



March 21, 2006

To: Mayor Cousens and Members of Markham Council

Re: Pesticide Reduction Strategy

Pesticide Free Ontario recommends that:

Markham immediately proceed with the pesticide bylaw process as approved by Markham Council on June 28, 2005.

Pesticide Free Ontario

- Province-wide network of grassroots organizations
- Working to have pesticide bylaws adopted by municipalities in Ontario

Pesticide Reduction Strategy

- The work done by Markham's Pesticide Reduction Steering Committee is impressive;
- The education program is a good first step since public education programs are an important component of a strategy to reduce pesticide use among residents.

Markham Residents support a Pesticide Bylaw

- In October 2005, Pesticide Free Ontario commissioned a public opinion poll of Markham Residents;
- 63% of residents supported a bylaw to phase out lawn pesticides;
- 67% of residents supported a bylaw plus a public education program.

Advantages of bylaws

- Logical next step is to consult with Markham residents on a pesticide bylaw;
- Study released last year by the Canadian Centre for Pollution Prevention (*The Impact of Bylaws and Public Education Programs on Reducing the Cosmetic/Non Essential Residential Use of Pesticides* www.pestinfo.ca) found that

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municipalities that combined public education with a bylaw were significantly more successful in reducing pesticides;

- A bylaw in combination with public education led to pesticide use reductions of 51 to 90%, while education alone only reduced pesticide use by 10 to 24 %;
- Makes financial sense to incorporate education about a pesticide bylaw with education about pesticide alternatives because this approach does lead to significant reductions;
- Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that municipalities have the right to pass bylaws that protect the health of residents and cited the precautionary principle in their landmark decision;
- Bylaws level the playing field for lawn care companies;
- Canadians tend to be law-abiding and a bylaw is a powerful public education tool..