

WHAT'S YOUR STORY

Chafer beetles ravage lawn in Port Moody bug war

Virginia Usher has tried everything legal to rid her grass of pests, and so far they've won

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Virginia Usher is in a war with chafer beetles and losing fast. She says every promise of pest control let her down. (Tristan LeRudulier/CBC)

Virginia Usher is battling chafer beetles and losing.

"It's going to continue to spread if we don't do something that works," said Usher.

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The Port Moody homeowner has tried everything legal — from cayenne pepper to nematodes. She feels let down by her lawn care company, the city and the empty promises that these pests can be kept in check without pesticides.

Property ground zero for grubs

The invasive beetle burrows deep into lawns and attracts animals that dig for the tasty bugs, destroying the lawn in the process.

City officials admit they have no solution.



Tiny chafer beetles burrow into the ground, causing predators to dig up turf and lawn to find them. (Notafly/Wikimedia)

"I have a lot of sympathy for her because we are going through the same thing," said Neil Carley, Port Moody's general manager of engineering and parks. "It's a very

serious issue. I don't know of a single municipality that's not affected by the chafer beetle."

The city website suggests intensive lawn care, extra top dressing, nemoatodes or landscaping alternatives to lawns. Drought has made the situation worse.

"It's a real problem, and not just for Port Moody but for the entire region," said Carley.

Despite this no pesticides are allowed for "cosmetic" purposes in Port Moody.

Usher's lawn is ripped up daily by birds and the "raccoon party" that comes nightly.

"I'm just going to have to wait until the spring because it's too frustrating to deal with it all now."

Usher spent more than \$600 trying to fix the thriving three-year infestation.

Frustrated, just very frustrated. Virginia Usher

She said that Nutri-lawn promised her control, but the lawn company literature explains that even at their best, nematodes are only up to 60 percent effective.

Nutri-lawn's owner Robert Bourne regrets Usher's situation.

"At this point she has seen devastation in her entire front lawn ... That property has been ground zero for grubs," Bourne said, adding that they will be providing Usher with free service to try to repair her lawn.

But when it comes to chafer beetles in general: "There aren't many options that are left. Nematodes are the only option we have. Pesticides are banned. I wish I could offer more to our clients."

When Usher rakes up the ruined lawn, she must then take the debris to a disposal company. It can't go in the green bin to prevent further infestation.

"I've done everything I am supposed to do and now I am supposed to pay (\$15 a wheelbarrow) on top of that?"

"I just wish that the city would come up with another method, or allow other methods. I've done every single, solitary thing their website says I'm supposed to do ... I am just frustrated. Very frustrated."

What's your story?

This story is part of a special CBC Vancouver News series, [What's Your Story?](#)

The series focuses on issues pitched by our audience about what matters to them.

If you have a story to pitch about an issue in your community, send it to mylocalstory@cbc.ca

NORAHG RESPONDS ABOUT EUROPEAN CHAFER INSECTS — GREEN ALTERNATIVES LIKE NEMATODES WILL NOT WORK AGAINST EUROPEAN CHAFER GRUBS IN PORT MOODY, BRITISH COLUMBIA (BC) !

In 1940, in the State of New York, the European Chafer was officially identified as a turfgrass pest. It was accidentally introduced from the Orient and Europe. Forty years later, in 1980, it reached the Niagara Peninsula in South-Western Ontario. Its rampage continued across the Greater Toronto Area throughout the 1980s and 1990s. In 1997, William H Gathercole, one of the foremost turfgrass experts in the nation, first reported its spread in Montreal, Quebec. By 2001, this insect had also spread across several states of the North-Eastern U.S. In 2001, Mr Gathercole also first identified the insect in the Pacific North-West, in New Westminster, British Columbia, while local experts and entomologists were somehow baffled about an insect pest that had created a well-documented ECOLOGICAL DISASTER in Urban Landscapes throughout Eastern North America. Additionally, Mr Gathercole exhaustively investigated the introduction of this pest into British Columbia and Quebec. In both cases, the European Chafer was imported by CONTAMINATED SOD PRODUCTS originating from grower locations in the Province of Ontario.

Get used to destroyed and ravaged lawns ! With arbitrary pesticide bans, such as the one recklessly imposed in BC municipalities like **Port Moody, New Westminster, and Burnaby**, green spaces invariably become CHAFER-INFESTED AND DANGEROUS GARBAGE DUMPS. <http://wp.me/P1jq40-44g>
<http://wp.me/P1jq40-4z3> <http://wp.me/p1jq40-7C4> Residents of in municipalities like **Port Moody, New Westminster, and Burnaby** had better get used to living with GARBAGE DUMP GREEN SPACE, since it is IMPOSSIBLE to adequately control damaging pests, like European Chafer, without the use of conventional insect control products. Recommending entomo-pathogenic nematodes for controlling damaging insects of turf is mis-guided and wrong ! It would be better to do nothing rather than use nematodes. Entomo-pathogenic nematodes are not viable, efficacious, practical, or economical green alternatives to replace conventional insect control products. Entomo-pathogenic nematodes cannot be consistently considered as true alternatives to conventional insecticides, since the insect pests are often only suppressed, and not controlled. Laboratory and field tests tend to indicate that the best nematode species are only marginally effective in controlling insect infestations. On the other hand, conventional pest control products fully and effectively control insect pests. In fact, conventional insect control products, such as Merit (imidaclopid), are deemed safer than entomo-pathogenic nematodes. NO HOME-OWNER DESERVES THIS #@!!% BAN NONSENSE !

In municipalities like **Port Moody, New Westminster, and Burnaby**, homeowners have NO OTHER OPTION THAN RE-SODDING their lawns, over and over and over again. In fact, Sod Growers probably represent THE ONLY INDUSTRY THAT HAS ACTUALLY BENEFITED FROM THE GARBAGE DUMP GREEN SPACES THAT WERE INFLICTED BY ANTI-PESTICIDE PROHIBITION. If **Port Moody, New Westminster, and Burnaby** truly want to save homeowner lawns from the European Chafer, then they should have their local pesticide bans RESCINDED. Across North America, municipal officials are thinking twice about prohibition by looking at the experience of those jurisdictions that have suffered the hardship and stunningly exorbitant costs of this #@!!% nonsense ! <http://wp.me/p1jq40-5x1>
<http://wp.me/P1jq40-43V> For more information about NEMATODES and SOD INDUSTRY, go to the reports at the following Pesticide Truths Web-Pages ... <http://wp.me/P1jq40-5ai> & <http://wp.me/P1jq40-6V4>

We are the National Organization Responding Against HUJE that conspire to destroy the Green space and other industries (NORAH G). As a non-profit and independent organization, we are environmentalists who are dedicated to reporting about NON-EXPERT PESTICIDE-HATING FANATICS, as well as the work of RESPECTED and HIGHLY RATED EXPERTS who promote ENVIRONMENTAL REALISM and PESTICIDE TRUTHS. <http://wp.me/p1jq40->

[8DV](#) Get the latest details at <http://pesticidetruths.com/> WILLIAM H
GATHERCOLE AND NORAH G