

# Insecticide toxic to bees promoted to kill Vancouver chafer beetles



[cbc.ca](http://cbc.ca)

CBC News1 day ago



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<http://www.cbc.ca/aboutcbc/discover/termsfuse.htm...> An insecticide marketed as Merit, with the active...

A chemical insecticide that's being widely promoted to Vancouver homeowners who have had their lawns destroyed by chafer beetles is "highly toxic to bees" and should not be used, warns an SFU biologist.



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<http://www.cbc.ca/aboutcbc/discover/termsofuse.htm...> Chafer beetles have been linked to the...

The insecticide Merit, manufactured by Bayer, contains the active ingredient imidacloprid — one of the controversial neonicotinoid pesticides that face increasing restrictions worldwide because of the risk they pose to bees.

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**2 Treatment Options**

Merit: from \$89	Nematodes: from \$119
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very effective (95%)</li> <li>• Low toxicity insecticide</li> <li>• Safe and easy: Water lawn once after treatment</li> <li>• May only be used where established infestations exist</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderately effective (60%)</li> <li>• Natural treatment / microscopic worms</li> <li>• Safe but less convenient: Lawn must be watered daily for up to 2 weeks</li> </ul>



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<http://www.cbc.ca/aboutcbc/discover/termsofuse.htm...> A portion of the flyer distributed by landscaping...

Companies are marketing the lawn treatment as "very effective" and "low toxicity," but the broad-spectrum insecticide also kills beneficial insects, said Mark Winston, a professor of apiculture at Simon Fraser University and senior fellow at the university's Centre for Dialogue.



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<http://www.cbc.ca/aboutcbc/discover/termsfuse.htm...> Chafer grubs are a popular food source for crows...

"A neonicotinoid is one of the most bee-toxic chemicals out on the market," said Winston.





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<http://www.cbc.ca/aboutcbc/discover/termsofuse.htm...> Merit is also sold directly to homeowners...

"By applying to lawns, bees that are nesting in lawns are going to die. These bees are extremely important pollinators in our Vancouver urban ecosystems. So there is just really no way that neonicotinoids should be used in lawn applications for that reason."

'Contentious issue' says landscaper

A landscaper who has distributed flyers advertising Merit as cheaper, easier and more effective than the non-chemical alternative — nematodes — told CBC News he offers it to customers who often have had years of frustration with infested lawns.

Some spend thousands of dollars replacing their grass, only to be hit again, said Paul Corbett of Cutting Edge Vancouver.

"It's usually people that will call us and say, look, I replaced my lawn last year because it was completely torn up by the raccoons. They're digging it up again. What can I do?"

"We know that it's a contentious issue ... but we think [Merit] is the most effective option" for people with persistent infestations, he said.

Corbett said he uses Merit on a few hundred lawns each year. His is just one of many landscaping companies offering the chemical treatment in Metro Vancouver.

#### Insecticide allowed in Vancouver

Merit is not on the list of allowed pesticides in Vancouver. However, an exemption does exist in the city's health bylaw for using pesticides "to control or destroy pests which have caused infestation to property."

The City of Vancouver did not make anyone available to speak about the insecticide rules and would not address the Merit issue directly in a statement after a week of queries from CBC News.

In a statement attributed to chief license inspector Andreea Toma, the city referred to the bylaw exemption and said it has received no complaints about pesticide usage this year.

The bylaw departments of Surrey and Burnaby, the next largest municipalities by population in the region, also told CBC News that Merit is not on the list of allowed pesticides in their cities, but did not address whether possible exemptions exist.

#### Debates rage over 'bee-toxic chemicals'

When Merit, or imidacloprid, is applied to a lawn, it gets watered into the soil and is absorbed by grasses and other plants — even travelling to the pollen and nectar of a plant, as well as ground and surface water, according to Health Canada.

It's used on chafer beetles in July and August — during their early larval stage — and disrupts the nerve impulses of the insects, "resulting in insects not feeding ... and eventually dying," according to Bayer.

But it also attacks other insects and policy debates rage about whether to ban imidacloprid and other neonicotinoids. The European Union banned most uses of imidacloprid in 2013.

In Canada, a Senate report last spring found neonicotinoids are harmful to bees but did not recommend taking policy action until Health Canada finishes its re-evaluation of the chemicals, which is currently underway.

Merit's manufacturer, Bayer, points to the agency's preliminary assessment, which states that there is a potential risk to bees from some soil treatments, but "current Canadian label mitigation adequately minimizes risk for use on turf" according to one study.

Winston thinks Canada's regulations need to be tightened, and said lawn treatments would be particularly harmful to wild bees, which nest in the ground.

"The question is, can they be applied in certain ways in which they are not in contact with bees, and that's an area of some dispute," said Winston, who is also author of *Bee Time: Lessons from the Hive*.

"But I think there is no scientific dispute at all about the fact that neonicotinoids are highly toxic to bees."

Alternative beetle-killer

Those who want to treat a chafer-infested lawn and avoid chemical insecticide can apply nematode worms, a beneficial parasite that feeds on beetle larvae.

It works more slowly and is somewhat less effective, but Corbett said nematodes still work more than 70 per cent of the time, in his experience. People can also plant alternative grasses and clovers that are beetle-resistant.

"The real story is, how do we get past the mindset of you need a perfect lawn? Which is the mindset in Vancouver," said Corbett, who makes a living in part replacing beetle-ravaged lawns.

"In an environment where you have an alternative, which is safe for the environment and safe for bees, why would you ever possibly want to use a very toxic chemical?" said Winston.

<http://www.msn.com/en-ca/news/other/insecticide-toxic-to-bees-promoted-to-kill-vancouver-chafer-beetles/ar-BBsDC7h>

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**NEONICOTINOIDS WILL CAUSE NO HARM, AND NEMATODE INSECTICIDES WILL NOT WORK !**

Mark Winston is WRONG ! Neonicotinoid insecticides used on the VAST MAJORITY of agricultural crops ( and home lawns ) WILL NOT harm pollinators. Winston conveniently forgets that, on January 5th, 2016, Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency ( PMRA ) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ( EPA ) released their preliminary assessments, both of which show A LIMITED NUMBER of situations where some neonicotinoid insecticides pose risk to pollinators.

<http://wp.me/p1jq40-99l> <http://wp.me/p1jq40-9eb>

Winston knows full well that THE REAL CULPRITS WHO HARM BEES ARE ACTUALLY THE BEE-KEEPERS THEMSELVES ! Seemingly, bee-keepers are losing their bees over and over again. Why is this madness happening ?!?! Observers have concluded that many bee-keepers have no idea what they are doing, and are simply not skilled to raise bees. Bee-keepers are killing their own bees over and over again. The alleged losses of bees are, in fact, the fault of these bee-keepers and their mis-management practices.

Mark Winston's recommendation of Nematode Insecticides for controlling DAMAGING INSECTS OF TURF is MIS-GUIDED and WRONG ! It would be better TO DO NOTHING rather than use nematodes. Recommending this kind of product merely VALIDATES the Screeching Monkeys, like Winston, who BLINDLY AND INEXPERTLY OPPOSE conventional pest control products. Nematode Insecticides are NOT viable, efficacious, practical, or economical GREEN ALTERNATIVES to replace conventional insect control products. Nematode Insecticides CANNOT be consistently considered as true alternatives to conventional insecticides, since the insect pests are often only SUPPRESSED, and NOT CONTROLLED. Laboratory and field tests tend to indicate that the best nematode species are only marginally effective in controlling insect infestations. On the other hand, conventional pest control products fully and effectively control insect pests. In fact, conventional insect control products, such as Merit ( imidacloprid ), are deemed SAFER than Nematode Insecticides. NO ONE WANTS THIS #@!!% NONSENSE ! For more information about Nematode Insecticides, go to the reports at the following Pesticide Truths Web-Page ... <http://wp.me/P1jq40-5ai> Get the latest details at <http://pesticidetruths.com/> WILLIAM H GATHERCOLE AND NORAH G