

Manitoba cosmetic pesticide ban leads to dandelion infestation



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Delineations in a Winnipeg park.

Randall Paull/Global News

It's a sea of yellow – and then white – popping up across Winnipeg boulevards and parks.

Winnipeg's dandelions have arguably become steadily worse since the Province banned herbicides for cosmetic purposes five years ago.

Several local parks are now more dandelion than grass.

Emily Bielik-Cran said she enjoys taking care of her front lawn, but when it comes to mowing the grass beside her house, and the dandelions that come with it, it's a hassle.

"We never used to have these dandelions here ... they are getting worse each year," Bielik-Cran said.

"I was telling my husband we have to get our own poison because it's going to come onto our lawn."

In 2014, the NDP government banned cosmetic pesticides used to fight weeds like dandelions. But on the campaign trail in 2016, the Progressive Conservatives promised to launch a review of that legislation.

However, the results aren't yet in.

The provincial government declined an on-camera interview, but provided Global News with this statement:

"The government is committed to legislation that balances safe, useable and aesthetic greenspaces while protecting human health and the environment. The regulation of cosmetic pesticides is under review to determine whether or not any amendments are necessary to achieve those legislative objectives."

It's similar to a statement provided to Global News about the issue last May.

READ MORE: A sea of yellow: how Manitoba's cosmetic pesticide ban has lead to a dandelion takeover

Most of the eco-friendly products around now burn the leaves off the dandelion, but don't get deep enough to the root to kill the entire plant, said one Winnipeg expert.

"Since the ban went in place, the older products used to work quite well for controlling dandelions and they would kill the root of the plant. The newer products are top-growth control," said Ken Land with St Mary's Nursery & Garden Centre.

The Province said it continues to have discussions with various parties and that any modifications to the ban would be carefully considered.

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