

Law Amendments Committee

Bill 61

An Act to Prohibit the Sale and Use of Non-essential Pesticides

Acknowledge Chair

Acknowledge Law Amendments Committee
Members

Ladies & Gentlemen

- My introduction from Town of Wolfville
- Introduce Dr. Janet Eaton

Town of Wolfville Scenario:

- High level of sensitivity on issues around
the use of pesticides for “cosmetic” purposes
on private and public properties

- Since 1994 (16) years the Town of Wolfville has used no pesticides on town land including parks and playing fields

- 2005-2007 I chaired a town task force for which Janet Eaton was the lead researcher

“The goal of the Wolfville Pesticide Management Task Force was to facilitate the process of bringing before Council a recommendation for a pesticide policy

which would lead to the elimination of the

use of non-essential landscape pesticides for the Town of Wolfville and its citizens.”

- One bullet in the 5 bullet task force policy recommendation was:

“The Town shall work with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities and the Province of Nova Scotia to clear any legal obstacles that may limit the ability of a Nova Scotia Municipality to regulate the use of pesticides within its boundaries.”

- This was followed by a study of pesticide
- use issues by Gardner Pinfold with

recommendations

Pause

- Very pleased with the skeleton of “An Act to Prohibit the Sale and Use of Non-essential Pesticides”
- Look forward to having the regulations developed which will give the Act legs
- This isn't rocket science although the Act does depend in part on the Precautionary Principle; that is, that where there is evidence of linkages between some chemicals that are pesticides, and illness,

which there are, we should err on the side of caution and are obligated to act on behalf of our citizens

- This principle was clearly articulated in 2001 by the Supreme Court of Canada in the case of *Spraytech vs. Hudson (Town in Quebec)*

Pause

- Want to speak briefly to my own situation
 - Twice led the charge by presenting resolutions on banning pesticides to Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities fall

conventions – in both cases the resolution was unanimously accepted – by all 55 municipalities.

- The fact that there were close to 1700 responses to the Department of Environment call for public input speaks to the public interest around this issue.
- The fact that close to 80% of those responses favoured a ban tells you clearly where the public head space is on this issue.

Pause

ALARM!

○ People will raise issues of enforcement
by “the inspector” – the dreaded
inspector!

▪ Detail that fear in cases of:

➤ Smoking in indoor public places

➤ Smoking in cars with children

present

We don't have a bylaw
Enforcement officer

➤ Use of a phone while driving

➤ Use of child restraining devices

in autos

- It's largely a red herring in this instance, too, because the Police Act already gives police officers the authority (power) to enforce all provincial laws

- And additionally:

- In large measure the culture about

pesticides is changing as it has in the examples above

- Suasion will be a big influence on public attitude

- Education around this issue will be extensive and profound in its effort
- You won't be able to buy the prohibited products!
- A number of major Canadian retailers were well ahead of our curve by declaring they would not sell banned products:
 - Home Depot
 - Canadian Tire
 - WalMart

Pause

Since the HRM Pesticide Bylaw was put in place between 2000 and 2005 there has been a 53% increase in the number of landscape and lawn care service providers.

In addition, the number of persons employed in the industry is up – the average number of persons employed per company has increased.

In closing:

From what I can discern this legislation looks very, very responsive to the needs and wishes of:

- the general public
- the medical profession
- interest groups
- even responsible and enlightened landscape service providers

There are, and have been for a long time, significant issues, concerns and fears around the use of many chemicals for landscaping purposes on public and private properties.

- The Canadian Cancer Society
- Pesticide Free Nova Scotia
- UNSM's 55 municipalities
- the overwhelming expressions of the public in the call for input from the Department of the Environment

Since 1997 my Council and I have waited for this legislation.

I am overwhelmed by this government's response to the major concerns of:

Good work! I look forward to providing whatever assistance I can as the regulations are developed in the weeks ahead.