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NEW POLICY ON CHILDREN'S AND FAMILIES PROTECTION ACT
STANDARD WRITTEN NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

DATE: January 21, 2009

TO: Schools, Day Cares, School Age Child Care Programs
Massachusetts Early Education and Care
Pesticide Applicator Associations
Licensed Dealers

FROM: Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, Division of Crop Protection and Pest Management, Pesticide Program

BACKGROUND:

The Children and Families Protection Act currently requires that schools send standard written notification home to parents and employees at least two working days before an outdoor pesticide application is to take place. A full notification includes the following three parts:

1. Consumer Information Bulletin;
2. Department Notification Form ; and
3. Chemical Fact Sheet.

In the past, it was the Department's interpretation that schools must send all parents hard copies of the above information, in order to comply with the standard written notification requirements. This notification method is costly to schools and did not take advantage of current electronic communication technology. With these issues in mind, the Department now has the following policy permitting schools to provide Standard Written Notification to parents via electronic means as an option to providing such notices in hard-copy format.

POLICY


It is the Department's policy to permit schools the following options for providing standard written notification to parents via electronic means. The following are examples of electronic standard written notification that the Department would find acceptable under this policy:

Option A: Schools may elect to send a letter home at the beginning of the school year that would provide an opportunity for parents to choose whether they wish to receive notification via hard copy or email format. Should parents choose to receive the notification via email, language in the letter shall make clear that it is the parents responsibility to routinely check their email and notify the school when their email address changes. The letter shall be issued every year and be maintained by the school for five-years, along with the school IPM plan. The letter shall also be provided to parents of any new or transfer students after registration at the school. See Appendix A for a model format of an acceptable letter format.

Email notification of pesticide applications shall include the three parts as outlined above. The schools must ensure that the notification is sent out in a manner so that it can be viewed at least two-working days prior to the pesticide application.

Option B: Schools may elect to use reverse 911 (community notification systems), to notify parents of an outdoor pesticide application. The reverse 911 call shall be made at least two working days prior to the application and direct parents to the school's website whereby; interested parties may view copies of the standard written notification. The website shall post the three parts as outlined above. Should parents not have the capability to view the notification on the website, the school shall make a hard copy available.

Option C: Schools may elect to call parents individually to notify parents that an outside pesticide application is going to take place. The call shall be made at least two working days prior to the application and direct parents to the school's website; whereby, interested parties may view copies of the standard written notification. The website shall post the three parts as outlined above. Should parents not have the capability to view the notification on the website, the school shall make a hard copy available.



Douglas Petersen, Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Appendix A

Dear Parents:

The Children and Families Protection Act of 2000 requires all schools (public, private, day care and school age child care programs) to develop and maintain an Integrated Pest Management Plan concerning any pest problems that may exist inside or outside of our school. The law also requires that you be notified at least two working days prior to any outdoor pesticide applications.

Should our school have to make any pesticide applications to the outside of the building we are asking for parents to "sign up" should they want to be notified of these applications via email. Please note that by choosing the option of being notified via email, you agree to routinely check your email as the notification is required to be sent out at two working days prior to the scheduled application. Please fill out the bottom of this form and return it by (*write in date*). Should you choose to not be notified via email then the notification will be sent home with your child.

_____ **NO**, I would not like to be notified of outdoor pesticide applications via email, I would prefer to have the notification sent home with my child.

Name of Student(s) Registered or Enrolled

Signature and Date of Parent or Legal Guardian

_____ **YES**, I would like to be notified of outdoor pesticide applications via email. Please send such notifications to the below provided email address(es).

Email Address(es) of Parent(s) or Legal Guardian(s)

Name of Student(s) Registered or Enrolled

Signature and Date of Parent or Legal Guardian