National Coalition for Pesticide-Free Lawns

Supporting healthy lawns and landscapes without the use of toxic pesticides

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-- GRASSROOTS ACTION ALERT --

With 195 million acres of state-owned and managed property across the country, statewide laws requiring environmentally sound pest management practices can have a significant impact on protecting the public and environment from unnecessary and toxic pesticide use. Yet, according to Beyond Pesticides' recent report, *Ending Toxic Dependency: The State of IPM*, existing state laws regulating pest management on state property, including buildings and land, allow broad dependency on toxic pesticides, while only four states call for pesticide reduction and alternatives. Download the report at www.beyondpesticides.org/stateipm.

The report, focusing on state provisions addressing integrated pest management (IPM), supports the need for defined and effective state IPM and organic programs, codified in policy and effectively carried out.

Overview of Findings:

- Ten states have IPM policies, yet they fail to incorporate all eight essential components of IPM;
- Four of the ten states adopt the IPM policy goal of pesticide reduction or curtailing unnecessary pesticide use;
- Only two of the four states with specific pesticide reduction goals have a mandatory program;
- Six states adopt the IPM definition most promoted by the chemical and pest control industry – a combination of methods without priority being given to non-chemical practices and absent toxic reduction or elimination goals and least-toxic chemicals;
- None of the state policies requires organic practices for management of state lands;

The report findings raise critical questions about the lack of serious effort by state governments to put in place IPM programs on state property. If the ten states that have adopted some form of an IPM policy affecting public property were to correct existing deficiencies and fully implement these policies, then 31% of the nation's population would be protected from unnecessary pesticide use on state-owned public areas.

IPM Definition:

In the 10 states that have codified in state law IPM practices for state owned or managed property, two types of IPM definitions emerge:

Non-prioritized Tactical IPM. With non-prioritized tactical IPM, the state IPM practices are defined as a combination of pest management methods (2 states: MI, MN) with no priority for pesticide or hazard reduction. Additional states specify IPM as a combined method that minimizes health and/or environmental risks (1 state: OR), as well as economic risks (4 states: AZ, OH, WA). However, this definition can be and is generally interpreted from the perspective of the health and economic risks of not using pesticides, as opposed to analyzing the real hazards or uncertainties (because of inadequate health and environmental effects testing of pesticides) associated with pesticide use.

Prioritized Strategic IPM. With first tier prioritized strategic IPM, state IPM policy seeks to reduce or eliminate hazardous pesticide use on state-owned property and requires the use of clearly defined least-toxic pesticides only as a last resort (2 states: CA, NJ). With second tier prioritized strategic IPM, state IPM policy seeks to reduce or minimize pesticide use, or unnecessary use, and adopt non-chemical practices, while using least-toxic pesticides without specifically requiring a last resort determination (CT, ME). The state of Maine's policy limits pesticide use to "low impact pesticides."

Take Action:

Urge your state to adopt a strong policy regarding toxic chemical use in the management of state-owned and leased property. States must adopt policies (through action of the state legislature or agency regulation) to manage state property with IPM and organic practices that are clearly defined with the goal of eliminating hazardous and unnecessary pesticide use, address the eight essential IPM program components, and ensure adequate funding, full coordination, accountability and enforcement. States should repeal preemption of local authority to restrict pesticides on private property.

States should encourage local jurisdictions to adopt policies and private property owners to put in place programs that ensure IPM and organic principles of eliminating toxic pesticide use.

To sign the National Declaration on the Use of Toxic Lawn Pesticides and pledge your lawn or landscape as organic, please visit www.beyondpesticides.org/lawns, call Beyond Pesticides at (202) 543-5450 or send an email to info@beyondpesticides.org.