



BEE KILLS LEAD TO NEW RESTRICTIONS

Studies have shown the links between neonicotinoid pesticides and pollinator deaths, but some jurisdictions have been quicker to ban the bee-killing chemicals than others. The city of Eugene banned them on its properties in February, but the June incident in Eugene where 17 sprayed linden trees killed more than 5,000 bees and other pollinator species calls attention to the fact that the city ban does not apply to private properties or all properties under the city's management. The incident at Jacobs Lane Apartments involved two trees in the city's right-of-way and was on a Housing and Community Services Agency of Lane County property.

In addition to a statewide restriction affecting 2014 products that called for a label statement saying the neonics imidacloprid and dinotefuran were not to be used on linden trees or other tilia species, the Oregon Department of Agriculture has now simply banned the use of those chemicals for 180 days, and the ban applies to all private homeowners and professional applicators. The Eugene incident and another recent bee die-off in Beaverton involved neonics with older labels.

"We're hoping that our action on the restrictions will provide a little more assurance that we won't have repeat incidents of bee kills involving these products," says Bruce Pokarney of the ODA. Pokarney says the investigation into the Eugene bee kill, which has already resulted in the suspension of the applicator's license, will be finished in the next few weeks and will

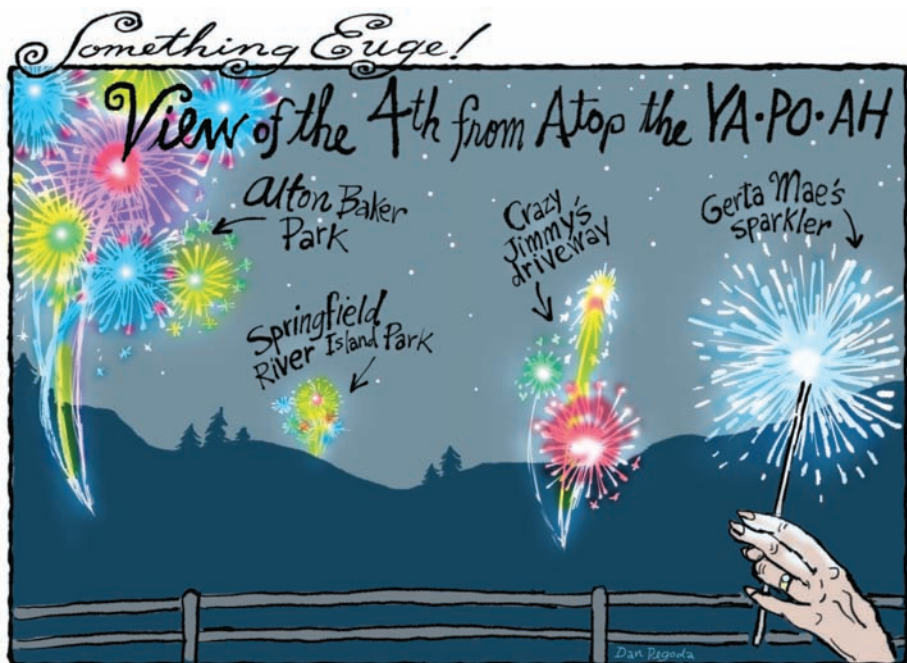
result in a fine for the company, Glass Tree Care & Spray Service. The company has apologized to the city and the county.

Jacobs Lane Apartments, where the pesticide imidacloprid was sprayed, is owned and managed by the Housing and Community Services Agency (HACSA) of Lane County, which provides housing for low-income families, elderly citizens and people with disabilities. Executive Director Larry Abel says that HACSA has an integrated pest management policy that includes "judicious use of pesticides." HACSA is not explicitly a part of the county and has separate policies, according to Abel.

"We definitely do not spray toxic stuff," Abel says. "These guys screwed up, and they used it when they weren't supposed to."

Although two of the linden trees were on city right-of-way, that is not the same as city property according to Mark Snyder, Eugene's urban forester. While city property is owned by the city of Eugene, city right-of-way is only maintained by the city.

In a statement released by Oregon State University on June 23, Ramesh Sagili, an entomologist at OSU, said that 10-15 percent loss of bee colonies is considered acceptable loss, since there is enough replacement to revitalize the colony. Currently the rate of colony loss in Oregon is 21.1 percent, according to OSU. Sagili says that "we have reason to be alarmed," as these rates are far above what is considered survivable. — Anna V. Smith



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