

Integrated Vegetation Management Association of BC

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Cosmetic Pesticide Use Nov 8, 2011

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IVMA

An organization of professionals dedicated to the responsible practice of all aspects of vegetation management

The IVMA represents the industrial users of herbicides in BC

- Forestry
- Highways and Railways
- Electrical utilities
- Oil and Gas utilities
- Noxious weed control
- Contractors and suppliers
- Nurseries and agriculture

Integrated Vegetation Management

involves selecting and integrating vegetation treatments to most effectively target specific plant species while minimizing impacts to human health and environment



Regulatory Initiatives

- IVMA provides extensive input to the Ministry of Environment. Most recently
 - during public consultation on development of the IPM Act and Reg
 - Still working cooperatively to prepare explanatory notes intended to help industry apply the requirements of the Act and Reg
 - Development of guidelines for First Nations consultation

Public Response to Herbicide Programs

- 70% of Pest Management Plans (PMPs) are IVMA members
- We consult extensively with the public during the development of PMPs
- We listen and address all concerns raised by the public
- Our number one issue is correcting misinformation spread by opponents of herbicide use
- Our experience is that most citizens are not concerned about our judicious use of herbicide
- This real experience is in conflict with other information



Carcinogenicity

No herbicides used by BCTC/Hydro and most industry in BC appear on any known, probable, possible or reasonably anticipated carcinogen list published by either IARC (International Agency for Research on Cancer) or the US Department of Health and Human Services /National Toxicology Program

Many of these active ingredients are also used in the landscape (“cosmetic”) industry



Caution

Eliminating herbicide use will have serious consequences for public health, the safety of industrial operations, prevention of wildfires, the supply of food, and the viability of industries that are important to BC's economy

Some communities in Ontario are using cosmetic bans as leverage to stop herbicide use on rights-of-way (eg Coleman)

Importance of Vegetation Management to Industry

- The forest industry must control competing vegetation on planting sites to establish crop trees and maintain biodiversity to ensure a future timber supply as required by the province
- Control of invasive and noxious weeds is imperative to maintain productive rangeland and food production
- Industrial sites control weeds to provide access and visibility for inspection and maintenance, reduce the potential for worker injury, and ensure proper functioning of equipment and infrastructure



Vegetation Management

- Railways need to keep the ballast free of weeds to prevent derailment and fire
- Substations must be weed free to prevent electrocution and fire
- Electrical utilities must ensure trees do not grow into the wires causing outages and fire
- Gas transmission vegetation is removed to assist leak detection, damage, erosion, unauthorized activity
- Oil and gas production facilities must be weed free for fire prevention
- Highways/Railways vegetation is removed for visibility and to reduce animal collisions



Why are Herbicides used

- Only method that can be used to maintain sites in a weed free condition and meet safety obligations and regulatory requirements
- Mechanical treatments do not eliminate deciduous vegetation
 - Follow up herbicide use is necessary
- Only successful control method for some invasive weeds



Advantages of herbicide use

- Heavy machines cause erosion, rutting, non-selective
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions
- Nesting habitats maintained
- Replace dense coppiced deciduous stands
 - Reduce fuel loading and fire risk
 - Habitat for wildlife
 - Enhanced recreational opportunities
 - Less frequent intervention once every 10 years
 - Keep rates low for the rate payers
- Less worker injuries 14 X less

Safe use of herbicides

- Must adhere to label requirements **PMRA**
- Must comply with restrictions imposed by the **IPMA and Reg**
 - Signage/notification requirements
 - Supervision by certified pesticide applicators/professionals
 - Habitat features and protected areas have been identified and PFZs/NTZs and buffers established
 - Stop work restrictions
 - Auditing and reporting
- All applications are guided by users IVM Plans which ensure that any application is the most appropriate control technique



Why does the IVMA care about a ban on the cosmetic use of pesticides

- Cosmetic use is an undefined term being used to disguise an agenda to stigmatize all pesticide use.
- Confusion over differing messages from Federal, Provincial and Municipal governments
 - Some products have both industrial and home use if they are not safe in a lawn how are they safe on a railway or right-of-way
 - Informally used as a local bargaining issue by unions
 - Local source of tension and confusion when herbicides are banned for home owners but used by industry at adjacent sites
- A ban on urban cosmetic use could inevitably spread to industrial use (activist groups have indicated that a cosmetic ban is just a first step)



Impacts of a ban to Industry

- Difficult consultation on the development of IPMPs
- Unsubstantiated concerns over herbicide use
- Spread of invasive plants and animals from urban sites to industrial sites
- Discourages innovation for new herbicides



Impacts of a ban to Industry and...

- Cost will be driven up and industries such as forestry will become less competitive
- Not just a cost to industry but also a cost to government
- Increased injuries to workers and Worksafe BC claims
- Other provincial experience where bans are in place



Recommendations

- The IVMA recommends that any decision on a ban be deferred.
 - Consequences of bans are just being felt – Ontario etc.
- BC is one of the only jurisdictions with comprehensive IPM legislation
 - Support and be proud of our considerable regulatory framework and IPM in BC
 - Use this opportunity to increase public awareness
- Strongly recommend a science based approach
 - Support the PMRA and the great work they are doing
- Continue to engage industry experts
 - We will continue to work with and assist government
- Put together a “Panel of Experts” to gather more facts
- Conduct a comprehensive environmental cost benefit analysis to understand the true cost of any decision