

# 'Fear-mongering'

BY LORNE HEPWORTH, THE LEADER-POST AUGUST 7, 2012 3:04 AM

Re: "Ban city pesticide use" (July 23, Letters). The Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment took information from Health Canada out of context to mislead readers into thinking the pesticides they use to protect their properties from infestations are not safe. This must be corrected.

The incident reports that the letter cites are used to track any possible problem related to a pesticide. These include packaging issues, misuse of products and unproven effects that often end up being unrelated to pesticides.

Much like the system established for pharmaceuticals, these reports are used to detect trends and Health Canada investigates and takes action as necessary. The writer seems to have missed that the two reported deaths she cites were investigated by Health Canada, which is responsible for regulating pesticides. It concluded that neither death was likely due to pesticide exposure.

Pesticides are one of the most stringently regulated products in Canada. The review process for new products involves a comprehensive set of over 200 tests and a review of all scientifically credible studies that exist to ensure the product will not cause harm to people, animals or the environment.

The letter's use of these statistics to scare residents into supporting a ban on pesticides is misleading. Regina's environmental advisory committee has been examining pesticide use in the city and I would encourage them and residents to consult Health Canada's website for reliable information about pesticides, rather than relying on fear-mongering statistics from groups like the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment.

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