

**REPORT TO:** COUNCIL COMMITTEE  
Meeting of the 30<sup>th</sup> May 2005

**FROM:** Environmental Advisory Committee

**DATE:** 19 May 2005

**SUBJECT:** Findings from the EAC Pesticide Sub-committee

### **Recommendations:**

1. That Council directs the EAC to move forward with the creation and delivery of an educational program regarding the use of pesticides on private property.
2. That Council moves towards creating a by-law to reduce the usage of pesticides through the application of the principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM).

### **Background / Introduction:**

The issue of the use of pesticides for cosmetic purposes on private property within the City of Orillia was referred to the EAC at the Jan. 28, 2002 meeting of City Council. The referral was based on comments that were received by Council from residents of Orillia.

EAC responded by forming the Pesticide Sub-committee at its March 28, 2002 meeting. The Sub-committee conducted research and compiled it into binders, which were made available for public review at the Planning counter of City Hall. Progress reports on the activities of the Sub-committee were provided to Council. A summary report was prepared and submitted to the EAC on June 20, 2002. It was decided that further information was needed. Additional information was secured through a series of public presentations from identified experts in the field as identified by the EAC (*See Appendix 1*) as listed below:

- 1) Ken Pavely, Landscape Ontario, Feb. 6 2003
- 2) Katrina Miller, Toronto Environmental Alliance, Feb. 26 2003
- 3) Dr. Keith Solomon, Centre for Toxicology, University of Guelph, Feb. 26, 2003
- 4) Marina Whelan, Simcoe County District Health Unit, March 20, 2003
- 5) Dr. Tim Allman, Chemist, May 23, 2003

A forum was held in Council Chambers at City Hall on June 12, 2003 to solicit public response to the speaker series. The sub-committee recapped its findings for EAC on March 25, 2004 and continued to incorporate current research. A special meeting was held in Council Chambers on Oct. 6, 2004 where the public was invited to hear a summary by the Sub-committee. The EAC discussed the issue and developed the recommendations on October 21, 2004.

This is a complex issue and the EAC recognizes there is a diversity of opinion. Time was taken and an effort was made to hear various points of view before making the recommendations presented in this report.

## **Summary of Findings:**

The Pesticide Sub-committee reviewed literature from extensive resources, which is listed in the Table of Contents of the compiled research (*Appendix 2*). A summary report of the research was circulated to the EAC for review and discussion (*Appendix 3*). The main points are as follows:

<b><i>Those in favour of pesticide use raise the following issues:</i></b>	<b><i>Those against pesticide use raise the following issues:</i></b>
<p>Many organizations believe that using a regulated pesticide as directed does not have a detrimental impact on the health of humans and the ecosystem (including: Guelph Turfgrass Institute, Landscape Ontario, Crop Protection Institute, Ag Care, Industry Taskforce on 2,4, D, Dr. Solomon et al, <i>World Health Organization, European Commission, United States Environmental Protection Agency, United States National Cancer Institute</i>).</p>	<p>Many organizations believe that the presence and interactions of pesticides in the environment have a detrimental impact on the health of humans and the ecosystem (Simcoe County District Health Unit, Ontario Public Health Association, International Agency on Research on Cancer, Harvard Centre for Disease Prevention, Canadian Cancer Society, Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment, Canadian Nurses Association, Canadian Union of Postal Workers, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, <i>World Health Organization, European Commission, United States Environmental Protection Agency</i>).</p>
<p><i>Italicized organisations are regulatory in nature, and thus are technically neither for nor against pesticide use.</i></p>	
<p>Orillia City Council received letters advocating the use of pesticides. Specific issues included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved air quality</li> <li>• Property values may be affected</li> <li>• Job losses in pesticide application on lawns</li> <li>• Lack of scientific evidence for harm</li> <li>• Government standards</li> <li>• Plant allergies</li> <li>• Plant control</li> </ul>	<p>Orillia City Council received letters against the use of pesticides. Specific issues included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pollution of air &amp; water</li> <li>• Property values may be affected</li> <li>• Entrepreneurial opportunities for organic lawn care</li> <li>• Lack of scientific evidence for safety</li> <li>• Alternatives to pesticides exist</li> <li>• Protection of health &amp; environment</li> <li>• Unintended exposure &amp; effects</li> </ul>
<p>Industry is moving towards Integrated Pest Management (I.P.M.).</p>	<p>The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development recommended that the government prohibit registration of cosmetic pesticides, and that their use be phased out.</p>

Generally, improving soil health and the proper maintenance of a lawn leads to the improved turf health and minimization of pests. Turfgrass can be replaced with other landscaping options including low-maintenance ground covers. Organic lawn & garden care approaches and providers exist. Surveys made available to the EAC indicate public support to reduce pesticide usage.

More than 66 Canadian municipalities now have pesticide by-laws (including Vancouver, Toronto, Halifax). Indications suggest education programs alone are not as effective as education and by-laws together at reducing pesticide use.

### **Policy Impacts:**

The first recommendation made in this report, would have no impact on City of Orillia Policies.

The second recommendation made in this report has the following impacts on City of Orillia policies:

- Review of current City of Orillia policy for the use of pesticides on public lands with in the City of Orillia
- Adoption of a by-law and policies relating to the use of pesticides on private lands within the City of Orillia

### **Financial Impacts:**

The first recommendation in this report would have the following financial impact(s):

- financial commitment to develop and distribute educational materials and/or programmes to residents in the City of Orillia. ( Cost estimate \$3,000 - \$5,000)

The second recommendation in this report would have the following financial impact(s):

- financial commitment to facilitate the development of a by-law, including public input
- financial commitment to enforce the by-law; costs would be dependent on the level and nature of enforcement for the by-law (Cost estimate \$15,000 – \$30,000)

### **Comments from Other Departments:**

The City of Orillia Parks and Recreation Department and Public Works Department have been informed on an informal basis through the EAC secretary. If Council moves forward, these departments should be formally consulted, along with By-law enforcement.