

# THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS



## Department of Agricultural Resources

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### THE ACT PROTECTING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FROM HARMFUL PESTICIDES OF 2000

Massachusetts Pesticide Enforcement Consumer Information Bulletin FOR SCHOOLS, DAYCARE CENTERS AND SCHOOL AGE CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

The Massachusetts Pesticide Control Act requires parents, staff, and children to receive this Consumer Information bulletin whenever pesticide applications are being made on the property of your school, daycare center or school age child care program. This bulletin is being provided to you along with a Standard Written Notification form and a Pesticide Specific Factsheet.

#### **Why am I receiving this information and what should I do when I receive it?**

The purpose of the Standard Written Notification is to provide you with information about pesticide applications which are taking place on the property of your school, day care center or school age child care program. The bulletin provides information about precautions you can take to minimize exposure to any pesticides. The Pesticide Specific Factsheets provide information about the properties of the pesticides being used.

#### **Who applies pesticides in my school, daycare center or school age child care program?**

Commercial pest management professionals, facilities managers, grounds personnel or custodians. Regardless of the approach used, the person who applies the pesticides must have a current and valid Pesticide Bureau Applicator license. Check the standard written notification form for the applicator's license number.

#### **How do I know when pesticides are being applied?**

Employees, supervised children and their guardians must receive standard written notification at least two working days prior to the application of pesticides outdoors on the property. The standard written notification form, which accompanies this bulletin, includes:

- approximate dates when the application shall commence and conclude;
- specific location of the application;
- product name, type and EPA Registration number of the pesticide;
- a Pesticide Specific Fact Sheet;
- a description of the purpose of the application and
- this Consumer Information Bulletin

The notification must also be posted in a common area of the facility at least two working days before the outdoor application is to commence and at least 72 hours after the application. Treated areas will be posted with clear and conspicuous warning signs along the perimeter. This information will be supplied to the school by the licensed pesticide applicator.

**Are applications of pesticides safe?**

All pesticides must be treated with caution. They are intended to be specifically poisonous to target pest insects, weeds, mold, fungus etc. - and may also be harmful to other living things including humans. Some degree of risk is always posed by their use. Because of this inherent risk, a number of regulatory and non-regulatory mechanisms have evolved to deal with those risks. Included among these mechanisms are pesticide regulations such as those enforced by Massachusetts Pesticide Enforcement; licensing and training of pesticide applicators; improved pesticide application methods; and the use of Integrated Pest Management (IPM).

**What precautions can I take to minimize my exposure to pesticide applications?**

There are several precautions that can be taken to reduce potential exposure to pesticides. These precautions will vary depending on where and how the pesticides are applied. Chemicals may be ingested, inhaled and absorbed through the skin. Know where the pesticide will be applied and how you might come into contact with it. Use common sense. The licensed pesticide applicator is required to post yellow signs to indicate a pesticide application on school grounds. These are some suggested general precautions. Ask the licensed pesticide applicator for other suggestions or directions specific to the work being done.

**For outdoor applications:**

- be familiar with the small yellow signs which applicators are required to post when a pesticide is applied outdoors to turf. Stay off the field until the flags are removed.
- if you are sensitive to chemicals, avoid the area of pesticide application for 72 hours.
- ensure that pets are kept away from the area of pesticide application

**For indoor applications:**

- cover or refrigerate edible products.
- remove or cover toys, clothes, and bedding from areas to be treated.
- remove pets including their food and water bowls and toys from the area to be treated.
- ventilate as much as possible during and, following an indoor pesticide application, open the windows.
- do not walk on treated areas and carpets until completely dry. Ask about drying times.

**What types of pesticides will be applied?**

Pesticide applicators may apply pesticides in several forms for control of insects and weeds. Dusts, aerosol sprays, sprays, baits, and fogs are all common forms in which pesticides exist and are used. For control of termites, the soil around the building may be impregnated with a pesticide. To control weeds, pesticides may be used as granules or sprays. Mechanical traps may also be used to control rodents.

In Massachusetts schools daycare centers and school age child care programs have to develop special pest management plans called Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plans. IPM is an approach to pest management which relies on a combination of common sense practices, including pesticides, for preventing and controlling pests. All plans are required to be submitted to the Department of Agricultural Resources. Check the MDAR website to see if your school has submitted its plan. <http://massnrc.org/ipm/index.html>

**What if I have a question or problem?**

Questions about what pesticides will be applied and why, and specific information about the application should be referred to the licensed pesticide applicator doing the work.

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, Pesticide Enforcement is responsible for enforcing the pesticide regulations and laws. Contact Pesticide Enforcement at 617-626-1781. Additional information can be found at the Pesticide Programs website: <http://www.mass.gov/agr/pesticides/>

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