

Conclusions (of this three part series)

Pesticides are thoroughly tested and the data are reviewed by the Canadian Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) prior to registration. Pesticide products that PMRA concludes have incomplete databases or that cannot be used safely are not granted registration and cannot be sold, imported, or used in Canada. Our country has the most stringent regulatory requirements in the world. Pesticides, like prescription drugs, *can* be used safely, provided label directions are followed. The recommended personal protective equipment should always be worn when handling and applying pesticides.

The benefits of using pesticides on turf include reduced potential for allergic reactions caused by weed pollen and insect stings and bites, positive health benefits associated with increased participation in outdoor sports such as soccer and golf, fewer sports injuries, reduced soil erosion resulting in less pollution of waterways etc., and the psychological benefits of improved aesthetics. The use of pesticides on residential property is a matter of personal choice which should be respected.

Reviews of sound, scientific, peer-reviewed data indicate that allegations suggesting occupational and bystander exposure to pesticides is associated with health effects such as asthma, cancer, endocrine disruption, developmental effects and neurological impairment in children, is currently *unfounded*. Unfortunately, the media's presentation of possible associations between pesticide use and health effects has served to create an irrational fear about pesticides among the general public.

As mentioned in Part 1 of this article, any pesticide ban approved by a municipality is a political decision based on emotion and not one based on sound science. This fact should be clearly communicated to the constituents of the municipalities involved. ♦

Editor's Note: The STA thanks Dr. Houghton for her informative article on Pesticide Exposure and Human Health. Our appreciation is extended to her for not only sharing her expertise but for all the time and energy spent in editing this information into three parts.

Weather watches, warnings & advisories from the Atmospheric Environment Service

For the safety of people and property, Environment Canada issues severe weather warnings, watches and advisories to the public via the media, weather outlets and Weatheradio Canada.

A *Weather Watch* alerts you that conditions are favourable for the development of severe weather. Watch the skies and listen for updated watches and possibly weather warnings.

A *Weather Warning* alerts you that severe weather is occurring or that hazardous weather is highly probable. Severe thunderstorm or tornado warnings may be issued less than one hour in advance. Other weather warnings may be issued six to twelve hours in advance.

A *Weather Advisory* means actual or expected weather conditions may cause general inconvenience or concern, but don't pose a serious enough threat to warrant a weather warning. An advisory may also be used when conditions show signs of becoming favourable for severe weather when the situation is not definite enough or too far in the future to justify a warning.

The following are some of the more common seasonal weather watches, warnings and advisories issued by Environment Canada. Note that criteria for warnings are established to meet local and regional needs and may vary slightly from region to region across Canada. Contact your nearest weather outlet to confirm criteria for your area.

Freezing rain warning. Expect slippery walking and driving conditions, and possible damage to trees and overhead wires due to rain freezing on contact to form a coating of ice. Avoid travel.

Wind warning. Expect winds blowing steadily at 60 km/h or more, or winds gusting to 90 km/h or more, for

at least one hour. Secure or put away loose objects such as outdoor furniture, put your car in the garage, and bring livestock to shelter. Definitely not a winter wonderland!



Blizzard warning. Expect snow or blowing snow, with a severe wind chill and visibility reduced to less than one kilometre, for four hours or more. Stock up on heating fuel and food. Stay indoors and wait out the storm.

Heavy snowfall warning. Expect a snowfall of 10 cm or more (15 cm or more in Ontario) in 12 hours or less. Travel could become hazardous.

Winter storm warning. Issued in Ontario when two or more winter conditions reach warning proportions (e.g. wind and snow, or freezing rain followed by heavy snowfall). Be prepared to cancel travel plans and stay indoors.

Wind chill warning. Expect very cold temperatures combining with wind to create outdoor conditions hazardous to human activity. Be prepared to stay indoors.

Cold wave advisory. Temperatures are expected to drop by 20°C or more within 18 hours. Dress warmly and check the weather forecast before travelling or venturing outdoors. ♦

To receive weather information when, where and how you want it, sign up for Environment Canada's free service e-Weather at:
www.weatheroffice.pyr.ec.gc.ca/e-weather/default_e.html