



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To Council - Feb 13, 2006
To Community Safety - Feb 8, 2006

To: Community Safety
From: Suzanne Bycraft
Manager, Emergency & Environmental Programs
Re: Pesticide Use Management in Richmond

Date: January 27, 2006
File: 10-6125-04-01

Staff Recommendation

1. That Council adopt the Pesticide Risk Reduction Policy (as per the report dated January 27, 2006 from the Manager, Emergency & Environmental Programs).
2. That staff report back to Council on a bi-annual basis on the progress made and overall policy effectiveness.

Suzanne Bycraft
Manager, Emergency & Environmental Programs
(3338)

FOR ORIGINATING DIVISION USE ONLY			
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER	
Parks Maintenance	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>		
Policy Planning	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>		
REVIEWED BY TAG	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	REVIEWED BY CAO	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Staff Report

Origin

At the April 26, 2004 meeting, Richmond Council adopted a community-wide policy approach to address concerns pertaining to pesticide use and referred a draft Policy to the City's Advisory Committee on the Environment (ACE), Agricultural Advisory Committee, Richmond Health, and other stakeholder groups for input.

This report provides the results of the consultation and presents the Pesticide Risk Reduction Policy for Council adoption.

Background

Evaluation of Alternative Response Strategies

In response to increasing public concern in communities across Canada, the City of Richmond evaluated four alternative response strategies:

1. Status Quo – No Additional City Effort
2. Improved Corporate Risk Reduction – Focus Solely on Reducing City of Richmond Risk
3. Pesticide Risk Reduction Policy – Work in Partnership with the Community to Reduce the Risk from Pesticide Use through multiple means (volume reductions, consumer education, strengthened regulatory approval processes, improved availability of alternative less risk products, improved monitoring and reporting, etc.)
4. Cosmetic Use Restrictive Bylaw – Restrict the use of pesticide usage for aesthetic purposes.

A comparative summary of the advantages and disadvantages of these alternative approaches is provided in Attachment 1.

Richmond Council endorsed proceeding with the adoption of the third alternative – pesticide risk reduction, based on consideration that it most effectively met the following guiding principles:

- **Comprehensive and Equitable - involving all responsible parties** (e.g., the City, other governmental agencies, agricultural community, industry and other business, residents, etc.)
- **Strategic – focus on risk reduction** and not just on use prohibition (e.g., acknowledges that not all pesticides are the same, that application practices are an equally important consideration and that significant benefits can likely be realized by moderate adjustments made by many)
- **Collaborative and Foster Community Empowerment** – works to identify strategies in partnership with the Richmond community and seeks to build long-term community capacity which facilitates the use of preferred practice in a way that respects and considers the multiple dimensions of Richmond community well-being today and in the future (e.g., health, fiscal responsibility, business prosperity, agricultural viability, ecological preservation, civic beautification, etc.)

- **Promote Responsible Governance** - pesticide management is not predominately a local responsibility; **senior governments need to be accountable** for the effective delivery of their management functions, including adequate product testing, encouraging the development of improved products and practices, pesticide use monitoring, environmental effects monitoring, raising community awareness, etc.

Proposed Pesticide Risk Reduction Policy

The proposed risk reduction policy is provided in Attachment 2. Key features of the policy include:

- ensures responsible corporate pesticide management
- in partnership with the community, facilitates information sharing and the adoption of preferable practices that reduce pesticide risk;
- focus on affirming positive action for improving local practices community-wide and,
- encourages stronger management by senior governments to better protect human health and the environment, and,
- focus on risk reduction and use of a variety of policy tools for targeting meaningful action.

Community Consultation - Process

Following the selection of the policy approach, a variety of community consultations were undertaken to solicit input on the proposed draft Policy. A total of 12 different groups were consulted including:

1. Users (YVR, golf courses, agricultural advisory committee, BC Landscape and Nursery Association, Richmond Garden Club)
2. Government Agencies (Federal Pest Management Regulatory Agency, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, GVRD, Vancouver Coastal Authority).
3. Richmond Community Interest Groups (Advisory Committee on the Environment, Canadian Federation of University Women)

Small group meetings were held between identified groups of interest and City staff to assess the level of support for the proposed risk-based. Sessions were moderated by an external third party facilitator. Based on input provided, a perspective was prepared summarizing each groups opinion. These perspectives were sent to each group for validation.

Analysis

Community Consultation - Results

A summary of the key findings of the community consultation, including a copy of a letter received from Vancouver Coast Health is provided in Attachment 3.

Eleven of the twelve groups consulted indicated support for the proposed pesticide risk reduction approach. This included all the federal, provincial and regional government agencies consulted, the two City Advisory Committees (Agriculture and Environment) and user groups. In general, there was strong support expressed for the policy approach as it focussed on education and building awareness and enabled opportunities for building partnerships between users, consumers and regulators.

The one group expressing concern was the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW). During the formal small group meeting, there was support provided for the approach but subsequent input was provided to the City indicating that the CFUW felt that a restrictive bylaw should be implemented as soon as possible. The Airport Authority and Richmond Garden Club also both indicated that a bylaw may need to be considered in future if the policy based approach did not achieve desired results.

Implications on City Services

Pesticides are used by the City in the management of City parks and infrastructure for aesthetic and maintenance requirements and in our management of rodents and mosquitos for both health purposes (i.e., West Nile virus management) and for nuisance control. Since 1992, the City has been adhering to integrated pest management (IPM) principles which strive to maximize use of non-chemical approaches and reduce reliance on pesticides. The adoption of the risk-based policy will support and strengthen this approach. It will, however, mean that City resources will be directed at efforts towards pesticides versus making advancements in other areas.

Major action in implementing the Policy is embedded in the policy itself. During 2006, staff propose that major action include:

- corporate review and establishment of information management system to enable corporate use reporting; and
- community education and engagement program.

Financial Impacts

The recommended community-wide policy approach can initially be pursued within existing departmental budgets. The corporate pesticide use review, improved reporting and initial community engagement and outreach will be managed within existing budgets.

Future cost implications may result depending on the opportunities identified through the corporate review and community discussions, and the pace by which the City decides to pursue

risk reduction initiatives. While reducing reliance on pesticide is anticipated to result in long-term community benefit, it is likely that initial investment will be required to support development and implementation of new ways of doing business in current programs are to be maintained.

However, pesticide risk reduction opportunities will be explored in context of ensuring long-term financial sustainability for the City and all measures with cost implications will be provided to Council for their review and decision prior to any implementation. Partnership opportunities, such as encouraging the GVRD to undertake regional educational initiatives and working with the BC Landscape Nursery Association will be a key area of emphasis. Staff will also continue to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of restrictive bylaws.

Conclusion

There is heightening concern over potential risks of pesticides to public health and the environment. Many municipalities across Canada have taken action to reduce associated risks, including the use of bylaws prohibiting the use of cosmetic pesticides. However, rather than focussing solely on cosmetic use which addresses only a portion of the risk, Richmond Council adopted a more comprehensive risk management approach which encourages collaborative action across all responsible parties (all levels of government, agricultural community, industry, and residential users). A proposed Pesticide Use policy was referred to the City's Advisory Committee on the Environment (ACE), Agricultural Advisory Committee, Richmond Health, and other stakeholder groups for input. Results from targeted community consultation involving user groups, community interest groups and government agencies indicated strong support for the proposed Policy. This report recommends that Council adopt the proposed Pesticide Use policy.



Margot Daykin, M.R.M
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MD:md

Attachment 1: Comparative Evaluation of Alternate Pesticide Management Strategies

Alternative Strategy	Advantages/Disadvantages
1. Status Quo – No Additional City Effort	Least financial cost. No further risk reduction (no reduction in public health, environmental or potential long-term economic cost as a result of increasing pesticide dependence).
2. Improved Corporate Risk Reduction	Demonstration of corporate leadership. Unlikely to result in meaningful risk reduction over the long-term since corporate use represents a small proportion of total community use.
3. Pesticide Use Policy – Community – Wide Risk Minimization (<i>recommended</i>)	Promotes collective effort including corporate responsibility, industry responsibility, consumer responsibility and effective governance. Phased approach enables incremental decision-making to ensure cost-effectiveness. While the approach is comprehensive, it is not anticipated to be labour intensive or necessitate additional funds above existing base operating budgets at this stage. Emphasis will be placed on developing partnerships and seeking cost-effective strategic approaches. Any identified measures requiring additional corporate funds will be brought forward to Council for their consideration prior to their implementation.
4. Cosmetic Use Restrictive Bylaw	Unclear legal authority to enact; Unknown feasibility with respect to challenges in enforcement including difficulty in establishing an offence. Likely would require additional levels of service for bylaw enforcement. May result in partial risk reduction; however efforts will not necessarily be directed towards those areas most likely to yield the greatest benefit in Richmond (e.g., uses which generate most risk – the highest uses, most toxic uses, least poorly applied - or where alternatives are most feasible etc.). Would be more effective if administered regionally. Does not address all users equitably.. Does not promote strengthened management at the federal and provincial level or facilitate informed decision-making by the community.



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Adopted by Council:

Amended:

POLICY:

File Ref:

PESTICIDE USE**POLICY:**

It is Council policy that:

in recognition that long-term impacts of pesticide use on human health and the environment are largely unknown, the City of Richmond supports and encourages pesticide risk reduction in the City by:

1. Reviewing corporate practices pertaining to pesticide use and management on an annual basis to seek opportunities to continually minimize risks posed by corporate pesticide use and reduce corporate dependence on pesticides.
2. Reporting corporate pesticide use in the City's State of Environment reporting program.
3. Working collaboratively with the Richmond community to facilitate pesticide risk reduction throughout the City to the greatest extent possible with an emphasis on building awareness and understanding and facilitating the use of alternative low risk effective practices.
4. Working with other levels of government to collaborate with industry and encourage stronger collective pesticide management, including but not limited to strengthened pesticide approval systems, improved monitoring and effects assessment, and coordinated education programs.
5. Reviewing this policy on an bi-annual basis or as new knowledge is gained to ensure it remains current and effective.



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Date Implemented:

**ADMINISTRATIVE
PROCEDURE:**

File Ref:

PESTICIDE USE POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The Pesticide Use policy is based on the following sustainability principles:

1. Precautionary Principle

- given that high uncertainty exists in whether pesticide use is safe, precautionary action should be taken to minimize risks
- an emphasis on risks recognizes that not all pesticides are the same and enables focus to be directed towards strategic action that results in the greatest benefit

2. User Responsibility

- pesticide risk reduction should be pursued in an inclusive approach, promoting collective action to ensure that all responsible parties are contributing fairly to the solution
- as a user of pesticides, the City should review its corporate practices to seek continual improvement and demonstrate accountability by reporting its use to the community

3. Decision-Making that Respects all Interests, Today and Tomorrow

- pesticide risk reduction should be pursued in a manner that fosters shared stewardship and that respects the complete suite of social, environmental and economic objectives of the Richmond community, including but not limited to human health protection, environmental preservation, agricultural viability, sustainable economic development and financial sustainability.
- pesticide risk reduction should be pursued in a manner that considers the interests of all members of the community today and in the future.

4. Effective Governance

- pesticide risk reduction should be pursued in a manner that fosters a coordinated approach and ensures that all involved parties (various levels of government, industry and other users) are meeting their respective responsibilities.

5. Community Empowerment

- pesticide risk reduction should be pursued in a manner that builds long-term community capacity and makes it easier to adopt and follow sustainable practices.



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File Ref:	PESTICIDE USE POLICY IMPLEMENTATION	

The Pesticide Use policy will be implemented interdepartmentally in the following manner:

Major Action	Lead Coordinating Department
1. Corporate Use Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish and manage electronic data system for recording and reporting corporate use • identify opportunities for risk reduction in corporate park activities • report options to Council 	Parks
2. State of Environment Reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • incorporate corporate pesticide use trend information 	Policy and Planning
3. Working with the Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhance education on alternative practices in partnership with the Richmond community and other agencies in a manner which builds upon already existing initiatives • initiate discussions with key stakeholder groups, including agricultural community, Advisory Committee on the Environment, golf course operators, and other key community stakeholders to better understand concerns and identify local opportunities for reducing risks posed by pesticides and report options to Council 	Environmental Programs/Parks Environmental Programs/Policy and Planning
4. Strengthening Collective Governance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluate strategies for the City to influence and improve senior government management of pesticides including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved pesticide registration • improved incentives for non-pesticide use (e.g., tax incentives to encourage organic farming) • strengthened communications with communities to improve awareness and understanding of how risks are being managed • improved monitoring and effects assessment • coordinate with other municipalities and the Greater Vancouver Regional District to identify opportunities for ensuring that the shared regional environment is being adequately protected 	Environmental Programs Environmental Programs/Parks
5. Policy Review	Environmental Programs

Attachment 3: Results of Community Consultation

Stakeholder	Response to Proposed Policy	Key Comments
Users		
Agriculture Advisory Committee	Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are not supportive of additional regulations for pesticide usage for agricultural purposes • public education is very important both with respect to increasing awareness of current best practices and alternatives, and for improving understanding of current practices being adhered to by the agricultural community • provision of wider choice of products could be a means for reducing risk
Richmond Golf Courses – Superintendents Association	Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support public education with respect to both golf course use and low-risk alternatives • provision of wider choice of products • risk-based policy approach will take time and sustained corporate focus • balancing different stakeholders may be challenging • would be interested in contributing expertise and being involved in initiative
Vancouver International Airport Authority	Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support the corporate reporting and education and awareness components and indicate that YVR will consider reporting its use • indicated that a bylaw may need to be considered if the approach is inadequate • indicated need for social change in terms of public expectations of green space and larger issues of sustainable practices
BC Landscape and Nursery Association	Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • indicate that a large part of the issue is people not understanding products or proper application – support focus on education and awareness • interested in creating partnership with the City to aid in approach delivery and monitoring of effectiveness
Richmond Garden Club	Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • most avid gardeners are aware of appropriate use of pesticides • areas of potential concern and suggestions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ addressing how difficult it is to understand pesticide use and risk ○ multi-cultural approach to education ○ transparency in pesticide use in parks, agriculture and the City ○ providing the community with an opportunity to dispose of old pesticides ○ promoting regulation of landscaping companies ○ consider a bylaw if approach does not achieve desired result
Government Agencies		
Federal Pesticide Management Regulatory Agency	Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regulatory changes are occurring at senior government level which will provide opportunities to link with the proposed policy-based approach (e.g., new regulations will simplify monitoring sales) – there are also various initiatives which could help support such as the Environmental Farm Plan program • providing options is important • City taking a leadership role is important
Ministry of Environment		
Ministry of Agriculture		
GVRD	Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • messaging that is linked to health is a strong impetus for behaviour change • there is a distinct need for data that provides credibility or endorsement for alternatives to chemical products • outreach should include consideration of lifecycle of products, consideration of alternatives, product selection, education on use, storage and disposal
Vancouver Coastal Health	Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • refer to attached letter
Community Interest Groups		
Advisory Committee on the Environment	Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • public awareness and education is the strongest component of the proposed policy • suggest that quantification of use, review of City's use, public and risk/benefit analysis also be components of the approach
Canadian Federation of University Women	Mixed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supported elements of the policy but consider that a bylaw restricted cosmetic pesticides should be implemented



**Richmond Health Department
Public Health Inspection**

Richmond Health Services
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February 17, 2005

City of Richmond
5599 Lynas Lane
Richmond, BC V7C 5B2

Attention: Suzanne Bycraft, Manager Emergency and Environmental Programs

Dear Ms. Bycraft:

Re: Pesticide Use Management in Richmond

The Richmond Health Department is supportive of the City of Richmond's staff recommendation to implementing a "Pesticide Use Policy – Community-Wide Risk Minimization" strategy.

The strategy as outlined recognizes that current scientific research on health related pesticide risks are incomplete when considering a complete ban on cosmetic (non-essential) pesticide use and whether an appreciable community risk reduction would result. There is a clear need that continued evaluation of whether these types of restrictive bylaws are effective in those regions where they have been implemented.

City staff's risk based policy approach further recognizes that community collaboration is necessary in the success of an integrated pest management approach, and that regular review and updating of this policy is essential in ensuring the policy is current as new health research and pesticide information is released.

Furthermore, the Richmond Health Department recommends:

1. The City of Richmond take a lead role in the development of corporate integrated pest management (IPM) strategies. As such, written IPM plans should be developed for each program where pesticides are used on City owned properties.
2. The City of Richmond request information relating to public pesticide sales in Richmond from the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection (MWLAP), to determine if pesticide reduction initiatives are having an impact on reduced pesticide usage. If this information is not available through MWLAP, the development of a bylaw requiring Richmond businesses to report pesticide sales by use, type, and quantity should be considered.
3. Educational initiatives should be developed and implemented advocating the reduction/elimination of cosmetic pesticide usage on private lands.

This precautionary approach does consider measures which need to be taken where there is evidence of health related risks, even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully understood.

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Should you wish to discuss any of these issues, please contact the undersigned at 604-233-3140.

Yours truly,



Kelvin Higo
Program Manager
Richmond Health Services

KH:ssc

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Dr. James Lu	Medical Health Officer, Richmond Health Services, Vancouver Coastal Health
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