

Re: City Sprays Pesticides Around Lake Merritt Without Alerting Citize

Reply to: comm-294838576@craigslist.org

Date: 2007-03-15, 9:58PM

The City of Oakland has an official ban on pesticides on city land, however, the many exemptions which render this "ban" relatively meaningless, include median strips throughout the city.

The city Public Works Department reportedly sprays medians from late Fall to early Spring. To protect yourself, keep a look out for red signs around medians and islands, which the city is required to post a day or two in advance. After they spray they post white signs with dates and pesticides applied. Also keep a look out for blue/green coloring on the ground, plants and possible run-off, which is added to the pesticides.

One of the excuses the city uses for spraying medians are complaints about weeds by the public. Please help balance those cosmetic complaints with your own public health complaints about the use of pesticides by the city (contact information for Public Works: <http://www.oaklandpw.com/Page72.aspx>). You can also get your friends, neighbors, and your own green thumb together and volunteer to maintain the median in your area as a pesticide free zone, and show the city how to garden responsibly, without the use of toxic chemicals.

Get in touch with City of Oakland officials (contacts again, from the original post: <http://www.oaklandnet.com/government/council/city-officials.html>) and demand the pesticide ban be revised into a true, complete ban like the one of the City of Arcada. For the text of the Arcada ordinance, the list of exemptions to Oakland's "ban", other local public places where pesticides are routinely used (such as the East Bay Regional Park District, along bay shorelines, Caltrans along the highways, and more), toxicological profiles of pesticides used, and to find out what to do after being poisoned, please visit East Bay Pesticide Alert at <http://www.eastbaypesticidealert.org>.

Original message to which this is in reply:

Date: 2007-03-14, 11:21AM PDT

This is not a political issue, it's a community and health issue. Please don't flag it. Instead, read it and send an email to the City Council members and Mayor Dellums.

Yesterday, the white city truck was out at the edge of Lake Merritt, spraying thick, opaque stuff around the redwoods on that island at Harrison and Grand. The guy doing the spraying had what looked like a white hazmat suit on, with a face mask. Today, the white city truck (and the guy with the white suit and the face mask) was spraying the same thick, opaque stuff on the northern side of Grand on Harrison (in an area that will be muddy in the rain because they're killing the grass that keeps it from getting muddy). They blocked parking with signs so cars wouldn't park there, so why are there no signs about toxic pesticide use?

I was walking my dog downwind there just now, and am at home now, a few minutes later. I have a metallic taste from that spray in my mouth and feel it on my skin. Yes, I'll wash my skin and brush my

teeth now and make a miso soup with seaweed to detoxify myself, but my dog isn't complaining, and he was affected by it too (I'll give him kelp). But what about everyone else? There have been other dogs and babies walked in those areas since yesterday; do any of their walkers know they've been contaminated? Why would they? The city doesn't require anyone to alert others about use of toxins.

If the city -- or a business, or a private home owner -- sprays pesticides here, you will not know about it unless you happen to see it or hear about it from someone who saw it.

There are no signs required to alert you, so you can choose to walk your baby, your young child, your dog, or yourself, in another area, or to complain about it to the sprayer, the owner, or the city. Instead, you and your loved ones get to breathe it in without knowing. And who pays for the hospital bills when you or they get sick? Which cancer or respiratory researchers will be able to factor those pesticides you or your loved ones inhaled into their research, when you didn't know about?

Please contact the Oakland City Council today about this. (Here's the page with the links: <http://www.oaklandnet.com/government/council/city-officials.html>). Maybe they don't know about this week's spraying, and the general issue of pesticide use, and would be glad to hear from you, since they want this to become a sustainable city. Please let them know that it's time for a law that protects us by at least letting us know when we're being exposed to environmental toxins, with signs. If they want to make this a sustainable city, this would be a good start. Heck, it would be nice to have the law say those chemicals should be banned in Oakland, I'd love that, but at least let us know that we're being exposed to something and what it is.

So when we have a toxic reaction, we can let the people in the emergency room -- or the veterinarian's office -- know and they can waste less time figuring out what caused the reaction. Duh. Personally, I'd rather not be exposed to this junk.

Original URL: <http://sfbay.craigslist.org/eby/com/294838576.html>