

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Household Pesticide Use Survey in Douglas, Arizona

Start Date: Spring 1999

Completion Date: 2000

Project Purpose:

Household pesticides are an unknown factor in understanding childhood exposure to pesticides and their health effects. This survey was conducted to identify what pesticides are being used in the home, where they are being used and stored, and how they are being disposed of.

Project Description:

In Spring 1999, we conducted an in-person survey in Douglas, Arizona, a non-agricultural border community. Eligible household indicated having used a pesticide in the six months prior to the survey and had at least one child under the age of ten. General pesticide usage, storage and disposal information was gathered in addition to specific information about each of the pesticides currently being used and/or stored in the home.

One hundred and forty-eight different pesticide products were found in the 107 households surveyed. Half of the pesticides were stored less than 4 feet from the ground, where a child could reach. Seventy percent of all the pesticides were stored inside the home, with the kitchen being the most often mentioned storage room. The kitchen was also the room where most of the pesticides were used, with 69% of the respondents saying they had used at least one pesticide there.

It will be important to continue to investigate all avenues of pesticide exposure in order to evaluate childhood exposures fully. Understanding household pesticide use and developing a model of exposure will help in this process. Profiles of the use, storage and disposal of products will also guide the development of effective education and poison prevention programs in the community.

Final Outcomes:

Project completed and published in a peer-reviewed journal.

Presentations and Publications:

Bass JK, Ortega L, Rosales C, Petersen NJ, Philen RM 2001. What's being used at home: a household pesticide survey. Rev Panam Salud Publica. Mar; 9(3): 138-44.

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