


Joel Freedman: City needs to ban pesticide use

Messenger Post

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In a Nov. 8 Daily Messenger article, Canandaigua Mayor Ellen Polimeni said, “Sometimes you have to make decisions that impact friendships, and that’s hard. But you’re trying to do what you were elected to do, and that’s to do what is in the best interest to the greatest number.”

Because the saturation of city property with toxic lawn chemicals that cause cancer, Parkinson’s disease, respiratory and reproductive illnesses for humans, poisons animals and pollute our drinking water (www.beyondpesticides.org) is certainly not in the best interest of most of us, Polimeni should support the enactment of our ordinance that would ban these chemicals on all city property, including city parks and privately maintained city-owned property between roads and sidewalks.

In an Aug. 29, 2011, guest essay, Canandaigua City Council Environment Committee members urged people to use lawn pesticides, including weed killers, only in emergency situations such as to destroy giant hogweed. They wrote that areas closest to drainage systems, i.e., city-owned turf between roads and sidewalks, “should not be treated with pesticides.”

Two months later, however, Canandaigua’s parks maintenance supervisor reported to Council that he continued to observe widespread lawn chemical usage on privately maintained but city-owned turf.

Even when people know about lawn chemical hazards, they may continue to use these chemicals. At Thompson Hospital, according to a letter I received in 2006, “We consistently take a proactive approach to ensure our environmental is as clean and safe as possible. This approach includes not using herbicides or herbicidal lawn treatments.”

But at Thompson Health Senior Communities, Ferris Hills and Clark Meadows, there is continued usage of toxic lawn chemicals. My attempts to protect the elderly residents of these communities from lawn chemical hazards have been unsuccessful. Why such a double standard practice by Thompson Health?

The Environmental Protection Agency has determined widespread lawn chemical usage is “a major environmental problem and a public health issue.” Last year, New York state banned lawn chemical use on public school lawns and athletic fields.

Current Councilmembers Jim Terwilliger and Karen White have consistently supported a ban on lawn chemical usage on city property. Several years ago, newly elected Councilmember Maria Bucci and I teamed up in support of a lawn chemical ban by the City School District, a ban that was approved prior to the state law requiring this ban. Councilmembers David Whitcomb and Meg Reston have at least recognized that a lawn chemical ban needs further consideration.

But action on a restrictive ordinance has been elusive during the six years I have lobbied for it, calling to mind what Benjamin Franklin wrote in the 1700s: “You will observe with concern how long a useful truth may be known, and exist, before it is generally received and practiced on.”

Hopefully, Canandaigua City Council will promptly enact an ordinance to help protect our community from the hazards of lawn chemicals, since Council’s well-intentioned public education endeavors have not accomplished this necessary goal.

Joel Freedman of Canandaigua is a frequent Messenger Post contributor and a human, animal and environment protection advocate.

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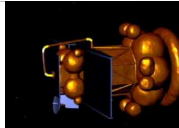
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Mr. Freeman, with no disrespect, you need to shut up and let people do what they want with their own property! And I really give a crap about what a Liberal run, bureaucratic government agency like the 'EPA' says! Get a life!
WHGANDNORAHG
The Environmental Protection Agency has determined widespread lawn chemical usage is a major environmental problem and a public health issue ?!?!?

Are you for real ?!?!

This is FALSE INFORMATION.

We say ... SHOW US THE DOCUMENTATION.

Joel Freedman is an Anti-Pesticide Activists who is UNABLE to provide DOCUMENTATION.

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