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Weed and feed lawn product to be eliminated

A new ban protects Alberta's water

Edmonton... A new ban on herbicide-fertilizer combination products in Alberta will help protect the quality of water downstream of urban areas.

As of January 1, 2010 herbicide-fertilizer combination products will no longer be sold in Alberta. Products intended for spot application to weeds will still be available for sale and use.

“We need to take steps wherever possible to protect and preserve the quality of Alberta's rivers and lakes,” said Alberta Environment Minister Rob Renner. “By eliminating products that encourage mass application we will reduce the amount of chemical run-off in our waterways.”

A chemical used in herbicide-fertilizer combination products, such as weed and feed, is highly mobile and commonly appears in water downstream of municipalities. This occurs when excess chemical runs off lawns into storm drainage systems and is deposited into creeks and rivers. More than 10 times the required amount of pesticide can be applied to lawns when weed and feed is used. The decision to ban weed and feed will not impact the agriculture sector or the landscaping industry since these products are almost exclusively used on homeowners' lawns.

The regulation of pesticide use is typically the responsibility of Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency. Currently, the average amount of 2,4-D in surface water downstream of Alberta municipalities is below the recommended federal threshold. By banning weed and feed, Alberta is taking a proactive stance to eliminate opportunities for additional unwanted substances to enter our waterways.

“This is a simple measure that Albertans can take to curb the amount of chemicals entering our water,” said Renner.

This action supports Alberta's Water for Life Strategy and is another way that Albertans can commit to One Simple Act to improve the well-being of the environment.

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