

Subject: [Fwd: Van Sun Article re: pesticide bylaws, etc.]

Date: Sat, 23 Jul 2005 16:15:55 -0700

From: Brian Platts <bplatts@shaw.ca>

To: Corrie Kost <kost@triumf.ca>

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Van Sun Article re: pesticide bylaws, etc.

Date: Sat, 23 Jul 2005 15:08:17 -0700

From: M E Craver <mecraver@shaw.ca>

To: Mayor and Council - DNV <Council@dnv.org>

CC: James Ridge <James_Ridge@dnv.org>, Ken Bennett <Ken_Bennett@dnv.org>, "FONVCA (E-mail)" <fonvca@fonvca.org>

Dear Mayor and Council: As you can see, the lawn care companies' arguments *blow in the wind*. Pesticide by-laws do work. We will not be able to please everybody, but if vanity is such that we are willing to compromise ours and our children's health for a "weed free" green lawn, then we are seriously wanting. Has anyone bothered to address that the biggest "weed problem" that we have may be grass itself? There are many low maintenance/no maintenance ground cover alternatives, that should be pursued in new home building -- **not** bringing in pesticide-laden turf to roll on the ground. That is something that could be adopted.

Kim Davis brings up several valid points regarding pesticide use, bylaws, etc. Why is DNV willing to stall on such an important decision because a bunch of "lawn care" companies refuse to change their destructive lawn care techniques? Vancouver Parks do not use pesticides and it works. Mayor and Council members are always going to have opposition to anything they propose -- but you are elected to work for the good of the whole community, not just specific self-interest stakeholder groups. Please work to ban all pesticides, and look to what West Vancouver has proposed. DNV has to practice what it preaches to the community -- **no exemptions!** The article from the Vancouver Sun follows. Thank you.

--Monica Craver--



Tuesday » July 26 » 2005 Saturday » July
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When it comes to yard care, natural is best

Kim Davis
Special to the Sun

July 23, 2005

There is nothing like spending time outside on a warm summer's afternoon: having friends over to enjoy the yard, walking barefoot through the grass, or watching the kids running through sprinklers on the lawn. Unfortunately, depending on your garden regime, you may be inadvertently exposing your friends, family and most importantly your children to toxic chemicals.

A 2002 survey of Greater Vancouver Regional District residents found that up to two-thirds of households reported using pesticides in lawn and garden maintenance.

While the word 'pesticide' is often used by people to mean an insecticide (that which kills insects), by definition pesticides are substances designed to prevent, destroy, repel, attract or mitigate any pests including rodents, weeds, or microorganisms.

In Canada, every day products such as certain disinfectants, bleaches, mildew removers, and even swimming pool chemicals also fall under the category of

pesticides.

According to the above mentioned survey, the most common type of garden pesticides used in the GVRD include Weed & Feed-type products (33.1 per cent), moss killers (28.8 per cent), insecticides (15.2 per cent), herbicides (14.8 per cent) and fungicides (11 per cent).

Most people appreciate well-kept, and largely weed-free, landscaping. And few would dispute the aesthetic (and often monetary) value that such landscaping adds to our individual homes and the urban landscape.

Unfortunately, given the regular use of pesticides by homeowners, it is obvious that too few people understand the ramifications of pesticide application or are aware of healthier alternatives.

Each pesticide is different in its effects but in general their use is associated with two things: toxicity in the environment and human health problems.

Since many chemical pesticides are toxic compounds, human exposure to them can cause adverse and sometimes severe health effects.

Many of the pesticides used today were registered before the use of rigorous toxicological studies.

Recently, both the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Canadian Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) began reviewing the safety of many pesticides. This has resulted in either the banning, or severe restriction of a number of products.

Registration or approval of a particular chemical, however, does not mean it is safe.

For example, 2, 4-D is a commonly used weed & feed chemical that was recently re-approved by PMRA despite continued concerns about its long term effects on human health and its high potential for water contamination. 2, 4-D has been positively associated with abnormal fetal skeletal development, increased fetal mortality, and other reproductive effects.

While the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has classified it as a class 2B carcinogen which denotes it as possibly carcinogenic to humans, because it has not been conclusively associated with the development of cancer, it continues to be an approved pesticide.

Children's developing bodies are particularly susceptible to the toxic effects of pesticides.

Children are also more likely to come into contact with greater quantities of pesticides as a result of their behavior.

They typically spend more time on the ground which means they have a greater chance of directly touching many pesticides. Young children may also experience greater exposure via ingestion as they are more apt to put their hands and other items in their mouths.

In 1991, the city of Hudson, Quebec banned the cosmetic use of pesticides (the non-essential use of pesticides for aesthetic or preventative reasons). While lawn care companies and chemical manufacturers challenged the municipality's jurisdiction over pesticides, the Supreme Court of Canada upheld the town's right to regulate where pesticides may be used.

Since then, a growing number of municipalities (75 to date) across the country have adopted or plan to implement stricter pesticide regulations.

Here in the GVRD, North Vancouver is now looking to become the fifth Lower Mainland municipality to limit pesticide use. **West Vancouver, Port Moody, Vancouver, and New Westminster already have, or are developing, restrictive pesticide bylaws. In the case of West Van, those in violation will face possible imprisonment and/or a fine of up to \$10,000.**

Here's what you can do. Start by following the lead of such municipal bodies as the Vancouver Park Board and the City of Port Moody who as early as 1987 adopted Integrated Pest Management (IPM) policies. This approach gives priority to cultural (i.e. mixing host and non-host plants together), physical (i.e. removing weed by hand) and biological (i.e. introducing predator species such as ladybugs) controls.

When chemical use is required, the least toxic, effective chemical control is applied.

For the past decade, no cosmetic pesticides have been used on any Vancouver Park Board playground, sports field or turf area. Weeds have been controlled entirely through physical means and water management **with no loss of quality to the playing fields.**

There are numerous resources available to residents on natural lawn and garden care.

These include a growing number of natural or organic lawn and garden maintenance companies and a plethora of eco-friendly gardening books.

The following are just a few of the online resources:

Canadian Association of Physicians, www.cape.ca

City Farmer, www.cityfarmer.org/grass.html

Georgia Strait Alliance, www.georgiastrait.org/CAW/pesticides.php

GVRD, Natural Lawn Care Brochure, www.gvrd.bc.ca/recycling-and-garbage/composting.htm

Society Promoting Environmental Conservation, www.spec.bc.ca

Kim Davis is on the board of directors for the Society Promoting Environmental Conservation.

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