



Policy on Cosmetic Pesticide Use

Proposed date of adoption: November 13, 2013

Proposed date of expiration: December 31, 2016

Preamble:

WHEREAS, pesticides (herbicides, vermicides, fungicides, and rodenticides) are poisons designed to kill insects, plants, fungi, moulds and rodents; and

WHEREAS, children have been found to be especially susceptible to the harmful effect of pesticides including brain cancer, leukemia, and birth defects¹; and

WHEREAS, the American Medical Association recommends limiting exposure to pesticides and encourages using safer alternatives because, among other reasons, "...uncertainty exists regarding the long-term effects of low-dose pesticide exposures. Current surveillance systems are inadequate to characterize potential exposure problems related either to pesticide usage or pesticide-related illnesses ... Considering these data gaps it is prudent...to limit pesticide exposure...and to use the least toxic chemical pesticide or non-chemical alternative."²; and

WHEREAS, a study conducted by the Department of Family Medicine from Queen's University, has discovered very strong evidence that pesticides cause birth defects, infertility, neurological diseases such as Parkinson's Disease, and a number of cancers. The alarming thing we found was that rates of childhood cancers including leukemia, lymphoma and brain tumours were increased with typical home and garden use of pesticides during, after and even before pregnancy. Again, this means that children are developing cancer due to home use of pesticides. More recent studies have corroborated this, and include exposure not just to infants and children, and pregnant women, but fathers as well.³; and

WHEREAS, no province (except for Quebec) prohibits the cosmetic use of pesticides indoors. This is an important area for improvement. Logically, cosmetic pesticide bans should extend to indoor applications, such as pesticides used on houseplants⁴; and

¹ Natural Resources Defense Council (October 1998), "Health hazards of pesticides"

² The American Medical Association's Council on Scientific Affairs, 1997

³ Pesticide and Health for B.C. Special Committee on Cosmetic Pesticides, *Vakil, Cathy (2011)*.

⁴ Pesticide Free? Oui! 2011 progress report: A comparison of provincial cosmetic pesticide bans, David Suzuki Foundation and Équiterre, 2011



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WHEREAS pesticide Carbaryl, 2,4-D (2,4-dichlorophenoxyacetic acid the most commonly used herbicide in Canada, was a major component in Agent Orange, and is still used in over 1,500 lawn-care products), Mecoprop, Dicamba, MCPA (2-methyl-4-chlorophenoxyacetic acid); these last three ingredients are “Weed ‘N Feed and Killex” products⁵⁶; and

WHEREAS over 98% of sprayed insecticides and 95% of herbicides reach a destination other than their target species, including non-target species, air, water, bottom sediments, and food; and

WHEREAS the use of harmful pesticides for non-agricultural purposes (cosmetic and aesthetic applications) yields little or no societal value, and puts people, animals and the environment at significant risk; therefore

Resolution:

Therefore, BIRT the KSA call on all levels of government, as a matter of human, animal, and environmental health, to ban harmful pesticide use on public and private property for cosmetic (purely aesthetic) purposes.

⁵ The Truth About Pesticides, Sierra Club of Canada, 2008

⁶ Pesticide Free BC Presentation to the Special Committee on Cosmetic Pesticides, *Wigmore, J, (2011)*.