

Good Afternoon. I come before you today as a concerned citizen- I am a mother of 2 young children, an elementary teacher, a resident of a strata complex where pesticides are used, and a regular user of Richmond's parks. I have a growing concern over our city's allowance of cosmetic pesticides on city and residential lands.

This weekend I read the city's report on Pesticide Use Management with disappointment. I am disappointed that our city staff would release such a short-sighted, subjective and repetitive report that mainly addresses the city's use of pesticides and does not address those affected by residential or strata use. I was expecting a more balanced report, and what we received was just a re-packaging of the same report that was released in 2006.

The Pesticide Risk Reduction Policy that was adopted in 2006 was supposed to:

- "ensure responsible corporate management" by creating an electronic data system for recording and reporting corporate use. However, when we requested this information from the Ministry of Environment, they said that they were "lucky to receive anything from Richmond" and forwarded what they had- a handwritten form that was incomplete, full of inconsistencies and errors. (I would be happy to share this with you).

It also stated that the city would work with other levels of senior government to influence and improve pesticide management. However, there is no evidence of this as I have personally met with local MLAs on this issue.

it also stated that they would initiate discussions with key stakeholder groups to better understand concerns and reduce risks and report back to council bi-annually- yet again, we can find no evidence of this.

The 2009 report contains the same stakeholder information that was in the 2006 report, most of whom would have no significant stake in a cosmetic pesticide bylaw. For example the Agricultural Advisory Committee, The Airport Authority and the Canadian Federation of University Women were consulted. None of these entities are an appropriate selection for "key" stakeholder groups for a cosmetic pesticide bylaw, most of the others were very biased and none were health-oriented.

- I want to know why key stakeholders didn't include parents of young children? People who are living in stratas or multiple family housing? Children's Sports Organizations using the fields that are sprayed? Or organizations such as The Canadian Lung Association? the Canadian Cancer Society? The David Suzuki Foundation? The Ontario College of Family Physicians? or The Canadian Medical Association? They probably

were not consulted because all these organizations have shown their support for a cosmetic pesticide bylaw and our city staff has decided that 152 cities across Canada must be wrong in putting human health above the appearance of our lawns and parks.

In this report I also read Dr. Lu's letter, in bewilderment that someone in his position would take such a strong stance **against** the precautionary principle. Those who oppose the precautionary principle want absolute scientific certainty that certain pesticides cause cancer or other diseases. To have scientific certainty in this case would be unrealistic and above all, unethical. What we would have to do is expose fetuses, pregnant women and young children to pesticides in order to measurably determine how long it would take for a critical illness to manifest itself. Yet, by requiring this burden of scientific proof we are essentially permitting our children to be used as guinea pigs until it is proven.

I also want to draw your attention to the fact that there are other medical health officers in BC who **do** support the precautionary principle, notably from the Interior Health Region. The role of medical health officers is to protect and advocate for the health and well-being of the residents in their regions and I do not believe this is what Dr. Lu's letter accomplishes.

In comparison, The Ontario College of Family Physicians, which represents almost 7,000 doctors, has stated that children face "undeniable risks from exposure to pesticides". They have stressed the importance of avoiding pesticides to help prevent the serious and debilitating diseases that are currently being associated with pesticide exposure such as asthma, infertility, various cancers including childhood leukemia and non-Hodgkins lymphoma, Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, and other neurological disorders.

I would urge you to ask Richmond city staff to draft a bylaw immediately and not waste any more time or resources on an ineffective and unprogressive Pesticide Risk Reduction. We need to enact change now in order to protect the health of future generations and that of our Earth.

According to The Canadian Perspective on the Precautionary Approach from the Government of Canada, I quote "the absence of full scientific certainty shall NOT be used as a reason to postpone decisions when faced with the threat of serious or irreversible harm".

On behalf of the Richmond Pesticide Awareness Coalition and our supporters, I ask that you too adopt this precautionary approach. We ask that you keep your promise, and respect the wishes of your constituents, by recommending a

cosmetic pesticide bylaw to council.

---