

## **Neonic Bill Passes in General Assembly**

The good news from Hartford is that the recent passage of SB9 ends the use of neonics on the state's over 300,000 acres of turf and lawns. Such uses had previously been allowed by professional pesticide applicators. This new restriction reflects an emerging recognition by the public and by government officials of the harm that neonics pose to pollinators, other insects, birds and pollution of our waterways.

Also, on the positive side was the rejection of a last-minute amendment that would have allowed certain pesticides to be used at K-8 schools. Connecticut has a long-standing statute that prohibits any pesticides at K-8 school grounds.

Although passage of SB9 is a significant win, one shortfall of the bill is that the use of neonics on shrubs and bushes in yards was not prohibited. This omission is important because such landscape features are where pollinators and birds go to feed and find shelter.

Also eliminated was a clause that would have eliminated neonic coatings on agricultural seeds. Connecticut Pesticide Reform (CPR) will need to work on both these issues for proposed legislation in the 2026 session.

Also, plans for next year include testing of rivers for chlorantraniliprole (Acelepryn), a newer insecticide that is particularly harmful to butterflies and to the shrimp and oyster industry. CPR will keep working to restrict other uses of neonics, and will advocate for a searchable database in Connecticut, showing what pesticides are being used, in what quantities, and where, in our state.

Although there is still work to be done, one can be encouraged by the support that the general public showed at hearings and by the support of critical representatives in Hartford. Thanks to everyone who took the time to make their views known and to the representatives who voted accordingly. This new restriction, which goes into effect October 1, 2027, reflects an emerging recognition by the public and by government officials of the harm that neonics pose to pollinators, other insects, birds and the resulting pollution of our waterways.