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Documents: Latest From: **Art Drysdale**

BC Residents & Cosmetic Pesticides

British Columbians are being asked for their input on proposed new cosmetic pesticide regulations!
by Art Drysdale

by **Art Drysdale**

email: art@artdrysdale.com



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>

January 25, 2010



Art | 4 all your gardening questions



Art's 83rd voice blog post
February 03, 04:55AM

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On September 9 last year on this site I began my weekly article with this paragraph: "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.'

That consultation is now underway. If you are a gardener in British Columbia I strongly recommend that you visit the newly-setup website: www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/ipmp/ and then click on the "Cosmetic Use of Pesticides" button on the right side of the page.

There the government says: "This consultation paper and website are intended to stimulate conversation and gather your input on this topic.

"The Ministry of Environment (the ministry) has prepared background information and identified consultation issues for discussion to build understanding about the subject and provide a structure for comments and feedback. Additional comments or suggestions beyond the identified consultation issues are also welcome."

I have carefully read and 'digested' the consultation paper, and aside from the definition of the 'flavour of the month' slogan--IPM (for Integrated Pest Management) which is really a non sequitur, which groups wishing to ban pesticides totally have grabbed onto as they proceed to try for a total ban; the first item that I noted of real interest was a so-called definition of cosmetic pesticides. It goes: "Cosmetic use of pesticides can be considered as the use of pesticides for non-essential or aesthetic purposes. For example, a pesticide may be used in an outdoor situation to improve the appearance of lawns, gardens, landscapes or other green spaces and/or to control unwanted or undesirable organisms.

"Some indoor uses, such as use of a pesticide to control spiders, can also be considered as cosmetic or aesthetic.

"Non-cosmetic use of pesticides includes use to prevent economic damage or health impacts such as reducing pest damage to crops or buildings or reducing spread of disease. Exclusions to regulatory provisions addressing the cosmetic use of pesticides have been made to allow the use of pesticides for such activities as public health and safety (including the protection of public works structures), agriculture and preventing impacts to agriculture, forestry, re-search and scientific purposes, and to protect natural resources.

"Regulations that address the cosmetic use of pesticides include: 1) Defining potentially subjective terms such as 'non-essential' or 'aesthetic'; 2) Addressing use of pesticides in food gardens and/or fruit trees in or near residential areas; and 4) Use of pesticides on business or commercial properties with public access or use--such as commercial gardens, retail businesses or landscaping of businesses in residential areas."

Following the foregoing two items, a large percentage of the discussion paper is taken up with a listing of what six other provinces have, or are about to, legislate (d), and the B.C. Government's perceived issues for discussion (respectively, 2 out of the 12 pages and 6 out of 12 pages).




Above, a typical lawn of dandelions, and one individual culprit; these scenes will be increasingly seen across Canada as bans on the use of 2,4-D come into being! Below, broadleaf weeds dying after a single application of 2,4-D; and one of millions of ragweed plants that will become a real nuisance as we lose the ability to control its spread when viable chemicals are no longer available. Author photos.











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In those final six pages, the consultation paper goes through eight separate aspects and gives the existing legislation, and then asks specific questions for participants to answer. For example, under "Conditions under which pesticides may be sold or purchased", the paper reads "B.C.'s existing laws governing the sale of pesticides presently require: A certified dispenser to talk to pesticide purchasers and inform the purchaser that the pesticide may only be used according to label directions--the dispenser must also offer to provide advice on pesticide use and pest management."



There then follows four questions specific to this section: "1) Do you have any comments or recommendations re-garding existing or new requirements governing the sale of pesticides that could be used for cosmetic purposes? 2) Do you feel that public access to all or specified classes of pesticides should be restricted or controlled? If yes, in what ways should access be restricted? 3) Should vendors be required to provide information to perspective purchasers of a pesticide prior to sale? If yes, what information should be provided and how? 4) Do you feel that sales of pesticides intended to be used for cosmetic purposes should be restricted to buyers who hold special authorization or training? If yes, what authorization (e.g., licensing) and/or training would you recommend?"

What I have quoted here is just one of the eight sections with separate questions. The number of questions varies by section.

In addition to inviting those who are interested in making comment on the framing of the new legislation, to read the discussion paper and submit comments [deadline, February 15] on a form supplied (at the same website), the B.C. Environment Department is also hosting at least one telephone and web-based information session on Tuesday January 26 at 1:00 PM. The web-based portion of the session will use Microsoft Office Live Meeting service. If you do not have a computer able to view Live Meetings, you can participate by telephone. You will be given opportunities during the presentation to ask questions.

If you are interested in participating in an information session, either web-based, or by telephone, please e-mail cindybertram@shaw.ca and Cindy will contact you with dates and directions for participation.

I guess the one major problem with this consultation process, is that there will likely be input from any number of interested but completely un-knowledgeable individuals. I think of the enviromaniacs who totally disregard the science behind these products, such as that used by the federal Health Department when they come up with their ongoing recommendations that all of the products are considered safe for use, provided the label recommendations are followed.

That's is another entire topic--the enviromaniacs (both individuals and groups or associations) go to extreme lengths such as commissioning national public polling using questions they purposely design to elicit the answers they themselves want to see. That will be for the next in this series!

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