

It's time!



May 22, 2008

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Volume 1, Issue 2

In the News

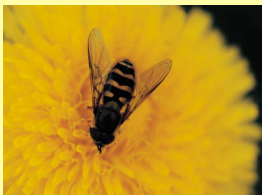
May 21, 2008:

Alberta Bee Keepers have endorsed the Coalition for a Healthy Calgary.

Gertie Adair, General Manager of Alberta Beekeepers states, "As representatives of the beekeeping industry, our bees are responsible for the pollination of crops such as vegetables, fruits and flower gardens that benefit bees as well as people. We need to protect our bees and the environment from these harmful chemicals and there is a need to educate applicators of the side affects chemicals have on bees."

For more information on Alberta Beekeepers go to:

www.albertabeekeepers.org.



What the Aldermen are asking.

Are municipal pesticide bylaws effective at reducing use?
Connelly, Chabot, Colley-Urquhart

According to the Cullbridge Report (Feb. 2004), which reviewed the experience of 62 communities in North America and Europe, *bylaws have achieved greater reductions in pesticide use (51% to 90%) than education programs alone (10% to 24%)*. All communities that have reached a high level of reduction have had a bylaw in place and/or a community-wide decision to reduce pesticide use alongside an educational program.

Canadian Examples:

From 1994-2005, **many municipalities in Quebec** had pesticide bylaws. During that period, *household pesticide use was reduced by one half from 30% to 15% as measured, province-wide.* (StatsCan)

From 2003 to 2005 the proportion of **Toronto** residents who reported any pesticide

use on their lawns decreased by 35%. In 2003 30%+ of households with lawns reporting pesticide use dropped to less than 25% in 2005. Households hiring lawn care companies applying pesticide treatments dropped from 50% in 2003 to 36% in 2005. This is prior to Toronto's bylaw coming into full effect in 2006!

Permit applications for pesticide use in **Halifax** dropped from 3,500 in 2003 to 307 in 2007. Bylaw Enforcement complaints leveled off from 400 in 2001, the first year of phase-in, to 48 in 2007. Independent third party public opinion surveys have indicated that over 90% of homeowners have transitioned to more sustainable landscape maintenance practices and products since the adoption of the bylaw.

None of the 140+ municipal pesticide bylaws enacted across Canada have been revoked and pesticide use appears to be decreasing. In contrast, pesticide use continues to increase in the Prairie Provinces where no municipal bylaws are in place. From 1994 to 2005 pesticide use in Alberta increased from 36% to 39% and even higher in Saskatchewan according to Stats Canada.

See page 2.



How effective is a municipal bylaw with out a provincial sales ban on pesticides?

Connelly, McIver, Colley-Urquhart

Pundits have used the Halifax experience as an example of how a municipal bylaw without a provincial sales ban doesn't work.

"Lawn and Order", which aired on CBC MarketPlace 2007 reported that household pesticide use dropped from 19% to 18% in Nova Scotia during the period from 1994 to 2005. (StatsCan.) Based on this information MarketPlace concluded that Halifax's pesticide bylaw has been largely ineffective.

Unfortunately, MarketPlace used provincial statistics from 1994 to 2006 to draw a municipal conclusion, failing to recognize or acknowledge that Halifax represents only 40% of the provincial population.

Stats Canada has data only on household pesticide usage collected from the entire province of Nova Scotia, which is largely ungoverned by pesticide bylaws. Any comparison of usage from 1994-2006 would not be reflective of Halifax's household usage.

The real gist of the CBC MarketPlace story was to demonstrate the need for Federal and Provincial levels of government to put in place consistent nationwide regulations regarding the sale of domestic use pesticides - either get them off the shelf or behind the sales counter requiring special licensing to purchase or reclassify the domestic label products into two groups: eco-friendly products anyone can purchase and those requiring special licensing and handling.

On its own accord Home Depot announced on April 22, 2008 that its stores will be removing traditional pesticides from shelves beginning in June 2008 in favour of eco-friendly alternatives. By December 2008 all 166 Home Depot Stores across the country will be pesticide free.

With an Integrated Pest Management Program and a 70% reduction in pesticide use why does Calgary need a pesticide bylaw?

Hodges, Lowe, Stevenson, McIver, Chabot

Yes, Calgary does have an IPM program. On paper it is an excellent program. In practice it is only as good as its implementation.

One of the basic tenants of a good IPM program is the use of pesticides only as a last resort. Cultural practices such as aerating, over seeding with drought tolerant grasses, top dressing with loam and compost, using native plant species and least toxic alternatives should be used first before resorting to the heavy artillery.

There is enough evidence within the City that pesticides are often used as the first line of defense to improve the aesthetics of the landscape while putting pregnant women, children and people with chemical sensitivities at risk. Witness the recent herbicide applications at Calgary Fire Halls, the ability of communities to secure additional spraying in their neighbourhoods, or the spraying of tot lots and baseball diamonds prior to the recent May long weekend. This is but a short-term solution focused on the symptoms rather than the causes.

With regard to the 70% reduction in pesticide use, information obtained by the Calgary Herald under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP) October 2006 does not appear to support the claim. Active ingredients listed cost \$182,246 in 2003, \$231,993 in 2005 and \$305,912 in 2005, a 68% increase over the 3-year period. Price inflation was not a factor during this time period

In addition, it is not at all clear whether the numbers obtained under FOIP include pesticide usage across all City business units including Parks, Golf Courses, Roads, Transit, Utilities, Calgary Housing, Corporate Properties or third party contracting.

Recent attempts within the City to pull statistics together from 2001 when IPM came into effect to 2007 are proving to be difficult and time consuming. This suggests that a central reporting structure and process may not be in place making timely and accurate reporting of pesticide use problematic and concerning.

More accountability of pesticide use and application is required before Calgarians can rest assured that public health and the environment are not being jeopardized needlessly with quick fix but unsustainable solutions.

