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**Beyond Toxics Press Kit:** <http://www.beyondtoxics.org/resources/press-kit/>



## News Release for Jan. 7, 2015

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### **Town Hall Panel and Community Dialog: Forestry, Herbicides and Health**

*Jan. 15<sup>th</sup> meeting to be moderated by Lincoln County Commissioner Bill Hall*

**EUGENE, ORE.** — Modeled after successful meetings held in other Oregon coastal towns that drew hundreds of people, residents of Newport have organized a town hall style meeting. On January 15 a panel of six expert speakers will talk about topics such as the Oregon Forest Practices Act, human health impacts of pesticides, legal and economics and trends in forestry. Included on the panel will be private consultants, as well as, representatives from Oregon Health Department and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality.

The Town Hall is being organized by a coalition of coastal residents and is sponsored by Beyond Toxics, an Oregon non-profit actively engaging rural communities to learn about protecting drinking water from the threat of forestry herbicide use. The free event will be held **January 15, 2015 at the Newport High School Library**. A light dinner will be served at 5:30 pm (\$6 donation) and the program begins at 7:00 pm.

The forest directly above Newport's drinking water reservoir is owned by Plum Creek Timber Company. This area and other coastal forestland have been targeted for clearcutting in 2015. Herbicides will likely be sprayed and since Oregon has no requirements for buffers around non-fish bearing streams that flow into the rivers that provide drinking water, many residents of Newport have expressed concern.

One such Newport resident who has expressed concern is Maria Sause, who learned about a similar town hall in the coastal town of Rockaway Beach last September. "People must become aware of unseen and unfelt dangers of pesticides in the local environment," says Maria. "Pesticides can make us sick in the long-term. We have no adequate testing and very little knowledge of the risks of combinations of chemicals in our bodies."

#### **Presenters**

- Josh Seeds (DEQ), "Monitoring in drinking watersheds"
- Ernie Niemi, "Forest economy for this and future generations"
- Laurie Bernstein, "Private timber and risk from the use of pesticides"
- Dave Farrer and Curtis Cude (OHA), "Public health agency pesticide response duties"
- Chris Winter, "Pursuing personal property rights"

For more background about the issue of pesticides in Oregon's private forests, go to:

<http://www.beyondtoxics.org/work/pesticide-reform/forestry-pesticide-project/>

*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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