Maryland Pesticide Education Network

Smart on Pesticide Coalition

Smart on Pesticides Coalition protects people, pollinators, wildlife, and the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem from the harmful impacts of pesticides. Smart on Pesticide Coalition (SOPC) was formed in 2012 and currently has 114 organizations and business members. Below are some of our recent successes.

Our Work Makes a Powerful Difference

We lead the effort to reduce harmful pesticides laden with PFAS in our communities, crops, drinking water, the Chesapeake Bay, and public spaces.
Our policy and advocacy brought the dangerous impacts of PFAS "forever chemicals" that are in over 1,000 pesticides used on homes, farms, hospitals, schools, and mosquito spraying to the policy leaders in Annapolis. In 2024, our bill that simply banned the use of any pesticide with PFAS as an active ingredient was eye opening to legislators. We will be back in 2025 to make sure that Marylanders are protected from these highly toxic forever chemicals.

In 2023, passed a bill to set up a three-agency study group to address testing for PFAS in pesticides. The three-agency report recommended the State wait for EPA to develop testing methods and, at that time, establish an in-house testing program. The Coalition identified issues with the report in a memo to legislators.

In 2022, closed loopholes to protect our pollinators: 1) Passed the Protecting Pollinators Act (HB208/SB375) to close a loophole that allowed retailers to keep selling to consumers many pollinator-killing neonic products. The original bill, passed in 2016, halted sales of neonic consumer products, but when Coalition members surveyed retailers, we found many stores still carried these harmful products. The Department of Agriculture was not aware or taking action to fix this problem. 2) Passed the Essential Workers Protection Act (HB581/SB486) and temporarily extended worker protection to farmworkers during COVID.

In 2020, banned chlorpyrifos: Our work with legislators successfully made the Md. Department of Agriculture ban chlorpyrifos in Maryland. This deadly pesticide is confirmed by the US EPA to harm babies' brains at any detectable level. There is no safe exposure. Our law was the first passed in the nation to ban all uses of this chemical.

Our Work Critically Needs Your Support

Changing pesticides regulations and laws is difficult. Our small but effective Coalition is up against Big Pesticides, the agrochemical industry, and their many lobbyists. We do the hard work to educate legislators, regulators, and the public on the deadly impact pesticides have on food, water, workers, and our health. We are often the watchdog to ensure these laws are enforced. Education, coalition building, and advocacy have resulted in a safer Maryland. But we have more work ahead. Your support makes this possible.

Please Donate to Help Us Win Against Big Pesticides

Access our extensive online resources:

MdPestnet.org – website for MD Pesticide Education Network for latest campaigns including pesticide free mosquito control, monthly PesticideSmart newsletter, action alerts, and more.
GoOrganicMd.org – website provides a wealth of information for transiting to a more organic lifestyle.
SaferDisinfectant.org – website identifies toxic and least-toxic disinfecting products for various needs.