

PESTICIDES

Adopted 1992, revised 1997

PESTICIDE USE REDUCTION

LWVMI supports the reduction of all pesticide use and replacement with nontoxic alternatives, for both rural and urban applications. Governmental bodies should encourage a reduction in pesticide use through the promotion of management programs such as Integrated Pest Management, sustainable and organic agricultural and nontoxic control techniques. State government should provide economic incentives to farmers and growers to implement those alternative techniques. State government should provide funding for training in these techniques to employees of public agencies and institutions, to commercial applicators, to farmers, and to private individuals. Anyone handling pesticides as part of a job should be required to demonstrate knowledge and competency and, before receiving a license or certification, be required to take a training course and pass a state-regulated examination.

GOVERNMENTAL REGULATION OF PESTICIDE USE

LWVMI supports the regulation of the use of pesticides by all levels of government. Government standards should be set for all lawn care and mosquito abatement companies. Adequate funding for all appropriate levels of government should be established to finance testing for over-spray, drift and water contamination. Pesticide drift beyond the boundaries of the targeted area should be prohibited by law.

The use of pesticides should be totally prohibited in the following instances:

- aerial spraying of residential neighborhoods
- recharge zones for drinking water supplies
- vulnerable wetlands and other natural areas
- habitats for endangered species
- in areas adjacent to organic farm/garden operations

In the absence of federal regulations, state governments should enact organic labeling laws and organic farming certification laws. In addition, funding for increased testing for pesticides in food by appropriate state agencies is essential; states should be able to set residue levels for food that are stricter than federal levels.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION OF PESTICIDE USE

LWVMI believes that lawn care companies, structural pest control companies, and agricultural pesticide applicators should provide the public, including agricultural workers and organic farmers, with extensive information about pesticides and pesticide use, including:

- purpose of application
- brand name of pesticide(s) used
- date and time of year when pesticides are to be applied
- label precautions and disposal information
- registration status
- amount and names of all inert ingredients
- name, address, and telephone number of applicator
- evidence of applicant's licensure or certification
- telephone number of state agency in charge of pesticide regulation
- telephone number of nearest Poison Control Center
- health symptoms and first aid

Because of the potential for involuntary exposure to pesticides, individuals should be notified prior to application of pesticides. Re-entry times and exposure precautions should be conspicuously posted. Information should be posted for interior and exterior pesticide application. Posting should occur in advance of application of any pesticide.