

To:
Mayor Wright and City of New Westminster Council
City of New Westminster
511 Royal Avenue
New Westminster, BC,
V3L 1H9

Dear Mayor and Council:

I urge the City of New Westminster Council to adopt and implement a strong and comprehensive bylaw to ban the cosmetic use of pesticides on lawns and gardens, as well as public parks and recreational facilities, combine with an education program.

I support a pesticide-free community.

An effective pesticide bylaw would prohibit the use of non-essential pesticides for cosmetic (beautification) purposes. Permitted exceptions should include only those that are a risk to human health. This risk would be determined by the professional judgment of a qualified public health official. The permitted exceptions would not be for weed control or other cosmetic purposes.

A cosmetic pesticide bylaw is about protecting people, especially children and youth, from involuntary exposure to these toxic chemicals when walking or playing on lawns and sports fields, for example. It is not about limiting personal freedom.

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), has classified some pesticide substances as known carcinogens, probable carcinogens or possible carcinogens. The term carcinogen refers to any substance that is an agent directly involved in the promotion of cancer or facilitating its propagation.

Studies have linked pesticide exposure to both adult and childhood cancers. These include childhood and adult leukemias, childhood brain cancer, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, neuroblastoma, brain cancer, prostate cancer, kidney cancer, and some lung cancers.

To date, 140 Canadian municipalities, the entire Province of Quebec (2006) and Ontario (2008), have adopted cosmetic pesticide-free bylaws. This number is quickly growing. No municipalities have removed the bylaw due to lack of effectiveness.

Many alternatives to pesticides for lawns and gardens are readily available to the average homeowner. Further, research tells us that, in regions where pesticide bylaws are in place, businesses have not only shifted successfully to non-toxic alternatives, but that sales and offerings of non-toxic alternatives are growing.

The Supreme Court of Canada ruled unanimously, 7-0, on June 28, 2001 that municipalities have the right to create bylaws to safeguard the health of their constituents and that municipalities are permitted to regulate or outlaw the use of pesticides.

The City of New Westminster can act now to protect its citizens and visitors to New Westminster from the unnecessary and harmful effects of cosmetic pesticides. Council can make New Westminster pesticide-free by adopting and implementing a bylaw coupled with a strong public education component.

Sincerely,

Signature _____

Printed name _____

Full Address _____

Date _____