

Cosmetic or Nonessential Lawn Pesticides

Prepared for



By



October 2005

Methodology and Logistics

Objective

The following represents the results of a public opinion survey conducted for Pesticide Free Ontario (PFO) by Oraclepoll Research Ltd. The objective of this survey was to gauge the opinions of residents of the Town of Markham on a series of issues related to the use of cosmetic or nonessential lawn pesticides on their lawn or gardens.

Study Sample

A total of 525 respondents, 18 years of age and older were interviewed in the survey. The margin of error for this survey is $\pm 4.3\%$, 19/20 times.

Survey Method

The survey was conducted using computer-assisted techniques of telephone interviewing (CATI) and random number selection. Interviews were conducted in the respondents preferred language of choice by Oraclepoll Research Limited's multilingual call centre staff. A total of 20% of all interviews were monitored and the management of Oraclepoll Research Limited supervised 100%.

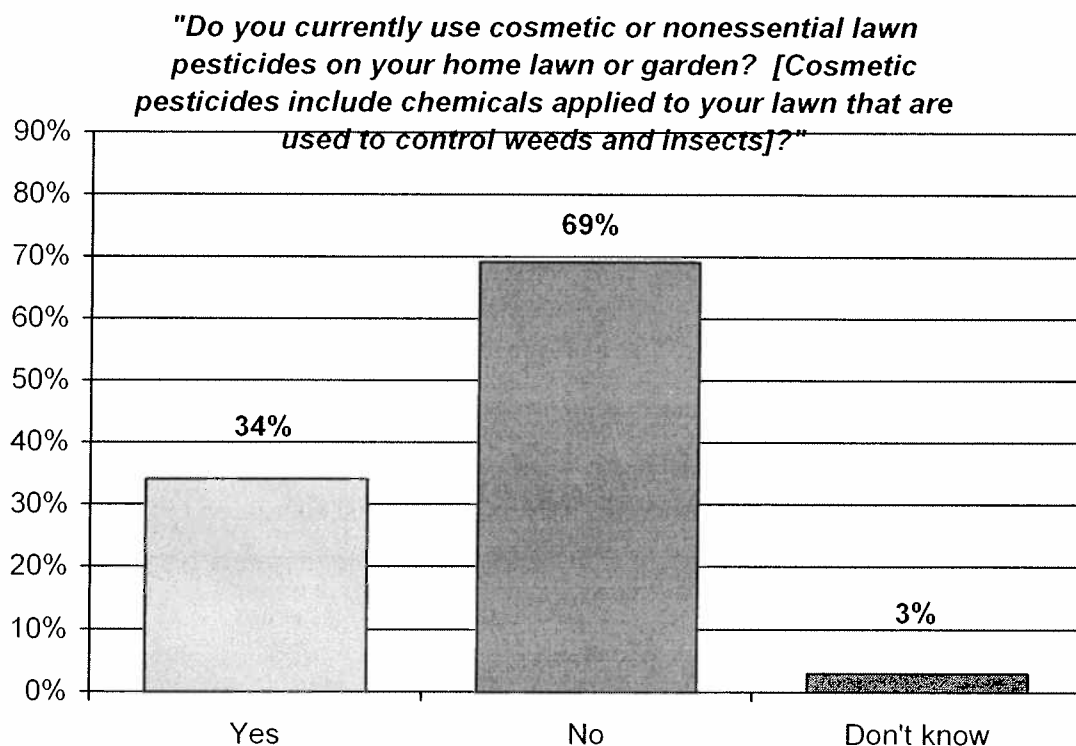
Logistics

Interviews were conducted between the days of October 19th to October 22nd, 2005. Initial calls were made from 5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. with call-backs of no-answers and busy numbers made on a (staggered) daily rotating basis up to 5 times (from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.) until contact was made. In addition, telephone interview appointments were attempted with those respondents unable to complete the survey at the time of contact.

Executive Summary

PESTICIDES USAGE

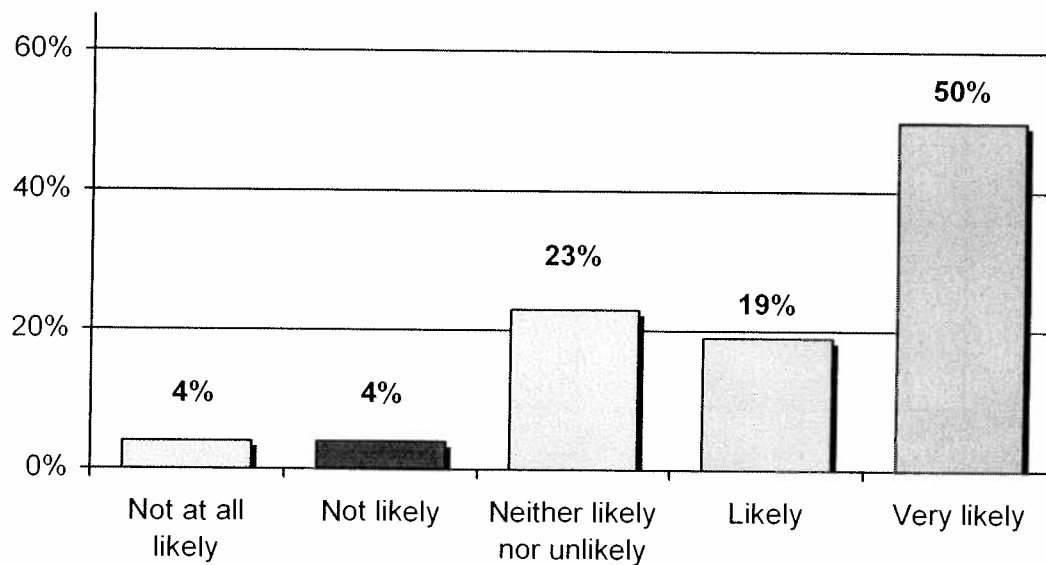
Respondents were first asked if they owned their home or if they were renters. Homeowners were then asked a series of questions related to their usage of cosmetic pesticides.



Slightly more than one-third of home owners (34%) currently use cosmetic pesticides. Usage was highest among those aged 35-54 (37%) and 55 and older (32%) and lowest among respondents in the 18-34 age group (27%).

The 34% of respondents that stated they currently use cosmetic pesticides were asked the following.

"If you were provided with information on methods to have a weed free lawn and garden without using cosmetic pesticides, what would be the likelihood that you would stop using them?"

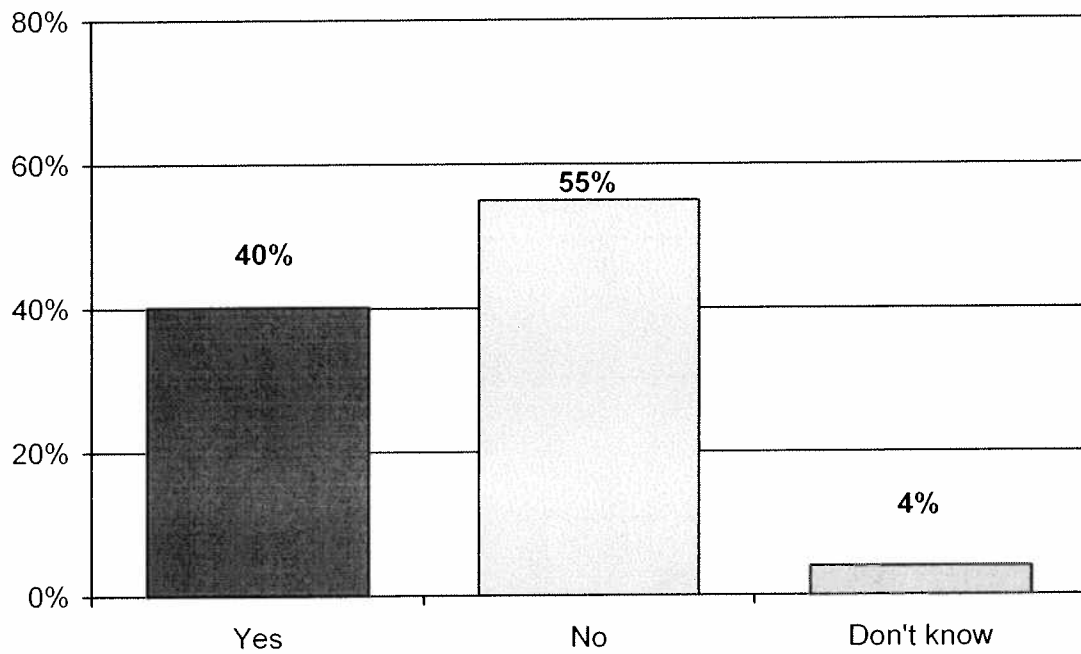


Almost seven in ten current pesticide users (69%) would be either likely or very likely to stop using these chemicals if they were provided with an alternative to having a weed free lawn, compared to only 8% that would not. A total of 23% were neutral as to whether or not they would discontinue the use of cosmetic pesticides.

Those more likely to stop using cosmetic pesticides were females (77%) compared to males (60%) and higher income earners in the \$75,000 and over cohort (77%) compared to those earning under \$50,000 (67%) and under \$35,000 (57%).

Homeowners not currently using cosmetic pesticides were asked the following.

"Have you ever used cosmetic pesticides on your lawn or garden?"



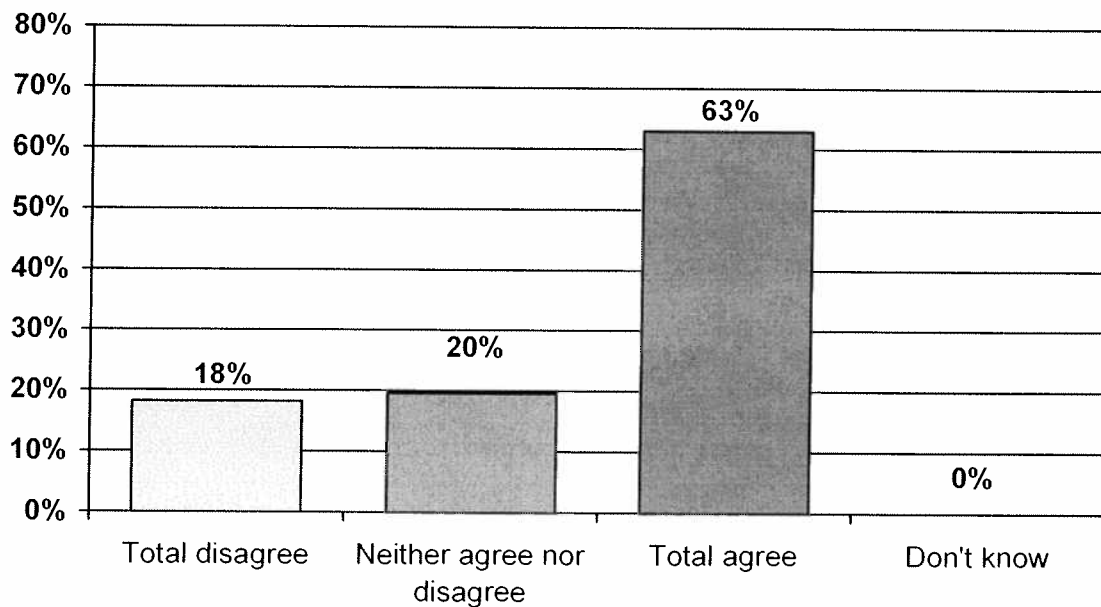
A total of 40% of homeowners not currently using cosmetic pesticides stated that they have used these chemicals on their lawns or gardens in the past.

RESTRICTION OF PESTICIDES

All respondents were read the following and were then asked to agree or disagree with a statement related to the phasing out of pesticides.

"The Town of Markham is considering the restriction of cosmetic or nonessential lawn pesticide use in the community. Please agree or disagree with the following statement using a scale from one strongly disagree to five strongly agree."

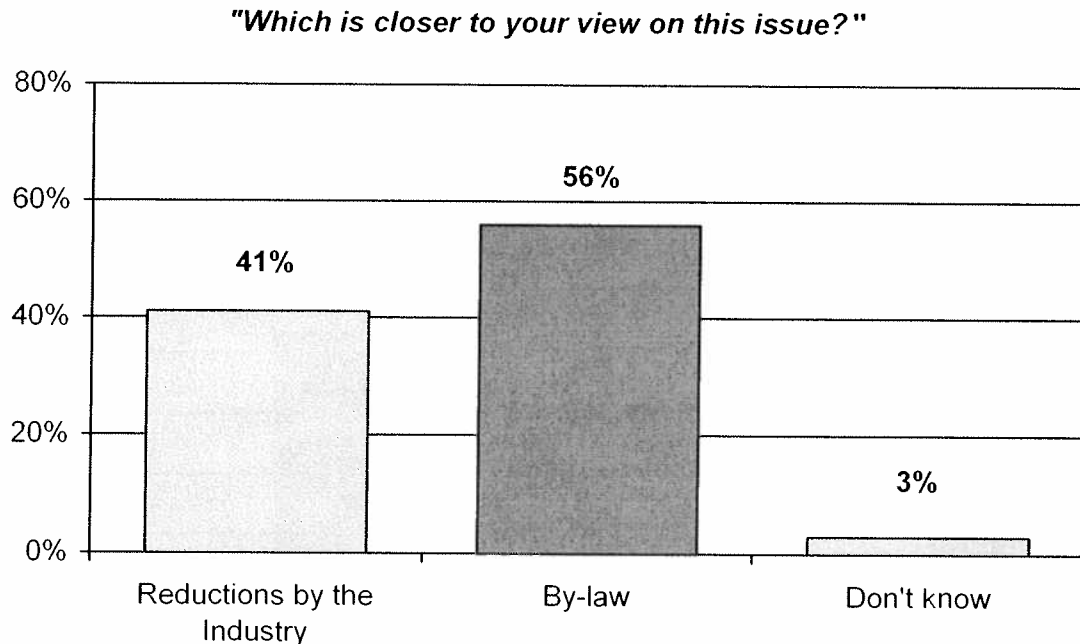
"The Town of Markham should pass a by-law phasing out the use of lawn pesticides, meaning that after the phase-out period, no pesticides could be used on Markham lawns."



A total of 63% of survey respondents agreed that the Town of Markham should pass a by-law phasing out the use of lawn pesticides, compared to only 18% that disagreed, while 20% were neutral on the topic.

All respondents were read the following and were then asked if they felt reductions should occur through reductions by the industry or through a by-law.

“The Town of Markham is considering reductions in lawn pesticide use. Some people feel these reductions are best achieved through reductions by the pesticide industry itself, while others feel that the Town of Markham should pass a bylaw restricting pesticide use.”



When asked if pesticide reductions would be best achieved by the industry or through a by-law, 56% of respondents stated that the Town should pass a by-law, compared to a lesser 41% that were of the opinion that voluntarily reductions would work best.

BUY-IN STATEMENTS

All respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the following statements.

BUY-IN STATEMENTS	TOTAL DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	TOTAL AGREE	DON'T KNOW
<i>Cosmetic or nonessential lawn pesticides used in my community <u>pose a threat to the environment</u> including wildlife, air quality and ground water</i>	11%	11%	77%	1%
<i>Cosmetic or nonessential lawn pesticides used in my community pose a <u>health threat to children</u></i>	16%	14%	67%	3%
<i>Cosmetic or nonessential lawn pesticides used in my community pose a <u>health threat to pets</u> such as cats and dogs</i>	17%	16%	63%	4%

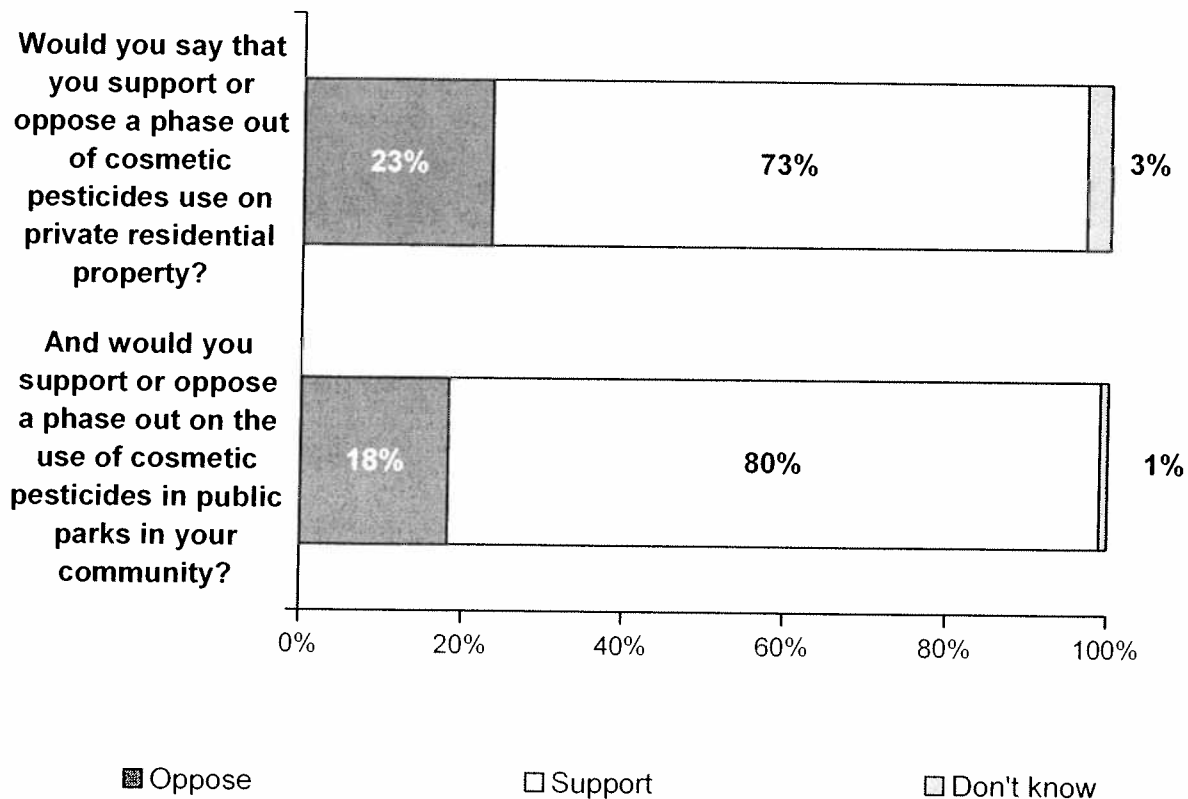
The strongest buy-in was with respect to the fact that cosmetic pesticides pose a threat to the environment, followed by a health threat to children and to pets.

PHASE OUT

Respondents were read a statement outlining how other communities are dealing with pesticides and they were then asked two questions about pesticide phase-outs.

“Towns and cities have the right to enact by-laws phasing out the use of cosmetic pesticides...a right that has been upheld by a recent Supreme Court ruling.

Many municipalities in Ontario, Quebec as well as other big cities across Canada (such as Toronto Vancouver & Halifax) have recently phased out the cosmetic use of pesticides on residential lawns. Toronto and Mississauga have all but eliminated pesticide use on weeds in local parks.”



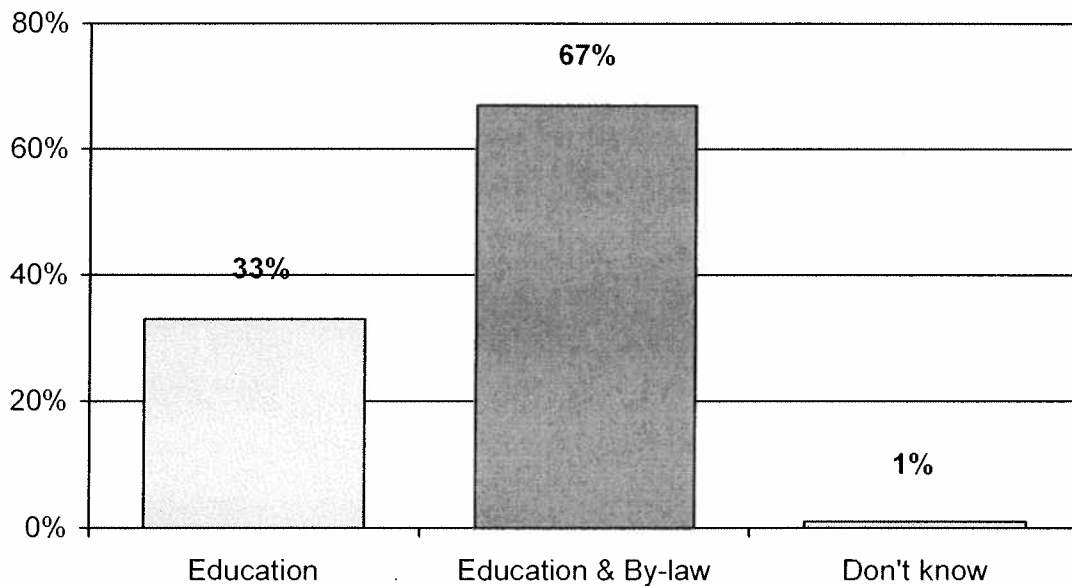
There is very strong support among eight in ten Markham residents (80%) for a phase out of cosmetic pesticides in public parks and by a lesser but still significant 73% for a phase out of pesticides on private residential properties.

BY - LAW & EDUCATION

Respondents were asked if a by-law alone or a by-law in conjunction with a public education program would work best.

“The Town of Markham is considering reductions in lawn pesticide use. Some people feel these reductions are best achieved through a public education program, while others feel the Town of Markham should BOTH run a public education program AND pass a bylaw restricting pesticide use.”

“Which is closer to your view on this issue?”



A two-thirds majority of Markham residents interviewed favor a by-law plus an education program compared to one third that support an education program only.

