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BC will not completely ban cosmetic pesticides

The environment critic calls the committee report a "missed opportunity"

Erin Loxam 2012/05/17

VANCOUVER (NEWS1130) - BC will not follow in the footsteps of six other provinces in banning cosmetic pesticides. The environment critic calls [the committee report](#) a "missed opportunity."

For the last year, a committee has looked at banning cosmetic pesticides, like ones to make your lawn green and weed-free. There are already 2.6 million people in BC living in municipalities with bylaws restricting or prohibiting them. Six provinces have outright bans, including Quebec, who brought in regulations a decade ago.

NDP MLA [Rob Fleming](#) says by not joining the others, the supposedly bipartisan committee made a profoundly disappointing decision. "Because these products are unnecessary in our daily lives, there should be a very low risk tolerance for what harm exposure to them can do."

"The recommendations are minimal," adds Fleming. "BC, at the end of the day, will still have the weakest cosmetic pesticide regulatory regime in Canada."

But Liberal MLA [Bill Bennett](#) with the committee claims that's just not true - that in fact, if the recommendations are implemented, we'd have the strongest policy west of Ontario.

The committee has made 17 recommendations, including restricting the sale and use of commercial grade pesticides, strengthening the enforcement of existing regulations, and boosting public education and training on pesticide use.

Bennett thinks a full ban is just not necessary, "Health Canada claims the products for sale are safe to use. I don't think we can second guess them."

But the [Canadian Cancer Society](#), the [Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment](#), the [David Suzuki Foundation](#), and the [Union of BC Municipalities](#) would. The committee also heard from over 9000 British Columbians who had concerns as well.

Fleming says Christy Clark has been vocal about banning cosmetic pesticides which shows a disconnect between this committee and the premier of the province.

Special Committee on Cosmetic Pesticides

17 Report Recommendations

1. Ban the sale of Commercial-class pesticides as soon as possible, except for use by certified applicators. Begin immediate consultations with the agriculture industry on how best to prohibit the sale of Commercial-class pesticides to anyone but a certified applicator.
2. Amend Integrated Pest Management Act (IPMA) regulation(s) regarding how pesticides can be sold to require vendors to restrict consumer access to most Domestic-class pesticides so customers must interact with a certified dispenser before purchasing a pesticide.
3. Require a certified dispenser to ensure that there is a strong justification for pesticide use before a pesticide is sold, based on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) principles, including the following:
 - a. The best way to control pests and weeds;

- b. The right way to use a pesticide so that it does the job;
 - c. The legal uses of the pesticide; and
 - d. The importance of reading and following the directions on the label.
4. Require a vendor to keep a record of each sale of a Domestic-class pesticide, in line with the requirement for a vendor of a Commercial-class pesticide; and that government use the records of sales information to track Domestic-class pesticide sales.
 5. Provide vendors with a reasonable phase-in implementation period.
 6. Increase inspections of retail outlets to ensure that pesticide products are accessible only by interaction with certified dispensers and that the consumer is receiving appropriate information and instruction.
 7. Increase penalties for those vendors not meeting the responsibility that accompanies their right to sell the product.
 8. Improve public education on the use of Domestic-class products, with a focus on the right product at the right time, in accordance with IPM principles and to the extent possible, in ways that are consistent with B.C. organic standards and organic management practices.
 9. Employ IPM specialist(s) to work with retailers and other stakeholders to educate the public on ways to eliminate pesticide use and increase alternative pest management methods. The specialist could be responsible for developing and/or coordinating and approving educational information developed through partnerships.
 10. Make public education a combined responsibility of manufacturers, retailers and government with manufacturers, retailers and applicator businesses paying most of the cost; and provide resources to support non-commercial organizations dedicated to public education. Components of the outreach or promotion could be contracted out, similar in nature to the Recycling Council of BC, with an IPM specialist approving educational information and delivery methods.
 11. Develop a separate list of preferred products that meet a set of criteria for sale/use on lawns, gardens and turf to assist certified dispensers and consumers when selecting pesticides.
 12. Develop, in conjunction with retailers and manufacturers, a one-day course for consumers. Graduates would be issued a card allowing a straightforward purchase of registered Domestic-class pesticides.
 13. Establish a website for the householder using pesticides in and around private homes and gardens that explains the principles of IPM, alternative methods of treatment, and methods of lawn care that reduce the growth of weeds.
 14. Amend the IPM Regulation regarding how pesticides can be used by landscapers for lawn and landscape pest management to require IPM accreditation for landscaping licensees. A third party accreditation body, like Plant Health BC, could be required to audit its members for compliance with record keeping requirements of IPM Regulation and for good IPM practices.
 15. Enhance retailer training by directing the retail industry to set up, at its own cost, a more comprehensive training and certification regime so that sales people in the retail setting are qualified to ensure consumer choices are in line with IPM principles; and develop a training course for pesticide applicators as a pre-requisite to test writing, with the course content to include the application of IPM principles in residential settings.
 16. Ask the golf industry to develop a province-wide certification process, or to modify an existing one, that will ensure a high standard of pesticide use by all golf courses in BC, including the use of IPM principles.
 17. Expand and enhance the provincial unwanted pesticide management program to facilitate the return of unwanted Domestic-, Commercial- or Restricted-class pesticide products.

