

# NEW WESTMINSTER PESTICIDE AWARENESS COALITION

## What are Pesticides?

Pesticides are substances intended to kill or otherwise control, non-specifically, weeds, insects, fungi or pests. They can be over the counter products, or special chemicals not easily available to the public. Examples include products intended to kill:

- weeds and unwanted plants (herbicides)
- insects (insecticides)
- mold (fungicides)

## Health Impacts

A 2004 literature review by the Ontario College of Family Physicians on the evidence linking pesticides to cancer concluded:

There is a statistically significant association between pesticide exposure and cancers including non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, adult and childhood leukemia, brain cancer, kidney cancer, pancreatic cancer, prostate cancer and some lung cancers.

"We found links between pesticides and cancer, birth defects, and neurological illness. Children are at greatest risk. Banning lawn pesticides will be a major contribution to children's health."

Jan Kasperski  
Ontario College of Family Physicians

The **New Westminster Pesticide Awareness Coalition** is concerned about human health and environmental impacts of the **cosmetic** use of pesticides for the purposes of enhancing the appearance of lawns, gardens, parks, recreational facilities, and schools.

## The Solution

We are asking the City of New Westminster to implement a bylaw which would ban the cosmetic use of pesticides on public and private land coupled with an education program which would educate the public on alternatives to pesticide use.

## Environmental Impacts

2006 Quebec Ministry Environment study on drinking water quality found that water from water treatment plants contained 7 different pesticides including herbicides found in Killex and insecticides such as diazinon and carbaryl.

*Ontario: John Struger*, a scientist with the Canadian Centre for Inland Waters has analyzed several urban streams in Ontario and detected nine kinds of lawn pesticides in them.

Distribution of sprayed pesticide :

- 50-100% in soil
- 0-30% in atmosphere
- 1-10% on plant
- 0-0.3% on target insect, disease, etc.

- *Environnemental Protection Agency - D. Pimente*

## Municipal Bylaws Work!

- A recent Quebec government study by its National Institute of Public Health (2004) showed that, "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."
- Pesticide restrictions have been very successful in reducing pesticide use if coupled with public education; however, without some sort of legislation, they are not as effective.
- Research shows that pesticide bylaws do not have adverse impact on business. Businesses can diversify and cater to client's increasing demand for natural solutions.

## The Movement

- 75% of all Canadians believe that pesticides have an impact on their health. (Canadian Medical Association Survey, reported August 2007)
- 75% of New Westminster Residents support legislation phasing-out the use of cosmetic pesticides on private and public properties (Ipsos Reid Public opinion poll data for the Canadian Cancer Society, February 2008)
- Over 140 municipalities across Canada have adopted bylaws restricting cosmetic pesticide use. Local examples include Burnaby, Vancouver, Port Moody and Maple Ridge.



## How to take action:

1. **Spread the Word and Speak Out.** Let your local government and others in the community know that you support making New Westminster pesticide-free. Email, fax or hand-write a letter to your local Mayor and Council and/or the local newspaper to voice your support for a pesticide-free community.
2. **Join the New Westminster Pesticide Awareness Coalition.** Add your name to the list by emailing [nwpac@hotmail.com](mailto:nwpac@hotmail.com) and we'll keep you informed about this important issue in our community.

## New Westminster Pesticide Awareness Coalition

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Founding Partners:

Canadian Cancer Society, Council of Canadians, New Westminster Environmental Partners, Voice New Westminster, and concerned citizens of New Westminster.