Subject: Re: Cosmetic Pesticide Bylaw
Date: Thu, 29 Sep 2005 18:07:05 -0700
From: Brian Platts <bplatts@shaw.ca>
To: Ernie Crist <ernie_crist@dnv.org>
CC: Major <stmajor@shaw.ca>, James Ridge <James_Ridge@dnv.org>, Mayor Harris <Janice_Harris@dnv.org>, Alan Nixon <Alan_Nixon@dnv.org>, Jim Cuthbert <Jim_Cuthbert@dnv.org>, mckeonholmes@telus.net, Richard Walton <richard_walton@dnv.org>, Lisa Muri <lisa_muri@dnv.org>, hunterjohn@telus.net, corrie@kost.ca, Council Remuneration <wrtracey@telus.net>, fonvca@fonvca.org, pat45@shaw.ca, allandorr@shaw.ca, cathyadams@canada.com, macdunn@uniserve.com, andersen@sagafc.com, m.bragg@shaw.ca

Well then, if a gardener gets cancer then pesticide use is definitely the cause. That's the same logic that dictates that the evidence shows every morning the rooster crows when the sun rises, therefore it follows that the sun rises because the rooster crows. Just because a person is unfortunate enough to get a disease does not make them an expert in its cause. Of course we can point back decades ago when people worked in unsafe environments with toxic substances, but it was medical science and government regulatory agencies that identified those toxic substances and created safety standards in the workplace. Running dogs aside Ernie, do you not trust science? Do you ever take medications prescribed by your doctor? If you do, well those medications have been approved by Health Canada. Saying we cannot trust anything but a ban on certain products because of an irrational fear is to fall victim to ignorance.

-Brian

Ernie Crist wrote:

> A MESSAGE FROM ERNIE CRIST
>
> I know a person who goes to the Ron Andrews Rec Center. She had a gardening business. She has cancer. For the time being she beat it. She has used safe pesticides during all her working days. She has this to say about "safe" pesticides. If you want to die young use "safe" pesticides.
>
> I also know a whole slew or should I say I KNEW a whole slew of shipyard workers who used "safe" paints, "safe" asbestos, they were told, and various other "safe" materials. Most of them died of cancer long before reaching a normal old age.
>
> Think about it. I also need to make a correction. The other day I stated that Corporations are the little running dogs of governments. That was definitely wrong. I made a mistake. Never say that I am not big enough to admit that I made a mistake. Actually, it is the other way around, governments are the little running dogs of corporations. You might remember this and live longer.
>
> Ernie Crist
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Brian Platts [mailto:bplatts@shaw.ca]
> **Sent:** Thursday, September 29, 2005 3:08 PM
> **To:** Major
> **Cc:** James Ridge; Mayor Harris; Alan Nixon; Jim Cuthbert; mckeonholmes@telus.net; Richard Walton; Ernie Crist; Lisa Muri; hunterjohn@telus.net; corrie@kost.ca; Council Remuneration; fonvca@fonvca.org; pat45@shaw.ca; allandorr@shaw.ca; cathyadams@canada.com; macdunn@uniserve.com; andersen@sagafc.com; m.bragg@shaw.ca
> **Subject:** Re: Cosmetic Pesticide Bylaw
>
> Mr. Major:
>
> In fact I offered no opinion regarding your claim of a 'grass roots movement away from pesticides'. I simply commented that if what you say is true, that the public is on your side, then a municipal bylaw is unnecessary. My reason for not supporting a such a bylaw is because in these sorts of debates I am pursued only by facts, not blind emotion or unsubstantiated scare tactics.
>
> Before any pesticide can be approved for use in this country, Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) takes statistical risk levels that have been found to exist and then multiplies them one thousand times, and even then the substance must not pose any real risk to humans, pets or anything other than the insect or weed it is intended to control. It is far too easy for scare mongers to say things like 'we must act for the health of our children!' Of course in EVERY substance CAN be be harmful to life; it is only a matter of dosage.
>
> For your benefit, Mr. Major, in a previous e-mail to Council I wrote the following:
>
> > alcohol can be extremely toxic and can kill you either quickly or over time by prolonged abuse. Yet countless studies show that moderate alcohol consumption, particularly red wine, can be excellent for your health. Consider also, do you ever swim in a pool or drink tap water? I don't need to tell you that both are treated with chlorine which, at the right dose, is about as deadly a substance as you can find anywhere, but used properly is a benefit to human health. Don't forget you also probably wash some of your clothes with a small amount of chlorine bleach. Sodium Hydroxide which was spilled in that recent train derailment near Squamish and unfortunately killed some fish in a creek is widely used

> in making soap and is probably an ingredient in every cleaning substance you have in your homes. Have you or any of your kids ever picked-up head lice? Well, the only shampoo able to get rid of the nasty and socially embarrassing problem is really just an insecticidal soap -- and you have to scrub your head with it! Have you ever used mosquito repellent? Well, it's a chemical too. I could go on ..... Beyond the campaign to ban safe pesticides, there are people convinced -- without any scientific basis -- that cell phones or overhead power lines are causing cancers. Others say that electrical appliances are making them sick. You can even find groups demanding, in the interest of health, a ban on wearing perfume fragrances in public. In spite of people living longer and healthier lives than ever before, we are increasingly, and irrationally, afraid of the latest and trendiest health scares.

In closing, I encourage you to carefully review Corrie Kost's comprehensive analysis which he has already sent to you as a PDF file.

-Brian Platts

Major wrote:

> Hello Everyone,
>
> In response to the previous emails from Mr. Platts and Mr. Hunter:
>
> I never claimed that anyone is against public education for the responsible use of pesticides; we believe that education alone, is a weak tactic to deal with the issue. The fact the Mr. Platts does not believe me my statement about a grass roots movement away from pesticide use, speaks volumes.
>
> As for Mr. Hunter's comment that I supply factual surveys to back up my argument about grass roots support, if I could afford one I would. Another predictable delay tactic, used to defeat those of us who are acting in the best interests of the community. I can only offer 18 years of experience, insight and communication with the community to draw upon to validate my position. What are you using to validate your position Mr. Hunter?
>
> Neither Mr. Platts nor Mr. Hunter has explained exactly why they oppose a ban on cosmetic pesticides. Perhaps they would step up and explain their motivation against doing the right thing and protecting our children from unnecessary poisons? With substantive validation, as they have continually asked me to supply.
>
> By the way, in case you forgot, elected officials set policy, not hired civil servants or consultants.
>
> Regards,
>
> Todd Major
>
> (without an s please Mr. Hunter)
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> ---
>
> **From:** Brian Platts [mailto:bplatts@shaw.ca]
> **Sent:** Wednesday, September 28, 2005 7:57 PM
> **To:** Major
> **Cc:** james_ridge@dnv.org; janice_harris@dnv.org; anixon@dnv.org; jcuthbert@dnv.org; mckeonholmes@telus.net; rwalton@dnv.org; ecrist@dnv.org; lmuri@dnv.org; hunterjohn@telus.net; corrie@kost.ca; wrtracey@telus.net; fonvca@fonvca.org; pat45@shaw.ca; allandorr@shaw.ca; cathyadams@canada.com; macdunn@uniserve.com; andersen@sagafc.com; m.bragg@shaw.ca
> **Subject:** Re: Cosmetic Pesticide Bylaw
>
> No one is against public education of the responsible use of pesticides. If what you proclaim is true that 'grassroots public opinion' is against using pesticides under any circumstances, then a municipal ban is totally unnecessary and therefore you have nothing to worry about.
>
> Brian Platts
>
> Major wrote:
> <!--[if !supportLineBreakNewLine]-->
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>
> Dear Councillors of the District Of North Vancouver,
>
> I would like to respond to the issue of a proposed Cosmetic Pesticide ban in the Dist. of North Van based on the information in the email that is attached below from Mr. John Hunter.
>
> Mayor Harris is exactly right, resistance is to the ban is useless; it is only a matter of time. Public opinion has already shifted to banning cosmetic pesticides and reduced usage from many citizens. Anyone who doesn't agree with this statement is sadly out of tune with the grass roots feelings of our citizens. My personal experience over the last 18 years in horticulture, in private and public business, clearly indicates an overwhelming majority against pesticide use, if for no other reason than to protect our children, pets and the environment. Retailers of such

products have already realized the prognosis, as they have witnessed their profits from the sale of cosmetic pesticide shrink and profits from safe organic alternatives grow.

The following statement, in my opinion, is wrong and unfairly exaggerates the issue.

This pesticide bylaw is aimed at both the customers AND the lawn care businesses – it forbids the business, practically speaking, from operating in DNV. It basically bans the business from operating in DNV UNLESS on public lands (they WILL get an exception) – there is sure to be an exemption for golf courses and parks, not so for residents, despite the platitudes.

A cosmetic pesticide ban, by the use of legislative authority, which is in line with the Community Charter, does not forbid a company from doing business, it simply regulates what can be done by said business, in the name of public safety, exactly as the anti smoking bylaws have done. Regulation for the pesticide bylaw is the same as many other building permit or development permit regulations. I suggest whoever wrote this statement should be better informed before they write such inaccuracies.

As for hypocrisy, who is trying to prevent us from stopping the use of poisons in our environment, and why? We are not talking about banning free speech; we are talking about regulating unnecessary toxic substances.

Talk about hypocrisy, as many speakers pointed out. “Natural pest control means won’t work for DNV, but for you taxpayers . . . .” That did NOT happen to pub owners.
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Commenting that we cannot regulate, we must educate is not the way to govern for every issue. We all want our leaders to lead, not follow. Yes, any new bylaw should be combined with an education program; one cannot successfully exist without the other. Saying that a cosmetic pesticide ban on companies will cause homeowners to take up the slack and start using chemicals on their own, is out of touch with the grassroots movement. Pesticide businesses apply a substantial amount of pesticide and they are convenient for homeowners. Take away the convenience and implement education combined with legislative authority and progress will be made on both fronts.

Bylaws in other communities banning cosmetic pesticide use have produced a reduction in usage, primarily because of the threat of bylaw enforcement and the accompanying education and people understand when something is right. Is someone trying to say we should not enforce speed limits because no one will listen or that we should stop trying to educate people about drunk driving because people will still do it anyway? Rubbish! New bylaws take time to implement and education is undertaken for long-term benefit, not the immediate benefit. By the way, pesticide usage is not “socially acceptable” anymore, by those people who are educated enough to understand the issues.

Mr. Hunter’s comment about earning respect and candid intelligent discussion is ironic, given some of the statements in his email. Who is he to tell us anything?

I can tell you that there are alternatives to pesticide use. I regularly advise my clients on ways to eliminate pesticide use, with excellent success and my customer’s children are safer for it. Residential cosmetic pesticides are used primarily out of a need to enhance our vanity, not to protect the environment, not to grow food or to eliminate the hordes of locust. The problem is no one on the North Shore is offering an alternative to pesticides or education. The exception is the North Shore Recycling Program, which is trying to move the agenda for everyone’s benefit.

If council decides that the issue needs more study, fine that is prudent, but DO NOT USE CITY STAFF ONLY TO PROVIDE YOUR DESCISON MAKIG INFORMATION, they are not experienced or educated in pesticide usage or the long term effects in the environment. Research institutions cannot be relied upon heavily to provide information because much of their grant money comes from chemical manufacturers. Professionals like myself can be trusted only so far, because we have already made up our minds based on years of field experience, exposure and training. Where does that leave you, as usual, listen to everyone, but make up your own mind based on what is best for our community health, be leaders as you were hired to be.

No one said a new bylaw of any type would be easy. We have to fight for every scrap of gain in our society. On the issue of scrapping, bitter, nasty or otherwise unprofessional discussion during council meetings, this is democracy, not tea time, it is never pretty and you do have to fight it out to make a gain. Anyone who thinks we should all shake each other hands and be friendly and rub each other all over to feel good, is too insulated from the realities of life in the world. Must be nice to be all warm and fuzzy everyday?

Regarding a Cosmetic Pesticide ban, Council should answer the following questions:

What is in the best interests of public safety?

Is the District of North Van. Parks department using pesticides and if yes, what is the City’s liability exposure in this regard?

Why are so many people (including some of the DNV staff) opposing the regulation of cosmetic pesticides? A measure designed to protect the health of all living things, including our children.

Would the implementation of such bylaw affect businesses? If yes, to what extent? Can the impact be mitigated?

Do any perceived negative effects of such a bylaw outweigh the benefits of social progression and public health?

Maybe DNV staff could work on answering these questions?

I thank you for listening to me.

Proudly with a Clean Conscience,

Todd Major

Sent: Tuesday, July 12, 2005 2:56 PM
Subject: FW: PMRA | Questions and Answers about 2,4-D

You can always count on Corrie! Great research Corrie.

PS Mayor Harris analogy last night in Council chambers claiming resistance to the "no pesticide/herbicide bylaws" is analogous to resistance to the anti-smoking bylaws in pubs and the spectre of job in that case (which job loss did not happen) is defective, I suggest.

Those anti-smoking bylaws were aimed at the customers primarily (you can't smoke in this and that place), although enforcement devolved to some extent on the business owner. This pesticide bylaw is aimed at both the customers AND the lawn care businesses – it forbids the business, practically speaking, from operating in DNV. It basically bans the business from operating in DNV UNLESS on public lands (they WILL get an exception) – there is sure to be an exemption for golf courses and parks, not so for residents, despite the platitudes. Talk about hypocrisy, as many speakers pointed out. "Natural pest control means won't work for DNV, but for you taxpayers . . . ." That did NOT happen to pub owners.

The proper analogy would be that government had banned professionally run pubs and forced people (as in prohibition days) to set up "speak-easys" as in the 1930s. And they tried in the 1930s, with the known results.

When will governments learn? You cannot stop socially acceptable things like pot, booze, and prostitution. The trick is education to make them NOT socially acceptable, not to use a stick as some would have, including C. Nixon and Crist to my disappointment. There has been lots of rhetoric but no solid evidence presented to council that they should overrule the feds, to my knowledge. Trotting out a few examples like DDT does not a solid case make.

The truly sad thing about last night's Council is a staff report which makes unsupported statements. Page 3: "This will effectively eliminate the use of many pesticides on residential

have BACKFIRED in other jurisdictions. That is, professional lawn care was replaced by amateurs like me who use far more chemicals to do the job than the licensed, trained professionals. And I can sympathize with his points – if you threaten to fine me $10,000 as this bylaw does, I'll use weed and feed (FAR worse) rather than the bit of spot spraying I do. My lawn is not going to end up like that weed infested mess at the bottom of my street (DNV property I assume, on Dollarton) or that up and coming weed mess on the Dollarton Hwy near Maplewood.

For staff to bring this to Council without any evidence pro or con that bylaws of like nature in other cities work is VERY disappointing. In fact, when the only input (it was in the Council package at the front desk) is that the bylaws have backfired elsewhere, it is to me inconceivable that this would come to Council. Was Mr. Charles wrong or biased? Who knows? But how can this topic go unaddressed in the report?

It seems a bit of a repeat of the staff Report to Council on the Burrard agreement a week or so ago, which contained no useful summary of the issues, the history, or anything that a responsible Council member should want to know. And the agreement vote is schedules on the same night the band has a 15 minutes delegation to Council on the Band's history; as C. Walton pointed out, how can an intelligent and candid discussion take place? We don't need this type of performance.

Please Council members, don't let this sort of thing continue. Councillor Nixon spoke of disrespect for all Council in "vitriolic" e-mails to himself re pesticides. Well, with respect, you have to earn respect and you do that partly by demanding businesslike behaviour of yourselves and staff. Accepting the "jamming" you got on Burrard and pesticides will not do it. And accepting recommendations to pass an arguably intrusive bylaw with ZERO info in the report on whether they work elsewhere will not do it.

Sincerely and with deep disappointment

John Hunter, P. Eng.
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