

LAWS TO PROTECT YOU FROM OUTDOOR PESTICIDES

A FACTSHEET FROM MIDWEST PESTICIDE ACTION CENTER

Illinois' Lawncare Products Application and Notice Act

The title of the law says it all – as an Illinois citizen, you have the right to reduce your involuntary exposure to pesticides. According to the law, pesticide applicators must place a marker on the lawn at the time of application and provide the customer with information on the product used. In addition, any adjacent neighbor (backyard or next door) has a legal right to be notified in **advance** of neighbors' pesticide applications.

If you request it, the company hired by your neighbor must contact you in person or by telephone to let you know what they will be applying, and when (date and approximate time of application). By law, companies must contact you one day before applying lawn chemicals.

Since this provision of the law is not well known, you may encounter some resistance. Remain firm but respectful - **have a copy of the law for backup** <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/pubact91/acts/91-0099.html>. If the company does not comply with your request, contact the Illinois Department of Agriculture, 217-785-2427 and fill out a complaint against the company.

School and Childcare Pesticide Notification Law: protect your children from unnecessary pesticide exposure

Illinois law requires schools and childcares to use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) inside buildings. A recent law <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=096-0424> passed on August 19, 2009, will provide stricter provisions in order to protect children playing outdoors from chemicals used on school and childcare grounds.

The new law:

- increases the notification requirement from two to four days prior to product application;
- recommends the use of natural lawn care techniques;
- requires a lawn care coordinator be appointed;
- requires MSDS sheets to be available on site for all products used in accordance with current right-to-know laws; and,
- requires, when requested, the notification of neighbors adjacent to the property before product application occurs.

Schools and childcares often maintain a registry of people who want to be notified. Call your school district to ask to be added to their notification list. This is a new law, so make sure your local schools and childcares are in compliance. Call them and ask them what their policies are for lawn care product applications. If they are not aware of this new law or it's not in place, you can educate them by giving them this factsheet or file a complaint to the Department of Agriculture, (217) 785-2427, or the Illinois Department of Public Health, (217) 782-5830.

Why Notify?

Notification gives you the opportunity to minimize your exposure to toxic chemicals – before they are applied. For example, if you know that a neighbor's yard will be sprayed tomorrow, you might decide not to fill your children's toddler pool. You could plan to close your windows and keep children and pets away during **and** after lawn has been treated.

Advance notification also gives you an opportunity to talk with neighbors who use pesticides and express your concerns in a non-judgmental way. Remember, many people who have contracts with lawn chemical companies don't think of pesticides as pollutants nor are they aware of the harmful health and environmental effects of pesticides. (See "[How to Talk to Your Neighbors About Pesticides](#)")

Midwest Pesticide Action Center is dedicated to reducing the health risks and environmental impacts of pesticides and promoting safer alternatives.

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