

Debunking Corrupt State Agencies and a Wacky Professors Theory

Santa Cruz, CA. February 27, 2009.

A report, released last week and authored by a group of researchers from various organizations supports concerns Californians have had about the aerial spraying of pesticides in the Monterey Bay area in 2007. The study clearly shows the correlation of the unprecedented bird die off and red tide with the timing of the spraying of the pesticide Checkmate. Other questions remain unanswered.

New State Study Supports Californians' Concerns About Aerial Pesticide Spray; More Questions Unanswered

Santa Cruz, CA. February 27, 2009. A report, released last week and authored by a group of researchers from various organizations including the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC), California Department of Fish and Game, and Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute, Moss Landing, supports concerns Californians have had about the aerial spraying of pesticides in the Monterey Bay area in 2007.

The study clearly shows the correlation of the unprecedented bird die off with the timing of the spraying of the pesticide Checkmate.

The authors of the study reported the birds had a "slimy yellow-green material on their feathers" and that the cause of death was due to "surfactant-like proteins, derived from organic matter of the red tide, [that] coated their feathers and neutralized natural water repellency and insulation." The birds were unable to maintain buoyancy and drowned.

While the researches commented on the foam as being attributed to red tide, the foam was in fact also seen in rivers after the pesticide spraying, and found by a San Jose State University researcher to be filled with microcapsules associated with the spray. Many residents within the spray zone remember the yellowish foamy substance on their windows, decks, and planter boxes left by the spray.

Former Santa Cruz city council member Ed Porter recalls thick yellow foam covering the San Lorenzo River: "I went to the trestle bridge and found a great deal of foam over about 3/4 of the width of the river. It was about 5 inches thick in some places. This is a spot on the river I visit often and I have never in 40 years seen foam like this there or anywhere else on the river. I saw the foam also all along the cliff at Cowells Beach which is the Northern reach of Monterey Bay."

According to Capitola resident Jacquie Rainwater, who together with her teenage daughter helped in the rescue of the sea birds: "We found the birds washing up in droves, soaking wet, shivering and frightened. There were grebes, loons, and scooters, literally drowning in front of our eyes. They were unable to make it all the way to shore, so they just sank. It was awful to watch."

Not studied by the investigators was the potential synergism between the highly toxic surfactant agent tricaprly methylammonium chloride (TMAC), present in Checkmate, and the surfactant protein found to be the cause of the bird deaths.

The authors note in their study that this was the first documented severe red tide capable of producing such a foam. The red tide coincided with the first time Checkmate was aerially sprayed in the vicinity of a national marine sanctuary. After the spraying, pesticide drift was measured over a distance of more than three miles, violating buffer zones around the sanctuary.

The pesticide label clearly states that the compound should not be used or come in contact with water.

The study also did not mention that Checkmate contains several compounds that can feed the microplankton that gives rise to red tide, including several surfactants, phosphates and urea.

Veteran surfers who have been surfing in the Monterey Bay for decades commented on the unique severity of the red tide that spiked after the spraying of Checkmate.

The study additionally noted that "some birds showed gross or microscopic evidence of acute haemorrhage into the lungs [...]" and adds that "one important possibility that merits investigation is exposure to an aerosolized component of the surface slime."

The study's findings fit with other research sponsored by the state of California: results of acute toxicology tests for Checkmate, released by the state in November 2008, showed that one out of ten lab animals died after only four hours of dermal exposure. Necropsy results showed "pale lungs" among other organ abnormalities.

These findings are echoed in the new study, where necropsy of the birds revealed that "... approximately half of the birds had gross and/or microscopic evidence of acute haemorrhage into the pulmonary parabronchi and adjacent pulmonary parenchyma was sometimes pale and hypoperfused."

These findings are consistent with the American Lung Association who reports that exposure to aerosol particulate matter of 10 microns can cause respiratory distress, emphysema, and even death. This connection was also not mentioned in the study.

Finally, the authors added: "Of note, some animal care personnel also reported mild respiratory irritation after contact with heavily soiled birds during this event."

Respiratory distress, from mild to almost lethal, was the most reported symptom due to the spraying and the aforementioned toxicology tests have shown Checkmate to be an irritant.

The sea bird-die off, the most severe ever reported for the Santa Cruz area, occurred immediately after three days of all-night pesticide spraying of residential areas by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) in attempts to eradicate the Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM), a moth that experts say has been in California for decades and is now known to not pose a threat to agriculture or native plants.

The bird die off dissipated in approximately 30 days which correlates with the life span of the microcapsules associated with the pesticide spray.