

Pesticides are sometimes used to improve the appearance of green spaces by controlling unwanted weeds and plants. When pesticides are used in this way, it is referred to as the cosmetic use of pesticides. It's important to note that our concern does not apply to using pesticides in agriculture to grow food, using pesticides to ensure public health and safety and using pesticides to prevent environmental damage.

The Canadian Cancer Society is very concerned about the cosmetic and non-essential use of potentially cancer-causing substances on green spaces.

Our position is based on the growing body of evidence suggesting a connection between pesticides and cancer. The cosmetic use of pesticides may cause harm and provides no health benefit. According to the precautionary principle, "When an activity raises threats of harm to human health or the environment, precautionary measures should be taken even if some cause-and-effect relationships are not fully established scientifically."

Most of the research to date has focused on occupational or workplace exposure linking exposure to non-Hodgkin lymphoma, leukemia, prostate cancer, kidney cancer, brain cancer and lung cancer. The World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has concluded that some substances used in pesticides are known, probable or possible carcinogens. There is also evidence that children may be especially vulnerable to the harmful effects of these chemicals.

A 2008 Ipsos Reid survey for the Canadian Cancer Society found that nearly 7 out of 10 Saskatchewan residents (close to 75%) are concerned that the use of cosmetic pesticides could threaten their health, the health of their children, their pets, and the environment. 85% say they would be willing to use safer alternatives on their lawns and gardens, if they were provided with information and tips.

Given this information, please answer the following questions:

1. As an elected official, would you be in favour of reducing or phasing out cosmetic pesticide use on green spaces, school grounds, public city gardens, parks and residential properties?

Yes, I would be in favour of moving away from the use of cosmetic pesticide uses and looking at other less invasive ways.

2. Would you as an elected official, commit to raising awareness about alternatives to pesticides, (85% of those surveyed would commit to trying alternatives), cosmetic use of toxic pesticides and the growing evidence of its links to cancer?

Yes I would be very supportive of this as there are many more alternatives to traditional pesticides that are proving effective and cost effective.

3. If elected, would you be willing to work towards reducing the use of cosmetic pesticides? If so, how?

Yes, as Mayor I would encourage Council to seek having the Administration work with you and other key stakeholders to craft a policy that would move us in this direction. There are best practices established in other municipalities and in our community that we can look to for how to achieve this.

4. As a role model and a community leader, would you support voluntarily eliminating the use of pesticides for cosmetic purposes on all municipal property, in much the same way as the Saskatoon Health Region has already done? The Saskatoon Health Region has eliminated the

use of herbicides on the green spaces of 4 of their hospital properties in Saskatoon. Their efforts were recognized by the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses Association, Lung Association of Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan Environmental Society among others.

Yes, I would welcome the opportunity.

Thank you for the opportunity to answer this questionnaire. I would be open to meeting with your members at any point during the campaign to discuss this issue and others that the Cancer Society would like addressed in our common pursuit of improving our wellbeing.

Kind regards,
Lenore Swystun
Your best candidate for Mayor
www.lenoreswystun.com