

It's time!



Spring 2008

VOTE YES FOR A BYLAW

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In the News

May 9, 2008: The Surrey School District in BC bans the use of herbicides on school grounds.

April 22, 2008. The Province of Ontario announces legislation banning the sale of cosmetic pesticides. The Cosmetic Pesticide Act is expected to come into full effect at the end of 2009.

Ontario is the second province to ban the sale of pesticides used for cosmetic purposes. Quebec enacted provincial legislation in 2003.

April 22, 2008. Home Depot announces on Earth Day that it is removing traditional pesticide products (herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, slug baits, etc) from its shelves beginning in June. By Dec. 2008 all 166 stores across Canada will be pesticide free offering eco-friendly alternatives to deal with common pest problems.

What the Aldermen are asking.

What is the definition of cosmetic with respect to pesticide use?

“Cosmetic, non-essential or unnecessary” are adjectives describing the use of pesticides to improve the aesthetics of a landscape without a demonstrated health benefit to humans or the environment. Because the use of these adjectives do not constitute a recognized classification of pesticides and the determination of aesthetics is highly subjective municipalities that have pesticide bylaws define the cosmetic use of pesticides in a 3 step process:

- i. The term pesticide is defined including: herbicides; insecticides; fungicides; rodenticides and; growth inhibitors/regulators;
- ii. All pesticide use is restricted;
- iii. A list of exemptions is specified which provides the municipality with flexibility to use pesticides in the event of a public or environmental health threat, agricultural production, forestry, water purification, etc.

Use of pesticides out side of permitted uses is therefore deemed cosmetic, non-essential or unnecessary. The approach as described has

been used by many municipalities and has withstood court challenges all the way up to the Supreme Court of Canada.

For a list of municipalities with pesticides bylaws go to:

<http://www.pesticidereform.ca/canadianpesticidebylaws.htm>

What is the “Precautionary Principle” and why is it a factor in the pesticide discussion?

The precautionary principle is most often

applied in context of the impact of human actions on the environment and human health in response to uncertainty or unpredictability of outcomes. In general, it involves acting to avoid threats of serious or irreversible damage even if some cause-and-effect relationships are not fully established scientifically.



The precautionary principle has relevance to the pesticide discussion as peer reviewed medical studies increasingly suggest stronger links between the use of pesticides and certain types of cancer, endocrine disruption, neurological disorders, respiratory illnesses, behavioral problems and low birth weights. Governments have the moral responsibility to act in the best interest of the public good even if the links are not fully established. In other words it is best to err on the side of caution until more research is done on the short and long term cumulative effects of these chemical toxins on human health and the environment.



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