



# BEYOND PESTICIDES

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## **Widespread Toxic Chemical Use Allowed by States on Public Property**

*State laws regulating pest management allow broad dependency on toxic pesticides, while four states call for pesticide reduction and alternatives*

Washington, DC, July 25, 2007 - With increasing public concern about the use of toxic and polluting pesticides because of adverse impacts on people and the environment, a national study finds that states are lagging behind on “green” standards for managing their state lands and buildings. The report, ***Ending Toxic Dependency: The State of IPM***, to be published in the Summer issue of *Pesticides and You*, finds that statewide integrated pest management (IPM) laws do not exist in 40 states and the District of Columbia, and existing laws in only 10 states are limited and mostly inadequate.

Only four states call for pesticide reduction and alternatives that do not rely on toxic chemicals in their IPM law. Six of the 10 states adopt the 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.

“While people are increasingly concerned about pollution, global warming, and fossil fuel use, state legislatures have a responsibility to ensure that pest management practices on state property are environmentally sound,” said Jay Feldman, executive director of Beyond Pesticides, and co-author of the report. “The toxic and petroleum-based pesticides are not needed and it’s wrong for states to do nothing or fall short of their responsibility to health and the environment,” Mr. Feldman said. The report cites 195 million acres of state land that would be affected by statewide laws requiring environmentally sound pest management practices.

In the report, Beyond Pesticides, a Washington, DC-based national clearinghouse and advocacy organization focused on pesticide hazards and alternatives, evaluates the states’ definition of IPM and essential components that it says are key to effective programs that trade toxic pesticides for sound public health and environmental practices. For buildings, these include sanitation, structural repairs, moisture control, maintenance, and biological controls. Outdoors, practices include planting proper plant varieties, soil health and natural fertilization.

Local governments across the country in 17 states have adopted ordinances that phase-out toxic pesticides on public property. Forty-one states prohibit towns and cities in their state from restricting pesticide use on private land.