Canadian Cancer Society
BRITISH COLUMBIA AND YUKON

Cosmetic Pesticides:

An idea whose time has gone

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Integrated Pest Management Task Force

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- Canadian Cancer Society position statement
- The link between pesticides and cancer
- A model bylaw
- Other reasons for a bylaw

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Position Statement:

- The Canadian Cancer Society is very concerned about the use of potential carcinogens for the purposes of enhancing the appearance of lawns and gardens, as well as parks, recreational facilities, and golf courses
- We base this concern on the conclusions of the International Agency for Research on Cancer, which state that some substances used in pesticides are classified as known, probable, or possible carcinogens.

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Since the cosmetic use of pesticides has no countervailing health benefit, and has the potential to cause harm, the Canadian Cancer Society calls for a ban restricting the cosmetic use of pesticides on lawns and gardens

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Health Impact:

- Pesticides are substances intended to kill or otherwise control insects, weeds, fungi, or pests
- There is a growing body of evidence linking exposure to pesticides with certain types of cancers

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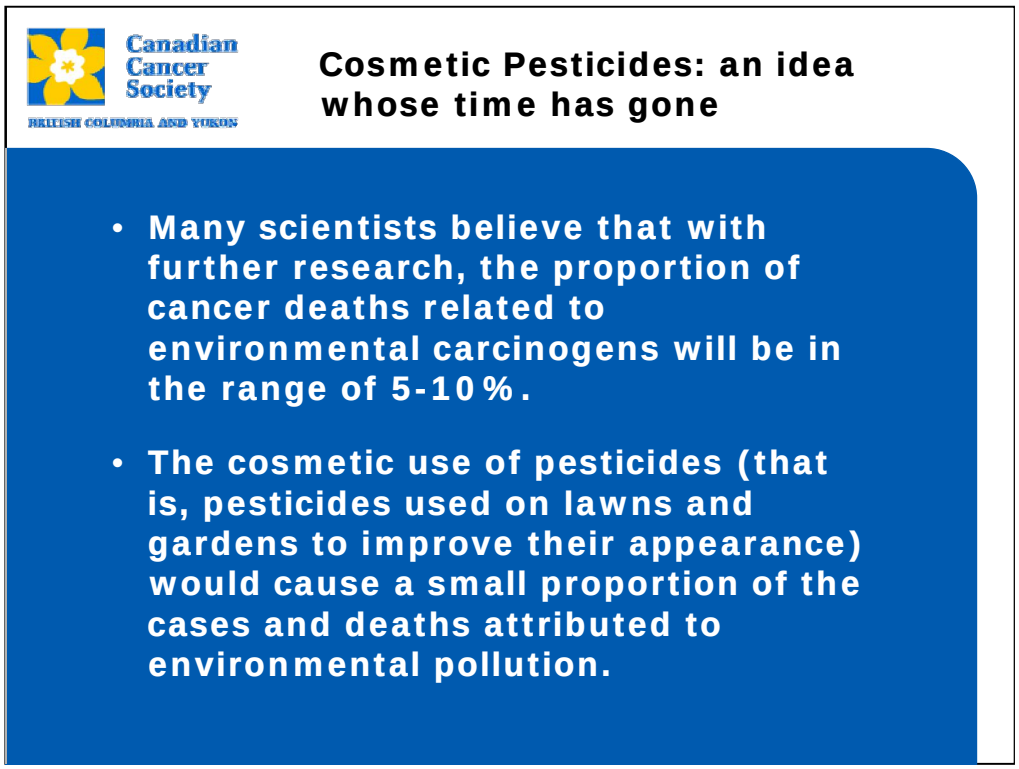
- **Studies have linked pesticide exposure to both adult and childhood cancers**
- **Infants and children are at greater risk from the effects of pesticides**

- The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), which conducts research into the causes of cancer, has concluded that certain ingredients in pesticides are known or probable carcinogens

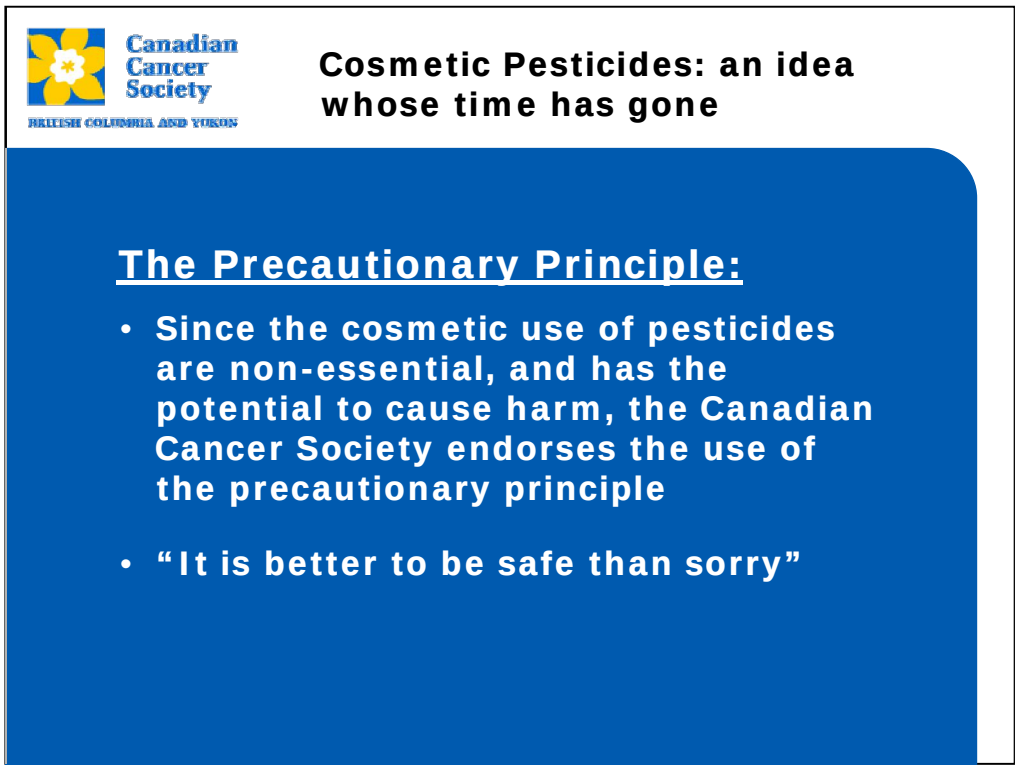
- IARC is a division of WHO and has reviewed more than 800 agents to identify those that cause cancer.

- The Ontario College of Family Physicians Report (2004) reviewed the scientific evidence and concluded that there is an association between pesticide exposure and certain types of cancers.

- That list includes childhood and adult leukemias, childhood brain cancer, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, neuroblastoma, brain cancer, prostate cancer, kidney cancer, and some lung cancers.



- The Harvard Report on Cancer Prevention (1996) estimated that environmental pollution is responsible for 2% of cancer deaths



for example, look at what we now know about levels of radon gas

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Cosmetic Pesticide Bylaws:

- In 2001, the Supreme Court of Canada, in a landmark decision, upheld the right of municipalities to pass bylaws restricting the cosmetic use of pesticides

In 1991, City Council in Hudson, Quebec passed by-law 270, to ban the cosmetic use of pesticides. Lawn care companies challenged that the municipality did not have jurisdiction over federally approved products. In 2001, the Supreme Court of Canada upheld the town's right to regulate where pesticides may be used. Fuelled by growing public concern about possible effects on human health and the environment, this precedent has given municipalities some authority over pesticide use creating a tri-level regulatory regime. Federally, the Pest Control Products Act ensures pesticide products are registered by Agriculture Canada before they may be sold or used in Canada. Provincially, the Pesticide Control Act applies to pesticide sale, transportation, storage, application and disposal and municipally, the City of Vancouver under the health powers of the Vancouver Charter would have the authority to determine when and where pesticides may be applied on lands subject to municipal jurisdiction.

The Canadian Strategy for Cancer Control's National Committee on Environmental and Occupational Exposures has added weight to this campaign by endorsing the precautionary principle and citing municipal pesticide bylaws as a 'best practice' in community education and action in Canada.

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Which BC Municipalities have Pesticide Bylaws:

- Gibsons – 2005
- Port Moody – Jan 1, 2006
- Vancouver – Jan 1, 2006
- West Vancouver – Jan 1, 2006
- Maple Ridge – December 12, 2006
- North Vancouver – education
- Comox – 3rd reading
- Cumberland – drafted
- Nelson – 3rd reading
- New Westminster - drafted

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Components of an ideal bylaw:

- Restricts, not just educates
- Allows for use of pesticides in exceptional situations
- Does not allow permits
- Includes public awareness/education program

Not just education: "Only those communities that passed a by-law and supported it with education or made a community agreement were successful in reducing the use of pesticides by a high degree (51-90%). Education and outreach programs alone, while more popular than by-laws, are far less effective. We could find none that have achieved more than a low reduction (10-24%) in pesticide use to date." (*From **The Impact of By-Laws and Public Education Programs on Reducing the Cosmetic/Non-essential, Residential Use of Pesticides: A Best Practices Review** Jointly prepared by the Canadian Centre for Pollution Prevention and Cullbridge Marketing and Communications, 2004)*

Components of an education program include: broad-based advertising (newspaper ads and articles, radio spots, posters and bus ads), web site, direct-mail campaign, fact sheets, residential lawns signs for pesticide-free lawns, and workshops and free seminars on pesticide alternatives.

Establish baseline levels of pesticide use via a survey

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Other reasons for a pesticide bylaw:

It shows leadership, and is the right thing to do

It will stimulate business that specializes in alternative lawn care, and grow alternative offerings.

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- It will add to the desirability of the city as a tourist destination.
- It will raise city's profile as a place that cares about the health of its citizens and the environment, and is a safe and healthy place to raise children.

"As Fernie moves into the future, local and tourist trade alike remain the key to its success" (www.fernie.ca, accessed on February 15, 2007).

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- Public typically supports it
- It can be easy
  - If done in a phased-in approach
    - Educate and then restrict
    - Complaint and then fine
  - There are many model bylaws
    - Peterborough, Port Moody and West Vancouver

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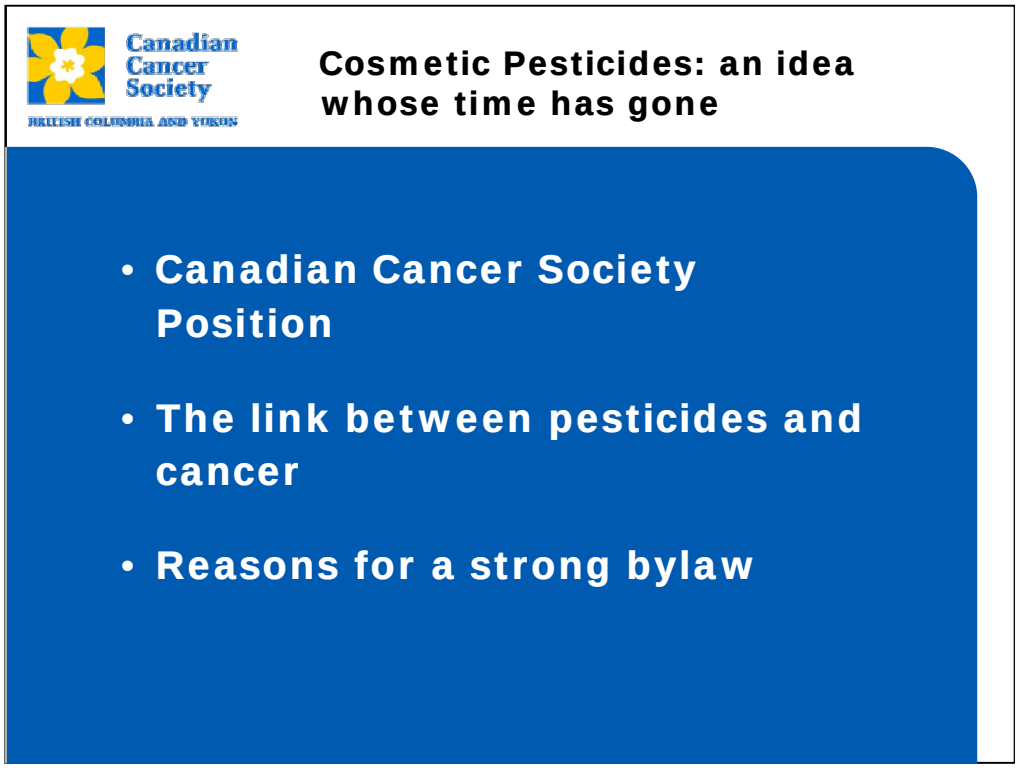
There are many alternatives to pesticides

Natural means – soap, borax, acetic acid, corn gluten

Healthy lawn practices – mow high

Native plans – better growth, fewer weeds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• Canadian Cancer Society Position
• The link between pesticides and cancer
• Reasons for a strong bylaw