

Organizations Urge Support For Investigation Of EPA

RALEIGH, N.C. — A group of 23 farm and tobacco organizations is urging congressional support for investigations surrounding the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) conduct in classifying environmental tobacco smoke as a group A carcinogen.

In a resolution circulated to congressional leaders on Capitol Hill, the twenty-three organizations call for "all representatives and senators with an interest in family farmers and scientific integrity to support congressional inquiries into the extremely questionable process by which the EPA reached its conclusions."

The final version of the EPA risk assessment on environmental tobacco smoke (ETS), which was released on January 7, is shrouded in controversy over the credibility of EPA's science. The General Accounting Office is now conducting an investigation into EPA's scientific review process and handling of ETS. In addition, EPA's own inspector general is investigating contracting irregularities for a workplace smoking guide.

Of particular concern to drafters of the resolution is the precedent setting change in the way EPA analyzed the statistical data on ETS. The groups charge that EPA manipulated the data on ETS to hit a predetermined antitobacco policy goal.

Fred Bond, chief executive of the Flue-Cured Tobacco Cooperative Stabilization Corporation in Raleigh, N.C., said that EPA altered its own established guidelines to classify ETS as a group A carcinogen. Bond said, "when EPA first analyzed the scientific studies on tobacco smoke, they found that the data was too weak to support the group A classification. Then, violating their own established procedure, EPA lowered their scientific requirements so that ETS could fall into the group A classification. EPA has clearly chosen to ignore the scientific data in pursuit of its policy goals against tobacco."

"EPA has applied a double standard and demonstrated extreme bias in making this risk assessment," said Danny McKinney, chief executive of the Burley

Tobacco Growers Cooperative Association in Lexington, Ky. "I firmly believe that a risk assessment based on such weak and clearly manipulated data would not have been issued by EPA on any other product. With substances other than tobacco, it's common to see results of scientific studies reported as too weak to be conclusive. But in this case, EPA would not accept the fact that the scientific studies do not support their anti-tobacco agenda."

The resolution sponsors have also asked why one of the largest and most comprehensive studies of ETS completed to date was not included in EPA's risk assessment. In November 1992, the *American Journal of Public Health* published the findings of a study on ETS conducted by the National Cancer Institute.

The National Cancer Institute study reported no statistically significant increase in nonsmoker lung cancer risk based on exposure to environmental tobacco smoke. In fact, 80 percent of the studies that were included in EPA's risk assessment showed no

statistically significant association between nonsmoker lung cancer risk and ETS. Critics charge that EPA's selective use of scientific

studies confirms that politics rather than science were at work in making this risk assessment.

Clinic For Well Owners

EPHRATA (Lancaster Co.) — Concerned about the quality of your drinking water? If you depend on your own well or spring, you should be.

"The quality of water from a private supply is the responsibility of its owner," said Leon Ressler, Penn State extension agent in agriculture and environmental issues, Lancaster County. "If you don't test your water, no one else will."

Persons whose water supply is from a private well should plan to attend a free "Safe Drinking Water Clinic" sponsored by the adult farmer program of the Ephrata Area School District, under the direction of Charles Ackley, agriculture education teacher.

The meeting will be held on March 9 at 7:45 p.m. in the Ephrata Senior High School Audition Room.

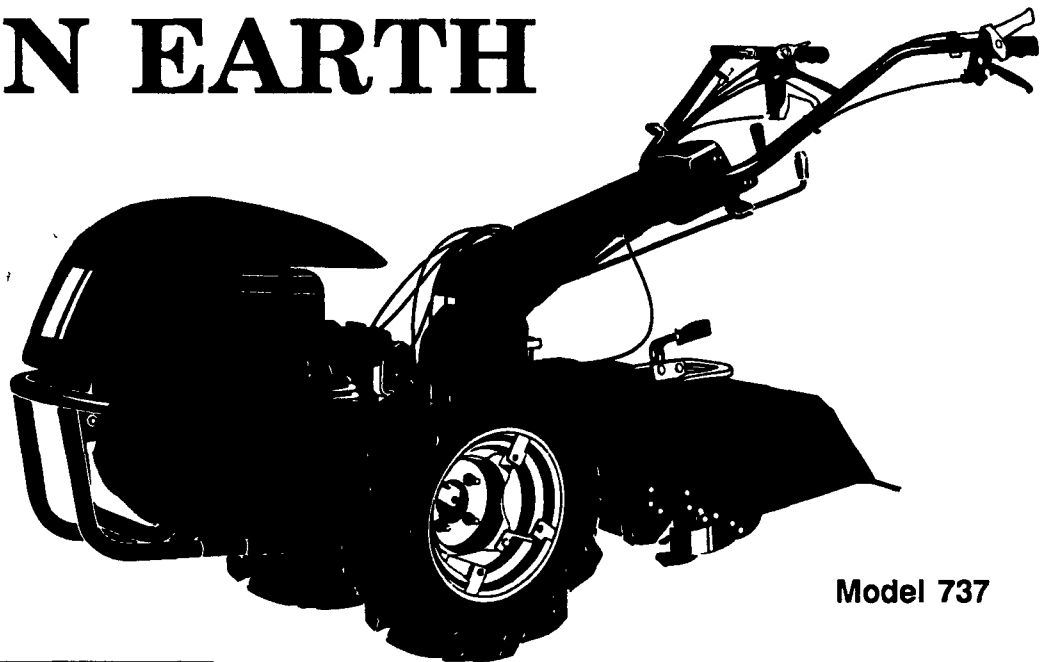
Ressler will speak on water quality issues in Lancaster County, drinking water quality problems, ground water quality, proper well construction, water testing and interpretation of water test results, and water treatment for private water systems.

Dr. Robert Thee will address radon in drinking water. He will discuss how radon enters your water, what risks are associated with it, and how to treat contaminated water. Thee joined Penn State extension in 1988 as a multi-county agent serving Lancaster, Montgomery, and Chester counties. He works with a variety of programs, including residential property management for part-time landlords, tenant education, the home purchase process for first-time buyers, barrier-free housing, radon, lead poisoning prevention, indoor air quality, and household waste management.



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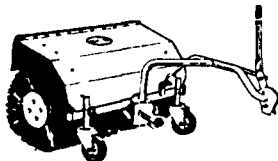
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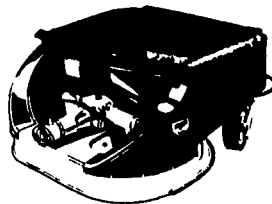
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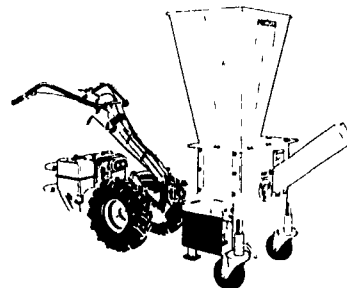
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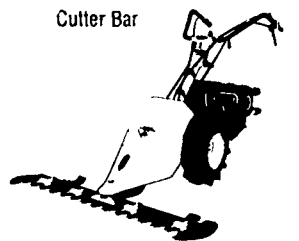
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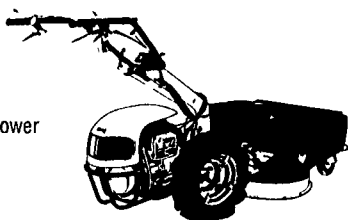
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