

# Make more Regina parks pesticide-free

BY DR. SANELA BEGIC, THE LEADER-POST JULY 5, 2011

The Canadian Cancer Society and the Lung Association of Saskatchewan are extremely disappointed with the City of Regina's decision not to make more of its parks pesticide-free.

Last year, three city parks were designated pesticide-free as part of a one-year pilot project (Gordon Park, Al Pickard Park and Queen Elizabeth II Park). The community and protective services committee had an opportunity to expand the list of chemical-free parks, but instead chose to extend the pilot project for yet another year.

There is a troubling body of evidence linking pesticides to several cancers including childhood leukemia, prostate and brain cancers.

Cosmetic pesticides can also be a problem for people who have multiple chemical sensitivities, or for people who have lung diseases.

If the city is concerned about the safety and wellbeing of children and pets that use our parks, which was its reason for making the three parks pesticide-free in the first place, why would it delay extending that protection to more Regina residents?

We have been working hard to encourage municipalities and the provincial government to follow the lead of the rest of the country and ban the sale and use of non-essential pesticides.

Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and more than 150 Canadian municipalities have adopted policies to protect residents' health from non-essential lawn and garden chemicals.

Regina has an opportunity to be a role model for its citizens and other Saskatchewan communities. Banning pesticides on its own property sends a powerful message that encourages individual residents to use safer alternatives.

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