

Eco-Might Herbicide Contains Hazardous Chemicals – Not Listed by Mary Wilson

Recently we became aware of an issue which serves to heighten our **concerns** about the way that pesticides are approved and distributed in this country.

This incident involves an “organic” herbicide, Eco-Might. All ingredients as listed on the label, peppermint oil, potassium sorbate and sodium chloride, are indeed on the list of organic compounds. However, testing results as confirmed by the USEPA Region 9, found this product to contain glyphosate, bifenthrin and permethrin, all hazardous chemicals.

Although EPA issued an Advisory Letter informing the company of possible liability for non-compliance, this letter never went to other regional EPA offices so that our Connecticut DEEP had no knowledge of this violation until we informed them

Other loopholes in the system:

- 1) Products composed solely of organic compounds do not have to be approved before being put on the market. This greatly increases the risk that adulterated products can easily be distributed to the marketplace.
- 2) All new products are evaluated by data submitted by the manufacturer. Without an independent assessment how can the consumer know that health and safety concerns have been adequately addressed?
- 3) Inert ingredients (things like stabilizers, surfactants, fragrances, etc.) do not have to be listed on the label. Studies have shown that at least one inert ingredient kills bumblebees.

EPA’s operations have come under scrutiny from various environmental organizations and news media with recent reports of undue influence from the pesticide industry and an agency which does incomplete or inaccurate risk assessments of new products before approval. Although some court decisions and a few state legislative actions have put appropriate controls or bans on some products, this is a lengthy and expensive process.

In addition to the protection of human health, pesticides represent a risk to pollinators, beneficial insects, wildlife, soil bacteria, native plants, our pets and especially our children. Contamination of water resources is also a huge concern. Infiltration and run-off threaten wells and streams, some of which eventually find their way to Long Island Sound.

In summary, the Eco-Might situation demonstrates a break down in systems designed to protect the environment and us. If we cannot trust the labels on such products, we can refrain from buying them!

We can learn about other ways to control pests in our yards and gardens which are safer and promote sustainability. There is much information on the POP website (Propollinators.com), the Pollinator Pathways website (Pollinator-pathways.org), and the POP book “Earth-Friendly Gardening.”