

Expanding Our Horizons

2009/10 PROGRESS REPORT



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PESTICIDE REGULATION

DPR's mission is to protect human health and the environment by regulating pesticide sales and use and by fostering reduced risk pest management. DPR's strict oversight begins with product evaluation and registration, and continues through statewide licensing of commercial applicators, consultants and other pesticide professionals; evaluation of health impacts of pesticides through illness surveillance and risk assessment; environmental monitoring of air, water, and soil; field enforcement (with the County Agricultural Commissioners, our local enforcement partners) of laws regulating pesticide use; and residue testing of fresh produce.



OUR EXECUTIVE TEAM

From left to right: JoAnne Payan, Assistant Director for Administrative Services; Chris Reardon, Chief Deputy Director; Mary-Ann Warmerdam, Director; Marylou Verder-Carlos, Assistant Director for Pesticide Programs and Science Advisor, Chuck Andrews, Associate Director for Pesticide Programs.
(Photo taken in front of Cal/EPA Headquarters.)

Leadership and Legacy

The city of Davis in Yolo County controlled pests like most other cities in the 1980s, with scheduled applications of pesticides and fertilizers. Davis' transformation to a model of integrated pest management earned it a 2008 IPM Innovator Award from the Department of Pesticide Regulation.

Often collaborating with University of California at Davis (UCD) researchers, the city uses solarization, flame weeding, less-toxic herbicides, biological control, mulching, various irrigation rates on poor soil and other pest-control strategies more protective of public health and the environment. Pest control information is distributed via the city's Web site, posters, handouts, signs, press releases, community-access television and at booths during its popular weekly farmers market and other events.

When accepting the award, Davis Mayor Ruth Asmundson recalled how residents kept "pushing, pushing, pushing" city leaders to use more environmentally friendly pest control. "They care about their planet," she said. "It's not always easy to change, but in the end we have innovative, creative solutions."

Davis, known for its progressive politics, is not a typical city. It has benefited from its relationship with UCD to compare less-toxic herbicides on city land and study an array of pest control methods. But its embrace of IPM reflects DPR's path under the leadership of Governor Schwarzenegger. The initial emphasis is pest prevention, followed by environmentally friendly practices and as a last resort, more traditional treatments.

While most people associate pesticides with agriculture, more than half of the products regulated by DPR are for commercial, industrial and home use. As the most extensive pesticide regulatory system in the world, one of our goals is to ensure that the most appropriate and least-toxic products are used on crops, in schools, hospitals and other institutions, and homes and gardens.

On the regulatory front, California is the first state in the nation to regulate pesticide emissions to improve air quality. Partnering with the California Air Resources Board, DPR set emission levels in five areas of the state not meeting national air quality standards. Pesticide emissions comprise a small percentage of California's air pollution, but we're committed to doing our part.

DPR's role as a national leader also was highlighted when Governor Schwarzenegger signed Senate Bill 1723, which requires recycling of HDPE pesticide containers. Under this first-of-its-kind law in the nation, pesticide sellers must participate in an existing recycling program or develop their own.

Finally, while DPR can't yet claim that pesticides with less risk to public health and the environment are the norm rather than the exception, we are building a foundation to take us there. Positive change will continue through a combination of regulation, enforcement, risk assessment, new technology, incentive and recognition. As you read about DPR's programs and achievements in the following pages, I think you will agree that the state of California, working with its many partners, will continue to lead the nation in balancing pest control and a healthy environment.



Mary-Ann Warmerdam
DPR Director