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Decision on pesticide ban put off for two more years



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Julia Parrish, ctvedmonton.ca

As a push for the City of Edmonton to put a ban on the use of pesticides reignited in City Hall Monday, councillors decided to wait at least another two years before taking action.

Several environmental groups and doctors were at City Hall Monday, and urged the city to follow the lead of dozens of other Canadian municipalities who have stopped using the chemicals.

Dr. Isabelle Chapados said studies show there is a long list of health risks associated with the use of pesticides.

"Can the city justify threatening our children with pesticide exposure?" Dr. Chapado said Monday. "I think no,

"Children and unborn babies are most susceptible to the effects of pesticides."

They want council to ban pesticides in cases when they're used for aesthetic reasons. They say the chemicals should only be used if they are being used to guard against health risks like diseases carried by insects.

"If there's a big outbreak of West Nile, I would not be against special spraying for that," said Chapados.

The Canadian Cancer Society says research has been done suggesting certain pesticides can increase the risk of cancers like Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, leukemia and prostate cancers.

"For the public we do recommend that they use alternatives and become informed because we really feel strongly that it's important to protect our children from all pesticide exposure that's really not essential," said Sarah Hawkins with the Canadian Cancer Society.

The Chief Medical Officer of Health for the Edmonton Region also presented his opinion on the issue, but his position was not as clear.

"When pesticides are to be used that the solution be the most effective, least toxic means possible," Dr. Christopher Sikora said.

Councillors voted to decide their next step Monday afternoon, and chose to put off making a decision for another two years.

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Council puts off decision on pesticide ban until 2014

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The vote means city crews will continue under current practices until February 2014, when city officials will present a report on alternative non-chemical practices.

With files from Sean Amato

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