

# Metam-Sodium Applications, Summer 2002

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**Enforcement Letter** ENF 02-32

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**Distribution** County agricultural commissioners

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**Referrals** If you have any questions pertaining to this document, please contact your Senior Pesticide Use Specialist Liaison.

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**Approval**  
**Original signed by**  
  
Scott T. Paulsen, Chief  
Enforcement Branch  
(916) 324-4100

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**Background** Metam-sodium applications are currently taking place throughout California. The Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) has been notified of incidents involving metam-sodium applications in the San Joaquin Valley. The recent above-normal high temperatures may enhance the reactive qualities of metam-sodium. Additionally, increased evaporation may be reducing the effectiveness of post-application irrigation. DPR would like the county agricultural commissioners (CACs) to remind permittees and applicators to pay special attention to metam labeling and the Technical Information Bulletin (TIB).

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**Introduction** To help prevent any additional incidents involving metam-sodium from occurring, DPR is recommending CACs to conduct preapplication site inspections when they receive a Notice of Intent (NOI).

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## Metam-Sodium Applications, Summer 2002, Continued

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### DPR Recommendations

DPR recommends the following:

- All metam labeling and the TIB shall be followed;
- If certain weather conditions exist that are not in compliance with the metam label and TIB, the NOI shall be denied;
- If the air temperature is expected to exceed 100 degrees, the following shall also apply:
  1. Conduct a preapplication site inspection prior to the metam application.
  2. Based on resources, CACs should give priority inspections to sensitive areas first, followed by other remaining sites, when possible.
  3. The CAC should take and record soil moisture readings and soil temperature readings to three (3) inches.
  4. The preapplication site inspection shall ensure that the site has an irrigation system readily available with the capability to cover the entire application site. The acres applied per day by shank injection near sensitive areas should not exceed the capacity of the available water delivery system to apply a minimum of ¼ inch per hour of water concurrently to the entire surface applied on that day.
  5. NOIs shall not be approved by the commissioner until a preapplication site inspection has been completed.
  6. Contact applicators to determine the exact application time to facilitate preapplication site inspections.
  7. Preapplication site inspections should occur as close to the intended date of application as possible and conducting as many preapplication site inspections as possible.

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## Metam-Sodium Applications, Summer 2002, Continued

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**DPR  
Recommendations**  
(continued)

8. Chemigation or shank injection applications near sensitive sites should apply an additional ½ inch of water on the day of application starting one hour before sunset. This additional water will be in addition to current requirements that specify water be applied immediately after the application. Water shall be applied as soon as possible, but not greater than two (2) hours after the passage of the shanks through each portion of the treated field.
9. Chemigation or shank injection applications near sensitive sites should be conducted during daytime conditions. However, during summertime, applications near sensitive areas may begin as early as two hours before sunrise in order to complete the application prior to the temperature or wind speed limitations being exceeded. If applications cannot be completed due to the high temperature or wind speed limitations, metam should not be applied until more favorable conditions exist.

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**Reference**

- ENF 00-44, *Permit Conditions for Applications of Metam-Sodium and Potassium N-methyldithiocarbamate (Metam-Potassium) Products.*
  - Metam product labeling.
  - Technical Information Bulletin, *Guidelines for All Application Methods for Metam-Sodium in California.*
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