Osoyoos Times

PROHIBITING COSMETIC PESTICIDES IS RESPONSIBLE ACTION CONSIDERING SCIENTIFIC DATA AVAILABLE

Posted on 27 June 2012 by admin

Dear Editor:

The B.C. Special Committee on Cosmetic Pesticides released its report in May which contained 17 recommendations to the government.
Although these recommendations did not include an outright ban on lawn and garden pesticides, it's important to note that the B.C. government has not made a decision (and the Special Committee itself did not have consensus in arriving at these recommendations).
It's also noteworthy that of the 7,300 e-questionnaires submitted by British Columbians during the committee's e -consultation, almost 5,000 supported a ban on the sale and use of cosmetic pesticides.
The Canadian Cancer Society maintains that health should take precedence over lawns.
It's important to note that pesticide registration by the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) of Health Canada does not mean that a pesticide is safe or without risk.
When the PMRA registers a pesticide it means that risk to both human health and the environment is minimized - but not eliminated - if the product is used for its intended purpose and according to label directions.
In its assessments, the PMRA does not differentiate between cosmetic use and non-cosmetic use.
While a definitive cause and effect relationship between pesticides and cancer has not been established, the Canadian Cancer Society is very concerned about the growing body of evidence suggesting pesticides may increase the risk of several types of cancers, including non-Hodgkin lymphoma, multiple myeloma, prostate, kidney and lung cancers.
Studies on pesticides and childhood cancer also show a possible connection with leukemia, brain tumours and non-Hodgkin lymphoma.
This information is very disconcerting and worrisome to our association.

Enough is known to be prudent and prevent exposure, especially when the use of these chemicals is unnecessary, exposure to them is irreversible and there are effective alternatives and practices.
The Canadian Cancer Society is not alone in its concern. This week, the Ontario College of Family Physicians issued a statement strongly recommending that the public reduce their exposure to pesticides, based on the findings of their second comprehensive review.
Their review demonstrates that children are particularly vulnerable and shows associations between pesticides and various neurological and respiratory diseases, and reproductive problems.
Prohibiting the use of cosmetic pesticides is both responsible and respectful of the state of the scientific evidence.
We thank the 40 municipalities throughout B.C. who have shown leadership by adopting cosmetic pesticide by-laws and we hope B.C. municipalities will continue to adopt cosmetic pesticide bylaws.
For our part, we will continue to urge the B.C. government to pass strong province-wide cosmetic pesticide legislation.
And we will continue to try and encourage other municipalities across the province to join the cause and introduce new legislation that would prohibit the use of these dangerous pesticides.
Through action, information and policies we can take steps to reduce the risk of cancer and promote health.
Thank you very much for allowing us to discuss this subject.

Patti Moore
Team Leader
Health Promotion
Canadian Cancer Society
Southern Interior Region
Cranbrook, B.C.

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