

Recommendations By Level of Government

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

PACKAGING

- Lawn-care pesticide products should be contained in packaging that will neither tear nor rip.
- Lawn-care pesticide packaging should prevent pesticide vapors from escaping so that odors cannot be detected.
- All consumer lawn-care pesticide packaging should be required to be childproof, as are some other pesticide products under current law.



LABELING

- Pesticide labels should be required to warn consumers of long-term (chronic) health risks, such as carcinogenicity, reproductive effects, and neurotoxicity. Currently, only acute health risks must be labeled.
- All warnings and instructions for safe use, storage, disposal and emergency advice should be printed in type not less than 18 points in size.

RISKS FROM LAWN-CARE PESTICIDES

- Fifty percent of the front of the consumer lawn-care packaging should be required to contain:
 - (1) pesticide or pesticides contained in the product;
 - (2) what the pesticide or pesticides are designed to target;
 - (3) precautions to prevent exposures;
 - (4) protective clothing to be worn when using the product or cleaning up spills;
 - (5) emergency procedures for accidental exposures;
 - (6) storage instructions; and
 - (7) disposal instructions.
- Labels should warn pregnant women and women expecting to become pregnant of the special hazards pesticides pose to unborn children.
- Pesticide product labels should identify all product ingredients, including “inert” ingredients. Labels should also include a summary of the acute and chronic toxicity of inert ingredients.
- Labels should include clear disposal instructions and should discourage indoor storage of partially used and open containers.



ADVERTISING REQUIREMENTS AND ADDITIONAL TESTING NEEDS FOR PESTICIDES

- Lawn-care pesticide manufacturing companies should be required to state the long-term health risks to consumers whenever they advertise their products.
- Lawn-care pesticides that are not licensed for use on food crops should be required by EPA to be tested to determine their potential chronic effects, including carcinogenicity, reproductive toxicity, developmental neurotoxicity and hormonal and immune system effects.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE STATE GOVERNMENT

- Lawn-care pesticides should not be sold indoors or near food. Stores should be required to store pesticides outdoors in a covered storage facility with non-permeable floors without floor drains.
- State law should be amended so that local governments may regulate lawn-care pesticides more strictly than the state does. Local governments should have the legal authority to create lawn-care pesticide regulations tailored to their ecological and land use conditions. Given Connecticut's heavy reliance on shallow drinking water supplies, communities should be concerned about intensive homeowner use of lawn-care pesticides.
- Establish a tax on lawn-care pesticide products. Currently the costs of monitoring, regulating, and cleaning up pesticide contamination are passed on to private individuals or local authorities. California taxes provide roughly half of the total amount spent on pesticide-related environmental protection in California (about \$50 million annually).³¹⁰
- Disposal of pesticides should be regulated as hazardous waste. Lawn-care pesticides are often discarded along with household waste. All pesticide products should be disposed of in a manner that prevents the release of pesticides to the environment, protects groundwater, and minimizes human exposures.
- Collect lawn-care pesticide sales data and make the data publicly available. Currently, no federal or state programs track the use of pesticides, other than restricted-use pesticides. Information on non-agricultural pesticide use, including applications to public and private lands, is not available. Connecticut should develop a database to track the



RISKS FROM LAWN-CARE PESTICIDES

amount of pesticides used on public and private property, including pesticide applications to parks, golf courses, cemeteries, rangeland, pastures, and along roadside and railroad rights-of-way, as well as the amount of pesticides purchased by homeowners. This information should be made available to the public. Several other states collect and release pesticide use data.^{311 312 313}

- Identify zones of highest water vulnerability to lawn-care pesticides. Consideration should be given to areas with high water tables, floodplains, proximity to water bodies and wetlands, soils, and relevant geological formations when identifying vulnerable zones. Areas within one-half mile of drinking water reservoirs should be restricted from lawn-care pesticide uses.
- Develop a formal pesticide illness reporting system. Connecticut is not listed on CDC's list of State-Based Pesticide Poisoning Surveillance Programs³¹⁴ and was not included on GAO's list of states with formal pesticide reporting systems.³¹⁵ Both the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and the National Center for Environmental Health have identified steps that are prerequisites to establishing effective state pesticide illness reporting systems, such as passing laws requiring health care professionals to report pesticide-related illness and injury conditions and improving the training of health care professionals in pesticide incident handling.³¹⁶ Connecticut should take these steps to improve the understanding of pesticide poisonings in the state and establish a reporting system for people exposed to harmful pesticides through either accidental poisonings or accidental exposures.
- Establish a water-monitoring program for pesticides in groundwater. Long-term statewide monitoring is necessary to evaluate trends in water quality.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TOWNS

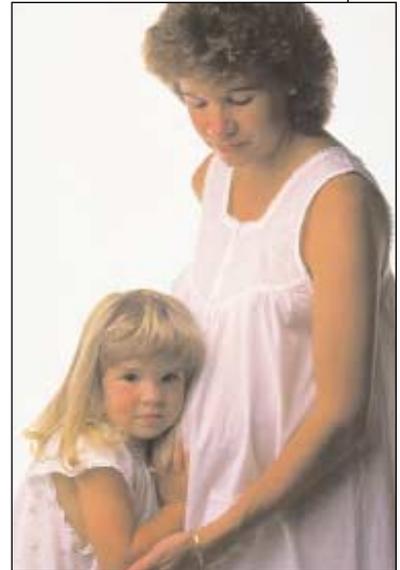
- Eliminate the use of lawn-care pesticides on town property. Towns should be especially careful to avoid use of lawn-care pesticides on their parks and athletic fields where children play.
- Educate residents to reduce their use of lawn-care pesticides. Encourage residents to avoid lawn-care pesticide use for cosmetic reasons. This is especially important in towns relying on wells for drinking water.
- Towns should demand “home-rule” so they have stricter control over lawn-care pesticides. Currently in Connecticut, towns are not allowed to have more restrictive lawn-care pesticide regulations than the state. Many towns have unique ecological and land use conditions that demand local control for the greatest protection of vulnerable water resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STORES

- Lawn-care pesticides should only be sold in covered outside facilities. These facilities should have non-permeable floors without floor drains and should be physically separated from areas containing food and other consumer products. Signs should be posted to warn consumers of the dangers of pesticides, and the need to separate them from other consumer products.
- Broken bags of lawn-care pesticides should be disposed of as hazardous waste.
- Employees should be trained in proper handling of pesticide products, including procedures to follow in the event of accidental spills.
- Large retail stores such as Walmart, Home Depot, and Lowe’s should strongly encourage the federal government to require more effective packaging to ensure protection of their customers and their work force from dangerous pesticide exposures.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS

- Avoid the use of lawn-care pesticides in order to minimize health and environmental risks. Obtain expert advice regarding non-chemical solutions to your lawn and gardening problems. Consider pesticide-free landscaping alternatives that make use of native plant species tolerant of conditions in your area.
- Pregnant women should be especially careful to avoid lawn-care pesticides. Each of the five most popular lawn-care pesticides has been associated with birth or reproductive effects.
- If pesticides are used, long-sleeved shirts, pants, gloves, and shoes should be worn during application. The majority of pesticide poisoning incidents occur after dermal (skin) and inhalation exposures. Following application, children and pets should be kept away from treated areas.
- Pesticide containers should be stored securely in a location that is not accessible to children. Take unused and unwanted pesticides to hazardous waste collection sites for disposal. These products should never be put in the regular trash or down storm drains.



- If you or your neighbors routinely use lawn-care pesticides, and your water is supplied by a residential well, have your water tested for pesticides by a professional water chemist to assure its safety.
- Residents should ask town officials to restrict the use of lawn-care pesticides on town properties, including parks and school athletic fields where children play.