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Protect health and the environment in childcare centres and schools

Updating: August 2011

The *Pesticides Management Code*, in force since April 3, 2003, introduces stringent regulations controlling the storage, sale and use of pesticides. It promotes an approach aimed at better prevention of health risks posed by these products, particularly to children and the environment.

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Why have special regulations for premises frequented by children?

Children are particularly vulnerable to the noxious effects of pesticides due to their physiology (undeveloped immune system, greater skin permeability, lower body weight, etc.) and the higher exposure levels that result from their behaviour (e.g., their tendency to put objects in their mouth). Pesticides are absorbed in the body, particularly by way of the mouth, skin and through the respiratory system. They can trigger immediate effects, which are usually manifested by symptoms such as headaches, skin or eye irritation, nausea, dizziness, loss of appetite and fatigue.

Furthermore, pesticide use often causes water, air and soil contamination. When organisms that are not targeted by the application of these products are exposed to them, the result is a negative impact on biodiversity.

How does the *Pesticides Management Code* concern you?

All establishments governed by the Act respecting childcare centres and childcare services and all those, public or private, offering preschool, primary or secondary education, including schools for Native students, are targeted by the Pesticides Management Code, more specifically sections 32 and 33 and Schedule II. Other

provisions of the Pesticides Management Code may also apply. Thus only pesticides representing the lowest risk to human health and the environment may be applied inside or outside these establishments.

To obtain a list

- of health and social services establishments, please visit the [Web site of the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux](#);
- of childcare centres and other childcare services, please see the childcare service locator available on the [Web site of the Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine](#).

Permit and certificate holders targeted by the [Regulation respecting permits and certificates for the sale and use of pesticides](#) must comply with the provisions of the Code. In addition, certain provisions apply to those without certificates (for instance, the owner of a home childcare residence) who apply Class 4 and Class 5 domestic-use pesticides in these premises.

Permits and certificates required for work done inside and outside establishments

In the case of remunerated work:

- extermination companies must hold a Subclass C5 permit, and exterminators must hold a Subclass CD5 certificate for use of Class 1 to Class 4 pesticides, or must be supervised by a certified individual;
- for green space maintenance, ornamental horticulture companies must hold a Subclass C4 permit, and their employees must hold a Subclass CD4 certificate for use of Class 1 to Class 4 pesticides, or must be supervised by a certified individual.

In the case of non-remunerated work (an individual, for instance a janitor, using Class 1 to Class 3 pesticides):

- for extermination activities, the owner of the premises must hold a Subclass D5 "Application for Extermination" permit, and pesticide application work must be carried out by a Subclass CD5 certificate holder, or must be supervised by a certified individual;
- for green space maintenance, the owner of the premises must hold a Subclass D4 "Application in Ornamental Horticulture" permit, and pesticide application work must be carried out by a Subclass CD4 certificate holder, or must be supervised by a certified individual.

Pesticide classification

In Québec, pesticides are divided into five classes according to their level of risk for the environment and for public health. The table below briefly compares the federal and Québec classifications of pesticides.

FEDERAL CLASSIFICATION	QUÉBEC CLASSIFICATION
Pesticides for restricted use	Classes 1 and 2
Pesticides for commercial, agricultural or industrial use	Class 3
Pesticides for domestic use	Classes 4 and 5

Class 1 to Class 3 pesticides are purchased and used by holders of permits issued by the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs. Class 4 and Class 5 pesticides may be obtained from various sales outlets such as garden centres, hardware stores, department stores, etc.



Main regulations in force since April 2003

General regulations for all users

- It is prohibited to apply products other than the biopesticides and authorized active ingredients mentioned in Schedule II of the *Pesticides Management Code* both inside and outside the establishment in question.
- It is prohibited to apply pesticides inside and outside childcare centres and educational institutions when services or activities are being offered by these establishments.
- A minimum eight-hour waiting period must be respected before services or activities resume in areas treated.
- All instructions appearing on the pesticide label must be respected. Where instructions and a provision of the *Pesticides Management Code* are inconsistent, the more restrictive of the two applies.
- Contamination of any space that does not require treatment and pet exposure to the products applied must be avoided.
- A distance of three metres from bodies of water, watercourses and individual tube wells must be respected during pesticide applications.

Supplementary regulations for holders of permits and certificates issued in accordance with the *Pesticides Act*

- A regulatory sign must be displayed at all entrances to an enclosed area, or every 20 linear metres along the perimeter of a non-enclosed area, following the application of pesticides on a lawn or paved surface or on trees or bushes. This requirement does not apply when pesticides are injected into plants.
- The regulatory sign must be in clear sight and display a warning indicating not to touch the treated surfaces for 24 hours after application. It must also indicate the plants treated, the active ingredient used, the date and time of application, the registration number of the pesticide, and the name, address and phone number of the permit or certificate holders.



Moreover, when application work includes the exclusive use of biopesticides or pesticides containing one of the active ingredients listed in Schedule II, the circle and slash on the pictogram may be either red or yellow.

- It is prohibited to apply fertilizer-pesticide mixtures. Please note that the authorized active ingredients are restricted to the products listed in Schedule II and biopesticides.

- During pesticide applications, a distance of 3 metres from bodies of water, watercourses and individual tube wells is required, as well as 100 metres from municipal water intake or catchment works used for the production of bottled water.
- If biopesticides or any active ingredient listed in Schedule II prove ineffective over a period of at least seven days following application, cyfluthrin may be used to control or destroy flying insects, crawling insects, food insects and wood insects under the following conditions:
 - only exterminators holding a C5 permit from the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs can apply this ingredient;
 - at least 24 hours before application, the administration of the establishment must be notified of the reasons for applying the active ingredient, the name of the pesticide and the active ingredient to be applied, the registration number of the pesticide and the proposed date and time of application;
 - the application must be followed by a period of at least 12 hours before services or activities resume in premises treated with cyfluthrin.
- For specific needs, the application of certain other products is also permitted under the first two conditions listed above, for instance:
 - resmethrin to destroy wasps', hornets' or bees' nests;
 - bromadiolone in combination with Bitrex (denatonium benzoate) and bromethalin (with Bitrex) to control rodents (rats, mice). These rodenticides must be used in solid block form and placed in a locked trap to prevent any human contact. Rodenticides must be used only as a last resort on these premises since several types of efficient traps can be acquired for rodent control purposes. Above all, rodent food sources must be eliminated, and rodent access routes uncovered and blocked.



How to live without pesticides

The *Pesticides Management Code* serves to modify certain user habits of both extermination and green space maintenance companies and individuals (home owners, daycare centre employees, etc.) who apply pesticides inside or outside childcare centres or other childcare services, preschools, primary schools or secondary schools.

Although the range of products available will now be limited, harmful organisms can still be controlled effectively, both inside and outside the establishments in question. By learning to recognize undesirable insects and plants, establishing the necessary preventive measures for deterring their appearance, and using environmentally-friendly substitutes, we will reduce pesticide use, thereby protecting the environment, our health and the health of our children.

By adopting the preventive approach known as integrated pest management, pesticides will only be used as a last resort, after all other possibilities have been exhausted. The participation of parents, children and the establishment's personnel is required in order for this approach to be implemented. Each and every player has an important role to play.

Inside and around childcare and educational establishments

A basic way to reduce the food sources that attract harmful organisms is by

applying the appropriate rules of hygiene both inside and outside the buildings in question. For instance, all premises where food is prepared and consumed should be disinfected and cleaned on a daily basis (kitchens, cafeterias, dinettes, etc.). Children and older students must be continually reminded to avoid leaving food in lockers or desks.

Frequent inspections and the laying of traps are indispensable ways to detect the beginning of an infestation and effectively monitor the premises. In addition, there are a number of different strategies to eliminate places where harmful organisms (insects, rodents, etc.) proliferate. For instance, you can replace deteriorating structures such as rotten pieces of wood; eliminate water leaks; mow the lawn close to all buildings; leave a plant-free strip around the perimeter of the foundations; prune branches of trees in contact with buildings; install screens; and block all cracks and fissures.

Outside establishments

For the lawn

Opt for a more natural lawn that requires less maintenance and water and fewer products. Be patient! A lawn being converted to pesticide- and chemical fertilizer-free maintenance requires an adjustment period.

To know the rules of maintenance of a lawn, consult [Gardening... all naturally](#).

For all inert surfaces such as paving stones

Eliminate weeds by pulling them out or applying boiling water. Boiling water should be used after hours to ensure the safety of children.

For ants' nests in lawns

Apply boiling water to the ants' nests on a frequent basis and resow the area once they have been destroyed.



If you really must resort to pesticides...

Does the situation require professional expertise? If the answer is yes, please make sure that the individual in question holds the appropriate permits and certificates issued by the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs.

However, if you think that you can solve the problem by yourself, please take guidance from the table below indicating authorized products. Even though authorized active ingredients are of less risk to health and the environment, the [usual precautions](#) apply during their application.

AUTHORIZED ACTIVE INGREDIENTS* for childcare centres and other childcare services, preschools as well as primary and secondary schools (SCHEDULE II OF THE PESTICIDES MANAGEMENT CODE)

Registered active	Class	Organisms controlled	Suggested uses
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ingredients**			
<i>Insecticides</i>			
Acetamiprid	3 and 5	Aphids, European pine sawflies, leaf hoppers, whiteflies and spotted tentiform leafminers	Ornamental plants, vegetable garden, fruit-bearing trees, outside only (liquid)
Boric acid	3 and 5	Cockroaches, ants and silverfish	Inside and outside (powder, gel or traps)
Borax	5	Ants	Inside and outside (liquid or traps)
Silicon dioxide (diatomaceous earth)	3 and 5	Ants, cockroaches, spiders, silverfish, ladybugs, bed bugs, crickets, earwigs, wasps, flies, fleas and millipedes	Inside or outside (powder)
Methoprene	3	Fleas	Inside only; regulator of insect growth; combats fleas infesting household pets (liquid)
Disodium octaborate tetrahydrate	3 and 4	Cockroaches, silverfish, crickets, ants, carpenter ants, termites and wood fungi	Inside or outside (powder, liquid or foam)
Ferrous phosphate	4	Slugs and snails	Outside only (wetable pellets)
Insecticide soap	3 and 5	Aphids, scale insects, spider mites, whiteflies, flea beetles, sawflies and earwigs	Inside and outside (liquid)
Spinosad	3 and 4	Pine sawfly larvae, eastern tent caterpillars, elm leaf beetles, gypsy moths, willow leaf beetles, western flower thrips, obliquebanded leafrollers and sod webworms	Outdoor ornamental plants, apple trees and lawn (liquid)
<i>Fungicides</i>			
Sulfur	3, 4 and 5	Powdery mildew, rust, blackspot, scab and certain moths	Outdoor ornamental plants, fruit-bearing trees and decorative trees (powder or liquid)
Calcium sulfide or calcium polysulfide	4	Insects, moths and fungus diseases that can survive during the winter	Trees and bushes, ornamental plants and fruit-bearing trees; during the dormant phase in the spring or directly on the insects in the summer (liquid)
<i>Herbicides</i>			
Acetic acid	3 and 5	All vegetation (common ragweed, stitchwort, goosefoot, black medic, dandelions, plantain, clover,	Nonselective herbicide applied directly on the targeted plant; can also be used on paved

		wild carrots, quich grass, etc.)	driveways, patios, etc. (liquid)
Mixture of capric and pelargonic acids	4 and 5	All vegetation (many weeds and grass)	
Herbicide soap	3 and 5	Moss and algae	Lawns only (liquid)
<p>* Biopesticides that are registered as such by the Pest Management Regulatory Agency are to be added to this list. ** Ingredients that are registered in accordance with the federal <i>Pest Management Products Act</i>. NB: Active Ingredient Trade Names (Classe 3 - Classes 4 and 5)</p>			

If someone you know becomes ill from pesticides

Guide the person to a well-ventilated area and ask him/her to lie down on his/her side.

Then contact the **Centre anti-poison du Québec, at 1 800 463-5060 (toll free telephone emergency, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week) or in the Québec City area (local call) at (418) 656-8090**, and follow their instructions to the letter. If the person's condition appears serious, go to the hospital immediately, making sure to bring the label of the product in question.

The information provided in this document is in no way meant to replace the text of the [Pesticides Management Code](#). The full text is published in the March 19, 2003, edition of the *Gazette officielle* of Publications du Québec.

Links:

[Healthy Lawns - Pest management Regulatory Agency](#)

[Pest notes](#) - Pest management Regulatory Agency

Please note : if you need advice for pest control measures contained in the Pest Notes, it is important that you check if active ingredients are authorized according to the Pesticides Management Code.

“Avoid pesticides... **a natural thing to do.**”



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