Soap kills insects

Many gardeners now are using soap on their plants, not on their laundry.

S.F. Condrashoff of Victoria, British Columbia said that soaps are making a comeback as pest-control agents.

"Our product is a blend of specific fatty acids selected for their high toxicity to insects and is not the same as washing soap," said Mr. Condrashoff, whose company, Safer Agro-Chem Limited, markets an insecticidal soap.

Pure soaps are made from fatty acids which are found everywhere, from a persons's skin to the laundry room. Fifty years ago soap was used as a pesticide, a role Mr. Condrashoff hopes it will play again.

In the early 1970s George Puritch, a Canadian Forestry Service scientist, accidentally discovered that a fatty acid killed 100 per cent of a balsam woolly aphid colony in a pesticide test. Mr. Puritch's research has since included testing each soap individually and identifying those most effective for killing insects with the least effect on plants.

The fatty acids from which the soaps are made are natural plant and animal products and are ingested every day as part of the human diet. Fatty acids are a natural constituent of human skin and one of the barriers against disease-causing fungus in humans.

"Besides controlling the balsam woolly aphid in forest nurseries, the winter moth is controlled on Vancouver Island with the combined application of insecticidal soap and methozychlor," Mr. Condrashoff said.

"Soaps are ideal for controlling pests on plants which decorate shopping malls, hospitals and public buildings. Commercial greenhouse operators are using insecticidal soap for control of aphids, spider mites and whitefly. Foresters in North Carolina are excited about the possibility of controlling spider mites on Frazer fir, an important Christmas tree species."

The insecticidal soap has little effect on beneficial insects such as honey bees, beetles and parasitic wasps. As far as man is concerned it has many benefits. It is safe to use in mass spraying with no danger to the skin or respiratory system and does not corrode equipment.

Mobile radio communications system integrates Nova Scotia

The province of Nova Scotia has in operation a communications system that helps to provide dependable mobile radio services enabling the government to serve the public efficiently and react quickly to emergencies.

The Nova Scotia government, in cooperation with the federal Department of Communications (DOC) began work in 1978 on an integrated radio network linking provincial government agencies and other organizations.

The result is a microwave trunk and VHF (very high frequency) repeater network ringing the province. It provides high technology communications and dependable, continuous radio coverage throughout the province.

When the system went into effect in summer 1980, participants included senior provincial officials, the provincial departments of lands and forests, highways, health services such as local ambulance corps and fire departments. Other agencies are being included gradually.

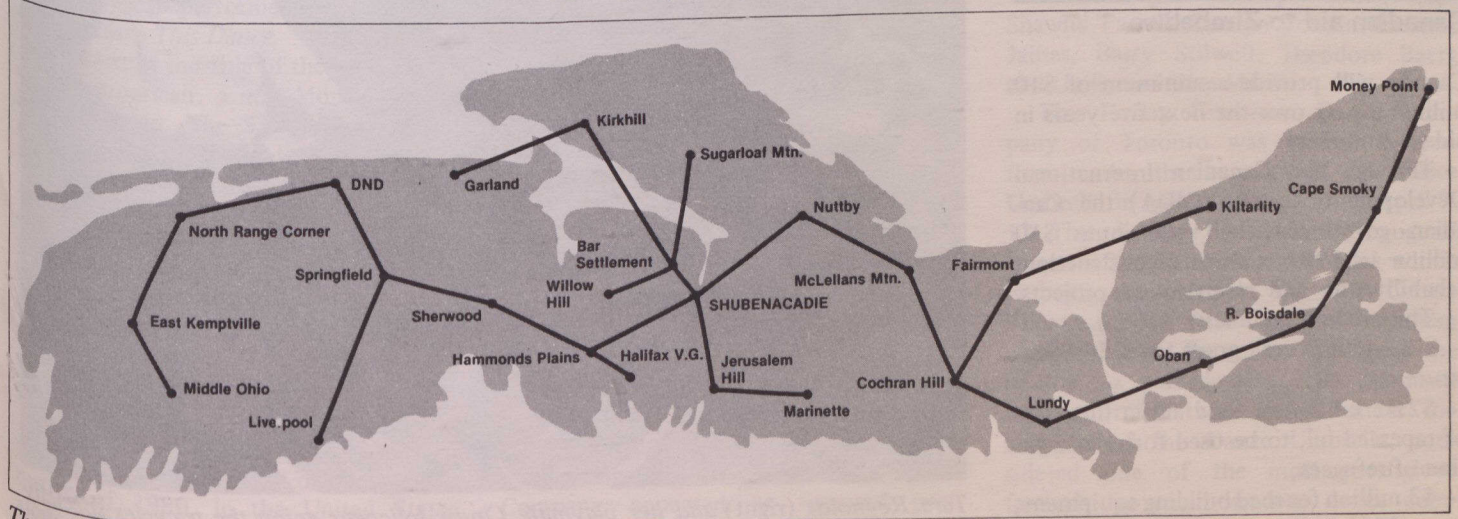
Using the integrated radio network, a fire line boss fighting a forest fire can radio the operator of the highways department road grader; an ambulance driver can call the snow plow operator; or a municipal police officer can call the local fire department.

Some participating agencies already had mobile radio systems when the project started two years ago; others did not. In addition, equipment to be integrated into the network included scanning multichannel mobiles, hand-held walkie-talkies, back pack sets, micro-wave links and VHF repeaters.

To date, more than 75 VHF frequencies and 34 microwave channels have been assigned by DOC. Base, repeater and relay stations have been authorized at more than 120 locations.

So far, the province has spent $6 million for design, construction and maintenance of the network. The 26 main repeater and microwave sites (many already owned by the province) have been fully equipped with all-weather roads, standby power, new buildings and towers. An extensive, 24-hour-a-day status monitoring system has been introduced to detect interference or breakdowns.

(From Modulation, *January 1981.)*



The integrated mobile radio system covers virtually the entire province. Map shows trunk network and mobile repeater stations.