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Cancer
Society

BRITISH COLUMBIA AND YUKON

Pesticides and Cancer:

The Need for an Effective Bylaw

*Presented by: Nancy Falconer, Community Action Coordinator
Canadian Cancer Society, Vancouver Island Region*

Port Alberni Pesticide Forum

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Pesticides:

- Pesticides and cancer
- Our position
- The need for a strong bylaw
- Benefits of a bylaw



Pesticides and Cancer

- **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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Pesticides and Cancer



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



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Our Position

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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The Precautionary Principle



- **Where cosmetic pesticides are concerned, the Canadian Cancer Society endorses the precautionary principle**
- **“It is better to be safe than sorry”**



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The Impact of Local Government

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





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A Growing Movement

Since then, 140 Canadian municipalities and one Province has adopted the precautionary approach to pesticide use and moved to ban the use of cosmetic pesticides





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Pesticide Bans Across Canada

- **Halifax**
- **Montreal**
- **Toronto**
- **London**
- **The Province of Quebec**
(Pesticides Management Code)
- **Ontario Government has committed to a province wide ban**





Which BC Municipalities Have Bylaws?

- **Gibsons – 2005**
- **Port Moody – Jan 1, 2006**
- **Vancouver – Jan 1, 2006**
- **West Vancouver – Jan 1, 2006**
- **Maple Ridge – December 12, 2006**
- **Nelson – July 23, 2007**
- **New Westminister - drafted**
- **Comox**
- **Courtenay**
- **Cumberland**
- **Victoria**
- **Esquimalt (drafted)**
- **North Vancouver (District) – drafted**
- **Salmon Arm – drafted**
- **Whistler**
- **Burnaby**



A Model Bylaw

- **Restricts, not just educates**
- **Includes herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, vermicides, rodenticides**
- **Includes public and private property**
- **Includes public awareness/education program**





The Scope of A Bylaw

- **Does NOT apply to**
 - swimming pools
 - inside an enclosed building
 - for purification of water
 - to control or destroy animals or plants which constitute a danger for human beings
 - forestry or agriculture
- **Allows for use of pesticides in exceptional situations (following notice, etc)**



Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Is Not the Answer

Bylaws Should Not Include "IPM":

- **Now used by the landscape industry to defend pesticide use**
- **IPM relies on pesticides**
- **Should not be integrated into legislation**



Support for Bylaws

- **Polls show that the majority of citizens support pesticide bylaws**
- **It can be easy**
 - **If done in a phased-in approach**
 - **Educate and then restrict**
 - **Complaint and then fine**
 - **There are many model bylaws**
 - **Courtney, Hudson, Peterborough, Oakville, Port Moody, West Vancouver**

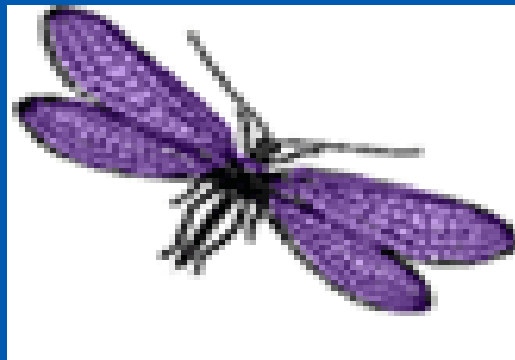


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Support for Bylaws

There are many
alternatives to
pesticides





- **Alberni Environmental Coalition**
- **Garden Clubs**
- **Organic landscaping companies**
- **Society for Organic Urban Land care (SOUL)**
- **Municipalities and regional districts with existing education campaigns (e.g Capital Regional District)**



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SOUL

Society for Organic Urban Land Care

<http://www.organiclandcare.org/>



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Composting Centres

The Greater Victoria Compost Education Centre:

- Sustainable Home and Garden
Series**



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Municipalities and Regional Districts with Education Campaigns

Toronto Public Health:

Pesticide Free....

A Guide to Natural Lawn and Garden
Care

<http://www.toronto.ca/health/pesticides/>



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Benefits of a Bylaw

- **It shows leadership, and is the right thing to do from a public health perspective**
- **Bylaws do not harm business, and will stimulate businesses that specialize in alternative lawn and garden care, and the number and variety of alternative lawn and garden products**





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Benefits of a Bylaw

- **It will raise the community'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**
- **It will add to the desirability of the community as a tourist destination**





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Thank You

For more information or to join the growing movement:

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- **380-2358 or nfalconer@bc.cancer.ca**