

From: Maria Besso-Ockert [mailto:mariabesso@shaw.ca]
Sent: Thursday, March 25, 2010 7:43 AM
To: Alanna Dean; Jim Roh
Subject: Fwd: Saanich - Looming pesticide bylaw forces changes to gardening habits

Some good ideas ... no need to reinvent the wheel.

cheers,
Maria

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Bokenfohr, Kerry" <Kerry.Bokenfohr@interiorhealth.ca>
Date: March 24, 2010 8:37:26 PM PDT (CA)
To: 'Maria Besso-Ockert' <mariabesso@shaw.ca>
Subject: FW: Saanich - Looming pesticide bylaw forces changes to gardening habits

It might be good to contact Saanich re. a public education program!

Kerry Bokenfohr, B.Sc.P.T.
Physiotherapist, Community Rehabilitation, Vernon
(250)308-6339

Saanich News

Looming pesticide bylaw forces changes to gardening habits



Saanich Mayor Frank Leonard stands behind a sign in the pristine gardens outside municipal hall Monday. Saanich has been pesticide free for three years.

Sharon Tiffin/News staff

By Keith Vass - Saanich News

Published: March 23, 2010 10:00 AM

It's an immaculate swath of green.

Many people may only catch a passing glimpse of the lawn at Saanich's municipal hall as they flit past on their way to the Pat Bay Highway.

But slow down and look closely. You'd be hard pressed to spot a single weed.

Ever since Saanich pledged in 2008 to stop using chemicals to control insects, weeds and other pests on municipal land, parks staff have turned to things alternatives like a vinegar-and-lemon mixture.

"We haven't used any of those traditional pesticides," said parks manager Rae Roer.

In a few weeks, anyone in Saanich who wants to keep their lawn as green and weed-free as the hall's will have to do the same.

On May 1, a new Saanich bylaw will come into effect restricting pesticide use for homeowners.

Out are the most common chemical pesticides, ingredients like glyphosate and 2,4-D.

Those will only be available as a last resort with a special permit from Saanich.

In are natural alternatives, like vinegar and corn gluten meal.

The key to keeping the hall's lawn looking like a fairway at Augusta without spraying comes down to keeping it healthy, said Roer.

"It's properly irrigated, it's mowed on a regular basis to keep things under control, it's aerated, it's fertilized," he said. "By preventing organisms from becoming a pest in the first place, you really reduce the need to rely on anything else."

The shift is going to require some education, said Adriane Pollard, Saanich's manager of environmental services.

"A lot of people don't know that the 'weed' in Weed 'n Feed (a popular lawn care product) is actually a pesticide that is no longer permitted."

Pollard's department is working the education front, sending every address in Saanich a shortlist of products that are safe to use under the new bylaw.

Working with the Capital Regional District, Saanich has created a series of information sheets that walk through alternatives to pesticides for common yard and garden problems from aphids to dandelions to yellowjackets.

"So if people know what it is that they're having a problem with, they can pick up a fact sheet that talks about that particular pest," said Pollard.

The sheets are available at malls and rec centres, and for download on Saanich's website (<http://www.saanich.ca/resident/environment/pesticideresources.html#pests>).

But even though Saanich is now the third Capital Region municipality to restrict pesticides (following Victoria and Esquimalt), the chemicals will still be on store shelves.

The power to restrict pesticide sales rests with the provincial and federal governments.

Coun. Susan Brice, the driving force behind Saanich's bylaw, suggested asking store staff if they're familiar with Saanich's bylaw when shopping for yard care supplies.

For her own part, Brice can recall spraying in her yard 20 years ago. But she became a convert to chemical-free gardening since hearing warnings about carcinogens from the Canadian Cancer Society.

"I'm done with using anything to get rid of the weeds," she said. "I've found, over the years, the best way to get the dandelions is by hand, as torturous as it is."

kvass@saanichnews.com


What's OK?

Saanich's new pesticide bylaw has 46 substances deemed safe enough to exempt from the restrictions. Here are some of the most common:

- * acetic acid (vinegar in products like EcoClear as herbicides);
- * corn gluten meal (acts as a natural herbicide used in turf weeds);
- * methoprene (an insect growth regulator);
- * botanically derived pesticides such as pyrethrins and rotenone;
- * insect bait stations and pheromones;
- * insecticidal or herbicidal soaps;
- * mineral oils; and
- * sulphurs, ferrous sulphate (moss killer)

Find this article at:

<http://www.bclocalnews.com/news/88932047.html>

 Click to Print

[SAVE THIS](#) | [EMAIL THIS](#) | [Close](#)

Top of Form

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

Bottom of Form

© Copyright Black Press. All rights reserved.