

**Subject:** The Toxic Truth

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## The toxic truth

### *Green activist groups can't handle the facts about environmental chemicals*

Will Verboven - December 12, 2005, Western Standard

Environmental groups have had considerable success convincing local municipalities across Canada to ban 2-4D, a herbicide that is used to control weeds in lawns. They've alleged that 2-4D was carcinogenic and a danger to human health. That claim has now proven to be false and misleading.

A new report from the Environmental Protection Agency, which determines the toxicity of chemicals in the U.S., states that 2-4D, the popular lawn and agricultural herbicide, is not carcinogenic.

The report is the culmination of a 17-year study to determine whether 2-4D has any adverse effect on humans, wildlife or the environment. The conclusion was that it had no detrimental effect and was not found to be carcinogenic when applied properly to agricultural crops or for non-agricultural purposes.

After all those years, more than 1,000 submissions from public and private groups and institutions, and reviewing every study on 2-4D, the EPA has finally put to disgrace the junk science and fear mongering about 2-4D used by self-appointed environmental and consumer groups.

Clearly it was a serious blow to the credibility of those groups and individuals who have been trying to scare naive citizens into believing that killing weeds with 2-4D was tantamount to inflicting cancer on the human race. It also makes all those municipalities who banned the use of 2-4D for lawn use look really silly, if not completely stupid.

But will this stop the deception used by the environmental groups against the use of 2-4D? Probably not. These folks need any bogus issue to stay in the news and keep the donations rolling in. Rest assured they will continue to use sneaky phrases like "linked to," "believed to be," or "suspected of"--none of which actually mean anything, but are designed to mislead the gullible.

The reality is that herbicides are only dangerous when they're misused. And considering their high cost, it's unlikely that the average citizen will be taking any baths in them or putting them on their kids' breakfast cereal anytime soon.

The credibility of environmental lobby groups had already been damaged by a report earlier in the year by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on environmental chemicals. Eco groups have long claimed that environmental pollutants have been slowly poisoning us, and the CDC study found that, indeed, the Americans in the study did have a number of toxic chemicals in their blood and urine.

However, the CDC report concluded, "Just because people have an environmental chemical in their blood or urine does not mean that the chemical causes disease." It went on to say, "The toxicity of the chemical is related to its dose or concentration in addition to a person's individual susceptibility." Common sense alone

tells us that people are not dropping dead in the streets from chemicals in their blood.

To environmental lobby groups and their spin doctors, such scientific common sense is annoying--particularly when their fundraising programs are based on scaring people into actually believing that even minute amounts of lawn herbicides will kill their children. But lobby groups never seem to shy away from twisting unwelcome facts into moral outrage even though it's bogus.

Predictably, a group called the Pesticide Action Network North America proclaimed, "the CDC report found that 90% of US residents carry a mixture of pesticides in their bodies . . . chemicals that are linked to cancer, birth defects and neurological problems." As usual, the group added the surefire hot-button words: "Children and breast-feeding mothers could be endangered." All of this, of course, is conjecture, as the CDC's report said no such thing.

Twisting and spinning the facts--whether it's 2-4D, hormones, antibiotics or genetically modified food--is all in a day's work for these self-appointed watchdog groups. They've been successful over the years mainly because gullible consumers always seem to let these nefarious groups assume the moral high ground.

What people need to know is the truth: That rates of pesticide and herbicide use is down by millions of tons per year; hormone and antibiotic use is down because of more targeted use; and genetically modified foods have absolutely no negative impact on human health. Unfortunately, such news does not keep lobby groups in business, but fear mongering about them sure does.

*Western Standard*