

**IEPMA – BC – John Holland – Pesticide Prohibition – Stuff...Posted:
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0Mach 2, 2010: Email Correspondence**

**From:John Holland [mailto:lux3@shaw.ca]Sent:March-02-10 2:43
PMTo:'Mayor_and_Council@district.salmon-
arm.bc.ca'Subject:Pesticides, EMAC, and Bylaws**

To the Mayor and Council of Salmon Arm:

In December, at the request of the local Salmon Arm applicator companies, I presented to the Environmental Management Advisory Committee (EMAC). We were fully aware that most of the Committee members, particularly those who attended the meeting on December 8 of last year, were extremely anti-pesticide in their views. It was more than obvious that I would not be facing anything remotely resembling an unbiased panel. However, we were informed by Monica Dalziel on October 20 that the City's protocol was to present to an established Committee prior to appearing before Council.

I have to admit that I am always astounded at how little informed (or, perhaps more accurately, how misinformed) municipal councils across Canada are about the actual facts regarding pesticides. This would not be of concern were it not for the propensity of Councils to pass prohibitive bylaws based on presentations and submissions by unscientific organizations and individuals. The propaganda and misconstrued science that is accepted as fact, and the enacting of bylaws without anything resembling the due diligence that one would rightfully expect, is certainly a black mark against government bodies?from municipal to provincial. Councillors and MLA's have a fiduciary duty to ascertain that it is real science and actual facts that are presented to them and subsequently used to justify any municipal or provincial legislation. It is also most unfortunate that so many politicians make decisions based on political considerations rather than science. With few exceptions, politicians?either municipal or federal?do not have any expertise in the science of pesticides. This is the obvious and critical reason why they should be seeking the findings and advice of real scientists, not

the misunderstandings of those emotionally opposed to the use of pesticides. I do have great concerns with the stance of even the Canadian Cancer Society, which has decided to dismiss science in order to align itself with the anti-pesticide organizations. If you are interested in the basis of these concerns, I suggest you read the pdf I have attached.

According to the January 12, 2010 minutes of the EMAC, the minutes were amended so that they would read that I "claim to be an advocate of real science and actual fact information on the risks of pesticide application." I note that the first part of that statement was italicized, which, I would hazard a guess, was to emphasize doubts over my sincerity. As I have always pointed out, I have been retired for over 5 years, and the position I hold with the IEPMA is voluntary and unsalaried. My continued participation in this issue is due only to my belief in using science when it is required. I have no share in any organization or company that manufactures, sells, distributes, or applies pesticides and receive no form of remuneration from them for what I do. A remark was made after my presentation to the effect that it was hard to believe that someone would take the time to prepare and present such a presentation without being paid to do so. This I can understand, from that person's point of view, particularly when one considers that many of those who make anti-pesticide presentations are, indeed, paid for their misdirected efforts. I did not, however, receive payment for either the preparation time or the actual EMAC presentation (full disclosure: the applicators bought me lunch).

The minutes also state that Hugh Tyson "requested that a statement be included that the Committee found the presentation by Mr. Holland uninformative and, in some specific instances, factually wrong. It was also suggested that much of Mr. Holland's presentation was based on opinion, and not fact." No part of my presentation is based on opinion and, most particularly, not my own. I am not a scientist, and therefore base my presentations on the findings and statements of leading scientists and scientific organizations, including (among others) toxicologists, epidemiologists, molecular biologists, Health Canada's Pest

Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA), the U.N.'s International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Besides having done extensive research on this issue, I have conversed?by phone, email, or in person?with noted and respected scientists in North America and Europe. I have no need to inject my own opinions into a presentation: the science speaks for itself (unfortunately, though, only if one cares to actually listen and attempt to understand). If someone found the presentation uninformative, perhaps it is because of a preconceived bias about, and rejection of, the real facts concerning actual pesticide science. I personally have nothing to gain from making statements or presentations about pesticides, other than the satisfaction of at least attempting to bring some of the truth to light?even if those listening are not prepared to open their minds to something which conflicts with the very basis of their beliefs. I saw nothing in the minutes with specifics about what was considered repetitive, what was considered opinion, or what was "factually wrong" (according to Mr. Tyson). Could I be provided with specifics instead of generalities?

The February 9, 2010 minutes of the EMAC states that "the committee felt that Mr. Holland's presentation was excessively long and repetitive." Council, in the past, has heard several lengthy anti-pesticide presentations by Dr. Warren Bell and Dr. Joan Bratty. It is important to understand that, however well-meaning they are, physicians are not experts in pesticide science. There is nothing on the curriculum of B.C. medical students, for example, which covers pesticides. According to a 2004 editorial in the prestigious British Medical Journal, "as medical students they were filled full with information on biochemistry, anatomy, physiology, and other sciences, but information does not a scientist make – otherwise, you could become a scientist by watching the Discovery channel." According to Dr. Len Ritter, an internationally known and respected toxicologist and recognized Canadian expert on pesticides, "I don't offer patients advice on when they should have their gall bladder taken out. And I sometimes think it would be better if physicians, largely family physicians, who really have no training in this area [of pesticides] at all, it would be better to leave the interpretation of the

data to people who are competent to do it" (quoted in *The Ottawa Citizen*, May 28, 2008). Dr. Ritter is also the Executive Director of the Canadian Network of Toxicology Centres and a Toxicology Professor in the University of Guelph's School of Environmental Sciences. He was also one of the non-industry scientists at our Kelowna Conference on January 29 who presented information on the science behind pesticides, to which all of Salmon Arm's Councillors and Mayor were invited to attend, but all of whom declined. A toxicologist from Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) also gave a presentation on pesticides. This was a golden opportunity for any Council bringing in a pesticide bylaw to actually gain valuable and timely information, an opportunity which was ignored.

The bylaw which Council has enacted will result in a significant loss in effectiveness and economy for service companies, accompanied by a corresponding decrease in customer-base and income. Although an hour is longer than most presentations made to Council, it is little enough to request when one considers the personal and financial ramifications which your bylaw will have for these companies.

A common statement by anti-pesticide groups and individuals is that there are equally effective and less toxic alternatives to what is being used at present. It may come as a shock to many, but 'organic' pesticides can be, and often are, more toxic than conventional ones. 'Natural' does not equate to 'safer,' while it usually does with 'much more expensive' and 'much less efficacious.' If 'organic' products worked so well, why would applicator companies not embrace them? The companies are willing to use any products that are registered by the PMRA, efficacious, and cost-effective.

To demand that any presentation on pesticides to be given to Council must first be approved by an anti-pesticide Committee seems to me to be a travesty of the democratic process. You welcomed presentations by those against the use of pesticides, but refuse to hear a presentation of scientific facts. Hugh Tyson, speaking at the February EMAC meeting, stated that "only presentations should be heard if they have new information." Then I must assume Mr. Tyson

is of the opinion that Council is aware of, and has accessed, all the science which I presented. This is something of which I am unaware. If Council had the scientific facts concerning pesticides, I very much doubt there would be a bylaw prohibiting their use.

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