



City endorses living pesticide-free

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Fourth year of Kelowna Bylaw

2012 marks the fourth year of the City's pesticide use regulation bylaw and its Pesticide Free education campaign.

"The Pesticide Free campaign helps residents make healthier yard maintenance choices," says Althea Livingston, Marketing and Communications Coordinator. "The education campaign is designed to assist with the implementation of our pesticide bylaw that regulates the use of cosmetic, non-essential pesticides on residential properties. The bylaw came into effect on January 1, 2009."

City staff will visit retailers and host a number of free workshops throughout the spring to ensure that information is provided directly to residents. The City's website, kelowna.ca/environment also features a number of different information brochures and fact sheets, answers to some frequently asked questions, plus helpful external links. Topics covered include managing pests, weeds, aphids, powdery mildew and fruit pests in residential yards. Another pamphlet explains how to read a pesticide label and determine which less toxic pesticides are permitted under the bylaw.

For the second year in a row, a pesticide expert is available to answer questions from residents who are dealing with a pest or weed problem and need advice. Residents can email pesticidefree@kelowna.ca or leave a voicemail on the Pesticide Free Hotline at 250-469-8881. "Residents can apply for a one-time exemption to deal with infestations they cannot get under control using natural measures by calling the Environment and Land Use Branch at 250-469-8626," says Livingston. "However, we will want to ensure people have done everything they can before resorting to pesticides."

Other exemptions from the bylaw include certified pesticide applicators, backyard fruit trees, pests that transmit human diseases, noxious weeds, noxious insects, City of Kelowna lands and less toxic pesticides such as acetic acid, dormant oil and safer soaps.

The City of Kelowna Park Services Department has reduced its pesticide use over the last 11 years, with the majority of pest management activity now being done through proper design and the use of horticultural practices, as well as through mechanical, biological and cultural controls. Provincial regulations currently allow cosmetic pesticides to be sold by retailers. However, some local retailers have opted to voluntarily take them off their shelves to support the numerous pesticide bylaws in Canada. The City is hopeful that new provincial legislation will further restrict the use and sale of cosmetic pesticides.

Year round disposal of pesticides and other hazardous materials with a corrosive, poison or flammable symbol on the label is available at the Battery Doctors at 1972 Windsor Rd. For more information about hazardous waste disposal, call Battery Doctors at 250-860-2866, or visit www.regionaldistrict.com/recycle.

For more information about the City of Kelowna pesticide bylaw, Pesticide Free education program and alternatives to chemicals, visit the Pesticide Free pages at kelowna.ca/environment.