

Calif. residents say moth spray dangerous

January 7 2008

Hundreds of Northern California residents have reported health problems since the state began anti-moth pesticide spraying in September.

Residents of Monterey and Santa Cruz counties filed 330 formal complaints to the state related to the light brown apple moth insecticide spraying, and about 300 more complained to doctors or public interest groups, said a report by the California Alliance to stop the Spray, the Santa Cruz (Calif.) Sentinel reported Sunday.

Citizens said the pheromone spray, CheckMate LBAM-F, caused scratchy throats and eyes, respiratory problems and skin rashes, the newspaper said.

The state Department of Food and Agriculture said the pesticide, which is a synthetic female moth pheromone intended to disrupt mating patterns, is only harmful at exposures much higher than the amount contained in the spray.

Without the spray, the more than 10,000 moths in Santa Cruz County could destroy millions of dollars worth of property, department officials said.

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Citation: Calif. residents say moth spray dangerous (2008, January 7) retrieved 19 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2008-01-calif-residents-moth-dangerous.html>

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