

Health and Environmental Organizations Support Ontario-wide Ban on Cosmetic Pesticides



Canadian Cancer Society
Société canadienne du cancer



We support the Ontario government's plan to enact pesticide legislation and call for a law that:

- prohibits the use, sale and retail display of cosmetic/ornamental pesticides for outdoor, non-agricultural use (including pesticide/fertilizer combinations);
- allows exemptions only to protect public health;
- requires publicity of the ban and public education about alternatives to pesticides;
- includes effective mechanisms for enforcement; and
- is passed in 2008 and is phased in and fully implemented within the government's current mandate.



In a world of multiple chemical exposures, we must remove needless risks from lawn and garden pesticides.

Why We Support a Province-wide Ban on Cosmetic Pesticides

Cosmetic Pesticide Use is a Public Health Issue, Particularly For Children

- The Pesticides Literature Review released by the Ontario College of Family Physicians, showed “consistent links to serious illnesses, such as cancer, reproductive problems and neurological diseases.”¹
- It is well established that children are at a greater risk from pesticide exposure than adults.²
- “Recently, the Quebec government* studied the body burden of chemicals that children in the province carry. Though 98% of all children tested were found to have pesticides from food, water and air in their bodies, **the tests did not find any lawn-care herbicides in the bodies of children living in municipalities with a ban. In municipalities without a ban, these lawn-care herbicides were found in children's bodies in addition to the other pesticides.**”³
* Quebec’s National Institute of Public Health

Pesticide Bans Work – Quebec’s Success Story

- Statistics Canada 2006 Households and the Environment Report⁴ attests that regulations effectively reduce urban pesticide use. The first with municipal bylaws, and then with a new Pesticides Management Code effective in 2005, Quebec has the lowest rate of household pesticide use in Canada at 15% - a 50% reduction in pesticide use since 1994.

Alternatives to Lawn and Garden Pesticides Work and Are Good For Business

- Cultural practices such as mowing high, over-seeding and topdressing restore ecological soil health. Products such as corn gluten meal and nematodes are widely available through retail and lawncare service providers.
- Statistics Canada Business Patterns data shows that the horticultural trades have increased in number and size in Toronto and Halifax, both with restrictive pesticide bylaws.^{5 6 7}

A Cosmetic Pesticide Ban in Ontario has Broad Public Support

- 2007 Oracle Poll of 1,000 Ontario residents shows 71% of Ontario citizens support province-wide restrictions on pesticides.⁸
- 2006/2007 Decima poll⁹ shows protecting our environment is the top priority of Ontario citizens.

¹ Ontario College of Family Physicians, News Release, April 23, 2005

www.ocfp.on.ca/English/OCFP/Communications/CurrentIssues/Pesticides/

² CPCHE, 2005. Primer on Child Health and the Environment. www.healthyenvironmentforkids.ca

Toronto Public Health, 2005. Environmental Threats to Children: Understanding the Risks, Enabling Prevention. www.toronto.ca

³ www.panna.org/magazine/summer2006/inDepthQuebecCode.html Valcke, M. et.al. 2004. Characterization of the exposure to residential-use pesticides in children aged 3 to 7 years in Quebec. National Institute of Public Health, Quebec.

⁴ www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/11-526-XIE/11-526-XIE2007001.pdf

⁵ www.toronto.ca/health/pesticides/index.htm

⁶ Statistics Canada. 2006. Business Register. Canadian Business Patterns (2001-2006).

⁷ www.flora.org/healthyottawa/Backgrounder-1.pdf

⁸ www.pesticidereform.ca/Poll.PDF

⁹ www.decima.com/en/pdf/news_releases/070105E.pdf