

## LETTERS

THE DAILY COURIER, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2009

### PESTICIDE DEBATE

# Attack messenger, OK, but not scientific facts

Re: There's a good reason they're not believed, letters, Feb. 3.

As the director of government and industrial relations, I also hold the title of principle investigator for MREP Communications.

Because of the findings of experts in the field, I have reason to protest the proclamations of activists. My protests and explanations take place in committee and council chambers across the country. My company's mission is to ensure that proper science and not the court of public opinion governs good environmental stewardship and policy development.

I question the objectivity of the media and the writer and wonder why all sides of any issue are not subjected to the same scrutiny. Maybe the facts get in the way of a good story.

The lawn care industry has four pillars in their use of products to provide their goods and services. One: the product has been registered with Health Canada. Two: the product has to work. Three: the product and methods have to be cost effective. Four: Use should not increase their carbon footprint.

I understand why the writer agrees with the information I presented — simple logic. However, the drive-by smear of the writer — in order to create intangible links — is either spin by the activists or an undermining of the industry.

It is healthy to question what was stated. My presentation at the IEP-

MA Conference in Kelowna on Jan. 29 was open to the public, and I brought documentation to support all statements made. I cannot understand why the writer and the media fail to put the activists under the same microscope.

The doctor who appeared in the CHBC News clip about the event (the evening following my presentation) made boilerplate statements such as "there is a large overwhelming body of scientific evidence..." Although the public no doubt perceived the "doctor" as a medical expert, it should be noted that he holds a PhD in English, not medicine.

As to the "growing body of evidence," those reports are currently the subject of a fraud investigation. In the Land of Oz, the activists don't want you to pull back the curtains: you will find smoke, mirrors and a lot of fertilizer.

You can attack the presenter — that is my job to be out front, and I have thick skin. But I know I have done my job when the attacks are about me and not the information I presented.

There is a misconception — created by activists, politicians and the media — that the industry will be compliant and allow accusations and public statements to go unchallenged. The industry will provide the venue (a courtroom) for individuals and organizations to try to prove their beliefs.

**Jeffrey Lowes,  
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