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Press Release

Eugene City Council bans neonicotinoid use on city property, expands Pesticide-Free Parks program

Resolution first of its kind in the nation

EUGENE, ORE. — At the request of Beyond Toxics, bee keepers and neighborhood leaders, Eugene's City Council Wednesday night voted to ban the use of neonicotinoid pesticides on city property. Council Resolution 5111 also expands the current Pesticide-Free Parks program and continues the implementation of the City of Eugene's Parks and Open Spaces integrated pest management (IPM) policy to require all city departments to adopt the same IPM standards and protocols. These policies extend to City property that the City rents or leases to others.

The Eugene City Council resolution, the first of its kind in the nation, passed by a unanimous vote during a council work session. The language of the resolution specifically includes a strong concern for children's health as well as protecting bees and other pollinators in Eugene's environment.

Recent research suggests that there is a possible link between pesticides that contain neonicotinoids and the die-off of plant pollinators, including honey bees, native bees, butterflies, and other insects. Neonicotinoids are synthetic insecticides that get absorbed into plant tissue and flowers, making them potentially toxic to bees when gathering pollen and nectar.

Lisa Arkin, Director of Beyond Toxics, attended the Council work session and said, "I'm proud that Eugene is the first city to step up and protect bees from these particularly dangerous pesticides. City staff has already implemented successful alternatives, and are pleased with the results. Eugene's precautionary policy is a good model for other local and state governments."

Eugene City Councilor Claire Syrett, who brought the resolution to the council with the support of Beyond Toxics said, "It is a testament to the strong value our city places on protecting the health of our children and our natural environment that this resolution was adopted unanimously and without controversy."

For more background about the issue of bee decline and the phenomenon's link to the use of neonicotinoid pesticides: <http://www.BeyondToxics.org>.

Beyond Toxics, an Oregon non-profit, has worked to guarantee environmental protections and health for all communities and residents since 2000. We expose root causes of toxic pollution, health inequities and help communities find effective, lasting solutions.

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