

Groundwater, prenotification are becoming emotional issues

Concern over groundwater pollution and urban pesticide spraying is resulting in overly restrictive local legislation based upon fear and emotion instead of facts.

Lack of an organized defense at the local level is causing problems not only for local applicators and chemical companies, but for state and Federal environmental protection agencies and Congress.



"Local governments are trying to ban uses of pesticides without scientific basis," says Ray Brush, executive director of the National Landscape Association. "What happens to a pesticide on Long Island, with its high water table and sandy soil, will not happen everywhere. News coverage of EDB and dioxin is used by environmentalists as if it were the same for all chemicals in all locations. That's not true, and EPA is aware of this. Since EPA is required to base its decisions on facts, it would be fair for EPA to prevent local agencies from restricting chemicals and their uses without consideration of the facts."

It wasn't facts that cancelled DDT. It was the emotional picture of young, rare birds dying because the shells of their eggs were too thin. Once the impression of dying birds was made, facts carried little to no weight in the minds of the public and their representatives.

Every effort has to be made to confront emotion with facts at the local level. Without answers or an organized defense, local lawmakers are going far overboard. When enough local agencies go overboard, the issue becomes a national one, an emotional national issue.

Public education leans toward grantholders, not good teachers

It used to be good teachers were secure in their jobs. Then, universities started requiring teachers to publish in recognized journals. This meant teachers also had to be researchers and writers. Now, they have to be salesmen too, selling their research to foundations and companies in exchange for grants.

Whatever happened to the good teacher? What is happening to students who have become second or third in the importance of their instructors? Somehow, university administrators have lost track of their primary job, educating students.

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by Bruce F. Shank, executive editor

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