

# **Med Net – What it is and How to Use It**

*New Med-Net Phone Numbers – Insureds Only June 2007*

The PCOC Med-Net line service has new phone numbers. The general number available for all members is now 408-973-0888, the after hours number (for insureds only) is 800-501-9008. For more than 20 years now, one of the best services available to the pest control industry anywhere in the nation is PCOC's Med-Net program. PCOC created Med-Net in 1986 to provide PCOC members and their customers with a resource of physicians who know about the pesticide products we use and the effects of exposure. Since 1990, Dr. Richard Thompson of EK Health Services has headed up the PCOC Med-Net program. Dr. Thompson and his clinics have been involved in the Med-Net program since its inception in 1986, and in 1990, the entire program was absorbed into his practice. Dr. Thompson and his staff have more than a decade of experience handling these calls for our industry, and are well qualified to discuss pesticide exposure issues with your customers or with your customer's own physician.

Those members who have used Med-Net know the value of this incredible service. Unfortunately, many members do not take advantage of the Med-Net Program. Med-Net is responsible for solving many problems before they become major problems and lawsuits. There are two basic strategies to using the Med-Net program. The first strategy is to refer the consumer to Med-Net before performing a pest control service. If you have a consumer, who is worried about the possible medical consequences of a planned service Med-Net is the perfect answer. Like it or not, consumers are much more likely to listen to and believe a Physician than the pest control professional who will be performing the work. The second strategy is to refer the consumer to Med-Net after a service. Consumers who are concerned about pesticide odors, or who are experiencing symptoms they fear may be due to pesticide exposure should be referred to Med-Net. In some of these cases, it is appropriate to ask the consumer to have their physician to call Med-Net. In at least one case the consumer gave their phone number to the PCO, who in turn called Med-Net themselves and asked Dr. Thompson to call the consumer's physician. (Normally Med-Net will only receive calls.)

The key is that if a consumer has questions, take advantage of Med-Net. While as a PCO you know your pesticides, the Med-Net physicians also know our products, and can frequently be much more effective in communicating to the consumer.

While a few companies list the Med-Net telephone number on all their paperwork, this is not necessarily the best way to use the number. In cases where the Med-Net phone number is listed on company paperwork, consumers call asking questions about scheduling service, and other issues which have nothing to do with Med-Net.

There are no additional fees associated with using Med-Net. You and your customers may call as often as needed. When PCOC first started this program in 1986, Med-Net services had fees associated with them should calls run over the allowed 10-minute time period. Today there are no time limits, and services during business hours (408-973-0888) are available to all members. A 24-hour toll free phone number (800-501-9008) service is made available for insureds of the PCOC Insurance Program. The PCOC Insurance Program feels it is important that their insureds both have access to, and use this important tool, which can eliminate or minimize many potential lawsuits and claims. PCOC members who do not participate in the PCOC Insurance Program may access the toll free number (800-501-9008) for a \$50 annual subscription fee.