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## ARTICLES

Documents: Latest From: **Art Drysdale:**

### Pest Control Products

Set to begin, a real battle to save, or bring back badly needed lawn and garden care products!  
by Art Drysdale

by **Art Drysdale**

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Art Drysdale, a life-long resident of Toronto and a horticulturist well known all across Canada, is now a resident of Parksville, British Columbia on Vancouver Island, just north of Nanaimo. He has renovated an old home and has a new garden there. His radio gardening vignettes are heard in south-western Ontario over two radio stations: Easy 101 FM out of Tillsonburg at 2 PM weekdays and CD98.9 FM out of Norfolk County at 11:40 AM weekdays.

Art also has his own website at <http://www.artdrysdale.com>

September 6, 2009



The Province of British Columbia Speech from the Throne was delivered on Tuesday, August 25th. It contained much of what had been predicted, particularly as regards a forecasted deficit. One item which many were not expecting had to do with cosmetic pesticide use. Here is the pertinent sentence: "British Columbians will be consulted on new statutory protections to further safeguard our environment from cosmetic chemical pesticides."



This might have been expected, if you think about the B.C. Liberal government's reasoning behind the announcement that it would introduce the Harmonized Sales Tax effective next July. That reasoning included the point that now that the province of Ontario had decided to introduce the hated HST, B.C. would have to follow suit in order to remain competitive for business. Now, maybe that is true.

I don't personally oppose the HST, I think it is a better way to go than the two-tier PST and GST we had previously. I only wish that it had happened 20 years ago when I was doing considerable business and could only get back slightly less than half of the taxes paid whereas soon now it will be possible to get back all of the tax on items being bought for re-sale.

But, if B.C. had to mimic Ontario's example of going with the HST, why does it follow that they would have to do the same with the banning of cosmetic pesticides? How is one even remotely related to the other?

William H. Gathercole, horticulturist and writer, now writes a daily internet blog (actually identified as a daily news-letter, called "*Force of Nature 3*") which is strongly critical not just of the enviro-terrorists who, back in the late 80s and early 90s conspired to see an end to the lawn, turf, and horticultural maintenance industries, initially through the banning of "cosmetic turf pesticides", starting in the Town of Hudson Québec.

William Gathercole holds a degree in Horticulture from the University of Guelph, and another pure and applied science degree from McGill University. He has worked in virtually all aspects of the green space industry, including public affairs, personal safety, and environmental issues. Mr. Gathercole has been a consultant and instructor for decades. He has been following the evolution of environmental terrorism for over a quarter-century. His involvement in environmental issues reached a fevered pitch in the 1990s, when he orchestrated, with others, legal action against unethical and excessive municipal regulations restricting the use of pest control products. (i.e. the Town of Hudson.) Although he can be accused of being anti-environment-movement, he is, in fact, simply a strong advocate for the green space industry. However, this position has not precluded him from criticizing the industry itself. Nonetheless, his vast knowledge of our long journey with environmental issues is undeniable. For many years, Mr. Gathercole has been a contributing columnist for *Turf & Recreation Magazine*, Canada's turf and grounds maintenance authority.

In a recent issue of *Force of Nature 3*, he outlined the situation in Salmon Arm, B.C. as follows:

"Legal, safe, and irreplaceable pest control products are prohibited in Salmon Arm, B.C., because weak-kneed councillors are unable to stand up to overly-influential residents that are members of environmental terror groups. Because of the prohibition, insects like aphids have become rampant. There are actually reports from Ontario and Québec where insect pests are on a critical rise since the crazed prohibitions were legislated, just like in Salmon Arm.

"In Salmon Arm, the sugary secretions exuded from the aphids are coating sidewalks and parked vehicles throughout the town. The secretions eventually attract more aggressive



Above, our Canna in the large pond, beside the geyser, this time with 'Joey Tomocik' a yellow hardy water lily poking in between. In the close-up of the lily, note the aphid on one of the upper petals! Below, one of our many groups of Crocosmia bulbs presently at their best; followed by two shots of another new Lobelia that came courtesy of our friend here, Louise Walli. It is Lobelia speciosa 'Fan Blue'.  
Author photos.












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insect species such as hornets and wasps.

"Repeated and unchecked aphid attacks will tend to make host trees brittle, meaning branches will break when the wind blows hard. People walking on sidewalks drenched in honeydew secretions may slip and fall, and severely hurt themselves. Do we hear the word lawsuit? Wouldn't it be interesting to see Salmon Arm sued for millions of dollars by some poor citizen struck by a falling branch because of city neglect, and because the city is run by enviro-maniacs! Salmon Arm appears to be run by councillors stricken with depraved indifference for the safety of its citizens!

"If the councillors of Salmon Arm had any brains, the malicious prohibition would be rescinded immediately, before some poor citizen becomes seriously hurt, and before Salmon Arm becomes the target of a major lawsuit! This should serve as a warning to any government officials who conspire to prohibit legal, safe, and irreplaceable pest control

products."

William Gathercole also points out, in an even newer edition, some of the many 'outright lies' that are being promoted by enviro-maniacs on this subject:

- 1) Acre for acre, the American lawn receives four times as much chemical pesticide as any U.S. farmland. [ WRONG ! ]
- 2) An estimated seven million birds are killed yearly in the U.S. by lawn-care pesticides. [ WRONG ! ]
- 3) Phosphorus runoff from lawn fertilizer causes algae blooms that suck oxygen out of our waterways, killing all aquatic life. [ WRONG ! ]
- 4) In the summer, over half of municipal water usage goes to lawns. [ WRONG ! ]

In addition to these totally incorrect statements by so-called "coaches" and "experts", virtually all of whom have no valid credentials in any aspect of horticulture or lawn care (truly they are enviro-maniacs), many of the products being recommended as 'alternative green' substitutes have their own problems! Some of the so-called 'green alternatives' such as acetic acid, corn gluten meal, Bacillus thuringiensis, herbicidal soap, horticultural oil, insecticidal soap, nematodes and Sclerotinia minor have negatives ranging from almost total ineffectiveness except under very specific circumstances, to a question about their toxicity; i.e. that it may well be more toxic than what it is designed to replace. In fact some jurisdictions have already begun to ban some of these 'green alternatives' and more will likely do the same soon.

This is a battle that has hardly begun, but if we are to continue to have green spaces and gardens, it needs to be fought. I'll have more in coming weeks.

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