

Crop Protection Industry Assessment of EPA Spray Drift PRN and Calculation of spray drift buffers using FIFRA methodology

M.F. Leggett¹, Mark Ledson², Scott Jackson³
¹CropLife America, ²Syngenta, ³BASF

Spray drift is pesticide droplet and particle movement that occurs during the initial application resulting in deposition onto non-target sites. This presentation reviewed spray drift policy, current practice in risk assessment of non-target plants exposed to drift and current research to improve exposure estimates were discussed. The EPA has sought to improve the language on labels with respect to drift. A draft PR Notice introduced in 2009 included a new standard that, if adopted, would effectively hold affected stakeholders to an unachievable “zero drift” policy.

The regulated industry opposes the proposed rule since it; undermines FIFRA, places an unreasonable burden on applicators, results in unpredictable liability, and establishes unattainable goals.

The EPA and state pesticide policies have long acknowledged that small levels of pesticide drift is unavoidable and, when used according to the product’s label, does not pose a risk of ‘unreasonable adverse effects’ to humans or the environment. EPA’s risk assessment and registration process include spray drift considerations, and label requirements include drift reduction considerations. These considerations are based on estimates of potential exposure from drift and hazard evaluation of the chemical being applied. The potential exposure from drift is estimated using models. Stakeholders are currently sponsoring research to improve model estimates so that they more accurately reflect potential for drift with consideration of available technology.