

# NEWS TORONTO & GTA

Ontario shoppers escape pesticide ban in U.S. 215

BY [ANTONELLA ARTUSO](#), QUEEN'S PARK BUREAU CHIEF

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(QMI AGENCY PHOTO)

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While many Ontarians are embracing the move to old-style lawn care following the Dalton McGuinty cosmetic pesticide ban, others are going so far as to cross borders to get their paws on stronger stuff.

Kevin Good, the seasonal department store manager at the Stamford Home

Hardware and Fireplace Shop in Niagara Falls, said he hasn't seen any drop in the sale of compression sprayers even though he is not allowed to sell the pesticide concentrate that goes into them.

"People are just right up front — 'You can't sell it to me, I'm going right across the river,'" Good said. "Basically what's happened is we've been screwed out of sales which means the whole nine yards — less staff, less money going

through this store, all going over to the States. Especially when they've got the good Canadian dollar — they're getting their gas, they pick up their pesticides, they bring it back.”

The Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) says Ontario's cosmetic pesticide ban cannot be legislatively enforced by their officials.

Officers at the border will only stop fertilizer and pesticides that fail to meet registration, packing and labelling requirements under the federal

Fertilizers Act, and Health Canada approves the use of products covered by the Ontario prohibition.

Even though the ban is now more than two years old, it continues to provoke strong reaction even as it serves as a template for environmentalists who want it duplicated in other provinces.

The Ontario ban goes far beyond other provincial and state governments have done limiting the use of pesticides, herbicides and insecticides.

Environment Minister John Wilkinson said some Ontarians may be trying to get around the ban but the vast majority are abiding by the rules, and a ministry study of 10 urban streams shows an 80% drop in the three most common chemicals found in pesticides.

“So we know that the ban is working,” he said.

Ontario's environment ministry confirms four convictions for violations of the pesticide ban over the past two years, but will not identify how many other cases may be under investigation or before the courts.

Wilkinson said the government brought in the ban after parents and doctors complained that children were being unnecessarily exposed to toxic chemicals.

Gideon Forman, executive director of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE), is one of those ban boosters, urging jurisdictions like British Columbia to follow Ontario's path.

“It is the best in North America ... in terms of health protective, there's nothing close to it in North America,” Forman said. “It takes about 250 toxic products off the market so that children, in particular, are not exposed to them. So in terms of protecting health, it's fabulous.”

Research shows that pesticide exposure increases the risk of cancer, birth defects and brain and nervous system disorders, such as Parkinson's disease,

Forman said.

“The fact that Health Canada approves something doesn't mean it's safe.

Health Canada also approves cigarettes,” Forman said. “What we're saying and what the Canadian Cancer Society is saying is that's there no health benefit from these pesticides ... Why would we take the risk when there's so many effective non-toxic products that we can use to keep our properties beautiful?”

Jeffrey Lowes, of M-REP Communications in Kingston, said politics, not science, is driving the Ontario ban.

The Dalton McGuinty government was more interested in appeasing lobbyists and environmental groups than developing policy based on facts, he said.

Lowes said he is currently preparing legal challenges to the ban on behalf of lawn care companies struggling to do their jobs with alternatives that are largely ineffective.

When customers can't get the results they want from the companies, they cancel their contracts and buy the banned products themselves, he said.

He estimated the ban costs lawn care companies \$350 million a year.

One firm was fined tens of thousands of dollars for using up the banned product left in its inventory, he said.

"That's why the lawn care companies are scared because they've not only made a law based on false medical reports, the ministry of the environment has an enforcement branch that is basically walking around in jackboots, you know, prosecuting anyone that has a nice lawn. Unless, of course, you own a golf course," Lowes said, referring to a controversial exemption to the ban.

Tory MPP Peter Shurman agreed that the cosmetic pesticide ban is just that, cosmetic.

Health Canada research, "the gold standard," did not suggest a need for a pesticide ban, he insisted.

Instead, it is yet another example of the McGuinty government interfering in the lives of Ontarians by telling them what to put on their dandelions, he said.

"I am aware that there are people taking Round Up, and things like that, out of Buffalo and bringing it across the border," Shurman said. "This is a nanny state policy of Dalton McGuinty."

Wilkinson said the Liberals campaigned on the ban and Ontarians showed their support for it when they voted them into office.

Ontario Horticultural Association President Carol Dunk, who has been gardening pesticide-free for eight years, said there may be a few bad apples who continue to feed their chemical habits but most gardeners welcome the ban.

"They're quite willing to change their way of gardening so that they can accommodate the ban," the Barrie resident said. "They're pretty nice people so they realize the harm that pesticides were doing to our environment and so they're quite willing to go the extra mile and do a little more weeding and a little picking of insects."

People with large lawns or non-native species may find it a bit more of a struggle to maintain their properties, she said.

Dunk said there are many environmentally-friendly options and products, but notes there's little to prevent someone from getting their hands on Round Up or a similar product in an Ontario store without crossing the border or making an on-line purchase.

"There is no restriction. You just have to tell a little fib and say you have poison ivy and you could get it," Dunk said. "You have to rely on your neighbours (not) telling on you."

The Ontario law allows people to purchase pesticides to deal with plants and insects that pose a health threat.

The province's enforcement efforts emphasize education, but individuals convicted under the act face fines of up to \$20,000 a day for a first offence and up to \$50,000 a day for subsequent offences. Corporations face fines of up to \$200,000 a day.

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Prohibition Is a FARCE

MOST ONTARIO RESIDENTS STILL DO NOT KNOW THE REASONS FOR PROHIBITION — in jurisdictions where PROHIBITION has been legislated, government has done a POOR JOB OF INFORMING THE PUBLIC as to the reasons why greens spaces now LOOK LIKE WEED-INFESTED and INSECT-DESTROYED GARBAGE DUMPS

MANY ONTARIO RESIDENTS HOARDED PRODUCT PRIOR TO PROHIBITION — residents simply stockpiled products prior to PROHIBITION, and are using them as they see fit — correctly or incorrectly — we will never know, since it is now out of reach of provincial over-sight and regulation that licensed applicators and companies needed to obey — so the misuse of pest control products remains — and PROHIBITION has ENSURED this

ONTARIO RESIDENTS ARE OBTAINING PRODUCTS FROM OUTSIDE — residents are obtaining products either from other provinces, or mostly from across the border in the United States — it is NOT illegal to own or possess these products, only to apply them — again, the mis-use of products remains — thanks to PROHIBITION

ONTARIO RESIDENTS ARE USING HOME-MADE AND INTERNET RECIPES — this is where it gets scary — gasoline, kerosene, naphtha, bleach, sodium chloride, nicotine tea, and the list goes on

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**Ken Petkau**

This is what happens when you elect morons to the legislature!

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- 94 Likes
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**goodshot1950**

yes and unless people wake up and start to take responsibility for themselves then we will have much more of the same. I hate that friggin idiot.

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- in reply to Ken Petkau
- 21 Likes
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**Guest**

You're what happens when morons like your parents reproduce.

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- 1 day ago
- in reply to Ken Petkau
- 3 Likes
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**goodshot1950**

Get stuffed as your dead from the neck up...I'm fed up with this dictatorship that leads Ontario so grow up and get out from under mamma.

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- in reply to Guest
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**qwerty411**

This was a typical Liberal response when confronted with an opinion contrary to their own. Libs can't deal with free thought and automatically attack the individual. Such a moral bunch. "Do as I say, not as I do" right?

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**F234ffg**

I agree with goodshot1950.

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- in reply to Guest
- 8 Likes
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**426 hemi**

Another of Comrade McGuilty's intrusions into our personal freedoms. Leave the Liberals in power long enough and we'll all be provided with a manual entitled "Ontario's Guide to Making Decisions Concerning Every Issue You Will Encounter In Your Lifetime". "Footnote: In the unlikely event that you encounter an issue not covered in this guide you must immediately contact the Ontario Ministry of Everything, and request a decision. Under no circumstances are you to use your own judgement at any time. Please keep in mind that the application of free will is no longer permitted and could expose you to severe fines and/or imprisonment. Ontario cares about you!"

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**SteveErin McIntoshMowbray**

Freedoms, as you put them, should not endanger others, including your own family. If knowingly tossing bits of poisonous crap on your lawn is important to you, you should not get the benefits of living in a society.

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- 1 day ago
- in reply to 426 hemi
- 9 Likes
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**Laviathan Rider**

I guess we should ban all alcohol and tobacco users from this utopian society of yours too then Steve? I don't smoke nor drink, but amazingly, our government allows the use of these proven killer poisons. These things kill people. I just want to kill some grubs and dandelions.

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**SteveErin McIntoshMowbray**

Hey Lavia, while your argument is almost solid, it lacks true bite from an intelligent standpoint. Smoking is self-inflicted damage. Putting shite on your lawn harms anyone that walks on it. Kids, pets, et al. The chems we're talking about should have been banned along with DDT year sgo. Tell me how you can justify killing others in your society, knowing full well that what you do will cause this, and then we'll talk. Until then, keep up the perpetual greed. Being for a party by means does not mean that that you should blind yourself to the issues.

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**2MyFriendly1**

Not everyone lives in a condo surrounded by concrete or have lawns the size of a dime. You have no business walking on my lawn in the first place, get the hell out of my life.

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**jdf135**

My main response is that tobacco and alchohol DO harm others in massively signficiant and overwhelmingly, scientifically ways. Ask any MADD member or consult any physician dealing with second-hand smoke not to mention the waste of agricultural space and soil mineral depletion caused by alchohol and tobacco production. Regardless of the science, there is definitely a double standard here.

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- in reply to SteveErin McIntoshMowbray
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**Odog Thewise**

If the government could have found a way to put a sin tax on it.....

It would still be on the stores shelves here in Ontario.

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- 1 day ago
- in reply to jdf135
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**AI\_Dente**

We have neither kids nor pets. And your contention of harm is absolute nonsense. If there was the slightest truth, we'd see higher incidences of harm to kids and pets living next to golf courses and on farms, where people work with massive amounts of this stuff every day.

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- in reply to SteveErin McIntoshMowbray
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**james mitchell**

like cancer rates, going up every year? Time for cancer to touch your life, see how important that lawn is.

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- in reply to AI\_Dente
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**AI\_Dente**

Read what I said. No evidence that people who work with, or are close to, pesticides have cancer rates any higher than those who aren't. So it's BS.

BTW, my nephew is now in the last stages of cancer of the esophagus and liver. He and his family live in a small town and are extremely strict about eating nothing but organic and never using anything artificial on anything, including their weed-covered lawn. And my father died of cancer. I've been touched plenty, but I don't invent false villains.

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- 1 day ago
- in reply to james mitchell
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**Larry**

The harm of second and third hand smoke has been well documented. Your cigarette affects me and my health too.

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- in reply to SteveErin McIntoshMowbray
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**wes23**

Are there any statistics on how many lives have been saved since the ban was put in place?

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**james mitchell**

these chemicals kill more than grubs or dandelions, they kill people.

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- in reply to Laviathan Rider
- 2 Likes
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**Jaxon**

Then I guess I'm in trouble as my house backs on to an ONTARIO GOLF COURSE. If you lived near one you would see how often and with the full permission of Dalton McSleazy that the course finds it necessary to have it's workers dressed up in full body and head coveralls with full face masks as they drive around the course spraying this same Sh\$t every time you turn around. I don't have to walk on the grass, the northwest wind across the course distributes the Liberal allowed toxins to all properties nearby.

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