

Misapplication of Parathion

By John E. Conover, Jr., P.E.

There was a farmer on eastern Long Island who had an extra house that he rented out. The rental house did not have a basement- it was built on footings and there was dirt under the floor.

One day the tenants complained of termites. The farmer came in, pried up a couple of floor boards in the kitchen, and poured in some parathion, full strength. Parathion is supposed to be used in orchards, very much diluted. And you are not supposed to go in the orchard for 30 days without wearing a respirator.

The people who lived in the rental house got very sick, and went to the hospital. The farmer was arrested by the police and then had to pay a lot of money to clean up the contaminated soil under the house.

He had to hire a house moving company who put steel beams under the house and wood blocks under the steel to hold the house up while they dug up the contaminated soil. The contaminated soil was hazardous waste, and had to be disposed of properly at a hazardous waste disposal facility.





Landlord Indicted in Pesticide Use

By John McDonald
STAFF WRITER

In an unusual indictment, a Manorville landlord was charged yesterday with reckless endangerment for pouring down a hole in a floor of a house he rented to a family nearly five gallons of pesticide — enough to spray 160 acres of land for insect control.

The family of five living in the house became ill, and one of the sons began vomiting a day after the pesticide parathion was poured through the floor, authorities said. The use of parathion indoors or without a state permit is illegal.

Bennet S. Dosiak Sr. of 135 South St. was charged in a five-count indictment with reckless endangerment, unlawful acts with a pesticide and three counts of

endangering the public health.

After surrendering to the district attorney's office yesterday, Dosiak pleaded innocent at an arraignment before Suffolk County Court Judge Denis Hurley and was released without bail.

Suffolk Assistant District Attorney Patrick Perrella said the quantity of parathion used would normally be used to spray 160 acres for insect control, and that Dosiak subsequently ran water through a hose into the hole for nearly an hour.

Dosiak's lawyer, Philip Murphy, said his client was attempting to exterminate termites from the house. "He was trying to make the house more habitable for his tenants," he said. "He applied it [the pesticide] without using a respirator, on land that he owns. He

didn't know it was parathion; he thought it was a substance that is appropriate to use for killing termites."

Murphy said that when the tenants complained about the fumes, Dosiak removed 120 tons of soil from under the house and will have it shipped to a state approved hazardous waste site near Buffalo. But state officials said the dirt removed from under the house was placed nearby, and additional cleanup is necessary. Officials said the cleanup will have to be strictly supervised, and will cost about \$70,000.

Perrella said Dosiak specifically is charged with recklessly endangering the health of 7-year-old Jeffrey Busick and with endangering the public health.

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by depositing 100 gallons of parathion-laced liquid into the soil. Perrella said the charge of unlawful acts with a pesticide is rarely made.

After the Feb. 3 incident, Jeffrey's mother, Marilyn Busick, called Newsday to complain that her landlord had poured gallons of pesticide into a hole in the kitchen floor of their Manorville home.

"The fumes were bad, but he seemed to think it would be gone in a day or so," she said at the time. She said her son Jeffrey began vomiting the next morning and that the entire family was plagued with headaches, nausea, diarrhea and other ailments.

The family went to University Hospital at Stony Brook for extensive tests, but the results could not be learned yesterday. The family declined to comment.

Perrella said, "There have been confirmed deaths from the misuse of parathion." He said that the youngster and his father, Stephen Busick Sr., experienced listlessness and other symptoms of exposure to parathion.

Ken Hill, chief of the Suffolk Health Department's public and environmental health laboratory, said that a quantity of parathion weighing as much as 10 grains of common table salt would be fatal to a child if inhaled or digested.

Murphy said his client had taken no precautions to protect himself from the toxin. "His dogs drank the water from under the house," Murphy said, "and they are still alive with no apparent ill effects. He had had this around for a long time on the farm; he had no idea it was dangerous."