



Connecticut's Lawn Care Pesticide Ban Information for Schools and Day Care Centers

1. Why no pesticides?

The Connecticut legislature passed a law (P.A. 09-56) banning lawn care pesticide applications on the grounds of day care centers, elementary and middle schools (grade 8 and lower) as a result of residents' concerns about children's health and the environment. This ban went into effect for day care centers on October 1, 2009 and for K-8 schools on July 1, 2010. Some Connecticut municipalities have gone beyond the requirements of the law and have stopped using pesticides to manage turfgrass on all their municipal properties.

2. What does Connecticut's pesticide ban cover?

Connecticut's pesticide ban prohibits the use of all U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered pesticides labeled for use on lawn and/or ornamental sites at all Connecticut day care centers and K-8 schools. This includes fungicides, herbicides and insecticides. This also includes organic pesticides that have EPA registration numbers.

3. Are there any restrictions on fertilizers under the new law?

Under CT's pesticide ban there are no restrictions on the use of straight fertilizer. Since the law prohibits the use of pesticides, combination fertilizer-pesticide products that contain an herbicide (e.g., for broadleaf weed control), an insecticide (e.g., for grub control), or a fungicide (e.g., for disease control) are not allowed to be used.

4. Are there any pesticides that can be used under the new law?

There are some pest control products that can be applied. EPA has developed criteria for minimum risk pesticides, which are exempt from federal registration and do not bear an EPA registration number. The EPA criteria for these products can be found at http://www.epa.gov/oppbppd1/biopesticides/regtools/25b_list.htm. These pesticides are allowed for use on day care centers and K-8 school grounds in Connecticut. Pertinent statutes and regulations must be followed including the requirements that applicators who apply pesticides on school grounds must be licensed and schools under the control of a Board of Education must have a written pest control policy and a system of notification in place.

If you have any questions about what may be used to control pests, contact CT DEP's Pesticide Management Program at 860-424-3369. If inquiring about the legality of a minimum risk product, please be prepared to provide a label copy for review.

5. Are there any exceptions for emergency situations?

Applications of pesticides are allowed to eliminate a threat to human health, as determined by the local health director, commissioner of public health, commissioner of environmental protection, or public school superintendent. Guidance on determining whether an emergency pesticide application is acceptable is available online at www.ct.gov/dep/IPM (Select "General Guidance").

6. What is the difference between CT's pesticide ban and organic land care?

Organic land care is an approach to turfgrass management that prohibits the use of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers. Organic Land Care Standards recommend cultural practices along with organic products to maintain soil health and improve turfgrass growth. Connecticut's pesticide ban on day care centers and K-8 school grounds prohibits pesticides that have an EPA registration number, which includes some pesticides commonly used in organic land care. Connecticut's pesticide ban does not restrict application of fertilizers, synthetic or organic.

7. What will happen to the athletic fields if no pesticides are used?

It is uncertain how the quality of the turf will change with time when no pesticides are used. There are few scientific studies about maintaining high quality turf for athletic fields without the use of pesticides. Until more data is available, turfgrass managers should conduct routine soil tests and fertilize appropriately, and follow cultural practices shown to produce acceptable turf, such as overseeding, aeration, adjusting mowing heights and topdressing.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Connecticut's Pesticide Ban and for Questions on Allowable Products

Contact the CT DEP Pesticide Management Program at 860-424-3369. Please have the label information available when making an inquiry about a product.

Organic Land Care Standards, Practices and Methods

Contact CT DEP Office of Pollution Prevention at 860-424-3297, www.ct.gov/dep/p2 or CT NOFA (Northeast Organic Farming Association) at 203-888-5146 www.organiclandcare.net

Best Management Practices for Turfgrass

Fact sheets to help municipal turf managers maintain quality turfgrass without pesticides will be published in the fall of 2010. They will cover soil testing, amendments and fertilizers as well as cultural practices such as aeration, overseeding and adjusting mowing heights.

This factsheet is a cooperative effort between the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, the University of Connecticut Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture and the CT NOFA Organic Land Care Program, funded in part through U.S. EPA PPIS grant.

