

IRRIGATORS ADVISED NOT TO CHEMIGATE OVER OR NEAR OPEN WATERWAYS

Summer irrigation season is the time when area farmers might apply chemical pesticides, herbicides or fertilizers through irrigation systems and over open waterways, inadvertently contaminating surface water. The Upper Niobrara White Natural Resources District (UNWNRD) is charged with protecting our water supply and wishes to remind irrigators of the potential environmental and regulatory consequences of chemigating over open canals and waterways.

Nebraska state laws administered by the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) and by the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) prohibit the use of any chemical which is inconsistent with its label or which impairs the beneficial use of any water resource within the state. Virtually all agricultural pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers are labeled to prohibit both the direct and indirect application into surface water. The NDEQ and local Natural Resources Districts regulate chemigation and water resource protection in Nebraska through the Clean Water Act and the Nebraska Chemigation Act.

With this in mind, UNWNRD, NDA and NDEQ advise all ag producers that any direct application or indirect runoff of chemically-treated water is a violation of state law and could result in enforcement action against the applicator. We encourage all producers to sincerely consider the protection of our water resources and aquatic ecosystems when applying pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers through irrigation systems. For more information regarding chemigation regulations, please call the UNWNRD at 308-432-6190, the NDA at 402-471-2341 or the NDEQ at 402- 471-4255.