



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



State Investigates Misuse of Pesticide for Bed Bug Control

Agriculture Agency and Health Department Working to Contact Customers

News Release: July 10, 2013

Contact:

Vermont Department of Health
802-863-7281

Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets
Alison Kosakowski
802-272-4547

The Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets has summarily suspended the license of a pesticide applicator, Cary Buck of AAA Accredited Pest Control of North Clarendon, for misuse of a pesticide in treating a residence for bed bugs.

This action was taken after the Agency discovered that the company had wrongfully applied an organophosphate insecticide called chlorpyrifos to a home in the Rutland area. All indoor uses of this pesticide were cancelled by the U.S. EPA in 2001.

The Health Department is working together with the Agency of Agriculture to individually contact customers of this company who may have had their residence treated with this pesticide in 2012 or 2013, and is offering laboratory testing at no cost to determine if the pesticide is present. The Agency has collected a number of samples already, and will continue to sample in the coming weeks.

According to records obtained from the company, an estimated 50 or more residences may be affected, although the extent to which this pesticide was used in any application by the company, which operated in the greater Rutland region, is not presently known. Test results will indicate the presence of chlorpyrifos and any detected levels will determine the advice given by the Health Department for further action.

“The discovery of misuse of chlorpyrifos by an applicator in Vermont is troubling, and we are working quickly to identify any customers who may have been exposed through this company’s action,” said Secretary of Agriculture Chuck Ross.

“We are concerned about possible health effects,” said Health Commissioner Harry Chen, MD. “This pesticide can persist in the indoor environment, and exposure to high enough levels can affect the central nervous system and can be especially harmful to pregnant women and children. While we don’t have any indication at this time that health effects from such exposure caused by this company have been widespread, we do recommend testing the residence of any customer identified so that we can take proper steps in the event we discover chlorpyrifos in the environment.”

Nationally, over the past 20 years, there has been a significant increase in the number of homes, hotels, schools and other settings that have been affected by bed bugs. From 2006 to 2010, the National Pesticide Information Center received reports of pesticides being misused to treat bed bugs that resulted in 129 mild or serious health effects, including one death.

The Agriculture Agency and Health Department recommend that any treatment plan for bed bugs includes non-chemical methods such as cleaning, laundering and heat treatments to reduce the need for chemical pesticides. Pesticides labeled for outside use only should never be used inside the home.

If you think you have been overexposed to a pesticide, or feel sick after a pesticide has been used in your home, call your doctor or the poison control center: 800-222-1222.

If you have questions, dial 2-1-1 to call Vermont 2-1-1, United Ways of Vermont.

For more information on chlorpyrifos: <http://npic.orst.edu/factsheets/chlorpgeen.html>

For more information for homeowners on treating bed bugs:

<http://healthvermont.gov/prevent/bedbugs/>

For health news, alerts and information - visit healthvermont.gov

Join us on [Facebook](#)

Follow us on [Twitter](#)

###

Vermont Department of Health | 108 Cherry Street | Burlington, VT 05402
Voice: 802-863-7200 | In Vermont 800-464-4343 | Fax: 802-865-7754 | TTY/TDD: Dial 711 first
|||