

Health official condemns 'inadequate' study

By CATHERINE SIEGNER
Of the Emerald

Preliminary findings of a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency study indicating no connection between herbicide exposure and miscarriages have drawn fire from U.S. Rep. Jim Weaver and Benton County Health Officer Norton Kalishman.

"The EPA hasn't carried out its job," Kalishman said. "I don't know who they're protecting when we're the ones who are paying their salaries."

Kalishman criticized the preliminary report as "extremely inadequate" because the research did not include the records of rural doctors.

Kalishman advised the EPA to check those records because many rural women don't go to hospitals. He was told the investigation would be too cumbersome if rural doctors were contacted.

The federal agency sent a research team from Colorado State University to Alsea last summer to investigate complaints of increased rates of miscarriage in the area.

Bonnie Hill, a high school teacher from the coastal community west of Corvallis kept records of the miscarriages and found an unusually high correlation between them and herbicide spraying in the area.

Hill was concerned that dioxin contained in herbicides Silvex and 2,4,5-T may have drifted into the water supply after aerial applications.

An EPA spokesman said criticism by Weaver and Kalishman is premature.

"I don't think this is appropriate since the final data has not been tabulated yet," Mike Watson of the EPA's Seattle office said.

Weaver, a Democrat, echoed Kalishman's concern Tuesday in an interview by New Rising Sun News Service.

"I can't understand why EPA did not check the records of local doctors in the Alsea area. A possible connection between herbicides and miscarriages is not to be taken lightly."

As chair of the Forest Subcommittee of the House Agriculture Committee, Weaver indicated he may call for local hearings on herbicide use.

EPA is currently studying the effects of human contact with dioxin and is expected to release its findings sometime this spring. It could decide to remove herbicides containing dioxin from the market.

Ron Eachus of Weaver's Eugene staff said the EPA study of dioxin could be extended and that hearing s would not be held earlier than March and possibly not until the middle of 1979.

Meanwhile, Weaver intends to pursue the issue. "I'm going to raise hell," he says.



Graphic by Tom Ettal

IFC holds off on spending requests

The Incidental Fee Committee Tuesday delayed allocating funds to two groups in a short meeting.

University Women in Transition requested \$226 to cover the costs of an office in the EMU, which was only approved for the group last year after Incidental Fee Committee budget hearings had begun. The budget approved at that time was insufficient to cover the new office's costs for postage, office supplies and printing and duplication.

The supplementary budget request, however, contained an allowance for an anticipated growth in the group's membership, which IFC member Kevin Chambers noted was in violation of the committee's

criteria. Committee members then voted to investigate the UWIT request and bring the matter up again later.

Ron Leventhall of the Social Workers Interest Group also made a supplementary budget request for his group. The organization had been active before budget cuts took hold within both the Incidental Fee Committee and the Community Services and Public Affairs department, which sponsors the group.

The IFC decided to postpone a decision on the matter until Leventhall has a chance to prepare a more thorough budget request. The group will be heard again next week.

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