

State Wants Pet Stores To Explain Pesticide Dangers To Pet Owners

EPA Advisory About Flea And Tick Products Prompts Reaction

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BOSTON -- The state's top consumer advocate said pet stores need to do more to educate consumers about the dangers of flea and tick pesticides for pets.

As Team 5 Investigates first reported, the Environmental Protection Agency is currently reviewing more than 44,000 filed last year.

"My first thought was, is this the product we have on our shelves?," said Shelby Klironomous, a groomer at Doggone It! in Needham.

She stopped selling Biospot flea and tick control after learning about the potential problems with products containing pesticides.

"If it's something I wouldn't give to my own dog, then I wouldn't sell it at my store," Klironomous said.

The manufacturer of BioSpot told Team 5 Investigates, "Our products have undergone extensive testing and exhibit a wide margin of safety when used according to label directions."

But as Team 5 Investigates discovered, the EPA is intensifying its evaluation of about 70 spot-on products containing pesticides "due to recent increases in the number of reported incidents...in some cases...the death of pets."

"The EPA doesn't issue these advisories lightly," said Barbara Anthony, the executive director of the Massachusetts Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation.

However, the EPA didn't issue a recall and products remain on store shelves at the major pet supply retailers.

PetSmart told Team 5 Investigates, "We work closely with our suppliers to make sure our products have easy-to-read instructions and appropriate safety warnings."

PetCo didn't return our calls.

"I think at an absolute minimum, disclosure here of the possible side effects is certainly something that every retailer should do," Anthony said.

She said retailers have a responsibility to disclose information which could influence a consumer's purchase, but Team 5 Investigates discovered PetSmart and Petco have nothing posted about the EPA's advisory at their stores.

Anthony said her office is ready to issue its own advisory to retailers.

"This is really a pet safety issue," she said.

You read it at CatOddities.com

And at Doggone It! in Needham, Biospot is gone.

"We're here to love our pets and take good care of them and not put them in harm's way," Klironomous said. "So it's coming off."

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