

## Statement for the Maine Board of Pesticides

Meeting August 19<sup>th</sup>  
Donna Herczeg Portland Resident

As a Portland resident who has been directly affected by pesticide drift and an owner of dogs whose breed is particularly susceptible to contracting bladder cancer from 2,4-D, a commonly used herbicide in lawn applications, I have found no protection provided for my property or family at the city or state level, including the Maine Board of Pesticides.

Also, as a Portland resident for over 15 years there has been a huge decrease in the insect activity in my gardens surrounding my property. This is the fourth summer of seeing very few butterflies when my gardens were regularly full. The only difference in the last 15 years has been the marked increase in the use of synthetic lawn chemicals.

I am a member of Beyond Pesticides, the Portland Protectors, the Maine Bumble bee Atlas, and the Maine Butterfly Survey. Being active in all of these groups has enabled me to have a broad overview of the different dangers present in the use of synthetic pesticides; to people, children, the environment, how pesticides affect the soil microbes and insects, and the difficulty in creating cultural change and new laws.

The recent presentation by Mary Tomlinson of the Maine Board of Pesticides to the South Portland Conservation Commission I believe should not have taken place since the data, according to Tomlinson, was not ready. Even though the sediment sampling data used in the presentation "Pesticides and Registration Quality Report" given to the Commission were "not yet entered, are incomplete, and not ready for distribution" and the "results would not be available to the public until they are released to our Board" it was nonetheless presented to the Commission.

Charles McNutt, a South Portland Conservation Commissioner, then wrote in a Portland Press Herald article titled "South Portland plan to ban pesticides a needless and harmful overreach", detrimental and erroneous statements regarding the dangers of synthetic pesticides and the need for a pesticide ordinance. Either McNutt was told incorrect information, or he completely misunderstood the data, but his position and his statements were irresponsible and damaging to both South Portland and Portland cities working on various stages of a pesticide ordinance.

The MBOP presentation also disparaged organic pesticides claiming they are just as toxic as synthetics, a consistent pesticide industry claim, even though organic pesticides are not systemic, such as the insecticides Neonicotinoids, or that there are not any studies showing that organic pesticides persist in the soil and water as do synthetic chemicals.

The Maine Board of Pesticides is supposed to function as an entity to protect our citizens and our environment and instead they are involving themselves at the municipal levels and using their position to unduly influence the municipalities of South Portland and Portland in a manner that is more beneficial to the pesticide industry than to the people, wildlife and the environment of Maine. I would encourage the MBOP to proceed as a neutral entity and provide fair and complete information on both organic and synthetic pesticides.

Donna Herczeg  
Portland