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OPINION LETTERS

Letters to the Editor, Aug. 28 8

FIRST POSTED: SUNDAY, AUGUST 28, 2011 12:20 AM EDT | UPDATED: FRIDAY, AUGUST 26, 2011 09:24 PM EDT

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Water was safe before

Re "Weeding out pesticide smugglers" (Antonella Artuso, Aug. 22): The McGuinty government has been grasping to justify its political pesticide ban ever since they imposed it, so it isn't surprising to see Environment Minister John Wilkinson pronouncing that this one study from his ministry is proof-positive the ban is working. What the minister fails to say about the apparent drop in levels of certain lawn chemicals is that the levels detected in virtually all samples — both before and after the ban — were in the parts per trillion range and well below water quality guidelines. In fact, previous studies show that for more than 10 years, there have been consistently low levels of pesticides in streams. One statistic most will agree on is that the Ontario ban was 100% politically-based and 0% science-based. Minister Wilkinson is now attempting to use science to mislead Ontarians into thinking the pesticide ban has somehow improved their environment. This government is trying to take credit for protecting us from a risk that was never there. This ban has done nothing more than taken safe, effective tools out of the hands of Ontarians and created a series of negative consequences.

Lorne Hepworth

President, CropLife Canada

(We still we can't figure out why, if these pesticides are supposedly unsafe on lawns, there's an exemption for agricultural use)

Hidden dangers

There aren't many Ontario shoppers who escape our pesticide ban by shopping in the U.S., as to date this phenomenon is seldom reported ("Weeding out pesticide smugglers," Antonella Artuso, Aug. 22). It is unfair to blame Ontario's so-called environmentalists for what is happening on this issue in other provinces. After all, there is a substantial number of concerned

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citizens in each province that would welcome a pesticide ban modelled on Ontario's. Tory MPP Peter Shurman refers to Health Canada research as "the gold standard." This is misleading. Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) has no labs of its own and registers pesticides on the basis of industry-provided toxicological (rat) data. Rats have detoxification genes missing in humans. Moreover, inconvenient studies are routinely withheld from the PMRA, which is notoriously weak in examining epidemiological (human) studies. In addition to their "active" ingredients, herbicides consist of secret, allegedly "inert" additives. What is officially tested is but a very small portion of the final product.

K. Jean Cottam

Nepean

(Same question. If it's unsafe for lawns, why is it safe for agriculture?)

Savings advice

Re "City Hall must answer \$774M question" (Editorial, Aug. 21): The solution is easy: Get rid of managers who oversee projects that are not completed on time and on budget; Contractors must guarantee their price or buy insurance to cover extra costs if strikes occur or there are material shortages; Convert Toronto Islands and the CNE grounds to year-round facilities.

Edward Zaretsky

(We're with you on ideas one and two — three's a bit more complicated)

Aren't we covered?

Re "Our ailing health care system" (Aug. 14): The Fraser Institute's Mark Rovere refers to 100% subsidy to health care cost and says "under provincial medicare, people are not directly responsible for any part of the health care that they consume." As a naive member of this brainwashed population, I recently cancelled my supplementary health insurance which covered things like a semi-private room, ambulance, etc. Last time I was in the hospital with a gangrened gallbladder I had to wait for surgery from Friday night to Sunday afternoon, because there was no bed of any kind, and the surgeon could not operate until there was a bed. You can see how useful my semi-private insurance was. As an aside, the surgeon told me after the operation that I could have died due to the gangrene. I am still outraged — if I was a drug-dealer with a knife or bullet wound I would have had immediate, life-saving medical attention. And John Downing gives us the dramatic conclusion to his ordeal ("Lessons from 86 days in hell") He also says OHIP paid nothing for his rehab and only 27% of his hospital bill. Please do your readers a service by telling us how that is possible? Do we or don't we have health coverage?

Marta Tomory

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Stouffville

(Yes, we have health coverage, but as your experience and John's shows, it's often inadequate)

Pay more or lose services

Re "Move to a city" (Letters, Aug. 21): This simply confirms how out-to-lunch citizens of Toronto can be. Connie Woodcock's point was that Toronto residents don't pay enough for their services and the letter writer's solution is for Connie to "move to a city" to get "BMW services" for "Honda rates." The reality is that most cities in Ontario have realistic tax rates, but Toronto is living in a fantasy world. My taxes on a \$350,000 house in Brampton are the same as those on a \$650,000 residence in Toronto, yet people are up in arms about closing a few libraries. You can either pay the true cost of your services or have them curtailed — what's it going to be? Oh, I know — more twittering from Margaret Atwood and outraged editorials in the Star. Good luck with that.

I. McVay

Brampton

(The only way to fill that \$774-million hole in Toronto's budget is to cut expenses or raise revenues)

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Regarding pesticide bans, I have never understood why golf courses and soccer fields are exempt if pesticides are so bad. We have lots of kids playing soccer and are they not as likely to be affected as anyone? However, I used to ask my lawn sprayer when was the last time anyone checked his blood for evidence of pesticides - always the answer was "never"! So please publish the name and address of anyone who they can factually say got cancer from pesticides, PCBs wind turbines and on and on. And while you are at it, publish the names of who funds these surveys!

3 weeks ago 18 Likes F Flag

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 [Christine Lalonde](#)

Letter writer K. Jean Cottam like all the other anti-pesticide zealots is attempting to mislead readers. While the Pesticide Management Review Agency has no labs Health Canada has many (I worked in one) research labs all over the country. It is Health in collaboration with PMRA who ensure pesticides are safe for use by the public. Cottam is just being dishonest and has no credibility.

3 weeks ago 13 Likes F Flag

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[Terry Haryett](#)



Re, Pesticide ban. I am sure these bans are based on a 1996 study from Tulane University that was written up in the journal Science. It made headlines at the time. It made sensational claims that certain mixes of pesticides could be 1,600 more deadly than previously thought.

Six months after the study was printed, other researchers were inquiring about method. Because nobody could repeat the results of said study.

In July 2001, the Journal Science printed a short notice.

The researchers at Tulane University had faked their results.

As of 2008, something like 80 municipalities in Canada had instituted pesticide bans on that faked study.

3 weeks ago 11 Likes F Flag

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Douglas Smith

And why are farmers allowed to use paper sludge on their fields? regarding the exemption given to golf courses and sports fields to the pesticide ban, well politicians do play golf you know and they are all in love with anything green especially your money! The only ones who are winners here are the weeds and especially the bed bugs and roaches and pest control company's!

3 weeks ago 5 Likes F Flag

Like



JohnGaltWasHere

Forcing contractors to insure themselves against material shortages is just going to increase the cost of the construction job.

3 weeks ago 4 Likes F Flag

Like



chiapetthewise

Well, I just opened my recent Hydro Bill. With a Dalton, attack ad in the background, I read my bill ! Firstly, I am glad my palpatations, slowed down enough, for co-herent speech. I did not want to over-tax (hehe) the Health Care System. Who knows when I would be seen, by a Over-Worked ER Doctor! I am not a real Hallway Dweller Type !

Secondly, I would like to Thank our Premier, for a Hydro Bill that has Doubled in the Past Year. To the tune of \$284.08 for 63 days of electricity. With last years extremely Longer Hot Summer, I cannot Fathom the reason Two people (my three kids every other wknd) can Drive up the Cost, ALMOST Doubling, even with the, Relatively, Same Amount of Power Used! ! (Yes, I pay my bill in full before the due date!)

Thirdly, after perusing the bill further; \$81.60 for the first 600kWh, \$78.81 for the balance of 2112 kWh, \$89.37 for delivery, \$14.78 for Regulatory charges, and the Best for Last, The Debt Retirement Charge for \$14.87. We will not comment, that the ' Debt ' was Paid in Full, Two (2) years ago! Hmmm, where did that money go Dalton ?

Also, the included " Loss Adjustment Factor" is 4.05%, on the electricity usage that Any Hydro Cannot Prove! The equipment is called Capacitor Banks, that re-vitalize, the grid! There is Not One Electrical Engineer, on this Planet, that can Prove Line Loss, with this Equipment Installed! This Equipment is Everywhere!

With an Attack ad Blaring in the background Again, from the Working Families Coalition, you just have to wonder, Who are their Families, that Can Actually Afford this? The Shareholders?

Craig Dowling
Burlington Ont

3 weeks ago 1 Like F Flag

Like



Glenn Clarke

Your bill didn't double liar. I read another lying right winger say his bill tripled.
Such liars.

3 weeks ago in reply to chiapetthewise F Flag

Like



Tim Roberts

Re: "Aren't WE Covered?": Health Minister Deb Matthews was on Global's "Provincial Affairs" last night. She claimed that the Wait Times were dramatically "lower", and a McGuinty Government will never accept a two-tiered system, "not on MY watch!" (even though the Socialist Paradise, Sweden, has gone that route with great success). With all these amazing Liberal improvements to the system, surely, Ms Tomoy, you must have dreamt your less-than-stellar service...

3 weeks ago 1 Like F Flag

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