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Welcome to this edition of *Occupational Health Watch*, an update of recent activities of the California Department of Public Health's Occupational Health Branch (OHB).

**Focus on...**

**Preventing worker illness from indoor pesticide exposure**

Although we often think about agriculture when we hear about pesticide illness, workers in a variety of indoor settings can get sick from pesticides. Bank and office workers have fallen ill after their buildings were fumigated; school employees have experienced symptoms after agricultural pesticides drifted into their schools; and flight attendants have become ill after exposure to pesticides used in airplanes.

In data collected by the California Department of Public Health's [Occupational Pesticide Illness Prevention Program \(OPIPP\)](#) from 1998-2009, nearly one out of five people who reported work-related pesticide illnesses were exposed to pesticides in indoor air.

Because workers and members of the public can become ill from pesticide use indoors, steps should be taken to eliminate or reduce human exposures. There are effective and safe ways to control pests without the use of sprayed pesticides.

CDPH's new web pages and fact sheets about indoor pesticide use provide information and resources for employees, employers, building management and pest control companies to use safer alternatives to control pests and prevent illnesses.

- [Preventing worker illness from indoor pesticide exposure](#) – new web page
- [Keep pests and pesticides out of your office! \(PDF\)](#) – fact sheet for workers (co-produced by California Department of Pesticide Regulation)
- [Managing pests and pesticides in your office \(PDF\)](#) – fact sheet for employers and building managers (co-produced by California Department of Pesticide Regulation)
- [Bank workers become ill after fumigation \(PDF\)](#) – pesticide hazard alert

OHB is dedicated to improving worker health and safety through prevention activities. We gather information on job hazards, work with others to test new approaches to prevent worker injury and illness, and assist with making changes at the workplace. For more information, visit the [OHB website](#) ([www.cdph.ca.gov/ohb](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/ohb)).

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