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# Pesticide use debate is not inert

Published: July 08, 2011 9:00 AM

Contrary to Mr. Hepworth's conviction that pesticides are safe and sufficiently regulated in Canada (The News, July 1, page A11), the Canadian Cancer Society believes municipal and provincial governments should take further precautions.

There is a growing body of evidence that links pesticide exposure to cancer, including childhood and adult leukemia, non-Hodgkin lymphoma, prostate, brain and lung cancers. Studies also show that children may be at a higher risk due to their rapidly developing bodies.

Numerous criticisms have been made about the pesticide regulatory system in Canada. For instance, some argue that data used to evaluate new pesticides comes from the industry and is mainly based on short-term toxicology tests on rats. In addition, some experts caution that inert ingredients are not tested, and interactions between pesticides or with other chemicals in the environment are not studied.

It is important to remember over 160 municipalities have banned the cosmetic use of pesticides across Canada. Viable alternatives are available to the average homeowner and municipalities are achieving great success at maintaining parks, playgrounds and sports fields without chemical pesticides.

The Canadian Cancer Society hopes that the province of B.C. will soon enact strong legislation banning the use and sale of pesticides used for cosmetic purposes so that all British Columbians will be protected.

Nancy Falconer, Health Promotion Co-ordinator, Canadian Cancer Society, Vancouver Island Region

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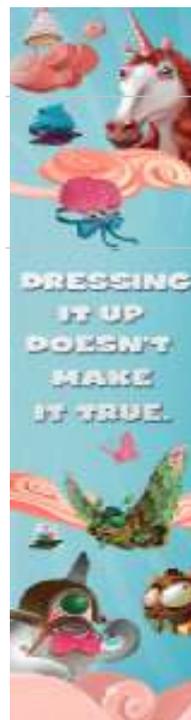


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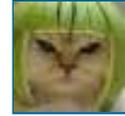
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- + [BC Opinions](#)
- + [Letters](#)
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- [Weather](#)
- [Horoscopes](#)
- [Lotteries](#)
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