



Toxics Use Reduction begins in the home, in the garden, on the lawn....

The Problem

The use of pesticides threaten our health and contaminates our food, water, soil and air. Pesticides are poisons. Pesticides can cause cancer, damage the central nervous system, endocrine system and immune system, and cause respiratory illness. Exposure to pesticides as household chemicals and in food is especially hazardous to children.

GreenCAP is the Green Decade Coalition's Committee for Alternatives to Pesticides. Our mission is to protect our health and the environment by promoting safe ecological approaches to landscaping and pest control.

About 85 percent of American homes maintain an average inventory of 3 to 4 pesticide products, including pest strips, bait boxes, bug bombs, flea collars, pesticidal pet shampoos, aerosols, granules, liquids and dusts. [1] Roughly 70 million households make more than 4 billion pesticide applications per year, an average of 57 applications per household per year. According to the National Home and Garden Pesticide Use Survey by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)...**37 percent of all U.S. households treat for insects even when there is not a major problem.** Surveys of New York and Massachusetts show that schools routinely use a variety of pesticides in classrooms, cafeterias and all other school areas, indoors and out. (RACHEL'S ENVIRONMENT ~ HEALTH WEEKLY, #469, November 23, 1995)

The Challenge

*...Through the use of home and garden pesticides, parents can inadvertently expose their children to much heavier levels of pesticides than they would normally be exposed to in food, water, or air. Despite good intentions, without knowledge of the potential effects of pesticides on their children, parents themselves may be the largest factor contributing to the exposure of their children. **Educating parents about the effects of pesticides on children is one important method of decreasing children's exposure.***

(“Case Studies of Environmental Risks to Children,” Lynn R. Goldman, M.D., M.P.H., pediatrician and epidemiologist, and assistant administrator for the Office of Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Washington, D.C.)

The Solution: *Break the Pesticide Habit*

· Become Informed. Learn about the health and environmental hazards of pesticides, how to prevent pest problems. Contact the Green Decade Coalition/Newton for references and resources.

Ask about pesticide use where you work, shop, pray and play. Ask your landscaper or pest control contractor for the labels and information sheets on any product they use.

Stop all pesticide applications. Use **Integrated Pest Management (IPM)** strategies that include natural controls, habitat modification and good sanitation to prevent pests and deprive them of places to hide, feed and breed.

Inform Others. Put **IMP** on the agenda of your community organizations, parent groups, schools, workplaces, churches and businesses.

Promote pesticide-free zones. Post GreenCAP signs on your lawn and front door to identify pesticide-free areas that are safe for children and animals. Urge city agencies and residential, business and other property owners to adopt **IPM** principles and practices for all buildings and grounds.

Join the Green Decade Coalition/Newton. Meet others who care about protecting our health and the environment. 617/965-1995