



Department of Toxic Substances Control



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Addendum to Interim Guidance for Sampling Agricultural Fields for School Sites (Second Revision)

Section 4.2: Chemicals of Potential Concern (COPC): Pesticides

September 26, 2003

A review of 35 proposed school sites along with the historical background of organochlorine pesticide (OCP) use in California indicates that sites with agricultural usage ending prior to 1950 do not need to be evaluated for organochlorine pesticides (OCPs). OCPs were first introduced into California Agriculture in 1944 and reached peak usage in the 1960's. In 1974 the use of the OCP DDT was banned for agricultural purposes, and the elimination of remaining OCPs in California agriculture quickly followed. Data from 35 proposed school sites where agricultural use ended prior to 1950 indicates that OCPs were not commonly identified as chemicals of potential concern. In those cases where OCPs were identified, the source appears to have been the application to structures on the property, and not the agricultural crops grown prior to 1950. It is recommended that former agricultural sites that terminated operation prior to 1950 not be evaluated for agriculturally related OCPs. Arsenic should still be evaluated as a chemical of potential concern since its use as arsenical pesticides and herbicides predates 1950.