

PESTICIDE SUMMARY

PESTICIDES are an overall umbrella for substances meant for attracting, seducing, destroying, or mitigating any pest. The most common use of pesticides is as plant protection products, however, pesticides are also used for non-agricultural purposes. Pesticides also include herbicide, insecticide, insect growth regulator, nematicide, termiticide, molluscicide, piscicide, avicide, rodenticide, predacide, bactericide, insect repellent, animal repellent, antimicrobial, fungicide, disinfectant (antimicrobial), and sanitizer.

The three types of pesticides that are used, or have been used, on campus include herbicides, rodenticides and insecticides.

HERBICIDES

There are three herbicide products currently being used by the Grounds department. Roundup is used on sidewalks and in mulched areas containing trees. Roundup will basically eradicate anything that is green. The product is an elaborate salt that plugs up pores and starves the plant. Trimec Classic 2,4-D is used for broadleaf plants, such as Dandelions. The product attacks dicots, not monocots, which is grass. Snapshot is a product that prevents growth at the seed stage – it won't allow the seed to germinate. The grounds process in mulched areas is to pull the majority of weeds, then apply mulch, and then apply Snapshot.

RODENTICIDES

In past years, the university used rat poison as a rodenticide. We now contract with a wildlife control service to remove rodents. When bats are caught on campus, they are released at the Schmeeckle Reserve.

INSECTICIDES

Insecticide use on campus includes wasp spray and WilKil for ants. In the past, the grounds department used a product called Malathion to spray on bushes. Now the department cuts actual stems off infected bushes and disposes of them properly to eliminate unwanted insects.

PESTICIDE USE AT UW-STEVEN'S POINT

UW-Stevens Point Grounds Department sustainability efforts include a gradual reduction of pesticide application on campus over time. However, other priorities to improve campus appearance often go against those efforts. For instance, campus appearance expectations during orientation have increased. Also, the use of preventive products increased when UW-Stevens Point contracted with NFL teams to practice on our athletic fields.

The current Grounds Superintendent has been employed since 1998. At that time there was a greater variety of chemicals being used in much larger quantities.

For example, in 1998, forty gallons of Roundup were applied annually and the Grounds Department employed eight students to help maintain the grounds. Today, 15 students are employed and only 10 gallons of Roundup are being applied. If we were to eliminate the use all herbicides on campus, it is projected that the grounds department would need to employ 27 students, hire another staff supervisor to monitor the additional students, and purchase additional equipment.

The Grounds Superintendent disposed of many of the chemicals used since 1998. An example is Daconil, a fungicide, which was used on athletic fields to prevent fungus growth.

The use of Vegemec has been eliminated as well. Vegemec is a soil sterilant product. It kills everything – bugs, weeds, seeds - and nothing grows for 90 days. Vegemec was used on granite padded areas – under bleachers and where bike racks are located. This was a very effective product when there was limited staff to maintain grounds. Rather than using Vegemec, we now have concrete placed under bleachers and brick pavers under bike racks. We do not spray entire areas as in the past, we now only spot treat with Roundup if needed.

Other products no longer being used include Malathion (insecticide), Orthene (insecticide), Ornamec (grass herbicide), and Barricade (herbicide).

Facility Services actively pursues the safest, most effective products available for weed control. Staff members applying the products are certified for product application and do so in a manner that exceeds the safety recommendations of the manufacturer. Each product used has Personal Protective Equipment requirements that are followed. For instance, when using Roundup, pants and a long sleeve shirt is required. For Vegemec, a respirator is used. *Staff actually uses respirators when spraying all products, even if it's not required by law.* UW-Stevens Point staffs two Certified Pesticide Applicators, and the Grounds Superintendent is also certified.

When herbicide treatments are applied, areas are flagged for 24 hours; even though we are not required by law to do so. A Message of the Day is sent out if Grounds knows when spraying is scheduled to occur. However, if it is too windy or raining, spraying is postponed. Grounds' staff sprays in the early morning to avoid human exposure. If the product is wet, you can carry the product on your being, but once applications are dry, the product is stable.

Applications are limited to what is necessary and a large manual weeding crew will continue to aid in reducing the use of herbicides. Material Safety Data Sheets are available for all products used on campus. All application amounts and locations are recorded in the Grounds department.

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection enforces Wisconsin's pesticide laws. Persons and businesses that sell or use pesticides must follow those requirements to protect humans and the environment and to help ensure that food and agricultural products are safe and wholesome. The WI Department of ATCP's pesticide rules cover the sales, distribution, proper handling, storage, mixing, loading, application and disposal of pesticides. This includes agricultural, industrial and commercial and residential and household pesticides.

As with most chemicals there are certain levels of hazards that must be recognized and controlled in order to utilize the products. Safety Data Sheets, regulations, manufacturer's product directions and application requirements are followed to safely utilize these products on campus. Reviews have been conducted to further corroborate the safety.

UWSP Risk Management's stance on the issue is the pesticides used on campus are legal products and may be used following manufacturer directions along with safety and application requirements. As with many chemicals, Risk Management encourages reducing or eliminating the use of the products where feasible.