

Bringing you HOPE -
Helping Our Peninsula's Environment

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Monterey City Council Alarmed about Aerial Pesticide Spray

Last evening, August 21, 2007 the Monterey City Council voted unanimously for an emergency resolution expressing their serious concern over the proposed aerial pesticide spraying of our Monterey Peninsula. They resolved to hold a special meeting specifically on this next week. City Manager Fred Meurer suggested they may need to move to a bigger hall, perhaps at the Conference Center.

Councilman Frank Sollecito said "This is an emergency of the highest order. This is an assault." Councilwoman Libby Downey added "This is too soon without notification. She added that while the city may not have authority over this, "we can have some influence." She expressed concern about the secret ingredients in the pesticides. (dd: The secret ingredients are misleadingly called "inerts." See: www.1hope.org/pest.htm)

Councilwoman Nancy Selfridge asked for city staff to look into the alternative of using pheromone moth traps and signing up volunteers. Councilman Jeff Haferman said "This process has been turned upside down. They need to take public input first - then make a decision."

Though the issue was not on the agenda, some 30 people rose to speak during public comment at the start of the meeting. After an hour some 45 people raised their hands in answer to a speaker's question of who was concerned about this issue. Not one person spoke in favor of the aerial spraying. All speakers were respectful, and Mayor Chuck Della Sala was courteous to those who went over

their time allowing them to conclude their remarks gracefully without cutting them off. Public comment, normally only a few minutes, took almost an hour and a half.

Issues raised included --

- "There are no apple orchards in Monterey."
- "The moths only affect the cosmetics of apples - not the health or nutrition of them."
- "The Food and Agricultural people admit this is an economic issue. If its not a health issue it is not an emergency."
- Alternatives exist - they can use hanging traps from trees rather than spraying pesticides from airplanes; they don't want to because they're too lazy. They used this alternative in Napa.
- "Monterey is a guinea pig - this hasn't been used anywhere in the U.S. before."
- During the malathion spraying for medfly "a lot of people got sick."
- "I'm leaving town during the spraying. I wish I could take everyone with me."
- "I'm not opposed to eradicating pests. I am opposed to using such radical measures without trying alternatives first."

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Next Tuesday at 7:00 pm the Fort Ord Community Advisory Group (FOCAG) will be holding a public meeting to allow the public to speak about this issue. The meeting is at the Youth Center at Lake El Estero in Monterey.

The agencies in charge of this proposal are invited as are Assemblyman John Laird, Senator Abel Maldonado.

What you can do:

1. Call, or better yet write, Assemblyman Laird's Office

Phone: 649-2832

Fax: 649-2935

Respectfully request that Mr. Laird insist the Agricultural Department do the Alternative instead of Spraying:

- Hang traps ("Twist ties") from trees.

2. OR call or write Congressman Farr's Office

Phone: 649-3555

Fax: 424-7099

3. Call your local City Council Members and respectfully request they agendize this serious issues BEFORE they spraying starts on Sept 5th

4. Write Letters to the Editor !

www.1hope.org/news12e.htm

For more info:

Call 624-6500 or see 1HOPE.ORG/pest

To be added to HOPE's alert list please send a note to -- info7 at 1hope dot org

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-David Dilworth, Executive Director

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