SCHOOL PESTICIDE REFORM PROTOCOL

A Proclamation for the Protection of Schoolchildren from Pests and Pesticides

WHEREAS, Children are particularly vulnerable to pesticide exposure due to their physiological and behavioral characteristics.[1]

WHEREAS, Pesticides are commonly used in school buildings and on school grounds.[2] Schools in poor condition or inadequately maintained tend to suffer from pest problems.

WHEREAS, Over 53 million children and 6 million adults, 20% of the U.S. population, attend schools.[3] Schools are the building blocks of communities and the keystone of our future.

WHEREAS, School age children have the highest asthma prevalence rate.[4] Learning and developmental disabilities among children is widespread.[5] The number of children with cancer has been rising.[6] There are consistent links between pesticide exposure and serious illnesses such as asthma,[7] cancer,[8] and reproductive and neurological problems.[9]

WHEREAS, Parents and guardians, and school staff wish to, and have a right to be notified in advance of any use of a pesticide in their school.

WHEREAS, The use of an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program that emphasizes non-chemical methods of pest prevention and management, such as sanitation and maintenance, and the use of the least hazardous pesticide as a last resort will eliminate or significantly reduce the use of and exposure to pesticides while controlling pest populations.[10]

WHEREAS, IPM complements other important goals of school maintenance and administration, including energy conservation, food safety, and security. Many schools report long-term economic benefits when IPM methods are adopted.[11]

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT NATIONAL, STATE AND LOCAL DECISION-MAKERS, SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND STAFF, AND INDIVIDUALS THROUGHOUT COMMUNITIES:

1. Significantly reduce, and where possible eliminate, the use of hazardous pesticides in schools in order to protect children and adults from pesticide exposure while effectively managing pests.

2. Support and promote the adoption of safer pest management practices, such as Integrated Pest Management, that are based on prevention, habitat modification, good soil health, and non-toxic strategies, and use of the least toxic pesticides when needed as a last resort.

3. Discontinue the use of all pesticides that are known or suspected to be carcinogenic, mutagenic, neurotoxic, endocrine or reproductive toxins to humans or those pesticide products that have the highest acute toxicity. End the practice of calendar-based pesticide spraying and the application of pesticides for aesthetic purposes. Prohibit the application of a pesticide in an area that is occupied or may soon be occupied.

4. Use a precautionary approach when making pest management decisions by asking how little harm is possible rather than asking how much harm is allowable.

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Agricultural Resources Center (NC); **Beyond Pesticides; Alaska Community Action on Toxics** (AL) **California Safe Schools** (CA); **California for Pesticide Reform** (CA); **Center for Health, Environment and Justice** (VA**)**; **Environment & Human Health, Inc.** (CT); **Environment California** (CA); **Healthy Schools Network** (NY); **Improving Kids Environment** (IN); **IPM Network of North America** (WI); **Kid for Saving Earth/MN Children's Health Environment Coalition** (MN); **LocalMotion** (MI); **Maryland Pesticide Network** (MD); **Mississippi 2020 Network** (MS); **New Jersey Environmental Federation** (NJ); **Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides** (OR); **Pennsylvania Clean Water Action** (PA); **Safer Pest Control Project** (IL); **Texans for Alternatives to Pesticides** (TX); **Toxics Action Center** (MA); **Urban-Ag Ecology** (CA)**; Vermont Public Interest Research Group** (VT); **Virginia Health and Environment Project** (VA); **Washington Toxics Coalition** (WA).

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[2] Schools in several states have been surveyed for the pesticide use and pest management practices by government and non-governmental organizations. Beyond Pesticides compiled the information into the *48 Commonly Used Pesticides In Schools* fact sheet. http://www.beyondpesticides.org/schools/publications

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