



Canadian Cancer Society
Société canadienne
du cancer

For immediate release

March 29, 2007

Support for pesticide bylaw up sharply, poll shows

4 out of 5 Ottawa residents say lawn chemicals threaten kids, environment

Ottawa, ON - The number of Ottawa residents who believe lawn pesticides threaten the environment has increased, according to a new poll. The survey, commissioned by the Canadian Cancer Society and the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE), suggests support for an Ottawa pesticide bylaw is growing.

Among Ottawa residents surveyed, 84% said they believe lawn pesticides threaten the environment, up from 77% in 2005.

The new poll also found 82% of Ottawans view pesticides as a health threat to children. In 2005, the number was just 74%.

"Now that over 80% of Ottawans are concerned about toxic lawn chemicals, there's no reason for city council to delay restrictions," said CAPE Executive Director Gideon Forman. "The number of residents supporting a bylaw was large two years ago. Now it's enormous."

When asked whether they saw pesticides as an issue of property rights or of public health, 79% of residents surveyed said it was a public health matter.

"This statistic tells us four out of five Ottawans view pesticides the same way our medical authorities do – as a threat to public health," said Jeff Froggett of the Canadian Cancer Society. "With such unanimity among citizens and experts, I think our councillors have a strong incentive to pass a bylaw this spring."

Ottawa is the largest city in eastern Canada without a pesticide bylaw. Across the country, more than 125 municipalities -- including Montreal, Peterborough, Toronto, and London -- have laws restricting pesticide use. In Ottawa, toxic chemicals can still be sprayed on private property adjacent to schools, seniors' homes and daycares.

The 500-person poll, conducted by Oracle Poll Research, is accurate to +/- 4.4%.

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