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Governor Rell Signs Law Extending Ban Use of Pesticides on School Grounds

At a ceremony today at East Hartford High School, Governor M. Jodi Rell signed HB 5234, An Act Banning Pesticide Use on School Grounds.

The new law, effective October 1, extends the ban on the use of lawn care pesticides at public schools from elementary school to grades 6, 7 and 8.

The new law also expands a school superintendent's ability to authorize emergency applications of lawn care pesticides in health emergencies and makes the state Department of Environmental Protection responsible for administering and enforcing school pesticide applications.

“This law will help protect the health of more than 100,000 Connecticut middle school students,” Governor Rell said. “While pesticides are known to be detrimental to people of all ages, we must take extra precautions to ensure that our young people are protected from potential harm. Today, we take another step toward better protection of our children by reducing unnecessary exposure to harmful chemicals.”

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Gov. Rell Speaks at the School Ground Pesticide Ban Bill signing at East Hartford High School

“This law is good for our children, good for the environment and good for our efforts to promote public health and well-being. Children and their parents deserve the peace of mind of knowing that we are endeavoring to make their schools as safe as possible.”

The measure phases out use of toxic lawn care pesticides at schools by July 1, 2009. Professional violators who knowingly break the law may be fined up to \$5,000,

imprisoned for up to one year, or both. A private applicator or other person who knowingly violates the law may be fined up to \$1,000, jailed for up to 30 days, or both.

Toxic lawn care pesticides are linked to health impacts including cancer, birth defects, and learning disabilities. Unnecessary use of pesticides at schools increases children’s exposure and risk of adverse health effects.

The bill passed 140-9 in the House and 35-0 in the Senate.

According to the state Department of Education, as of 2006 there were 212,292 public school students in grades 1-5 and 131,210 public school students in grades 6-8.



Governor Rell signs An Act Banning Pesticide Use on School Grounds at East Hartford High School on June 18, 2007

Governor Rell chose the high school for the bill signing ceremony because State Sen. Gary LeBeau and State Representative Henry Genga - who both represent East Hartford in the Connecticut General Assembly - are set to retire from the school system this week.

“On behalf of the state of Connecticut, I commend Sen. LeBeau and Rep. Genga for their outstanding teaching careers and thank them for their many years of dedicated service,” Governor Rell said.

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