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Label changes – how will it affect you?

Bayer's Dr Colin Mumford talks to Turf Matters about the upcoming Classification, Labelling and Packaging (CLP) changes and what they will mean for groundsmen.

What are the CLP changes and why are they happening?

Over the next two years fungicides and other chemical products will undergo a number of changes to the labels that appear on the product packaging. It follows the United Nation's (UN) Global Harmonisation System (GHS) of the classification and labelling of chemicals.

"GHS introduces revised hazard symbols, signal words, hazard statements and precautionary statements, with the aim of creating a globally recognised system which will be universal across every country worldwide," comments Colin.

The CLP legislation incorporates all industrial and household chemicals, including all those products used within the turf and amenity sector, such as fungicides, herbicides and insecticides.

Colin advises, "It is important to emphasise the updated labels do not reflect any change to the products themselves. The risk that products pose to turf managers and groundsmen, the consumer or to the environment has not changed in any way; it is purely just the labels themselves that are being updated.

"However, outside of these CLP changes, it is important to remember that as part of good practice you should always continue to review product labels, in order to keep abreast of any additional changes," he says.

"Users of any chemical product will now see a selection of nine new hazard pictograms, depicted within a red diamond, which replace the original square symbols with the orange background.

"There are new signal words which replace those currently on chemical labels, such as 'Toxic' and 'Harmful' will be replaced with 'Danger' and 'Warning'. A new disposal phrase will also be introduced to the labels."



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Important dates

In terms of timescales, all products leaving the manufacturer or marketing companies must be labelled in accordance with the new CLP regulation by the 1st June 2015. However, distributors and users have until the 1st June 2017 to use up stock which still holds the old labelling.

Many manufacturers will be making the changes to their labelling now, in advance of next June. "We (at Bayer) are being proactive and are already updating all of our labels ahead of the deadline," says Colin. "Those who use our products will start to see the new symbols on our products towards the end of this year, or the start of 2015; it is all dependent on what new stock your distributor has available."

Colin explains that it is a huge project for manufacturers to ensure that these changes are made and carried out correctly, and within the deadline. "It has meant we've had to go back through all of the data on each of our products to ensure they are all correctly classified according to the new legislation, and then update the label text with the new symbols and phrases."

How will it affect me?

All products will now need to conform to the new legislation. And whilst they will be implemented at a worldwide level, the physical label changes will take place at slightly different times across the world.

Colin reiterates that the revised label changes do not reflect any changes to the products themselves, "the usage rate, method of application and level of personal protective equipment needed to apply the products has not changed, it is solely the hazard symbols and wording on the labels.

Colin urges that it is now more important than ever that groundsmen stay on top of their stock rotation.

"Although it is very rare that stock of chemical products is carried over from one year to the next, if this does happen, be sure to use the old label items first. Be vigilant and take care not to leave pallets of older stock at the back of the store," he concludes.



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FAQs

- *What has changed – what will I see?*

The changes apply to many chemicals, but in the amenity sector turf managers will now see that all the products they use, whether it be fungicides or fertilisers, hold a selection of nine new hazard pictograms, depicted within a red diamond, replacing the current boxed warning symbols with the orange background. There are also new signal words replacing those currently on chemical labels, and a new disposal phrase will also be introduced to the labels.

- *Why have the changes been brought in?*

The Classification, Labelling and Packaging (CLP) label changes are happening following the UN's Global Harmonisation of the classification and labelling of chemicals. The overarching aim of these changes is to create a globally universal system.

- *What does this mean for me applying my product of choice?*

Nothing will change to the product itself; the label rates, application method or the level of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) you need to use when applying the product will all remain the same. However, it is important to familiarise yourself with the new hazard symbols and warnings.

- *By what date do I need to make sure I've used up old labelled stock?*

All products leaving the manufacturer or marketing companies must be labelled in accordance with the new CLP regulation by the 1st June 2015. However, distributors and users have until the 1st June 2017 to use up stock which still holds the old labelling.

Labelling trivia:

- ✓ 1960s - The EU passed a Directive which set out a classification system for chemical substances, called the Dangerous Substances Directive (DSD)
- ✓ In time, the same approach was applied to chemicals made of more than one substance. The law which set out the classification requirements was called the Dangerous Preparations Directive (DPD)



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- ✓ The DSD and DPD are implemented in the UK by a law called the Chemicals (Hazard Information and Packaging for Supply) Regulations 2009, known as CHIP
- ✓ Many chemical users and consumers will be familiar with the CHIP orange and black hazard symbols which have appeared on chemical products for many years
- ✓ European Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008 on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures came into force on 20 January 2009 in all EU Member States, including the UK

