

Summary of Findings

- **Widespread Use of Pesticides:** Of the 53 homeowners that volunteered to have their wells tested for pesticides, 72% used pesticides on their lawns and/or trees. This indicates a widespread use of lawn and tree care pesticides, even when drinking water wells exist beneath lawns.
- **Forty-two percent of users were regular users:** Of the 53 homeowners, 22 identified themselves as regular users of lawn and/or tree care pesticides.
- **Eleven percent of wells contained pesticide traces:** Six wells (11%) were found to have trace levels of pesticides. Five of these wells had more than one pesticide in them.
- **No research on multiple pesticides:** One well was contaminated with five pesticides. Pesticides are tested for health effects one compound at a time. There is no research on the interaction or synergy of these chemicals found together, or on their compounded effects on human health.¹
- **No guarantee of pesticide-free well water:** Choosing not to use pesticides on one's property is not a guarantee that pesticides will not be found in



¹ EPA. Goldman, L. 1998 (Dec. 9). Report to FIFRA Scientific Advisory Panel on need for additional developmental toxicity testing.

one's well water. Pesticides used in one part of a community may show up in the groundwater in another part of that community.

- **Federal licensing is no guarantee of safety:** Federal licensing of pesticides is no guarantee of safety. Federal registration of a pesticide in no way guarantees that it has been fully tested to determine toxic effects on the immune, nervous and endocrine systems of fetuses, infants and children.²



- **Safety levels set for pesticides are often compromises:** Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) that set the enforceable levels of pesticides in drinking water are often compromises between public health standards, technological feasibility, and cost. Of the seven pesticides found in this survey's

wells, only two, chlordane and lindane, have established Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs),³ showing how slow the government is in regulating the safety standards of pesticides. The government has not yet established MCLs for the majority of pesticides and other hazardous substances.

² EPA. Goldman, L. 1998 (Dec. 9). Report to FIFRA Scientific Advisory Panel on need for additional developmental toxicity testing. See also: EPA, 1998 (Nov. 30) Toxicology data requirements for assessing risks from pesticide exposure to children's health. Draft.

³ Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station Report on Woodbridge Residential Well Tests; 1998.