

School Pesticide Monitor

A Bi-monthly Bulletin on Pesticides and Alternatives

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Beyond Pesticides / National Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticides
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Another School District Finds Success in Implementing IPM

Three middle schools in the Kyrene School District, Maricopa County, Arizona have been successfully implementing an integrated pest management (IPM) program that has reduced pesticide use by more than 90% and reduced pest populations by 85%. Dawn Gouge, urban entomologist with the University of Arizona and director of the pilot project, stated that their "IPM in schools project is aimed at offering a better alternative to the routine chemical spraying currently used by most of [their] school districts."

"Frequently the routine sprays are ineffective and increasing numbers of parents are keeping students home for a day or two after the monthly sprays," reports Ms. Gouge. Project coordinators reported no significant changes in the cost of implementing the IPM program at the three schools. Teachers and students are involved in the program as they check and monitor traps and identify insect pests. Common pest problems identified by the program include bark scorpions, *Culex* mosquitoes, southern fire ants and Turkestan cockroaches.

The IPM program is being expanded in Spring 2001 to all 27 schools in the Kyrene School District because of its incredible success. Ms. Gouge also states that the project coordinators plan to start additional pilot programs in the Navajo Nation, New Mexico and Las Vegas, Nevada.

Beyond Pesticides/NCAMP has identified over 100 school districts that are implementing alternatives to conventional hazardous pesticides around the

What is Integrated Pest Management (IPM)?

Integrated Pest Management is a program of prevention, monitoring, and control which offers the opportunity to eliminate or drastically reduce the use of pesticides, and to minimize the toxicity of and exposure to any products which are used. IPM does this by utilizing a variety of methods and techniques, including cultural, biological and structural strategies to control a multitude of pest problems, and, if nontoxic options are unreasonable and have been exhausted, least toxic pesticides.

IPM is a term that is used loosely with many different definitions and methods of implementation. IPM can mean virtually anything the practitioner wants it to mean. Beware of chemical dependent programs masquerading as IPM. *For more information on IPM contact Beyond Pesticides/NCAMP or see www.beyondpesticides.org or www.safetysource.tv*

country, proving that alternatives work.

Kyrene School District's push to go IPM is yet another example that the tools and experience to control school pests without using toxic chemicals are available and have proven to be effective and economical. *For information on how-to get your school to adopt an IPM program and provide right-to-know information regarding pesticide use or for information on the list of school districts implementing such programs, contact Beyond Pesticides/NCAMP or see www.beyondpesticides.org.*

Arsenic Found to Leach from Playground Equipment

An article in the *New York Times* (3/22/01) reports sections of three Miami-area parks were closed after researchers found that poisonous arsenic had leached into the soil from wood pressure treated with copper chromium arsenic (CCA), which contains chromium VI. The *St. Petersburg Times* has been running a series of special reports addressing the risks associated with arsenic after finding ten times higher levels of arsenic leaking from the treated

wood than those considered safe by the state of Florida. In addition, the findings of a study conducted by the University of Miami and the University of Florida found an average of 28 parts per million of arsenic in soil sampled from sites across the state, far above the level of 0.8 parts per million that the state considers safe. This news comes on the heels of EPA's announcement that the agency will abandon the new arsenic levels for drinking water that had been approved by the Clinton administration.

Recent studies show that low-dose exposure to arsenic may increase the risk of certain types of cancer, diabetes and vascular disease. Arsenic in drinking water was confirmed to cause bladder, lung, and skin cancer, and suspected to cause kidney and liver cancer in a 1999 report by the National Academy of Sciences, *Arsenic in Drinking Water*. Researchers at the Dartmouth Medical School have discovered that, unlike most other endocrine disruptors that block or mimic the estrogen hormone, arsenic disrupts the glucocorticoid receptor, which regulates a variety of biological processes.

Beyond Pesticides/NCAMP's investigative reports on pressure-

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The Connecticut Department of Health in 1998 issued the following warning on CCA:

"It is now clear that exposure from CCA-treated wood can be the major source of arsenic for children who frequently play on CCA-treated playscapes, tree houses, or decks... Arsenic is easily taken up onto hands from simple contact with the wood surface. Young children with frequent hand-to-mouth activity may swallow some of this arsenic ... should be prevented from playing underneath CCA-treated structures, including backyard playscapes, to minimize exposure to soil which may be contaminated with arsenic."

treated wood, *Poison Poles: A Report on Their Toxic Trail and the Safer Alternatives* and *Pole Pollution: New Utility Pole Chemical Risks Identified by EPA While Survey Shows Widespread Contamination*, find that the chemicals used as wood preservatives are among the most toxic pesticides known to humankind. Next to chlorine, wood preservatives used in pressure treated lumber constitute the single largest pesticide use in the U.S., accounting for nearly one billion pounds annually.

Beyond Pesticides/NCAMP began to work for a more responsible federal policy on these chemicals back in the early 1980s when EPA put them into a special review process because of the recognized hazards associated with their continued use.

There are alternatives to preservative treated wood, including recycled steel, plastics, and concrete. The *St. Petersburg Times* reported that Disney stopped using wood treated with CCA at its Animal Kingdom, due to concern for the animals.

For more information on pressure treated wood contact Greg Kidd, Beyond Pesticides/NCAMP's legal and science policy director, gkidd@beyondpesticides.org.

Eight State School Pesticide Laws Are in the Works

2001 looks like it could be another banner year for states to take some necessary steps in addressing children's exposure to pesticides while at school.

The momentum to protect children from school pesticide use continues to grow. The eight state bills demonstrate the varying political climate in state legislatures and industry pressure across the country. Based on Beyond Pesticides/NCAMP's report, *The Schooling of State Pesticide Laws – 2000*, just over half the states, or 31 states have

adopted pesticide acts and regulations that address the protection of children by specifically focusing on pesticide use in, around or near schools. Between 1999 and 2000, six states passed laws that strengthened their existing laws regarding this issue and two states, for the first time, passed legislation to attempt to protect children while at school. For a copy of *The Schooling of State Pesticide Laws – 2000*, see www.beyondpesticides.org.

Beyond Pesticides/NCAMP has a *Model School Pest Management Act* for state governments seeking to protect children and school employees from pesticides. Beyond Pesticides/NCAMP's *Model* has been introduced in Rhode Island and was the basis for the Tennessee bill. For a copy of the *Model School Pest Management Act*, contact Beyond Pesticides/NCAMP.

States with School Pesticide Laws in their Legislatures:

- **California** *Pesticide Use Near Schools* (AB 947), passed, as amended, the Environmental Safety & Toxic Materials Committee and referred to the Education Committee
- **Indiana** *Pesticide Use in Public and Private Schools and Day Care Centers* (HB 1250), referred to the Education Committee
- **New York** *Children's Environmental Health & Safety Bill of Rights Act* (AB 6024), referred to the Education Committee
- **Pennsylvania** *Notification of Pesticide Treatments at Schools* (SB 705), referred to the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee
- **Rhode Island** *School Pest Management Act* (S 660), referred to the Committee on Health, Education and Welfare
- **Tennessee** *Child Care Centers Pest Management Act* (HB 591 and SB 1331) and *Tennessee School Pest Management Act* (HB 1180 and SB 1566), each referred to different committees
- **Washington** *Children's Pesticide Right-to-know Act* (HB 1451 and SB 5533), passed out of committees in both the House and Senate with different sets of strengthening amendments
- **Wyoming** *Pesticides in Schools* (HB28), passed both State Houses