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Bill to cut pesticide use by Oregon state agencies wins Senate support

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Oregon's Senate passed a bill today that aims to minimize pesticide use on state-owned property, sending it to Gov. [John Kitzhaber](#)'s desk for signature.

[House Bill 3364](#) requires "integrated pest management" for state programs such as invasive weed control and on public property from forests to universities to roadsides.

The Senate's 24-6 vote, with six Republicans dissenting, is a significant victory for [Beyond Toxics](#) in Eugene, which drove the bill. It passed the House earlier and Kitzhaber's office said he would sign it, adding to a successful 2009 bill that required IPM for schools.

State agencies will unify efforts and measure results under a new interagency committee headed by Oregon State University's [Paul Jepson](#), the state's IPM coordinator since 2002.

IPM allows selective use of herbicides and insecticides. But it requires evaluation of alternatives, including mechanical and biological controls and consideration of acceptable levels of insects and weeds.

Backers stress that the bill would not affect private lands or outlaw pesticides.

The bill, which [underwent revisions during the legislative session](#), includes "selective use of pesticides" among a list of techniques to be considered.

It calls for both preventing "unacceptable levels of pest damage" and for pesticide use that "poses the least possible risk to people, property, resources and the environment."

That language, which replaced a requirement that non-chemical measures be tried first, drew support for the bill from [Oregonians for Food and Shelter](#). The group's members include forest and farm representatives and pesticide manufacturers, distributors and applicators.

-- Scott Learn