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**MANITOBA GOVERNMENT ALLOWS FLEXIBILITY IN USE OF FEDERALLY APPROVED COSMETIC PESTICIDES**

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Changes Permit Use of All Health Canada-Registered Products, Enhance Protections in Areas Where Children and Pets Gather: Wharton

The Manitoba government has passed legislation amending the Environment Act to give Manitobans the choice to be able to purchase and use cosmetic pesticides on their lawns that are already registered with Health Canada and, out of an abundance of caution, the list of sensitive areas that would be protected from the application of these products has been expanded, Environment, Climate and Parks Minister Jeff Wharton announced today.

“Our government is committed to protecting the environment and we rely on science to inform the proper use of cosmetic pesticides. We recognize Health Canada as the foremost expert in this field to evaluate pesticides used in Manitoba,” said Wharton. “Pesticides registered with Health Canada go through a rigorous review process that assesses the risk of pesticides to human health, animal health and the environment, and must meet strict health and safety measures. Manitoba will continue to rely on Health Canada to evaluate pesticide products and all pesticides sold and used in Manitoba must be federally registered under the Pest Control Products Act.”

Manitoba still has the strictest pesticide regulations among the Prairie provinces by prohibiting cosmetic pesticide use in sensitive areas, the minister noted.

“By expanding the list of sensitive areas, our government continues to protect children and pets, while keeping communities safe and minimizing environmental impact. These protected areas include schools, hospitals, child-care centres, provincial parks, designated municipal picnic areas, playgrounds and dog parks,” said Wharton.

To understand better the experience of Manitobans with previous cosmetic pesticide restrictions, which were put in place in 2015, the Manitoba government launched a public consultation. More than 60 per cent of respondents indicated restrictions on the sale and usage of pesticides for cosmetic use were too strict and over 70 per cent of respondents wanted restrictions reduced or rescinded.

Municipalities have reported the previous approach added unnecessary costs because of repeated applications. Municipalities and other stakeholders asked for greater flexibility to have useable, aesthetic green spaces in communities, noted Wharton. The legislation allows the use of all Health Canada-registered cosmetic pesticides in low-risk areas like boulevards, sidewalks, right-of-ways and fairgrounds. Manitobans will also have the ability to apply all pesticides registered with Health Canada on their lawns.

“The Association of Manitoba Municipalities welcomes the Manitoba government’s decision to align with federal regulations and rigorous Health Canada review processes,” said Kam Blight, president, Association of Manitoba Municipalities. “These legislative changes will allow municipalities to effectively manage weed control programs while mitigating financial pressures on municipal budgets.”

“Our greenspaces contribute to our quality of life and produce enormous environmental benefits, but are continually threatened by extreme climate conditions and invasive species,” said Chad Labbe, president, Manitoba Nursery Landscape Association. “It is essential as green industry professionals, that we have choices when selecting the best products available to protect these valuable landscapes. The new regulations will encourage innovation and allow more options when deciding how to deal with pests that threaten our landscapes.”

Health Canada can initiate a special review at any time if and when new research emerges that identifies risks from pesticides where is reasonable grounds to believe that health or environmental risks, or the value of a pesticide are no longer acceptable, the minister noted.

When using pesticides and chemicals, consumers should follow directions and only use products for intended purposes, the minister added. More information on safe pesticide use is available through Health Canada at [www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/about-pesticides/use-pesticides-safely.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/about-pesticides/use-pesticides-safely.html).

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