has multiple uses such as a feed additive micro-nutrient, fertilizer micro-nutrient and a pesticide (algaecide and fungicide). It has been widely used for many years as a pesticide for the control of algae in ponds and dugouts. Other common names include bluestone (due to the colour of the product), copper sulfate, cupric sulphate and blue vitriol.

In 1987, provincial officials with Alberta Environment began consultations with Agriculture Canada and several copper sulphate manufacturers to register the algaecide use under the Pest Control Products Act. Concerns were related to the improper use, I.E., effective rates were not easily available to the users. Without labels outlining algaecidal use directions of copper sulphate, the chemical had the potential to be misused in locations and at rates which may have had a serious environmental impact. The potential risks are fish kills, cattle or animals using the pond as a water source and an increase in unnecessary copper sulphate in the environment. It may also lead to higher levels of heavy metals that commonly occur in the granular copper sulfate.

Current Situation

TeckCominco, Nalco and Phelps Dodge hold current registrations for use of granular copper sulphate as an algaecide. They were first registered in 1991. TeckCominco is the only company currently marketing in Canada. The registered products have labels affixed directly to the containers with the appropriate use and precautions to be followed.

Unfortunately, due to the wide availability it remains a common practice for some retailers and dugout owners to sell and use unregistered feed additive (granular) copper sulphates for algae control. The purpose of this information bulletin is to inform the seller and users that all products sold or used in Canada for algae control in ponds and dugouts require registration. Sale or use of unregistered products is a violation of the Pest Control Products Act (PCPA).

It is important to note that a registered pest control product always has a label that includes the following statement:

REGISTRATION NO. 12345 Pest Control Products Act (PCPA)

or

REGN NO. 12345 PCPA.

Please ensure that all pesticide products you sell or use are registered. For further information contact your local PMRA office or call the Pest Management Information Service at 1-800-267-6315.

Dated: August, 2003