

Backgrounder: Why We Support a Province-wide Ban on Cosmetic Pesticides

(Adapted from David Suzuki Foundation,

http://www.davidsuzuki.org/issues/downloads/BC_Ban_Statement.pdf)

Cosmetic pesticide use is a public health issue, particularly for children

- The International Agency for Research on Cancer and the US National Toxicology Program state that some pesticides can cause cancer.ⁱ The Pesticides Literature Review conducted by the Ontario College of Family Physicians, showed “consistent links to serious illnesses, such as cancer, reproductive problems and neurological diseases.”ⁱⁱ
- Children are at a greater risk from pesticide exposure than adults because they are closer to the ground and their bodies are still developing.ⁱⁱⁱ
- The notion that pesticide use is an individual matter is scientifically incorrect. Once dispersed, pesticides affect non-target plant, animal and human health in our shared environment.

Pesticide bans work:

- In Quebec, the number of households with a lawn or garden using chemical pesticides dropped dramatically to just 4 percent in 2007, one year after provincial regulations prohibiting the use and sale of many lawn pesticides were fully implemented. Without a province-wide ban, 43 percent of Manitoba households with a lawn or garden still use chemical pesticides.^{iv}

Alternatives are available and good for business

- Practices such as mowing high, over-seeding, and topdressing restore ecological soil health. Low-risk, natural products such as corn gluten meal and nematodes are widely available through retail and lawn care service providers.
- Statistics Canada Business Patterns data shows that the horticultural trades have increased in number and size in Toronto and Halifax following the adoption of restrictive pesticide bylaws.^v

Public support for pesticide bans

- Little public polling research has been conducted on cosmetic pesticide bans in Manitoba. However, in other Western provinces where research has been conducted, a large majority of the population has shown concern about cosmetic pesticides.
- Three out of four British Columbians support provincial legislation to restrict pesticide use, 79 per cent of Saskatchewan residents support the statement that “pesticides pose a threat to the environment, including wildlife, air quality and

ground water” according to polling conducted by Ipsos Reid on behalf of the Canadian Cancer Society in 2008.^{vi}

- Quebec and Ontario already have cosmetic pesticide bans in place, while
- In British Columbia, both party leaders have expressed support for a proposed ban on cosmetic pesticides currently before the legislature.

ⁱ The U.S. National Toxicology Program 11th Report on Carcinogens, 2005 <http://ntpserver.niehs.nih.gov/index.cfm?objectid=03C9B512-ACF8-C1F3-ADBA53CAE848F635>; International Agency for Research on Cancer, IARC Monographs on the Evaluation of Carcinogenic Risks to Humans, World Health Organization, <http://monographs.iarc.fr>

ⁱⁱ M. Sanborn et al., Pesticide Literature Review, Ontario College of Family Physicians, 2003. Quoting April 23, 2003 press release.

<http://www.ocfp.on.ca/English/OCFP/Communications/CurrentIssues/Pesticides>

ⁱⁱⁱ Canadian Partnership for Children’s Health and Environment, Child Health and the Environment – A Primer, 2005. <http://www.healthyenvironmentforkids.ca>

^{iv} Statistics Canada, Households and the Environment, 2007.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-526-x/11-526-x2009001-eng.pdf>

^v www.toronto.ca/health/pesticides/index.htm; Statistics Canada. 2006. Business Register. Canadian Business Patterns (2001-2006).

^{vi} Canadian Cancer Society Advocacy Public Opinion Research Survey, 2008.

http://www.cancer.ca/saskatchewan/about%20us/media%20centre/sk-media%20releases/~/_media/CCS/Saskatchewan/Files%20List/English%20files%20heading/pdf%20not%20in%20publications%20section/Environmental%20carcinogens%20briefing%20document%20and%20poll%20results_297511393.ashx