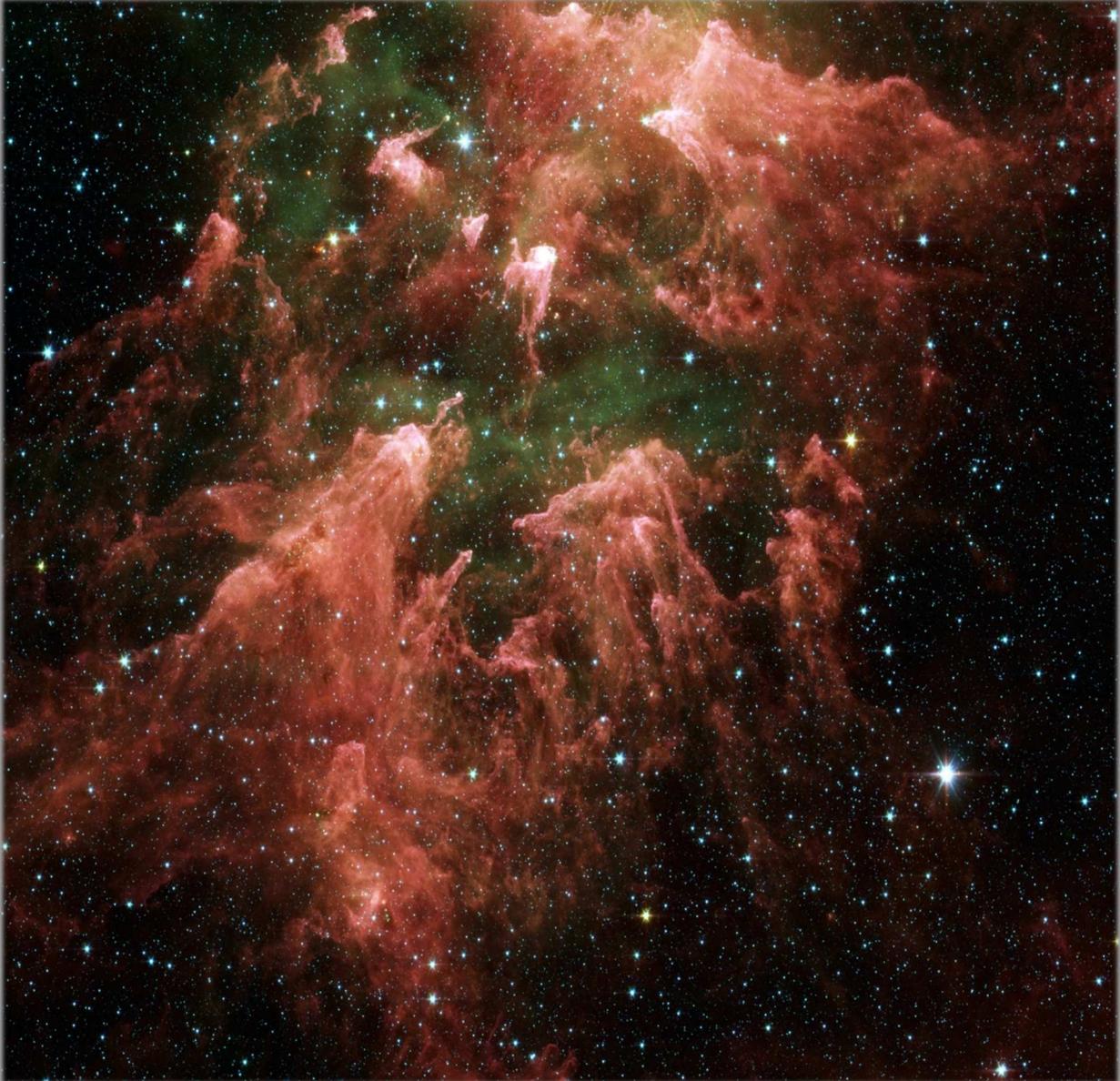


New Brunswick Prohibition of Pest Control Products. Part 1.

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Poll shows 79 per cent support ban on cosmetic pesticides.

Monday February 18th, 2009

Jesse Robichaud

Times & Transcript Staff

FREDERICTON – The evidence that New Brunswickers support a province wide ban on the use of cosmetic pesticides is beginning to pile up.

An Ipsos–Reid poll conducted in December and released yesterday found 79 per cent of respondents support a provincial ban on non–essential use of pesticides, while 75 per cent support a ban on the sale of pesticides.

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The poll questioned 438 adults and was commissioned by the Canadian Cancer Society, the New Brunswick Lung Association, and the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment.

The results were released as the Department of Environment considers how it will address the issue of cosmetic pesticides in the province.

Environment Minister Roland Haché said a decision has not yet been made, but he will announce a change to the status quo in the spring sitting of the legislature.

The Liberal government is considering four options, including an emphasis on education and voluntary reduction, targeted regulatory changes, a role for municipal governments, and a new province wide prohibition that would exclude agriculture, forestry, and golf courses.

The poll also found that 80 per cent of New Brunswickers believe cosmetic pesticides have the potential to pose a health risk to humans and the environment, while 85 per cent believe these chemicals could pose a risk to family pets.

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Gideon Forman, executive director of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment, said the results intensify the pressure on the government to pass a provincial ban quickly.

"When the government passes this piece of legislation, we believe there is going to be little resistance," said Forman.

He said it is clear that New Brunswickers feel threatened by pesticides. "The vast majority of New Brunswickers see these pesticides threatening some of the most important things in their lives: their pets, the environment and other people, all of which helps explain their support for a pesticide ban," said Forman.

"They want protection from these chemicals in the form of a ban on their use and sale."

Forman pointed to the fact that 72 per cent of people questioned said they would stop using pesticides if they were shown non-toxic ways of manicuring their lawn.

"That tells us something very important; that pesticide users are not wedded to 3 of 13. these chemicals," he said.

The poll comes after the Department of Environment conducted a public consultation last fall that showed overwhelming support for a provincial ban on pesticides.

About 1,500 New Brunswickers expressed their thoughts and concerns about four proposed courses of action to address pesticides.

The province wide ban was preferred by as many respondents as for all other options combined.

Ellen Snider of the Canadian Cancer Society's New Brunswick branch, said the poll shows how New Brunswick families see pesticides as a threat.

"Children may be especially vulnerable to the harmful effects of these chemicals as their immune systems are still developing," said Snider.

"The normal behaviour of children, including playing on floors and lawns and tending to put objects in their mouths, put them in even greater risk."

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She said the Liberal government must use the precautionary principle to ensure New Brunswickers aren't harmed because science doesn't yet fully account for all the potential effects of pesticides.

Liz Smith of the N.B. Lung Association said the lawn-care industry has already been moving toward more sustainable practices, but she said a sharper adjustment is necessary.

She said the industry in New Brunswick has already been able to establish an efficient certification system, and she said the next step is removing pesticides.

"I urge them to do so quickly, and for the lawn-care companies to get educated and certified in how to garden without pesticides so we know who to hire. This will be good for their business."

The Province of Quebec passed a ban on cosmetic pesticide use in 2006. It was followed by a ban in Ontario which includes sales of pesticides used for lawn care and landscape purposes.

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Moncton-East Liberal MLA Chris Collins has been pushing for a pesticide ban since his time on Moncton City Council.

"This is exactly what I have been hearing for years. In fact, if you went into certain areas, I think that number would be higher than other areas that are just getting into this issue," said Collins.

Collins, who has been lobbying for a provincial ban, said a prohibition could actually create new opportunities in the lawn-care industry.

"If I was in the lawn-care business I would have seen this coming for quite a while," said Collins.

"In Nova Scotia there has actually been an increase in lawn care companies."

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Support grows for banning cosmetic pesticides

Published Wednesday February 18th, 2009

Jesse Robichaud

Canadaeast News Service

The evidence that New Brunswickers support a province wide ban on the use of cosmetic pesticides is beginning to pile up.

PESTICIDES POLL: Health organizations held a news conference Tuesday to release results of a pesticides poll. Above, from left, are: Gideon Forman, executive director of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment; Ellen Snider, senior manager of public issues with the Canadian Cancer Society's New Brunswick branch; and Liz Smith, environmental programs co-ordinator with the New Brunswick Lung Association.

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An Ipsos Reid poll conducted in December and released Tuesday found 79 per cent of respondents support a province wide ban on non-essential use of pesticides, while 75 per cent support a ban on the sale of pesticides.

The poll questioned 438 adults and was commissioned by the Canadian Cancer Society, the New Brunswick Lung Association and the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment.

The results were released as the Department of Environment considers how it will address the issue of cosmetic pesticides.

Environment Minister Roland Haché said a decision has not yet been made, but he will announce a change to the status quo in the spring sitting of the legislature.

The Liberal government is considering four options:

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- an emphasis on education and voluntary reduction;
- targeted regulatory changes;
- a role for municipal governments;
- and a province wide prohibition that would exclude agriculture, forestry and golf courses.

The poll also found that 80 cent of New Brunswickers believe cosmetic pesticides can pose a health risk to humans and the environment, while 85 per cent believe these chemicals could pose a risk to family pets.

Gideon Forman, executive director of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment, said the results intensify the pressure on the government to pass a provincial ban quickly.

"When the government passes this piece of legislation, we believe there is going to be little resistance," said Forman.

He said it's clear that New Brunswickers feel threatened by pesticides.

"The vast majority of New Brunswickers see these pesticides threatening some of the most important things in their lives: their pets, the environment and other people. All of which helps explain their support for a pesticide ban," said 6 of 13. Forman.

Forman highlighted the fact that 72 per cent of people questioned said they would stop using pesticides if they were shown non-toxic ways of maintaining their lawns.

"That tells us something very important, that pesticide users are not wedded to these chemicals," he said.

The poll comes after the Department of Environment conducted a public consultation last fall that showed overwhelming support for a provincial ban on pesticides.

About 1,500 New Brunswickers expressed their thoughts and concerns about four proposed courses of action to address pesticides.

The province wide ban was preferred by as many respondents as for all other options combined.

Ellen Snider of the Canadian Cancer Society's New Brunswick branch said the poll shows how New Brunswick families see pesticides as a threat.

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"Children may be especially vulnerable to the harmful effects of these chemicals, as their immune systems are still developing," said Snider.

"The normal behaviour of children, including playing on floors and lawns and tending to put objects in their mouths, put them in even greater risk."

She said the Liberal government must use the precautionary principle to ensure New Brunswickers aren't harmed because science doesn't yet fully account for all the potential effects of pesticides.

Liz Smith of the New Brunswick Lung Association said the lawn-care industry has been moving toward more sustainable practices, but legislation is needed.

"New Brunswickers who prefer to hire someone else to look after their garden will need to know they can trust the person they hire to know how to promote healthy plants," she said.

Smith said the industry in New Brunswick has been able to establish an efficient certification system and the next step is removing pesticides.

"I urge them to do so quickly, and for the lawn-care companies to get educated and certified in how to garden without pesticides so we know who to hire. This will be good for their business," Smith said. 7 of 13.

Quebec passed a ban on cosmetic pesticide use in 2006. It was followed by a ban in Ontario, which includes sales of pesticides used for lawn care and landscape purposes.

Moncton-East Liberal MLA Chris Collins has been pushing for a pesticide ban since his time on Moncton city council.

He said he's pleased with, but not surprised by, the poll's findings.

"This is exactly what I have been hearing for years. In fact, if you went into certain areas I think that number would be higher than other areas that are just getting into this issue," he said.

Collins, who has been lobbying for a provincial ban, said a prohibition could create opportunities.

"If I was in the lawn-care business, I would have seen this coming for quite a while," said Collins.

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"In Nova Scotia there has actually been an increase in lawn-care companies and the people working for them because of alternative methods of lawn care, going to different methods of lawn-care architecture."



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PESTICIDES POLL: Health organizations held a news conference Tuesday to release results of a pesticides poll. Above, from left, are: Gideon Forman, executive director of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment; Ellen Snider, senior manager of public issues with the Canadian Cancer Society's New Brunswick branch; and Liz Smith, environmental programs co-ordinator with the New Brunswick Lung Association.

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Poll shows majority favours ban of pesticides, herbicides

Published Wednesday February 18th, 2009

Benjamin Shingler

Telegraph-Journal

The overwhelming majority of New Brunswickers surveyed in a new poll favour a province wide ban on cosmetic herbicides and pesticides, results showed Tuesday.

The Ipsos Reid survey shows that 79 per cent of residents polled want a ban on the use of chemical compounds that are used for non-essential purposes such as ridding lawns and gardens of insects and weeds. The poll also shows that 75 per cent of the residents surveyed are in favour of banning the sale of such products. 9 of 13.

Proponents of a full ban are calling on the provincial government to bring in legislation that reflects the poll results.

"It is clear in this case that the risk associated with cosmetic pesticide use far outweigh the benefits," Ellen Snider, senior manager of public issues for the New Brunswick office of the Canadian Cancer Society.

"They should not be used to simply enhance the appearance of our lawns and gardens, or parks and recreational facilities."

Details of the poll results were released at a news conference in Fredericton on Tuesday. The cancer society commissioned the poll along with the New Brunswick Lung Association and the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment.

The poll, which was conducted from Dec. 5 to 9, 2008, collected the opinions of 438 New Brunswick adults. It is accurate within plus or minus 4.7 per cent 19 times out of 20.

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Environment Minister Roland Haché has pledged to unveil the province's pesticide plan during the spring sitting of the legislature, but the details of the plan aren't yet certain.

One option would be the introduction of a province wide ban on cosmetic pesticides. Golf courses, as well as the agricultural and forestry industries, would likely be excluded from such a ban.

Gideon Forman, executive director of the physicians group, argued that golf courses should also be included in the ban.

Forman said golf courses do not qualify as an "essential" sector for herbicides or pesticides. While acknowledging the economic importance of golf courses, he said it's possible to maintain courses through alternative, non-toxic methods.

"I think we recognize that golf courses have some special challenges, so they may need some extra time perhaps, but we would like to see them included in the ban," he said.

For years, the cancer society has called for bans of pesticides for cosmetic use.

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Snider said the evidence linking pesticide use and cancer is "suggestive and growing."

She said children are particularly vulnerable to the chemicals found in the preparations.

"Their immune systems are still developing," she said, adding: "The normal behaviour of children, including playing on lawns and tending to put things in their mouths, puts them at even greater risk."

Liz Smith, environmental programs co-ordinator of the New Brunswick Lung Association, urged lawn care companies to drop the use of herbicides and pesticides immediately, in preparation for a ban. She said such a change is what most customers want, according to the poll results.

Ontario and Quebec are so far the only provinces to institute a province wide ban on cosmetic pesticides and herbicides. Across Canada, more than 100 communities have banned the use of pesticides. In New Brunswick, four communities have banned their use: Saint Andrews, Sackville, Shediac and Caraquet.

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Enough delay, ban pesticides

Published Friday February 20th, 2009

The public has spoken and it is clear there is overwhelming support in New Brunswick for a ban on the cosmetic use of pesticides and the provincial government must put such a ban in place before spring and the advent of the lawn-spraying.

The Ipsos-Reid poll released Monday and commissioned by the Canadian Cancer Society, the New Brunswick Lung Association and the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment indicates a clear majority of New Brunswickers support such action and that citizens are well aware of the dangers of the chemicals and the fact there are safer alternatives. As well, the poll confirms what the government has already learned via its public consultations into the matter. Of the approximately 1,500 submissions to government, more supported a ban than the three other lesser options combined. It leaves little doubt what the public wants and what government must do.

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The poll found 79 per cent of people support a province-wide ban on non-essential use of pesticides and almost as many (75 per cent) support a ban on the sale of the pesticides. Eighty per cent believe (correctly) that cosmetic pesticides pose potential health risks to humans, while 85 per cent believe they put pets at risk. Significantly, 72 per cent said they would stop using cosmetic pesticides if they were shown non-toxic ways to maintain their lawns. Surely the politicians don't fear controversy, for there will be very little.

No government should ignore such clear expressions of public will. This government has been taking its good old time in acting and is at least a year behind its original schedule, but now it has no excuse. The public verdict is in. And there are precedents and legislation from other provinces (Ontario and Quebec, for example) it can copy and adapt. We are not inventing a new wheel. This a matter of a clear and present danger to everybody's good health; there is little for compromise. Lawn care firms may complain, yet they continue to exist and thrive where such bans exist; they merely need to adopt new methods, something they have been slow to do voluntarily, despite years of public concern. It is time to force the issue. That includes banning the sale of cosmetic pesticides to the public, for a ban against use without a ban on the sale would be futile and self-defeating.

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The public has spoken, its will is strong and known, the science supports the move, and elsewhere affected businesses have managed to adapt. Delay, legislation that is easily circumvented in the name of unnecessary "compromise" and a lengthy phase-in of the regulations cannot be justified; they only prolong the serious risk posed to public health. It is time to protect citizens. Nothing less will do.



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Ban would help companies

Monday February 23rd, 2009

Moncton Times Transcript

To The Editor:

Kudos on your superb editorial urging a province-wide ban on lawn pesticide use and sales in New Brunswick. Citizens are indeed supportive of this legislation, with nearly eight out of 10 New Brunswickers in favour.

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You mention that lawn care firms thrive in communities where bans have been implemented and that's exactly right. For example, in the five years following Halifax's pesticide prohibition, the number of landscaping companies in the city grew 53 per cent — from 118 to 180 — according to Statistics Canada. The number of workers in the sector increased as well.

Going pesticide-free is not only good for human and environmental health. It's also beneficial for the lawn care industry.

Gideon Forman,
Executive Director,
Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment,
Toronto, Ont.