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Press Release

State agencies will prioritize protecting children's health, rivers and ecosystems for pesticides use

Bill earns broad support for integrated pest management on state property

Salem, OR (5/28/2013)

The Oregon Senate voted 24–6 to approve HB 3364, a bill that strengthens and improves coordination among state agency programs that implement Integrated Pest Management on state-owned and leased properties. The bill passed in the Oregon House on a 51-9 vote earlier in this month. It now goes to the Governor's desk for final approval.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a science-based, proven approach to controlling pests based on monitoring, tracking and less harmful treatments. HB 3364 directs Oregon State University to develop IPM protocols from state agencies to manage invasive pests. The goal is to deliver sustainable reductions in risks from pests and pest management-related strategies.

The outcome of HB 3364 will be a coordinated and collaborative approach to implement IPM for pest management-related issues using the latest methods and approaches to IPM. The bill also requires state agencies to prioritize safety and protections for children, the elderly, fish, wildlife and water quality from the use of pesticides.

The bill applies to state agencies and programs only, and not to private or commercial pest control activities. State government has ongoing responsibilities to address pest problems, whether mosquitos, rodents or invasive plants. By establishing common effectiveness and outcome metrics, and processes that encourage interagency information sharing, HB 3364 will save money and improve efficiency.

The bill was introduced by Beyond Toxics, a statewide environmental health organization that also worked to end field burning and reduce toxic chemicals in Oregon's rivers and schools. The organization examined hundreds of herbicide spray records for tax payer funded projects. It was clear that millions of dollars are regularly spent to reduce pests and that it is common for state agencies to spend public money on some products that contaminate ground water, harm fish or are human carcinogens.

Chief bill sponsors are Senator Chris Edwards (D-Lane County) and Representative Alissa Keny-Guyer (D-Multnomah County). Dr. Paul Jepson, Oregon's State IPM Coordinator and a professor at Oregon State University, was a key champion of the bill. His keen support for HB 3364 convinced OSU's School of Agriculture to pledge \$25,000 towards IPM implementation for state agencies.

With data showing the presence of pesticides in Oregon rivers, fish and residents, there is increasing awareness and public support for a State Integrated Pest Management law. Oregon adopted a 2009 school integrated pest management policy to reduce toxic pesticides for all K-12 schools throughout the state.

"The passage of the bill shows strong bi-partisan support for better management of both pests and pest control strategies, as well as tracking and measuring the effectiveness of pesticides on public land," said Lisa Arkin, Executive Director of Beyond Toxics. "IPM programs consistently reduce pesticides while simultaneously solving pest problems."

Supporters are certain that developing a strong State IPM program will also help meet the state's pollution reduction goals.