MEMORANDUM

TO: Thurston County Board of County Commissioners

FROM: The Pest and Vegetation Management Advisory Committee (PVMAC)

DATE: April 3, 2001

SUBJECT: 2000 Annual Report

The Board of County Commissioners adopted the Thurston County Pesticide Use Policy in 1989 and the revised Pest and Vegetation Management Policy in 1993. The Board adopted these policies after significant public involvement and input from the Pesticide Use Study Committee. These policies established a mandate for all county departments using pesticides to adopt Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programs and prescriptions. Additionally, it created the Pest and Vegetation Management Advisory Committee (PVMAC).

In 1990, the Thurston County Board of County Commissioners appointed nine citizens to the PVMAC. The Committee has been directed to assist in the implementation of the Pest and Vegetation Management Policy. This Policy emphasizes development and implementation of IPM programs that provide effective pest and vegetation management with minimal environmental and public health impacts. Often, a direct result of IPM is a reduction in pesticide use.

No pesticides were used from 1990 until 1996 when the first IPM programs were approved. Following is a graph showing the amount of pesticides used by the County over the past five years. The “Pounds of Pesticide Products” is the total amount of pesticide used (not amount of mixture). The graph illustrates an increase in the first year when pesticides were allowed under newly developed IPM prescriptions. It also shows a continuing trend in the reduction of pesticide use. A major reason for this reduction is the adherence of departments to IPM principles. IPM provides a more permanent solution to pest problems, thus resulting in a decreased dependency on pesticides. Lower pest management costs often accompany IPM programs.
2000 PVMAC Activities:

In 2000, members of the PVMAC used their monthly meetings to discuss the Thurston County Pest and Vegetation Management Policy with representatives of County Departments. This gave members an opportunity to review the effectiveness of ongoing IPM prescriptions for controlling pests. Any need for major changes or “fine tuning” of IPM prescriptions was brought to the table at that time. Members were able to make one field visit this past year. All PVMAC meetings are open to the public to gather citizen input.

January:

A. Discussed aquatic herbicide applications in Thurston County and whether the County Policy should be changed.
B. Discussed whether to reorganize the group representation on the Committee.
C. Discussed the proposed IPM article.

February:

A. Continued discussion on aquatic herbicide applications in Thurston County and whether the County Policy should be changed. Approved letter with recommendations to Board of County Commissioners.
B. Continued discussion on whether to reorganize the group representation on the Committee.

March: No scheduled meeting.

April:
A. Discussion on the future of the IPM Program and the Advisory Committee.
B. IPM article update.

May and June: No scheduled meetings.

July:

Committee members toured the Frye Cove County Park and Glacial Heritage Preserve.

August, September, October, November, and December: No meetings scheduled.

Proposed Committee Activities for 2001:

A. Review IPM programs.
   Facilities: The Facilities Program should be completing their IPM Program this year.
B. Review and make recommendations to the staff and the Board of County Commissioners on the future of the PVMAC and the County’s IPM program.
C. Documentation:
   1. More detailed evaluations of current IPM programs and prescriptions are needed to determine if the current policy is effective - are pests being kept at tolerable levels and at what price?
   2. Written history of IPM in Thurston County should be published in order to share our experiences with others who may choose to follow our work.

Conclusions:

The Committee is concerned with the increased pesticide use since 1998. The Committee will discuss this concern with staff.

This Citizen’s Committee is grateful for the opportunity to help implement IPM in Thurston County. We would encourage continued public input at our meetings and further, suggest that an expanded process be implemented to get more of the public involved in this decision making process. Attached is a detailed 2000 report of the pesticide usage by County Departments and a summary from 1996 through 2000.

The Committee again wishes to thank Mark Swartout, the Natural Resource Program Manager, for his timely and consistent support of PVMAC activities. Mr. Swartout has continued to provide the necessary materials so we can concentrate on our duties. This streamlined process greatly enhances our ability to offer suggestions to the Board of Health and the Board of County Commissioners regarding pest management practices in Thurston County.

Respectfully submitted by Dr. Daniel A. Suomi, Co-chair, PVMAC

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