

Health and Environmental Organizations Call for a Province-wide Ban on Lawn and Garden Pesticides



We support the BC Government's interest in safeguarding the environment from cosmetic chemical pesticides and call for new legislation that:

- Prohibits the use, sale, and retail display of chemical pesticides for lawns, gardens, and non-agricultural landscaping;
- Allows exemptions only to protect public health;
- Provides for public education about the ban and alternatives to chemical pesticides;
- Includes effective mechanisms for enforcement;
- Is passed in 2010 and fully implemented within the first two years of the government's current mandate



In a world of multiple chemical exposures, we must eliminate needless risks from lawn and garden pesticides.

Why We Support a Province-wide Ban on Cosmetic Pesticides

Cosmetic Pesticide Use is a Public Health Issue, Particularly for Children

- The International Agency for Research on Cancer and the US National Toxicology Program state that some pesticides can cause cancer.¹ The Pesticides Literature Review conducted by the Ontario College of Family Physicians, showed “consistent links to serious illnesses, such as cancer, reproductive problems and neurological diseases.”²
- Children are at a greater risk from pesticide exposure than adults because they are closer to the ground and their bodies are still developing.³
- The notion that pesticide use is an individual matter is scientifically incorrect. Once dispersed, pesticides affect non-target plant, animal and human health in our shared environment.

Pesticide Bans Work

- In Quebec, the number of households with a lawn or garden using chemical pesticides dropped dramatically to just 4 percent in 2007, one year after provincial regulations prohibiting the use and sale of many lawn pesticides were fully implemented. Without a province-wide ban, 25 percent of BC households with a lawn or garden still use chemical pesticides.⁴

Alternatives are Available and Good for Business

- Practices such as mowing high, over-seeding, and topdressing restore ecological soil health. Low-risk, natural products such as corn gluten meal and nematodes are widely available through retail and lawn care service providers.
- Statistics Canada Business Patterns data shows that the horticultural trades have increased in number and size in Toronto and Halifax following the adoption of restrictive pesticide bylaws.⁵

There is Broad Public Support for a Cosmetic Pesticide Ban in BC

- Three out of four British Columbians support provincial legislation to restrict pesticide use, according to polling conducted by Ipsos Reid on behalf of the Canadian Cancer Society in 2008.⁶
- More than 25 British Columbia municipalities have already adopted bylaws restricting the cosmetic use of pesticides.
- Delegates to the 2008 and 2009 Union of BC Municipalities Conventions voted in favour of resolutions calling on the provincial government to ban the use and sale of cosmetic pesticides province-wide.⁷

¹ The U.S. National Toxicology Program 11th Report on Carcinogens, 2005 <http://ntp-server.niehs.nih.gov/index.cfm?objectid=03C9B512-ACF8-C1F3-ADBA53CAE848F635>; International Agency for Research on Cancer, IARC Monographs on the Evaluation of Carcinogenic Risks to Humans, World Health Organization, <http://monographs.iarc.fr>

² M. Sanborn et al., Pesticide Literature Review, Ontario College of Family Physicians, 2003. Quoting April 23, 2003 press release. <http://www.ocfp.on.ca/English/OCFP/Communications/CurrentIssues/Pesticides>

³ Canadian Partnership for Children's Health and Environment, Child Health and the Environment – A Primer, 2005. <http://www.healthyenvironmentforkids.ca>

⁴ Statistics Canada, Households and the Environment, 2007. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-526-x/11-526-x2009001-eng.pdf>

⁵ www.toronto.ca/health/pesticides/index.htm; Statistics Canada, 2006. Business Register. Canadian Business Patterns (2001-2006).

⁶ Canadian Cancer Society Advocacy Public Opinion Research Survey, 2008.

⁷ UBCM, 2008 Resolutions as Excerpted from Convention Minutes (see resolutions B81 and B82). <http://ubcm.fileprosite.com/contentengine/launch.asp?ID=3880+2009+res>