

## ALTERNATIVES TO USING PESTICIDES

The average yard contains 10x more chemicals per acre than a typical commercial farm.

### MAKE YOUR GRASS LESS TOXIC BY:

- \* Not using quick release fertilizers such as “weed and feed” products.
  - \* Applying compost to your lawn 1-2 times a year.
- HEALTHY TURF GRASS IS THE BEST DEFENSE AGAINST WEEDS.**
- KEEP YOUR GRASS HEALTHY BY :**
- \* Mowing often and not too short, keeping it 2.5 - 3.5” tall.

- \* Leaving lawn clippings.
- \* Overseeding with locally adapted grass seed.
- \* Pulling unwanted weeds instead of spraying.
- \* Using spot treatment of vinegar, corn gluten, or borax to kill weeds.

### IN YOUR GARDEN BEDS :

- \* Use a layer of mulch to keep down weeds.
- \* Add native plants to your garden which are naturally disease and pest resistant; also plant densely.

## SPREAD THE WORD

Consider contacting the following groups and encourage them to adopt nontoxic alternatives: your local HOA, municipal and school officials, and athletic associations.



## RESOURCES

- A. Non-toxic Communities which includes many organic alternatives:  
<http://www.nontoxiccommunities.com>
- B. Beyond Pesticides  
<http://www.beyondpesticides.org/programs/2021npf/home>
- C. The National Pesticide Information Center:  
<http://www.npic.orst.edu/health/child.html>
- D. <http://nontoxiccommunities.com/organic-alternatives.html>
- E. <http://pediatrics.aapublications.org/content/130/6/e1757>
- F. <http://www.petmed.com/dog/care/dangers-lawn-chemicals-your-perfect-lawn-killing-your-pet>

## REFERENCES

1. <http://www.beyondpesticides.org/assets/media/documents/lawn/factsheets/Pesticide.children.do.ntmix.pdf>
2. <http://www.beyondpesticides.org/resources/pets>
3. <http://www.nontoxiccommunities.com/documents.html>



# LEARN MORE ABOUT PESTICIDES



CREATED BY  
DOYLESTOWN TOWNSHIP  
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

## WHAT ARE PESTICIDES ?

Pesticides are defined as “ Any substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying, repelling or mitigating any pest.” Insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides are all examples of pesticide products. The most common of these is herbicides, accounting for approximately 80% of all pesticide applications.

## WHAT ARE THE CONCERNS ?

Even at very low levels, pesticide exposure can adversely affect endocrine, neurological, immune and respiratory systems especially in children and pets.

Unfortunately, pesticides don't stay outside on our lawns. The dried chemical dust is brought in on our shoes and on paws of our pets. Once inside, pesticide dust contaminates both the air and surfaces. Studies show that pesticide dust can persist in carpets for up to a year.

The indoor exposure to pesticides for children is 10 times higher during the week after a lawn application than the week before treatment.

Consider removing & leaving your shoes at the door.



## RISKS TO CHILDREN

Because children are smaller in size and because their organs and brains are still developing, we need to be aware of their exposure to pesticides.

Children love to play and crawl on grass and floors, often putting their hands in their mouths, potentially ingesting pesticide dust.

It is not necessarily one instance of pesticide exposure that threatens our children's health, it is the cumulative toxic “load” that is the issue. They are exposed to a wide array of pesticides used in insect repellents, non-organic foods, rodent control products, lawn and garden care products, and pet products.

## CONCERNS FOR PETS

Pets are more vulnerable to chemicals because of their size and their behavior patterns which make them more likely to be exposed. They come into contact with pesticides by digging, sniffing, licking and eating unknown objects. They are exposed to pesticides in flea collars, rodent poison, weed killers, and insect sprays and baits.

## EVIDENCE TO CONSIDER

- > Children who live in households where pesticides are used suffer elevated rates of leukemia (6.5 times higher), brain cancer and soft tissue carcinoma.<sup>1</sup>
- > Children exposed to pesticides either in utero or during critical periods of development may result in lower IQs, birth defects, developmental delays, and face higher risk of autism, ADHD, and cancer.<sup>1</sup>
- > Dogs, whose owners lawns were treated professionally with pesticides, were associated with higher risk (70%) of canine malignant lymphoma.<sup>2</sup>
- > Dogs exposed to herbicide-treated lawns may have an increased risk of bladder cancer in certain breeds by up to 4 to 7 times.<sup>2</sup>
- > Cats are highly sensitive to insecticides which can trigger seizures, tremors, muscle spasms, and even death.<sup>2</sup>