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New poll reveals Maritimers support ban of cosmetic pesticides

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND, Jan. 14 /CNW/ - A poll recently commissioned by the Canadian Cancer Society indicates the majority of Maritime residents support a ban on the cosmetic use of pesticides on residential lawns and gardens.

"It's clear that many of us are concerned about pesticides and the effect they may have on human health," says Dawn Binns, Executive Director of the Canadian Cancer Society in Prince Edward Island. "These polling results show that Maritimers support our call to government for more stringent regulations against exposure to these potentially harmful chemicals."

The poll, conducted by Corporate Research Associates Inc. in November 2007, surveyed 1,101 households in New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia. Of those surveyed, 69 per cent support a ban on the use of cosmetic pesticides, and 79 per cent believe pesticides used for lawn and garden maintenance have the potential to pose a health risk to people.

According to the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), pesticides contain substances that are known, probable or possible carcinogens. But while scientific evidence linking exposure to pesticides with increased cancer risk is inconclusive, it is suggestive and growing. The Canadian Cancer Society believes that in light of the potential for harm and the lack of health benefit, pesticide bans should be implemented for residential lawns and gardens, as well as recreational spaces, such as parks and golf courses.

Currently, four communities in New Brunswick have pesticide bans, including Shediac, Caraquet, Sackville and St. Andrew's; in Nova Scotia the Halifax Regional Municipality has issued a ban.

"Cosmetic pesticide use is a major concern for Maritimers and we certainly urge our provincial and municipal governments to respond to these concerns," says Binns. "This is a health and safety issue, here in the Maritimes and across the country."

In Prince Edward Island the Legislative Assembly is currently examining the feasibility of an Island-wide ban of cosmetic pesticides through public hearings.

The Canadian Cancer Society is a national community-based organization of volunteers whose mission is to eradicate cancer and to enhance the quality of life of people living with cancer. For more information about cancer, visit our website at www.cancer.ca or call our toll-free bilingual Cancer Information Service at 1 888 939-3333.

For further information: on results for each province or to arrange local interviews, please contact: Lesley Mulcahy, Communications Coordinator, Canadian Cancer Society - Nova Scotia Division, lesley.mulcahy@ns.cancer.ca, (902) 423-6183 ext 283; Heather Scales, Communications and Public Issues Coordinator, Canadian Cancer Society - PEI Division, communications@pei.cancer.ca, (902) 566-4007; Paula White, Manager, Communications, Canadian Cancer Society - New Brunswick Division, pwhite@nb.cancer.ca, (506) 634-6040

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