

April 22, 2008

Questions and Answers on Banning Pesticides for Cosmetic Purposes

Why is the government introducing a ban on the use and sale of cosmetic pesticides?

- The McGuinty government is committed to reducing Ontarians' exposure to toxic chemicals in our air, water, land and consumer products.
- The use of pesticides for cosmetic purposes is an unnecessary risk to human health, particularly children's health.
- Children's smaller size and greater exploratory behaviour make them more likely to come into direct contact with pesticide residues in the environment. Once exposed, they are generally more susceptible to the potential toxic effects of pesticides because of their immature stage of development.
- Banning the sale, as well as the use, is the strongest possible approach to eliminating pesticides for cosmetic purposes since they will not be available for people to buy. A ban on the sale is strongly supported by environmental and health groups as well as the general public.

What does the legislation do?-

- If enacted, it will:
 - Prohibit the use and sale of pesticides for cosmetic or non-essential purposes (the list of pesticide products and active ingredients would be specified in a regulation to come at a later date)
 - Make exceptions for agriculture, forestry, the promotion of public health or safety and golf courses
 - supercede municipal pesticide by-laws for cosmetic purposes.
- If enacted, the legislation would give the province the authority to make regulations. The regulations would identify the pesticides which would be prohibited, define the exceptions to the use ban, and identify any conditions attached to the exceptions.

Why does the Bill provide exceptions for certain sectors?

- The intent of the proposed legislation is to prohibit the unnecessary use of pesticides to protect human health, especially children's health.
- Exceptions are being proposed for the agriculture and forestry sectors to protect and enhance food production and our forests, plus there are already strict rules on their use and storage.
- Golf courses are excepted because of their specialized nature, but only if certain conditions are met. These would be detailed in a regulation that would be made detailing the specifics of the ban, if the legislation is enacted.
- There will be exceptions for health and safety reasons, too. Some examples might be to manage mosquitoes which can carry the West Nile Virus, or to control stinging insects or poison ivy, or products that protect the health of pets.

Are rural residents included?

- Yes. The intent of the proposed legislation is to protect human health, especially children's health, regardless of where children may live in the province.

When will the ban take effect?

- The timing depends on the passing of the legislation by the Legislature of Ontario.
- If passed, a draft regulation would be developed and posted for public consultation. The draft regulation would include proposed timing for implementation.

What will happen to existing municipal pesticide by-laws?

- The government's proposed ban builds on the leadership shown by those municipalities that introduced bans or imposed restrictions on cosmetic pesticides over the past several months.
- It's important, however, to extend that protection to all children and families regardless of where they live. That's why the government is introducing one comprehensive ban for the province.

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For more information, visit the ministry's web site at:
www.ontario.ca/pesticides