

Pesticides and You

News from the National Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticides (NCAMP)

One in a Series of NCAMP "How-To's"

Assessing State Pesticide Pollution

Pesticide use triggers a long list of risks related to manufacturing, transportation, storage, mixing, loading, application, disposal and residue. Here are some ideas for painting a picture of transportation through disposal risks in your state.

Not all states collect and report data on all avenues of exposure to pesticides, and the data is never complete. Information may be scattered in a number of different agencies, though in some states one agency, for example the state Right-to-Know office, may collect data from several others.

••**Transportation spills** are a regular occurrence. Contact the state department of transportation and ask about spills of pesticides and agricul-

tural chemicals. The state fire chief and local fire departments often keep records of spills and other accidents.

••**Accidents** at production facilities and storage sites are common. Fire departments, the state emergency response unit for hazardous materials accidents, and the state Right-to-Know office are all potential sources of information about accidents. EPA's *Chemicals in Your Community: A Guide to the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act* lists state contacts.

••**Poisonings** may be reported to poison control centers or hospitals. A few states keep records of poisonings in the agency that regulates pesticides or the health department. Farmworker organizations and clinics may also record

occupational poisonings.

••**Mixing and loading spills** may be handled by the state agency that regulates pesticides, the spill response agency, or the agency that regulates hazardous waste.

••**Contaminated sites** potentially requiring attention under Superfund or a state clean-up program should be listed by the state lead agency for the Superfund program. These may include storage, disposal and treatment sites.

••**Wildlife poisonings** and fish kills related to pesticide use may be recorded by the state wildlife or fish and game agency, or the state environmental agency. The state apiarist, usually affiliated with the cooperative extension agency, may have an estimate of the number of beehives affected.

NCAMP would like to know how much environmental damage pesticides are doing in your state.