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# Pesticides and Cancer:

## The Need for an Effective Bylaw

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**The Inconvenient Truth about Pesticides**

**September 22, 2007**



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# Pesticides and Cancer: The Need for an Effective Bylaw

## Outline:

- Pesticides and cancer
- Canadian Cancer Society position statement
- The need for an effective bylaw
- Benefits of a bylaw



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# Pesticides and Cancer: The Need for an Effective Bylaw

- Pesticides are substances intended to kill or otherwise control insects, weeds, fungi, or pests
- There is a growing body of evidence linking exposure to pesticides with certain types of cancers





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- Studies have linked pesticide exposure to both adult and childhood cancers
- Children are at greater risk from the effects of pesticides



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The Canadian Cancer Society calls for a ban restricting the cosmetic use of pesticides on lawns and gardens





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- Where cosmetic pesticides are concerned, the Canadian Cancer Society endorses the *precautionary principle*
- “It is better to be safe than sorry”



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## Cosmetic Pesticide Bylaws:

In 2001, the Supreme Court of Canada, in a landmark decision, upheld the right of municipalities to pass bylaws restricting the cosmetic use of pesticides





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- “local government is seen as the best level at which to make and implement laws that affect the community”  
*(Hudson v. Spraytech)*
- “The bylaw is working very well, costs us very little to maintain and grass is still growing in Hudson” *(Michael Elliott, former Hudson, Que., mayor, November 22, 2002, The Ottawa Sun)*



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Over 130 Canadian municipalities and one Province has adopted the precautionary approach to pesticide use and moved to ban the use of cosmetic pesticides





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## Which Municipalities Have Pesticide Bylaws:

- Halifax
- Montreal
- Toronto
- London
- The Province of Quebec (*Pesticides Management Code*)
- Ontario Liberal government's 2007 election platform





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- Gibsons – 2005
- Port Moody – Jan 1, 2006
- Vancouver – Jan 1, 2006
- West Vancouver – Jan 1, 2006
- Maple Ridge – December 12, 2006
- Nelson – July 23, 2007
- New Westminster - drafted
- Comox – 2006
- Courtney – July 3, 2007
- Cumberland – 2007
- North Vancouver (District) – drafted
- Salmon Arm – drafted
- Victoria - drafted



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- Restricts, not just educates
- Includes herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, vermicides, rodenticides
- Includes public and private property
- Includes public awareness/education program





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Does NOT apply to:

- swimming pools
- inside an enclosed building
- for purification of water
- to control or destroy animals or plants which constitute a danger for human beings
- forestry or agriculture

Allows for use of pesticides in exceptional situations (following notice, permits etc)



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**Polls show that the majority of citizens support pesticide bylaws**

It can be easy!

- If done in a phased-in approach
  - Educate and then restrict
  - Complaint and then fine
- There are many model bylaws
  - Courtney, Hudson, Peterborough, Oakville, Port Moody, West Vancouver



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*There are many alternatives to pesticides*





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- It shows leadership, and is the right thing to do from a public health perspective
- Bylaws do not harm business, and will stimulate businesses that specialize in alternative lawn and garden care, and the number and variety of alternative lawn and garden products





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- It will add to the desirability of the community as a tourist destination
- It will raise the community's profile as a place that cares about the health of its citizens and the environment, and is a safe and healthy place to raise children





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## Join the Growing Movement!

- Restrict the cosmetic use of pesticides in your community
- Advocate for a municipal pesticide bylaw
  - You can do it!
  - Let the Canadian Cancer Society help you make a difference!



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## For more information:

- Contact the Canadian Cancer Society in Kelowna at 762-6381
- Visit [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca)
- Call **1-888-939-3333**

Thank you