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## Pollinator Protection

**Introduction**

**Pesticides play an important role in controlling insects, weeds, and diseases on farms and in urban landscapes. The areas treated for pests are often shared by pollinators; mainly insects such as bees, butterfly, wasps, hornets, and flies but also birds and bats as well. Pollinators visit flowers in their search for nectar and pollen. While at a flower a pollinator may accidentally brush against the flowers reproductive parts, depositing pollen from a different flower. The plant then uses the pollen to produce a fruit or seed.**

**Pollinators are essential to the survival of the majority of flowering plants in our environment and to the production of more than 85 food crops. Over $15 billion annually is attributed to the value of pollination of food crops, especially fruits, vegetables, and nuts. It is estimated that pollinators are responsible for 1 out of every 3 bites of food that we eat.**

**Insects are the most common and abundant pollinators. Among the pollinating insects, the honey bee is relied upon, to perform most of the commercial pollination. As a pesticide applicator, you are critical to reducing pesticide risks to honey bees. Pesticides can be very harmful to non-target insects such as honey bees. To reduce pesticide exposure to non-targets always first read and adheres to the product label. The use of *Integrated Pest Management* (IPM)* and *Best Management Practices* (BMPs)* wherever pollinators are present, will prevent harming nests, their food sources, water, and habitat.**
**Although the information in this module is targeted to the protection of bees and wasps, the stewardship principles and practices described are applicable to all pollinators.**

**https://hampton.gov/3009/Note-to-Beekeepers**

***IPM- a balanced approach to pest control utilizing mechanical, biological, cultural and chemical controls.**

***BMP- Methods or techniques found to be the most effective and practical means in achieving an objective (such as preventing or minimizing pollution) while making the optimum use of resources.**

**The City of Hamptons Environmental Services Division strives to maintain a strong, environmentally-sound program that focuses on the ecology, while controlling Hampton's mosquito population and reducing diseases transmitted by mosquitoes and other living organisms.**

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**We strive to achieve a "bee friendly" mosquito control program by reducing pesticide quantities and application frequencies, using pesticides with lower toxicity, informing beekeepers when pesticides are going to be used, and creating and updating maps that show pesticide applicators where hives are located. Two key "eco-friendly" strategies help us achieve our goal:**


- **Conducting public outreach and education - *http://www.colonialbeekeepers.org/index.php***
- **Strengthening Hampton's natural bio-rational diversity, which improves the effectiveness of juvenile and adult mosquito predation.**

**To help us in our outreach efforts, we ask that local beekeepers contact the 311 Call Center via home phone or (727-8311) from your cell phone to inform Environmental Services of your contact information and general hive locations. This information is critical when pesticides are being applied in a neighborhood because it helps us avoid direct and indirect contact between hives and drifting pesticide.**

*****For Hamptons IPM program, truck and aerial sprays for adult mosquitoes are the last attempt to control a nuisance or disease outbreak. City of Hampton prefers to utilize Public Outreach and Education, Source Reduction (remove standing water) and larvicide applications to target juvenile mosquito populations before they achieve flight.**

**To notify the City of Hampton about a private or commercial beekeeper or apiarist please goes to: *https://hampton.gov/3024/Hampton-Beekeeper-Information-Form***

**Tips for Certified Pesticide Applicators**

- **Follow all requirements on pesticide product labels (label is the law-EPA)**
- **Maintain all application equipment in good working order and calibrate it regularly.**
- **Check equipment for leaks and malfunctions before use to minimize the potential for accidental spills.**
- **Rinse pesticide application equipment and pesticide containers on a solid surface where it will not drain to waterways.**
- **If not specified on the label, apply when wind speed is between 3 and 10 mph.**
- **For ground boom applications, apply using a nozzle height of no more than 2 feet above the ground or crop canopy, unless a greater height is required for efficacy or safety.**

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- **Use a low pressure, large droplet sprayer, and spray close to the crop canopy or the ground.**
- **Do not spray if heavy rain is expected within 48 hours as the pesticide may wash away from the area of application and into water bodies.**
- **Where possible, leave a vegetative buffer strip between the field and areas where wildlife may be present, including downhill aquatic habitats. Be sure to follow any label requirements related to buffers, as well.**
- **Make sure you get and maintain proper training and certification (VDACS in Virginia)**

**EPA Standards for Certification of Private Applicators**

**The federal regulations require private applicators to show practical knowledge of:**

- **pest problems and control practices associated with agricultural operations;**
- **proper storage, use, handling, and disposal of pesticides and containers; and**
- **legal responsibility;**

**and have the ability to:**

- **read and understand pesticide labels and labeling;**
- **apply pesticides according to labeling instructions and warnings; and**
- **recognize**
    - **common pests and damage caused by them;**
    - **local environmental situations to be considered during application to avoid contamination; and**
    - **Poisoning symptoms and procedures to follow in case of a pesticide accident.**

**Private applicators are certified by a state, territory, or tribe by:**

- **Passing a written or oral test.**
- **Attending a training course.**
- **Another system approved by EPA.**

**https://www.epa.gov/pollinator-protection**