Secure Dangerous Chemicals in the Farm

Dean Ross
Extension Dairy Educator
Southeast Michigan

Millions of tons of farm chemicals are used annually in the United States, often with little concern for the potential for poisoning or misuse related to accidental, criminal or terrorist activities. Security considerations for these chemicals are important and should be on your radar screen. Planning is important in preventing or dealing with theft, loss or accidental spill of chemicals. Consider the following to enhance security in your farm.

Security for Bulk Storage and Holding Tanks.
Secure bulk storage with locks and secondary security fencing. Additional deterrents include dogs and electronic security such as alarms and video monitoring. Surround bulk storage with a secondary containment system to prevent the further spreading of minor spills or catastrophic discharges.

Secure chemical and fertilizer transport tanks and equipment when left in the field. Do not leave them isolated and close to the road. Notify local police when leaving chemicals in the field. Provide portable spill containment materials for use in the field. Train employees in spill containment. Label storage appropriately. Signs should have emergency contact information.

Security of Storage Facilities.
Ensure chemical storage facilities are locked when not in use and maintain a current inventory of hazardous chemicals and pesticides. Modify the inventory as materials are used. Store this inventory or a duplicate outside the storage area in case of emergency or fire. Good records should include chemical name, active ingredient, date of purchase, location and volume stored. Good inventory management will help reduce costs by minimizing the amount of expensive chemicals on hand at any one time.

Keeping storage areas neat and organized increases the ability to detect theft and tampering. Broken locks, doors and windows will be more quickly and easily identified should theft or vandalism take place.

MSU Extension Bulletin E-2335, On-Farm Agrichemical Storage & Handling provides more information on this topic. It can be purchased at your county Extension office or from the MSU Bulletin office at <http://www.emdc.msue.msu.edu>.
Reference
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