



**GreenCAP**  
green decade  
COALITION/NEWTON  
474 Centre Street  
Newton, MA 02158  
617/965-1995

Membership \$19.97

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

Questions about GreenCAP?  
Call Ellie Goldberg, Chair  
965-9637

**GreenCAP News**

- CAP Meeting Jan. 27
- Great Lawns Video on New TV-13
- MBTA Update
- Two new bills, *The Pesticide Disclosure Act* and the *Citizens' Right to Know Act*.
- Good News: Law suit ends secrecy about so-called inert ingredients in pesticides.
- IPM for Newton's Parks and Schools
- New Resources

GreenCAP's has received a Toxics Use Reduction Network Grant from the Toxics Use Reduction Institute, University of Massachusetts/Lowell. The grant will help fund education about toxics use reduction and the impact of pesticides on our health and the environment.

Newton's program is expected to become a model for other communities.

Dear Neighbors and Friends,

# MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**Monday, January 27 · 7:30 p.m.**

## **GreenCAP Meeting**, Newton Highlands.

Help to make Newton the *Organic Garden City*. Urge the City of Newton to adopt pest control policies and practices that avoid the use of pesticides in public buildings and grounds. Help promote alternatives to pesticides for healthier neighborhoods, schools, parks, the **MBTA Green Line**, and all the places where we live, work, shop and play. Spread the word about Integrated Pest Management, a cost effective problem-solving approach to weed and insect control based on pollution prevention principles. You can make a difference. For information and location can the Decade Coalition/Newton, 965-1995.

The first 15 people at the meeting will receive a *free* copy of the magazine *Solutions* from the New York Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides featuring articles such as "Combating Grubs Safely", "Understanding Fertilizers" and much more. Other resources are also available.

## **The Green Decode Coalition and New TV-13 presents Great Lakes, Great Lawns at 9 p.m.**

**Wednesdays: January 15,22, and 29-Fridays: January 17,24, and 30**

Informative and inspiring! *Great Lakes, Great Lawns* features scientists, parks managers, landscapers, parents, gardeners, and homeowners-all communed to Good Neighbor Policies and Integrated Pest Management in action! *Great Lakes, Great Lawns* is a production of Milwaukee Wisconsin's Green Thumb Project. For households without cable access, GreenCAP has videos available for free loan. Call Ellie Goldberg, 965-9637.

**Monday, February 3 · 7:00 p.m.**

The Green Decade Coalition and The Newton Free Library present

## **Clean Water Issues In Newton**, Cindy Luppi. Clean Water Action

**Monday, March 3 · 7:00 p.m.**

The Green *Decade Coalition* and The Newton Free Library present

## **Are we Threatening Our Fertility, Intelligence, and Survival?**

Diane Dumanoski. coauthor, *Our Stolen Future*

### **Attention: GREEN LINE ABUTTERS**

Did you know that the MBTA sprayed RoundUp on the Green Line Tracks in May 1996? The MBTA provided no notice or warning to abutters and no notice to GreenCAP so we could alert you. The MBTA sprayed in August 1995, in May 1996 and plans to spray again in May, 1997.

Do you believe that areas where children and other vulnerable populations live, work and play should be designated as "sensitive areas" and therefore be required to use safe, ecologically-sound weed control methods to avoid contamination from pesticides? Come to the GreenCAP meeting on January 27. Information: 965-1995.



### **THERE OUGHT TO BE A LAW!**

**Would you like to have advance notice before your neighbors spray their lawns and bushes? Would you like to know when your workplace or children's school uses pesticides?**

In December, Senator Lois Pine's filed a Pesticide Disclosure Acts that, if passed, would require pesticide users to give advance notice to occupants and abutters of any building or property where pesticides will be applied. It would also require school officials to notify parents before schools use pesticides. The required notice would include information about the pesticide and its hazards and precautions for minimizing exposure of children, toys, utensils, food, animals, the elderly, pregnant woman and those with health problems.

If this bill passes, it will give everyone information about pesticide exposure in their neighborhoods, and other private and public areas. The bill also encourages the adoption of Integrated Pest Management

(IPM) to reduce the reliance on pesticides in all buildings and grounds owned or managed by the Commonwealth .

Lois Pines has also filed the *Massachusetts Citizens' Right to Know Act* to require producers or packagers to label all consumer products containing toxic ingredients known to cause cancer, birth defects, nervous system damage and other toxic effects. In California, this toxics disclosure bill has led manufacturers to reformulate products with less toxic ingredients. If passed, this bill will allow consumers to make informed choices about the cleaners, glues, perfumes, pesticides and other products they buy.

GreenCAP supports these bills. We believe people have a right to know when they or their children are exposed to toxic chemicals. We also believe that if people knew about the extent of their exposure to pesticides, they would be more involved in efforts to promote IPM in our community.

We need stronger laws because, throughout the state, there is almost universal disregard and no meaningful enforcement of current notification and posting requirements. (citizens have the burden of trying to obtain pesticide use records which are difficult to obtain, unintelligible and unreliable. For example, in Newton, there are at least five contractors for different types of insect and weed control in public buildings and grounds for such pests as rodents, poison ivy, crabgrass and cockroaches. None of the contracts currently require Integrated Pest Management or least-toxic approaches to pest control.

Get involved. Support Right-To-Know and IPM in Newton and in Massachusetts. GreenCAP: 965-1995.

### **MBTA TASK FORC UPDATE:**

In Summer 1995, GreenCAP notified abutters along the Green Line tracks about the MBTA's yearly application of Roundup and Escort. After a show of public and official opposition, including letters from Lois Pines, Kay Khan, David Cohen, the MBTA delayed the spray and then agreed to a "reduced" spray in August 1995. The Aldermen set up a task force to develop alternative methods of vegetation control. At the first meeting, June 4, 1996, there was no representative from the MBTA. Task Force members gave Health Commissioner David Neparstek a list of questions about policies and practices to submit to the MBTA. The task force members did not know that Green Line had been sprayed a few weeks earlier in May 1996. Mr. Andrew Brennan attended the second meeting on November 20 and said that there had been an application of Roundup in May 1996.

Martha Horn, of Newton's Conservation Commission has promised to give GreenCAP notice of the public's opportunity to comment on the MBTA's plan to spray in May 1997. Mr. Brennan said he would ask the MBTA General Manager about mailing notices to alert abutters to the pesticide application but he couldn't promise that the MBTA would do the mailing.

If you would like to work for alternatives to Roundup on the Green Line, please call GreenCAP and come to the GreenCAP meeting January 27. Information: 965-1995

**Roundup is a common weed killer. It is the pesticide used by the MBTA on the Green Line Tracks for weed control. POEA (polyethoxylated tallowamine), one of the inert ingredients in Roundup, is three times as lethal as Roundup's active ingredient, glyphosate. It can cause stomach, eye and skin irritation, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.**

### **IPM for Newton's Parks**

Since last year, members of GreenCAP have been meeting with the Parks Department to promote the adoption of IPM practices in city contracts for parks and school fields. Herbicides were applied to only two sports fields, Weeks and Nahanton, last year. Roundup and other chemical products were used selectively to spray poison ivy in wooded areas near five schools.

Recently GreenCAP joined with another citizen group, the Newton Landscape Maintenance Task Force, to work for improved landscape maintenance practices throughout the city. The Task Force's objectives include such ~IPM" practices as Taking advantage of opportunities to reduce or avoid costs by replacing high-maintenance plants such as grass in locations where grass is not needed and choosing more drought tolerant plants for areas where water is not available during hot spells. The Task Force also envisions a five-year plan to develop site-specific plans to create ecologically-sound, economically-viable sustainable environments.

## **Pesticides in the Schools**

In November 1996, the Massachusetts Public Interest Research Group released *Primary* a study about the use of pesticides in Massachusetts's schools. Eighteen out of the 20 school districts surveyed use pesticides on a monthly basis

in buildings and grounds for insect and weed control. Only 15% of the schools post warning signs even though pesticides are used in areas frequently used by children. Lexington Public Schools was cited as an example of a school system that

has successfully implemented an Integrated Pest Management approach to reduce the use of toxics in school buildings and grounds. (Newton did not provide information for the MassPIRG survey.)

## **IPM for Newton's**

When GreenCAP proposed that the City of Newton adopt Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices in pest control contracts for its buildings and grounds, the Alderman requested pest control service records from Newton's city departments, including information about pest control measures in the Newton Schools.

Michael Pierce, Manager of Support Services for Newton Schools, provided copies of Waltham Chemical Company's service records of inspections and pesticide treatments in certain areas of six schools. In December, Ellie Goldberg met with Mr. Pierce, and Richard Berman and Steve Kalgren of the Waltham Chemical Co. to discuss obtaining information about all twenty-one schools and to discuss implementing IPM policies and practices citywide.

Unlike most other schools in Massachusetts, there are no routine applications of pesticides in the Newton schools. However, without an IPM policy, there are no restrictions on the staff's use of pesticides and no involvement of staff, parents or students in preventing pest problems. Goldberg told Mr. Pierce about receiving a call from a parent about pesticides making teachers and students sick in a nearby west-suburban elementary classroom in a vain attempt to combat headline.

In fact, within days of the meeting, Braids was sprayed in two kindergarten classrooms at the Mason Rice School in an attempt to deal with a chronic Fruit fly infestation. Both GreenCAP and Steve Kalgren from Waltham Chemical provided Principal Mark Springer with information about IPM. After Steve Kalgren inspected the school, he recommended improvements in sanitation and hygiene practices to correct conditions where the insects were feeding and breeding. His recommendations included rinsing out recycled bottles, cans and containers, emptying trash and recycled materials daily, using fresh trash can liners every day, scrubbing out cans where wet food is thrown away, and cleaning out sink drains regularly. Parents have been asked to check cubbies daily for uneaten snacks and lunches.

This incident illustrates the need for a system-wide proactive IPM program to control the conditions that attract and feed pests. By adopting IPM policies and practices in contracts for pest control, the Newton Schools could benefit from the guidance of professional pest control experts who can accurately identify pests, teach staff and students about good hygiene and sanitation practices, and point out structural problems to repair.

Schools around the country have implemented successful IPM programs. They demonstrate that education and

cooperation of all Wilding occupants and users are vital to the success of an IPM program. Schools, of flees and hospitals that are experienced with IPM report that improving housekeeping, hygiene and sanitation provides additional health and environmental benefits and saves money spent on costly chemicals as well.

GreenCAP has collected model policies and programs from other com

*Blueprint for a Green School, Jayni Chase, Founder, Center for Environmental Education, 1995. Scholastic Inc. A comprehensive book full of exciting curriculum ideas and projects about toxics reduction, ecology and other environmental topics for creating safe and healthy schools and neighborhoods.*

*Community Action to Manage Pesticide Use in Schools (Campus): A Citizen's Guide, September, 1996. Provides check lists and guidelines for staff and parents for implementing a successful pest control program that reduces the unnecessary and dangerous use of pesticides.*

*Pest Control in the School Environment: Adopting IPM in the Schools, US EPA.*

**If you are interested in implementing IPM in your school or workplace, call the Green Decade Coalition, 965-1995.**

**Inert Alert:** **Xylenes** are solvents used as *inerts* in about 2,000 pesticide products. They can cause nose, throat and eye irritation, difficulty breathing, lung inflammation, nausea, vomiting, impaired memory, and other serious health problems.

**GreenCAP recommends** that consumers, especially parents of young children, *stop* all routine use of pesticides in their homes and landscapes. Question your landscaper and pest control contractor about any product they use in your home or yard. Do not permit the use of any product without full disclosure of all ingredients. Beware of false assurances about the safety of any pesticide product. Teach children to avoid areas where pesticide warning signs are posted.

## Good News

On October 11, 1996 The Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides won a lawsuit against the US EPA that ends government-sanctioned secrecy about the "so-called *inert* ingredients" in pesticide products. The District of Columbia Federal District Court ruled that "inerts", which can make up 99% of a pesticide product, do not qualify for trade secret protection. The ruling affirms the public's Right To Know what chemicals they are exposed to when pesticides are used.

NCAP has also called on the EPA to stop the use of pesticide floggers and sprays in supermarkets, to post warnings on doors if pesticides are used, and to educate managers on safer ways to control pests, such as improved sanitation,

To find out more about the hoards of pesticide ingredients, GreenCAP recommends the following

- National Pesticide Network: 800/858-7378 (24 hours)
- *Generations at Risk: How Environmental Toxins May Affect Reproductive Health in Massachusetts*, Great Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility and Massachusetts Public Interest

## GreenCAP Resources

GreenCAP's goal is to make it easy for people to solve their pest control and landscaping problems without pesticides. A new GreenCAP brochure, *Gift Ideas*, features books and other resources about organic gardening methods, ecological solutions to insect and weed problems, and landscaping advice. It was developed with research assistance by Fran Gustman who is now working for GreenCAP to develop a comprehensive *Newton IPM Reader's Guide* to the journals, videos, pamphlets and books GreenCAP has collected. GreenCAP plans to donate its collection to the Newton Free Library to expand its environmental resources. Keep your family safe all year round. For your copy of *Gift Ideas* call GreenCAP, 965-1995.

## Noticed In *Reader's Digest*

*One morning, finding a wasp had entered the house, I shouted to my husband: "Dan, there's a wasp in here. Do we have any spray?" He told me there was a can under the kitchen sink. Honey, I called out to him again, This is ant and roach spray~not for wasps. n Nell, my husband replied, Don't show him the label."*

## GreenCAP comments:

Don Rivard, the Executive Director of the Massachusetts Pest Control Association, calls the conventional approach to pest control the Gunslingers method. Reaching for the can of spray is wrong because it doesn't work. Worse, people may store and use pesticides in their homes where food is stored, prepared or eaten and where children and other unsuspecting family members or visitors can find them.

Most people do not or cannot read the label nor heed the directions or warnings. And most people do not realize that the most effective way to control bugs is the IPM way which uses knowledge of bug biology and behavior. IPM is safe, practical and effective. IPM targets conditions that attract or nourish the bugs. Rivard, an expert on IPM, urges his customers to find out where the bugs live, feed and breed and then to change the conditions that allow them to thrive.

Avoid exposing your family to pesticides: **"THINK CAULKING GUN NOT SPRAY GUN.."**



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GreenCAP has heard from a number of callers who want to reduce the use of pesticides and synthetic fertilizers but are having difficulty finding a landscaper who is knowledgeable about ecological principles and practices. Do you have a landscaper you can recommend? Are you a landscaper or pest control contractor who is committed to Integrated Pest Management (IPM)? Call GreenCAP: 965-1995