

Review urges reducing pesticide exposure

THE OTTAWA CITIZEN MARCH 13, 2009

Re: PhDs, clean out your desks, March 7.

Ontario College of Family Physicians' pesticide literature review, that was mentioned in this column, is a landmark document on the human health effects of pesticide exposure.

It represents the scientific views of an expert team of medical doctors working under the auspices of an organization representing 9,000 family physicians.

The review found very troubling associations between pesticide exposure and an increased risk of cancer, neurological illness, and reproductive problems. Based on its scientific findings, it concluded that Ontarians should "avoid exposure to all pesticides whenever and wherever possible."

To ensure that their work met the most stringent demands of scientific scholarship, the review's authors submitted their research to the prestigious journal Canadian Family Physician.

After a thorough peer-review process -- in which third-party medical authorities examined the authors' findings -- the research was accepted for publication in the Canadian Family Physician's October 2007 issue.

We urge all citizens to read this publication for themselves. If they do, we believe they will share the scientists' recommendation that "exposure to all pesticides be reduced."

Those supporting continued use of non-essential pesticides tend to be connected with the pesticide industry itself. Those urging a phase-out of cosmetic pesticides include Ontario's doctors and nurses and the Canadian Cancer Society. Readers must decide for themselves whom they trust to protect their health.

Gideon Forman, Toronto

Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment

© Copyright (c) The Ottawa Citizen