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Pesticides and Cancer:

The Need for an Effective Bylaw

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Port Alberni Pesticide Forum

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Pesticides Overview

Pesticides:

- Pesticides and cancer
- Our position
- The need for a strong bylaw
- Benefits of a bylaw

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Pesticides and Cancer

- Pesticides are substances intended to kill or otherwise control insects, weeds, fungi, or pests
- There is a growing body of evidence linking exposure to pesticides with certain types of cancers

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Pesticides and Cancer

- Studies have linked pesticide exposure to both adult and childhood cancers
- Children are at greater risk from the effects of pesticides

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Our Position

Since the cosmetic use of pesticides has no countervailing health benefit, and has the potential to cause harm, the Canadian Cancer Society calls for a ban restricting the cosmetic use of pesticides on lawns and gardens

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The Precautionary Principle

- Where cosmetic pesticides are concerned, the Canadian Cancer Society endorses the precautionary principle
- "It is better to be safe than sorry"

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The Impact of Local Government

In 2001, the Supreme Court of Canada, in a landmark decision, upheld the right of municipalities to pass bylaws restricting the cosmetic use of pesticides

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A Growing Movement

Since then, 140 Canadian municipalities and one Province has adopted the precautionary approach to pesticide use and moved to ban the use of cosmetic pesticides

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Pesticide Bans Across Canada

- **Halifax**
- **Montreal**
- **Toronto**
- **London**
- **The Province of Quebec (*Pesticides Management Code*)**
- **Ontario Government has committed to a province wide ban**

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Which BC Municipalities Have Bylaws?

- Gibsons – 2005
- Port Moody – Jan 1, 2006
- Vancouver – Jan 1, 2006
- West Vancouver – Jan 1, 2006
- Maple Ridge – December 12, 2006
- Nelson – July 23, 2007
- New Westminster - drafted
- Comox
- Courtenay
- Cumberland
- Victoria
- Esquimalt (drafted)
- North Vancouver (District) – drafted
- Salmon Arm – drafted
- Whistler
- Burnaby

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A Model Bylaw

- Restricts, not just educates
- Includes herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, vermicides, rodenticides
- Includes public and private property
- Includes public awareness/education program

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The Scope of A Bylaw

- **Does NOT apply to**
  - swimming pools
  - inside an enclosed building
  - for purification of water
  - to control or destroy animals or plants which constitute a danger for human beings
  - forestry or agriculture
- **Allows for use of pesticides in exceptional situations (following notice, etc)**

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Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Is Not the Answer

Bylaws Should Not Include "IPM":

- Now used by the landscape industry to defend pesticide use
- IPM relies on pesticides
- Should not be integrated into legislation

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Support for Bylaws

- Polls show that the majority of citizens support pesticide bylaws
- It can be easy
  - If done in a phased-in approach
    - Educate and then restrict
    - Complaint and then fine
  - There are many model bylaws
    - Courtney, Hudson, Peterborough, Oakville, Port Moody, West Vancouver

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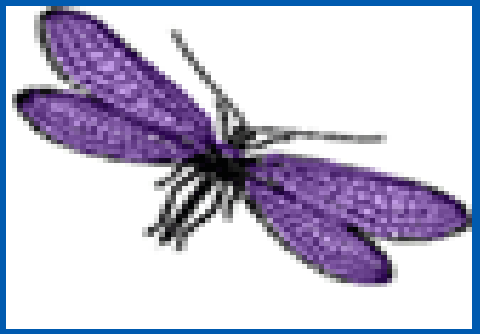
Support for Bylaws

There are many alternatives to pesticides



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Resources

- Alberni Environmental Coalition
- Garden Clubs
- Organic landscaping companies
- Society for Organic Urban Land care (SOUL)
- Municipalities and regional districts with existing education campaigns (e.g Capital Regional District)

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SOUL

Society for Organic Urban Land Care

http://www.organiclandcare.org/

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Composting Centres

The Greater Victoria Compost Education Centre:

- Sustainable Home and Garden Series

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Municipalities and Regional Districts with Education Campaigns

Toronto Public Health:

Pesticide Free….

A Guide to Natural Lawn and Garden Care

http://www.toronto.ca/health/pesticides/

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Benefits of a Bylaw

- It shows leadership, and is the right thing to do from a public health perspective
- Bylaws do not harm business, and will stimulate businesses that specialize in alternative lawn and garden care, and the number and variety of alternative lawn and garden products

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Benefits of a Bylaw

- It will raise the community's profile as a place that cares about the health of its citizens and the environment, and is a safe and healthy place to raise children
- It will add to the desirability of the community as a tourist destination

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Thank You

For more information or to join the growing movement:

- **Contact Nancy Falconer, Community Action Coordinator, Canadian Cancer Society, Vancouver Island Region**
- **380-2358 or nfalconer@bc.cancer.ca**