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Oregon Keeps Public in the Dark About Dangerous Pesticides in People and Streams

The Oregon Forest Practices Act prevents the public from knowing about pesticide use and potential threats to human and wildlife health

Eugene, OR (December 15, 2013) Beyond Toxics, a nonprofit public health advocacy organization, released the first in-depth analysis of private, commercial forestry pesticide application records. The organization's report, [Oregon's Industrial Forests and Herbicide Use: A Case Study of Risk to People, Drinking Water and Salmon](#), includes information usually kept from the public by antiquated state regulations. A federal investigation into health problems unsealed three years' worth of timber company pesticide spray records of the Triangle Lake area near Eugene. This information was compiled and forms the base of the report.

"This report provides a never before glimpse into a statewide health risk for many rural Oregonians," says Lisa Arkin of Beyond Toxics. "Dangerous pesticides used by timber companies were found in the drinking water of a grade school and in the bodies of every single person tested." Pesticides applied by helicopters can drift up to 4 miles.

The report includes documentation that: Application of hormone-disrupting pesticides by timber companies into streams and watersheds that provide community drinking water; some of these same pesticides were found in every person tested in a federal study; timber companies mix chemicals with unknown synergistic effects; while spray plans are filed with the state, the medical staff and the public are never allowed access to these plans; qualified state employees with access to spray plans are not allowed to comment on or modify timber company spray plans; and Washington and Idaho allow public access to pesticide spray plans as part of their public right-to-know process.

"People have the right to know what chemicals are being sprayed and how much is being sprayed into the air they breathe and the water they use," says Arkin, "Oregonians should be allowed access to the same information that residents of Washington and Idaho have."

The report concludes with a call to expand protections in forestry laws, including: Public access to past and future pesticide spray plans and records; no helicopter pesticide applications within 5-miles of schools and homes; and a protective "no spray" buffer along all streams, including headwaters for salmon streams.

The report can be found here:

<http://www.beyondtoxics.org/work/pesticide-reform/forest-practices-act-report-media-access/>

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Beyond Toxics' Mission

Beyond Toxics works to guarantee environmental protections and health for all communities and residents, regardless of their background, income or where their home is located. We expose root causes of toxic pollution and help communities find solutions that are appropriate to their needs.