



Canadian Cancer Society
Société canadienne du cancer



Media Advisory April 24th, 2009

Non-profit groups recognize the Interior Health Authority for its proactive pesticide policy



A coalition of environmental/health groups presented Interior Health with a leadership certificate for regulating cosmetic pesticides because of their harmful effects on the environment and people's health.

When: Friday April 24th, 2009 at 1:30pm

Where: Cottonwoods Extended Care - 2255 Ethel Street, Kelowna, B.C.

In March 2007, Interior Health set policy specifying total elimination of the use of chemical pesticides/herbicides for cosmetic use on their property. Leonard Schein, Chair of the Canadian Cancer Society (CCS), BC & Yukon Division, says "the Canadian Cancer Society applauds the leadership of the Interior Health Authority in working to implement their new groundskeeping policy. This policy will ensure the protection of staff, patients and public from exposure to non-essential pesticides and puts us a step closer to reducing the incidence of cancer."



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According to Dr. Warren Bell from the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE), "Pesticides are linked to cancer, neuro-developmental injury and hormone disruption. They crudely disrupt the delicate balance of natural ecosystems as well, polluting water, soil and food. By eliminating them from its properties, the Interior Health Authority has taken an important and positive step; I hope all the other Health Authorities, Health Regions and the Local Health Networks follow this lead."

Mae Burrows, executive director of Toxic Free Canada commends Interior Health for its leading policy and guidelines. "The Interior Health Authority's progressive policy on banning the use of cosmetic pesticides shows great leadership in fulfilling their mandate to increase the health and well-being of their residents. We need to take protecting our children from exposure to the harmful chemicals in pesticide to the Health Authorities level. Thank-you to the Interior Health Authority for starting what will be an important trend in making our communities healthier."

Paul Hasselback, Interior Health's Medical Health Officer agrees that not using pesticides protects human health and the environment. "Interior Health is dedicated to improving the quality of life and health and continues to strive towards environmental excellence. Eliminating the use of cosmetic pesticides is just one way we continue to meet our health and environmental goals".

Because the cosmetic use of pesticides is non-essential and has the potential to cause harm, the CCS, CAPE and Toxic Free Canada rely on the precautionary principle and call for the elimination of cosmetic pesticide use.

For more information:

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