



Are Ontario Golf Courses Improving Pest Management?

**You can help *Prevent Cancer Now* find out
– Citizen Scientists Needed for Data Entry –
Teens Can Earn Volunteer Hours!**

Ontario's [*Cosmetic Pesticides Ban Act*](#), 2008 restricts pesticides sales and use on lawns and gardens, but not golf courses. Before the *Act* was finalized, golf course representatives committed to using Integrated Pest Management (IPM) to reduce pesticide use. IPM includes cultural practices (choice of grasses, types and timing of fertilizer, mowing, aeration, etc.). To track pesticide use and progress, [annual reports from every golf course](#) are required to be posted online by the Integrated Pest Management Council of Canada. The point is to track progress in pesticide reductions, and to apply lessons learnt from this experience.

<http://www.ipmcouncilcanada.org/epar/en-CA/Default/courses.aspx>

It is hard to know how pesticides reductions are progressing. Rather than putting data into a database, the golf course reports are online as pdfs, jpegs and other unhelpful formats. This is where YOU come in. Many hands make light work, so we need **lots** of help to put this data into a useful format. We have a simple online form to transfer numbers and text into a database, and University of Ottawa student Corrine Giorgetti is supplying enthusiastic expertise.

Preliminary analyses have identified some interesting trends, such as annual variability in pesticide usage, and shifts from older (quite toxic) insecticides to newer ones purported to be less toxic to non-insect life forms.

Topics we're investigating include:

1. Changes in quantities of pesticides;
2. Shifts in products being used (e.g. away from older to newer products that are advertised to be less toxic);
3. Strategies reported by golf courses as being helpful to control pests, or otherwise; and
4. Quality of data / reporting.

Of course, we should not have to enlist an army of volunteers to access and use this data. Thus, along with exploring pesticides reduction progress and lessons learned, as part of this project we will ask the IPM Council and the Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, going forward, to require golf courses to submit their data into a database. Generally, evidence-based decision-making requires data collection and storage in a useful format.

In the meantime, lets all dig into this data! If you have an hour or two to spare, or if you are looking for a worthwhile volunteering opportunity, please contact Info@PreventCancerNow.ca.