



# School Pesticide Monitor

A Bi-Monthly Bulletin on Pesticides and Alternatives  
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Vol. 10 No. 4 2010

## Grassroots Efforts Make Resounding Impacts on Local Pesticide Policies

**A** nine-year old environmental activist led a group of about two dozen other children in an organized protest against the potential use of herbicides on Boulder, Colorado city parks. The third grader was disturbed to learn that an advisory committee in his community had approved two new herbicides on the parks where he loves to play kickball and baseball.

The Integrated Pest Management Subcommittee - made up of representatives of three city boards - recommended that Boulder add the herbicides Tenacity and Barricade to the list of allowed turf treatments. Both Tenacity and Barricade are used to

prevent broad-leaf weeds in grass. The active ingredient in Tenacity is called mesotrione, which, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), has been linked to ocular, liver and kidney effects, and may disrupt the developing nervous system in children. Barricade is made up of the active ingredient proflaminate, which is classified as a possible human carcinogen and is a suspected endocrine disruptor. Warning labels say that expectant mothers, infants and children "should not come into contact with or have any exposure to Tenacity."

"I didn't think it was right," he said. "The children of this generation should

be able to grow up without worrying about the air they're breathing or the grass they're playing on."

The child protesters gathered in front of the Boulder County Courthouse on the Pearl Street Mall waving hand-lettered signs that read: "Let us play in clean parks;" "We love dandelions;" and "Babies crawl in parks. No Spray!"

One eleven-year old asked: "You know that big oil slick in the Gulf of Mexico? Maybe you've heard of it? As many people are trying to stop that, that's how many people I want trying to stop these chemicals on our parks!"

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## Indiana Schools Propose Mandatory Pesticide Reduction Policy

**A**fter nearly a decade of failed voluntary pesticide guidelines, the Indiana Pesticide Board tentatively approved a set of mandatory rules for Indiana Schools to help minimize pesticide exposure to students.

These new requirements include banning the use of pesticides when students are present, keeping pesticides locked in storage areas where students do not have access, providing advance notice of pesticide applications, and using pesticides with the lowest hazards to children.

Paul Rivas, the district's director of facilities, trained custodians, teachers and staff in ways to keep the district's

nine elementary schools, three middle schools, and high school clean in order to avoid attracting pests. The shelving in kitchen pantries are raised at least eight inches off the floor so workers can sweep crumbs out from underneath, and staff has sealed up cracks on the outside and installed extra weather stripping to block pest entrances.

Mr. Rivas estimated that these measures have saved his district between \$6,000 and \$10,000 a year by reducing the need for pesticides.

In addition to these techniques, Beyond Pesticides recommends taking pesticide reduction a step further by developing a defined Integrated Pest

Management (IPM) program that seeks to prevent pest problems with non-chemical management strategies and only using least-toxic pesticides as a last resort. IPM relies on a combination of methods that address sanitation, structural repair, mechanical measures, biological controls and other non-chemical methods inside buildings and additional approaches for turf and ornamental plant management that build healthy soil and natural resistance to pests.

These least-toxic measures are imperative to ensuring a healthy environment, since children are especially vulnerable to the health hazards associated with

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# Urge Your Local School to Adopt the Triclosan-Free Model Resolution

Last year, we encouraged parents, educators and school staff to help get triclosan out of schools and homes with our fact sheet, *What's the Right Answer to the Germ Question*. This year, as children and educators gear up to go back-to-school, Beyond Pesticides has drafted a model resolution to make it even easier for schools to adopt a triclosan-free policy.

Encourage your local school, municipality, institution or company to use their buying power to go triclosan-free and urge them to adopt the model resolution which aims to end the unnecessary non-medical uses of the toxic chemical triclosan.

The resolution sites the many adverse health effects that are associated with the chemical, including skin irritation, immunotoxic and neurotoxic reactions, and the ability to bioaccumulate in fatty tissues.

Newly released data from the Centers

for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) finds that levels of triclosan in humans have increased by 50% since 2004. Moreover, a study by the University of Toledo shows that triclosan and triclocarbon, a similar compound, can enter the food chain through use of contaminated water or fertilizer on agricultural crops.

The resolution also demonstrates that the effectiveness of triclosan is both reduced by widespread use, and, for handwashing, is no greater at killing bacteria than soap and water. The CDC recommends that children wash their hands several times a day for 20 seconds or the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice.

According to CDC, hands should be washed: before preparing or eating food; after going to the bathroom; after changing diapers; before and after tending to someone who is sick; after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; after handling an animal or animal

waste; after handling garbage; before and after treating a cut or wound.

Since the 2004 publication of "The Ubiquitous Triclosan," Beyond Pesticides has been exposing the dangers of this toxic chemical. Now, along with Food and Water Watch and over 80 environmental and public health groups, Beyond Pesticides is leading a national grassroots movement calling for the ban of triclosan from consumer products. Beyond Pesticides is calling on school districts, along with manufacturers, retailers, local businesses and communities to wash their hands of triclosan and protect our nation's waters and public health from this toxic pesticide.

To read the Triclosan-Free Model Resolution in its entirety and to learn more about this grassroots campaign, including more information on how to get triclosan out of your school, see our triclosan homepage: [www.beyondpesticides.org/antibacterial](http://www.beyondpesticides.org/antibacterial).

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## Indiana Schools

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pesticide exposure due to their small size, greater intake of air and food relative to body weight, and developing organ systems. Several commonly used pesticides are known to cause or exacerbate asthma symptoms, and a growing body of research shows that

pesticide exposure can adversely affect a child's neurological, respiratory, immune, and endocrine system, even at low levels.

To address the issue of IPM in schools Beyond Pesticides helped draft Federal legislation, the School Environment Protection Act of 2009 (SEPA). This

bill has been introduced by Rep. Rush Holt and would protect school children from pesticides used both indoors and on all school grounds nationwide. The legislation also bans the use of synthetic fertilizers. To learn more about this legislation and help its passage, see Beyond Pesticides' Children and School's page.

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## Grassroots Efforts

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In response to the pressure from the community, Boulder's city manager announced in May that they will spend \$50,000 to study the process by which chemicals are approved for use on city property.

In many communities across the country, people are taking a stand against the use of pesticides. Concerns for children's exposure, have prompted

many cities to reduce their use in public spaces.

The city of Anchorage, Alaska cancelled plans to spray the herbicides 2,4-D and dicamba on a popular city park because of concerns for the safety of the children who play there. Members from the grassroots group, Alaska Community Action on Toxics (ACAT) discussed their concerns during a public meeting with the Anchorage Assembly. Under pressure from the group, the mayor

later announced that spraying would be cancelled and dandelions would have to be removed by hand.

Concerned about the pesticides in your community and the impact it has on children? Be a voice for change in your neighborhood! All it takes is a few voices to organize for reform. For more information on what you can do to eliminate unnecessary pesticide use, visit Beyond Pesticides Lawn and Landscapes program page.