



The Columbia Center for Children's Environmental Health

April 15, 2002

Dear Study Participant,

When you agreed to participate in our study, we promised to let you know when final results on the study were published. We are writing to let you know that some preliminary results on pesticide exposures will be published in May.

These early results indicate that women in the study are commonly exposed to pesticides used in the home to control roaches and mice, and that these levels are generally low. However, in some cases higher exposure levels were seen. We do not know what these exposures mean for the health of any individual mother and her child. What we do know from previous research in laboratory animals is that some chemicals commonly found in pesticides can be harmful at much higher levels. For this reason, we think that it is best to reduce your own and your children's exposure as much as possible.

We have attached recommendations for home pest prevention and pest control methods that are safer to use than pesticide sprays. If you would like additional information, please feel free to call us at the phone numbers listed below. We would be happy to talk with you.

Sincerely,

Andria Reyes (212-304-7274)

Judyth Ramirez (212-304-5574)

Jessica Dietrich (212-304-5575)

Diurka Diaz (212-304-5594)

Yesenia Cosme (212-304-6373)

En español...⇒

HOUSING REPAIRS



FACT: The owner of your building is responsible for keeping apartments in good repair. Closing up holes and crevices in your apartment walls is one of the best ways to prevent cockroaches and mice from entering your home.

Eliminating leaks that cause moisture in the walls and on floors is also important since cockroaches are attracted to water.



YOU CAN REQUEST REPAIRS through the landlord, superintendent or maintenance staff in your building.



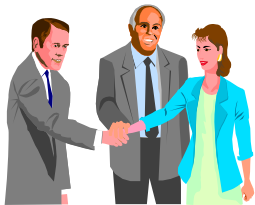
If your request is not acted upon by your landlord and you live in **PRIVATELY OWNED HOUSING**, you can call the Central Complaint phone number at the NYC Housing, Preservation & Development (HPD) Department at 212-824-4328, and give as much detail as possible so that the problem is well documented and on record if you every need to follow-up in housing court.



Tell the operator when you will be home for the inspector visit. HPD will assign a case number and tell you what it is. An inspector will then be sent to your home to inspect the damage needing repair.

If your request is not acted upon by your building manager and you live in CITY-OWNED HOUSING, you can call the Division of Property Management's (DPM) Focus Unit to file a complaint: **Manhattan**, 212-694-2435 or the **Bronx**, 718-617-7459. Complaints are grouped by priority - emergency, priority & non-priority repairs - and responded to accordingly. You will be given a complaint number.

If your request is not acted upon by your building's maintenance staff and you live in NYCHA HOUSING, you can call the New York City Housing Authority's Community Operations Department at 212-306-8628. In an emergency, after regular working hours, call NYCHA's 24-hour Emergency Services Department at 212-289-8000.



If your landlord still does not comply, you may want to contact **Legal Services** where advocates or attorneys can intervene to arrange repair with your landlord or through the court system.

In Washington Heights, Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation (212-368-0230/-3) offers legal services.

In Harlem, Legal Aid Society's Harlem Neighborhood Project (212-678-0333) offers legal assistance.

In the South Bronx, Pueblo en Marcha (718-665-7375) serves as an intermediary between tenants and landlords and also helps with legal action if necessary. **ACORN** (718-292-0070) assists buildings in forming tenant unions to help improve landlords' responsiveness to maintenance needs.

PESTS WON'T LIKE TO VISIT YOUR HOME IF YOU...

REPAIR LEAKY FAUCETS



- Take out garbage nightly
- Throw away grocery bags
- Keep garbage containers clean

DON'T GIVE PESTS FOOD OR WATER

- ☺ Store food in glass jars & plastic tubs with tight lids
- ☺ Wet mop the floor to clean up crumbs & food spills
- ☺ Do not allow food to be eaten outside the kitchen
- ☺ Place the cap back on the toothpaste tube & tighten
- ☺ Clean kitchen & bathroom often and thoroughly



REMEMBER: Pests can squeeze through spaces as tiny as 1/64 of an inch!

SEAL ALL ACCESS POINTS

- ➔ Look for small cracks & spaces behind the refrigerator & oven. Plug them with steel wool, copper mesh, caulk or duct tape until they can be properly repaired.
- Repair torn window screens.
- ⬆ Fasten moldings tightly to wall and seal well.

TRAPPING PESTS SAFELY



Use:

Gel baits
Bait stations
Sticky traps

TO AVOID...

... potentially HARMFUL

SPRAYS, FOGS
&
BOMBS

that can linger in the
air and be inhaled by
children.



**USE BAIT STATIONS & STICKY TRAPS
CORRECTLY TO TRIUMPH OVER PESTS!**



Place traps in places pests like to visit:

- ☺ Along the base molding on the floor
- ☺ Behind the refrigerator & stove
- ☺ In the food pantry
- ☺ Under the sink
- ☺ In the bathroom

**Use many traps & replace every 2-3 months for
best effect.**

☺ **RECOMMENDED FOR USE:** Combat bait stations, sticky traps & gels

☹ **NOT RECOMMENDED:** Never purchase roach & rat poisons sold at dollar stores, such as **Dursban, Tres Pasitos & Tempo**. They are unregulated products and can be even more harmful than approved products. Avoid pesticide sprays & fogs as much as possible.