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Cancer society wrong on anti-pesticide stance

Published: **February 17, 2011 7:00 AM**

Updated: **February 17, 2011 7:10 AM**

Dear Sir:

Re: " Stop cosmetic pesticides," letter to the editor, The Terrace Standard, Feb. 9, 2011.

Shame on the Canadian Cancer Society for misleading Terrace residents about urban pesticides.

If the Canadian Cancer Society has information to back up its pesticide claims it is irresponsibly squandering its efforts on municipal campaigns rather than presenting "proof" to Health Canada, which regulates the products, or to the industry, which runs hundreds of tests on each and every product seeking federal government registration.

What many people don't know is that before any pesticide can be sold in Canada it must undergo a rigorous scientific review and risk assessment by Health Canada.

Through this process pesticides receive a greater breadth of scrutiny than any other regulated product to ensure they will not harm the health or environment of current or future generations. Only those products that meet Health Canada's strict health and safety standards are registered for sale and use.

The fact of the matter is, if the concerns raised in the letter were valid, the pesticides that are currently available for use in British Columbia would not have passed through Health Canada's comprehensive review process.

Furthermore, if the Canadian Cancer Society had even a shred of relevant, compelling information Health Canada would be all over it. After all, the health of Canadians is Health Canada's top priority and it is mandated to assess all scientifically credible evidence available regarding the pesticides it has approved for sale and use.

If the Canadian Cancer Society does know something about the safety of pesticides that the

rest of us do not, they have an obligation to bring it to Health Canada so it can be investigated.

As it stands now, the weight of scientific research proves that pesticides can be safely used and Canadians should feel comfortable if they choose to use them.

Lorne Hepworth,

President, CropLife Canada,

Ottawa, Ontario

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