



LD 1547: An Act to Revise Notification Requirements for Pesticides Applications Using Aircraft and Air Carrier Equipment

Streamline Maine's Pesticide Notification System

Everyone benefits when there is a simple system for land managers and neighbors to communicate about pesticide spraying.

Pesticides can cause serious health effects and contaminate organically grown produce.

- Pesticides can cause birth defects, cancer, asthma, developmental disabilities, and even death¹
- Pesticides can contaminate organically grown produce, making it unfit to market as organic and leading to economic losses.

Maine people should be able to find out about aerial and air carrier pesticide spraying in their communities.

- Pesticide spray can drift off-target and impact the health and property of neighboring families and businesses.
- Studies indicate that less than one tenth of one percent of pesticides actually reaches the targeted pests.²



Photo courtesy of Jean English

Maine's new pesticide notification law provides a common-sense framework for communication between stakeholders, but it needs some important refinements in order to make it work better for everyone.

- The law needs to identify which neighbors should be prioritized for advance general notification, focusing on landowners whose property not only abuts the intended spray area but also lies within 1,320 feet of it.
- The law must establish a clear and effective notification schedule that will work for everyone: landowners, neighbors as well as public administrators.
- The law must ensure that the information being relayed is informative and easy to understand.
- The law must provide options for officials to act in the interest of public health when necessary.

There are simple steps Maine lawmakers can take to clarify and streamline Maine's pesticide notification system.

- Proposed amendments from Representative O'Brien specifically address each of the practical considerations raised by landowners as well as the Board of Pesticides Control.
- The O'Brien amendments clarify and streamline the notification recipients and schedule, the type of information that must be provided, and the options available for public health emergencies.

The O'Brien amendments will benefit all stakeholders by

- Making the system more manageable, consistent, and easier to understand for land managers
- Making the system easier to enforce for Maine's Board of Pesticides Control
- Helping the general public know what to expect of their pesticide spraying neighbors

Pass the O'Brien amendments to Maine's pesticide notification law so land managers, neighbors, community members, and enforcement agencies can benefit

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LD 1547: An Act to Revise Notification Requirements for Pesticides Applications Using Aircraft and Air Carrier Equipment is supported by the:

Environmental Priorities Coalition

We are 26 environmental, conservation, and public health organizations who have joined together for a sixth consecutive year around a Common Environmental Agenda. We represent over 100,000 members in Maine who want to protect good health, good jobs, and the quality of life that our environment provides for all of us.

Coalition partners include:

American Lung Association of Maine
Appalachian Mountain Club
Atlantic Salmon Federation
Bicycle Coalition of Maine
Conservation Law Foundation
Environmental Health Strategy Center
Environment Maine
Environment Northeast
Friends of Casco Bay
Maine Audubon
Maine Center for Economic Policy
Maine Congress of Lake Associations
Maine Council of Churches

Maine Council of Trout Unlimited
Maine League of Conservation Voters
Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
Maine People's Alliance
Maine Rivers
Natural Resources Council of Maine
Northern Forest Alliance
Physicians for Social Responsibility, Maine Chapter
RESTORE: The North Woods
Sierra Club, Maine Chapter
The Ocean Conservancy
The Wilderness Society
Toxics Action Center

References:

¹ There are many studies that show links between pesticide exposure and increased incidence of disease in people who are exposed. Several articles that summarize the peer-reviewed scientific literature on this topic include:

- * Los Angeles Physicians for Social Responsibility's Pesticides and Human Health. <http://www.psr-la.org/issues/environmental-health/pesticides>
- * Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility's Generations At Risk. <http://www.psr.org/chapters/boston/resources/generations-at-risk-book.html>
- * Ontario College of Family Physicians' Pesticides Literature Review. <http://www.ocfp.on.ca/English/OCFP/Communications/CurrentIssues/Pesticides/default.asp?s=1>
- * Pesticide Education Center's Chronic Health Effects Associated with Airborne Pesticides (Excerpt from Secondhand Pesticides: Airborne Pesticide Drift in California. <http://www.panna.org/resources/documents/secondhandDriftAvail.dv.html>)

² "Amounts of pesticides reaching target pests: Environmental impacts and ethics", Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics, Volume 8, Number 1 / March, 1995. David Pimentel, Department of Entomology Comstock Hall, Cornell University