

## Advisory Committee

The Colorado Agricultural Commission appoints an advisory committee to assist in the management of this program. The committee consists of individuals representing the following groups: the general public; producers; the green industry; agricultural chemical suppliers; commercial pesticide applicators; and the Water Quality Control Commission. Members are appointed for three-year terms.

## Funding

Funding for the Program is provided by an annual fee assessed to the manufacturer of each pesticide product registered in Colorado, and a fee on each ton of commercial fertilizer sold in the state.



Additional information can be obtained by contacting the following:



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Extension

CSU Extension  
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## Agricultural Chemicals & Groundwater Protection

GOAL...

*...To protect groundwater and the environment from impairment or degradation due to the improper use of agricultural chemicals while allowing for their proper and correct use...*

C.R.S. 25-8-205.5(1)



## Introduction

During the 1990 legislative session, the Colorado General Assembly passed Senate Bill 90-126, which created the Agricultural Chemicals and Groundwater Protection Program. This amendment to the Colorado Water Quality Control Act states that the public policy of this state is: *to protect groundwater and the environment from impairment or degradation due to the improper use of agricultural chemicals while allowing for their proper and correct use. The emphasis is to improve the management of agricultural chemicals to prevent, minimize, and mitigate their presence in groundwater.*

The Program emphasizes a voluntary approach, using education and training to achieve the goal. If voluntary efforts fail, the law sets forth a series of actions first by the Commissioner of Agriculture, and then by the Water Quality Control Commission to address groundwater contamination from agricultural chemicals.

Agricultural chemicals are defined as all pesticides and commercial fertilizers used in both urban and rural settings. The Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA; the lead agency), Colorado State University Extension (CSUE), and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) are cooperating agencies in the implementation of this program.



## Education and Training

Education and training of agricultural chemical applicators to insure the proper and correct use of pesticides and fertilizers is key to the Program. Colorado State University Extension provides the education and training component. The Program is geared to all users of pesticides and fertilizers such as commercial applicators, urban homeowners, producers, crop consultants, and golf course superintendents. A variety of educational methods are used to reach these groups with information on agricultural chemical use and groundwater protection.

One major component of the Program is the development of best management practices (BMPs) for agricultural chemical use. In cooperation with other agricultural groups, CSUE uses research based guidance principles to develop and refine BMPs. Locally adapted BMPs are developed with extensive input from producers and other users.

## Rules for Bulk Storage and Mixing/Loading Areas for Pesticides and Fertilizers

The Commissioner of Agriculture has promulgated rules for facilities where pesticides and/or fertilizers are stored and handled in quantities that exceed minimum thresholds. The purpose of the rules is to prevent and/or contain spills and leaks that can potentially contaminate groundwater resources. The rules also establish standards for the construction and operation of bulk liquid and dry agricultural chemical storage facilities and mixing/loading areas.

## Groundwater Monitoring

The CDA is responsible for monitoring groundwater to detect the presence of agricultural chemicals. The sampling is performed in close coordination with private landowners, county extension agents, water conservancy districts, and local officials.

Well samples are analyzed for selected pesticides and basic inorganic elements including nitrate. The pesticides are selected based on frequency of use and the physical and chemical properties of the pesticide. The groundwater monitoring program provides a baseline upon which to gauge trends in groundwater quality. The CDPHE is responsible for analysis and interpretation of the groundwater data.