



# Pesticide ban amounts to bad public policy

BY ROBERT WAGER, THE DAILY NEWS JULY 17, 2012

The "City Log" article claiming that the current weed infestation of our streets and sidewalks is not a result of the pesticide ban is political spin at its finest.

All one has to do is look at any street, island or sidewalk in the city to see the huge number of weeds to realize Coun. Kipp's words are simply not true.

A couple years ago I was asked by the mayor to present the science of common synthetic pesticides to the committee charged with developing the city pesticide policy (whether or not to ban synthetic pesticides).

The science at that time was clear that a ban of effective, safe, federally regulated pesticides would result in a significant increase in weed issues in our city. This scientific opinion is backed up by the experiences of numerous Canadian municipalities.

Health Canada states there was no health risk associated with properly used synthetic pesticides. Even the Quebec government was forced to admit to the court that there was no science supporting the ban of 2,4-D.

The response by the committee (led by Kipp) to the science was telling. A committee member said: "We cannot possibly understand the science so we are going ahead with the ban."

Now Nanaimo is paying the price for disregarding decades of extensive science; everywhere you look in this city you see weeds overtaking parks, greenbelts, roadways, sidewalks, medians, shoulders; the list goes on.

This infestation that now threatens municipal infrastructure is a direct result of the synthetic pesticide ban.

Unless the present ban is reversed, structural damage from the weed infestation and cost of repairs or replacement will result in a significant additional financial burden to Nanaimo taxpayers. When science is disregarded in the development of sciencebased public policy, we get bad public policy. This is our city's present situation.

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