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Natural Resources Awareness Tool Developed for Herbicide Applicators

Intended to help prevent off-target drift damage to sensitive crops and natural areas

SPRINGFIELD, IL – The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) has launched a new online tool that will allow landowners, producers, and chemical applicators to see the locations of sensitive natural resources in Illinois.

The “Natural Resources Awareness Tool for Applicators” was created in response to reports that some agricultural herbicides can drift off-target and damage sensitive crops and natural areas. IDNR will be working with the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) and other partner organizations during the upcoming growing season to monitor natural areas and assist IDOA with reports of suspected herbicide damage to trees and other plants.

“Our hope is to work proactively with agricultural interests to prevent problems, including potential drift injury to adjacent property,” said IDNR Director Wayne Rosenthal. “By providing additional information, IDNR can help farmers and applicators better comply with rules and statutes governing the use of herbicides.”

The “Natural Resources Awareness Tool for Applicators” is designed to complement the multi-state DRIFTWATCH program, which allows farmers, producers and applicators to identify sensitive crop areas, which is critical as another growing season draws near.

Producers can access the DRIFTWATCH site and enter the location of their fields. Pesticide applicators can then register and see the location of sensitive crops in the area, and receive email alerts when new fields are added. The program is free, quick and easy to use; however, growers must be diligent in entering the location of their fields accurately in order for the system to work successfully.

Those who are planning to apply any of the three dicamba products approved for over-the-top applications on soybeans and cotton in 2018 are required to adhere to all label requirements, including completion of a
training program that utilizes materials developed by the registrants of the products (Monsanto, BASF or DuPont).

Information regarding the required training for 2018 can be found on the Illinois Fertilizer and Chemical Association website. Those who participate in the training will receive a certification of completion that can be used as proof of training for record keeping purposes.

IDNR is committed to working closely to promote proper and safe use of herbicides, and to increase awareness of sensitive areas of the state that include natural areas, Illinois Nature Preserves, state parks and other sites. For more information, visit IDOA’s pesticide information page: https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/agr/Pesticides/Pages/default.aspx

The map can be found here: https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/conservation/Pages/Chemical-Drift-Awareness-Areas.aspx

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