

Revise Pesticide Rules - LTE *Sierra Vista Herald* (March 14, 1988)

Although the bill now before the state Legislature to reform the Structural Pest Control Board would go a long way toward protecting homeowners from some of the abuses of the pesticide and construction industries that have occurred under existing law, the bill would do little to protect the environment and public health from the risks of toxic pesticides.

Historically, the greatest problem with termite control operations has not been the underuse that led to the scandal surrounding the Structural Board, but rather, the overuse and other misuse of persistent pesticides leading to contamination of living quarters and the exposure of residents.

In order to adequately protect the public and environment, the bill should be amended to:

- (1) Require that treatments for pests be carried out only when and where necessary. The current shotgun approach needlessly introduced thousands of pounds of persistent toxic pesticides into our homes every year;
- (2) Require that when treatment is needed, non-chemical methods be given top priority so that toxic chemicals are used only after safer methods are shown to be inadequate. The bill as introduced would not allow operators to even consider non-toxic alternatives;
- (3) Require that the extremely toxic and persistent pesticides chlordane and heptachlor be banned from use in Arizona as they are being banned in other states;
- (4) Require that properties treated with toxic pesticide be posted to warn the public against the dangers of exposure;
- (5) Require that regulation of structural pest control be given not to the Commission on Agriculture and Horticulture, but to the Department of Environmental Quality and the Department of Health Services;
- (6) Require that at least one member of the regulatory board (whether a board or a department or commission) be a specialist in Integrated Pest Management and non-chemical pest control.