

Blue Hill Health Ecosystem Ordinance FAQ What are the Ordinance basics?

The Ordinance prohibits application, storage, or sale of synthetic substances (pesticides) other than those specifically listed as “allowed” in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s [National List](#) of Allowed and Prohibited Substances, (National Organic Program). There are other exemptions listed in the Exemption section of the Ordinance, pages 5-6.

If I need to use a pesticide, what products can I use?

First of all, every effort should be made to use a nontoxic alternative. This [Guide to Pest Best Management Practices](#), created by the Portland Sustainability Office, provides detailed information on non-chemical and mechanical solutions as well as least toxic chemical options as a last resort.

If applying a prohibited pesticide, what procedures do I need to follow?

Follow the instructions on the package. In addition, there are Notification and Signage requirements, detailed in Section G. Public Notification of Pesticide Use, page 7, of the Ordinance.

How will this ordinance be enforced?

The intent of this Ordinance is not to punish but to educate, the ideal result being the replacement of toxic substances with nontoxic substances and/or methods. If someone is suspected of violating the Ordinance, is reported to the Code Enforcement Officer (CEO), and found to be in violation of the Ordinance, levying a fine will be at the discretion of the CEO.

Why are commercial farms exempt?

Maine’s [Right to Farm Act](#) permits commercial farmers to use pesticides. Per Maine’s Agricultural Compliance Program, *“Essentially, this law specifies that these (farm) operations may not be considered a “nuisance” under law if the operation is in compliance with applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations, and conforms to [Best Management Practices](#).”* Hopefully, as people become more aware of the health risks of synthetic pesticides, they will share their concerns with the farmers with whom they do business and request that alternative methods be used.

When will the ordinance go into effect?

In order to allow time for residents and businesses to become familiar with the requirements of this ordinance, the prohibitions on the use of certain products and/or applications (and the related public notification, signage and reporting requirements), the ordinance shall become effective on January 1, 2021.

The EPA hasn’t banned glyphosate (principle ingredient in Roundup). Doesn’t that mean it’s safe?

No! For 20 years, scientists have been studying and documenting the [health problems linked to Glyphosate](#). Children are particularly at risk. At least [19 countries](#) have banned Glyphosate. [Scores of communities](#) across the United States have done so as well. Over [70 countries](#) have banned various pesticides that are allowed in the United States. In Maine, at least 29 communities have enacted Ordinances, which prohibit or regulate the use of pesticides.

How do I safely dispose of pesticides?

Because of the extremely toxic nature of many pesticides and the health risks of their handling and storage, there are no established town or county programs for people to bring their pesticides for disposal. Once a year the State of Maine offers the opportunity for people to bring their pesticides to one of four locations for disposal. Disposal is free and registration is required. To dispose of unwanted pesticides, call the Board of Pesticide Control at 207-287-2731 or visit the [Obsolete Pesticide Collection](#) page on the Maine Board of Pesticide Control website.

One day of collection at four locations in Maine is largely inadequate, resulting in pesticides either being stored or disposed of improperly, putting people and the environment at risk. Hopefully, as awareness of pesticide toxicity increases, towns and counties will create programs for safe pesticide disposal. Until such time, please handle pesticides as little as possible, and store them in a secure location away from children and pets.