Dealing with Pesticide Exemptions
BRUCE HAY, MANAGER OF PARKS OPERATIONS, CITY OF BRAMPTON

In brief point form, this article will explore the development of the City of Brampton’s pesticide policy.

Why Develop a Pesticide Policy?

- It is a consistent informational tool for your council, staff and the public.
- It is a road map for present and future activities
- Pesticide use is a very sensitive issue that requires you to take a position.
- To defend your position on pesticide use.

Pre-Policy Issues

- Current pesticide use practices.
- Determine what your pesticide use practices will be in 5 to 10 years. Include issues such as new products, environmental and health issues and public acceptance. Work back to create milestones.
- How much information have you provided to your council in the past and what is their understanding of the issues.
- Most important – what does the public want as mirrored by your elected officials.

Development of the Policy Document Requirements

- Corporate template
- Benchmarking with your peers. Don’t reinvent the wheel.
- Public and professional satisfaction. Develop thresholds you can live with.
- The use of public surveys and polls
- Public meetings vs. city council
- Building the communication plan

Dealing With People Who Oppose the Use of Pesticides

There are two types – individual residents and activists. Never disregard a member of your public because they appear to be an activist. They are the customer.

- Have concerned citizens and advocacy groups opposing pesticide use already approached your department or your council?
- Determine their objective through initial contact via phone, e-mail or the media. Is it 1) a complete ban, including agriculture (not likely); 2) cosmetic only; 3) synthetic only; or 4) antagonism?
- Plan your response and the use of the “cool off period.”
- Schedule your council presentation to coincide with their delegation. Be focused.
- Determine their level of sophistication.
- Use of experts. 1) What are their information sources? 2) Are they credible? And 3) How much support do they have in your community?
- Presentations and delegations to committees of council should contain: quality, applicable information, studies, etc.; the use of experts and their areas of expertise; determining the origin of the group and their tactics; the use of media; and compromise.

Legitimate Alternatives to Pesticides: More Tools for the Toolbox

- Where is the industry heading? IPM Accreditation
- Pesticide free zones
- Upgraded cultural practices on sportfields and high exposure areas
- Sand in playgrounds
- Mulching programs
- Aquacide weeds
- Biological controls
- Weed mats
- Increase mowing frequency
- Install more irrigation systems
Presentation of the Finished Document Should Include

- Policy Statement: How and when pesticides will be used.
- Purpose: Guidance to council, staff and the public.
- Procedure: Determining when and when not to use pesticides.
- Accountability: Who in the corporation is ultimately responsible?
- Administration: Department that maintains the program.
- Contacts: Names of staff members within the department.
- Information Sessions: With staff, council and the public.
- Annual Review: of policy and implementation of milestones.

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