



## **DEC News Release**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **DEC's New Forestry Vegetation Management Pesticide Regulations Create Pesticide Free Zones**

**November 4, 2003—Fairbanks**—The Department of Environmental Conservation today presented its new Forestry Vegetation Management Pesticide Control Regulations at the Board of Forestry meeting in Fairbanks. The Department's pesticide regulations govern the application of herbicides to control the growth of unwanted vegetation.

Regulation changes reflect input received during the public comment periods, in which 335 people made recommendations. Environmental Health Director Kristin Ryan said, "We incorporated many of the excellent comments we received. The result is protective and clear pesticide regulations for Alaska."

The most significant changes are:

- the creation of a pesticide free zone of 35 feet around surface or marine water bodies;
- the establishment of additional protective areas where no spraying occurs to ensure pesticides do not spread into the pesticide free zone;
- monitoring requirements to ensure compliance with state requirements; and
- a defined public review process for permit applications that requires notification of community members and opportunities to appeal decision to spray.

In 2001 DEC received a permit application to conduct herbicide aerial spraying for a forestry vegetation management project. Previously, DEC used the standards set under the Alaska Coastal Management Program (6 AAC 80.130-.150). The proposed regulations were drafted on the advice of the Department of Law to clarify how permit applications would be reviewed consistent with the Forest Practices Act.

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“We now have a much a better process for reviewing applications,” Ryan said, noting the new regulations clearly define the state and public review process and what is expected of the applicant.

The new regulation changes come after nearly twelve months of informal and formal comment periods, which began in November 2002. Limited changes were made to other sections of the Pesticide Control regulations. The summary of comments and regulations can be downloaded from DEC’s website at [www.state.ak.us/dec/deh/pestcomment.htm](http://www.state.ak.us/dec/deh/pestcomment.htm)

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