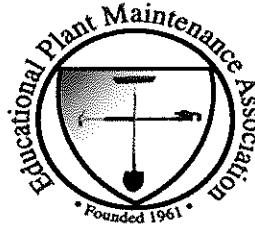


AUG 12 2020



Andrew R. Madura
President

Mark Hager
Vice President

Shelley Phillips
Treasurer

To Whom It May Concern:

Over forty Facilities and Transportation Directors from schools all around the state met virtually via Zoom on Thursday August 6 to discuss the use of electromagnetic sprayers to apply disinfectants in our schools and on our bus fleets in an effort to respond to enhanced cleaning and disinfecting in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. We have been told that, due to a Maine law stating that the use of battery powered spraying devices is only allowed if one holds a pesticide applicators license, unlicensed school employees cannot use these devices. Given the timing of learning this information, there is not enough reasonable time for us or enough of our staff members to become licensed before the start of school.

While we appreciate and understand that laws are put in place for a reason, most of us, as IPM coordinators for our school departments, also know that the increased demand for disinfection of surfaces, and no additional personnel to help with this increased workload, forces the need for us to utilize machines like these electromagnetic sprayers. The devices do several things to assist us in making our schools, buses and school facilities safe:

- 1.) Because the particles are charged electronically, the particles seek to adhere immediately to surfaces. Compared to hand pump sprayers and spray bottles, the risk is LOWER, for airborne contamination and contaminated air quality. John Pietroski from the Maine Board of Pesticide Control could not answer the question as to the logic of how these devices work differently than the already approved hand pump sprayers and stated he did not have experience using an electro-static sprayer for disinfectant use, he added that he had heard positive feedback from a few applicators. Mr. Pietroski however did point out that all disinfectants have potential to be harmful to the applicators and the public. The applicator needs to follow the disinfectant label and the equipment instructions.
- 2.) They reduce the amount of disinfectant needed to cover a surface, as the particles are smaller and adhere immediately. This reduces the overuse of chemicals that pump sprayers and bottles cause, thereby helping keep our budgets for disinfectants under control and treated areas safer by not overapplying disinfectants.

3.) They allow more area to be covered more quickly and evenly by the same or fewer staff with less chemical. ALL of us as school facilities leaders are understaffed during this global pandemic, as we are being asked to perform more cleaning and disinfecting in the same amount of time.

The COVID-19 pandemic is an unprecedented situation that none of us has ever seen or experienced before. We hope to never have to deal with it again during our lifetimes. Our goals in fighting this pandemic are the same: ***Keep our students and staff safe.*** In no way do any of us want to flout the law or have an unreasonable exception made to randomly spray harmful chemicals. Our staff members have been and will continue to be trained in safety matters including the appropriate, safe and responsible ways to apply disinfectants to keep our schools and all of our facilities safe for all.

Please allow for an exemption or waiver to be made to this law, even if it is temporary, so that we can continue to do our jobs in the best and safest way we know how and combat the spread of COVID-19 virus.

Sincerely, Yours

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Madura', with a large loop at the start and a long, sweeping underline.

Andrew R Madura
President
Maine Educational Plant Maintenance Association

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