



Time to amend pesticide ban

Ted Chudleigh - My View

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The (Dalton) McGuinty pesticide ban has taken away the ability of people to safeguard themselves against noxious weeds and disease-carrying insects.

As a result, Ontario now has a more dangerous outdoor environment, a black market in pesticides and a trail of economic destruction with hundreds of small businesses destroyed and thousands of people out of work.

What has happened is the predictable effect of using junk science to justify a political decision.

Of course I am concerned with the overuse of pesticides and the potential effects they could have on our environment. Show me the science. Show me the evidence. I am also concerned about reports that deer ticks which carry Lyme disease are running wild, particularly in semi-rural areas just outside our cities.

I am concerned about noxious weeds, which in extreme cases can contribute to death and which force millions to medicate themselves or live with severe allergic effects.

That's why I introduced Bill 88 to amend the ban on pesticides and allow licensed professionals to apply these products under strict conditions and in concentrations well within established safety limits.

These products are rigorously tested and monitored by Health Canada.

Surely the entirely unproven concerns of a few politically-connected fear-mongers should be balanced against the strictly-tested, lengthy and scientifically-documented use of pesticides applied under controlled conditions to deal with human health problems caused by noxious plants and disease-carrying insects.

The current regime encourages people to purchase pesticides and apply them in strong concentrations.

Bill 88 requires professional application and has the added effect of strengthening an industry that has been devastated by the McGuinty Liberals' arbitrary position on this issue.

It is only a matter of time before problems in rural and semi-rural areas come to an urban area near you.

I would also like to reduce the Big Brother effect of the current legislation. Golf courses are currently exempt but have to hold an annual meeting open to local residents to outline the use of pesticides. Despite the considerable expense of these meetings they are inevitably ignored by the public. These Big Bother government regulations add to the cost of doing business, simply for the optics it creates for government benefit.

Surely providing a report on pesticide use to residents who request it should be more than sufficient for public information.

I'm hopeful that common sense supported by 21st century science will triumph in the end.

Ted Chudleigh is the Conservative MPP representing the provincial riding of Halton.

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