

# Pesticide-use restrictions also damage sports fields

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Re: [Drought means 'save now, pay later' for city's sporting fields](#), Aug. 9.

If the City of Ottawa thinks re-pairing the sports fields across the city will be tough after the drought, add to the equation the fact that they don't have access to pest control products to protect the turf.

As I'm sure Ottawa residents know, sports fields across the city were already in despair before the drought - littered with weeds and with many suffering from grub damage.

The City of Ottawa must share some of the blame due to its own pesticide-use restrictions imposed some time ago on its sports fields.

But when Ontario's pesticide ban came into effect in 2009, it severely limited the tools that can be used to protect green spaces across the province and now we're starting to see the toll the ban is taking.

Sports fields aren't the only green spaces suffering - homeowners are also frustrated about the condition of their personal property.

A poll of Ontario homeowners shows that more than half feel the Government of Ontario did not do the right thing by implementing a ban; they would rather have the ban scrapped or modified.

The polling also found that many Ontarians are mixing potentially dangerous concoctions on their own or wilfully breaking the law by using pesticides that have been banned to protect their lawns and gardens.

Without pesticides, fixing the turf from the weed and pest infestations alone will be more costly and less effective.

Now add the impact of the drought and I think it's safe to say repairing Ottawa's fields will cost the city a lot more time and money.

There's no good reason that Ontarians are losing their green spaces to insect and weed infestations, especially since pesticides are federally regulated by Health Canada, who says they can be safely used.

**Lorne Hepworth**, Ottawa President, CropLife Canada

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