



Canadian Cancer Society  
Société canadienne du cancer

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## Canadian Cancer Society proposal to ban use of cosmetic pesticides in BC would set new national standard

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VANCOUVER -

### On-line consultation an opportunity for public to join the fight for cancer prevention

The Canadian Cancer Society British Columbia and Yukon today called on the B.C. government to enact legislation to ban the cosmetic use of pesticides that would set a new national standard. The Society is also asking British Columbians to participate in the on-line public consultation.

“Over the next 40 days, British Columbians can make their voices heard and join the fight for cancer prevention and against the use of cosmetic pesticides,” says Barbara Kaminsky, CEO, Canadian Cancer Society B.C. and Yukon. “It is time for the provincial government to accept the research and listen to the vast majority of British Columbians who want pesticide legislation.”

Kaminsky says that in 2010, B.C. will have an opportunity to demonstrate national leadership by adopting the strongest cosmetic pesticide ban in Canada.

The Society in partnership with Toxic Free Canada introduced model legislation as part of the 60 day on-line public consultation process announced last month by B.C. Environment Minister Barry Penner. In addition to adopting some of the standards set in the Province of Ontario’s ban, the Society’s proposed bill goes further and includes:

- immediate ban on use of cosmetic pesticides on all sports fields – including those being used for an international or national event;
- municipalities to pass stronger cosmetic pesticide bylaws, as they have done in passing smoke-free bylaws;
- ban on the use of cosmetic pesticides on B.C. golf courses within three years; and,
- establishment of a public education campaign and ‘white list’ of low risk products that can be used as alternatives to cosmetic pesticides.

A complete copy of the proposal is available at [www.cancer.ca/bc](http://www.cancer.ca/bc) . The proposal focuses on cosmetic uses of pesticides; pesticide use in forestry and agriculture are beyond the scope of the proposal.

“It is important that the B.C. consultation leads to a new law this year that can come into effect this time next year,” says Kaminsky. “Most important of all, however, is that the B.C. government does not pass weak legislation like that has been the case in other jurisdictions.”

To facilitate increased public participation in the province’s on-line consultation process the Society has created a special web-link at [www.cancer.ca/bc](http://www.cancer.ca/bc) where members of the public can provide their input by email, by contacting their local MLA or by joining the Pesticide Free B.C. Facebook group. The Society is also hosting the Vancouver Premiere of “A Chemical Reaction”, a documentary that tells the story of the Canadian movement to ban lawn and garden pesticides on January 20, 2010 7:00pm at Park Theatre 3440 Cambie Street.

A growing body of evidence in published studies from the World Health Organization and US Environmental Protection Agency on the carcinogenicity of pesticides points to an increased risk of cancer to both adults and children: cancers that include leukemia, non-Hodgkin lymphoma, prostate, brain, and lung.

“Children may be at a higher risk due to their rapidly developing bodies,” says Kaminsky. “By eliminating these harmful agents from our lawns, gardens, sports fields, playgrounds and recreation areas, we will be helping to prevent cancer in children and adults and we will be promoting a sustainable environment at the same time.”

Cosmetic pesticides are used to control unwanted weeds and plants to improve the appearance of lawns and gardens. More than 25 B.C. municipalities have adopted bylaws to ban their cosmetic use and several provinces have bans in place. Ontario’s law is currently recognized as a national standard.

Large national retailers have voluntarily stopped selling pesticides and others have said they would support a provincial ban.

For more information on the B.C. government’s consultation process, contact <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/ipmp/regs/cosmetic-pesticides/consultation.htm>

The Canadian Cancer Society is a national community-based organization of volunteers whose mission is the eradication of cancer and the enhancement of the quality of life of people living with cancer. When you want to know more about cancer, visit our website [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca) or call our toll-free, bilingual Cancer Information Service at 1 888 939-3333.

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