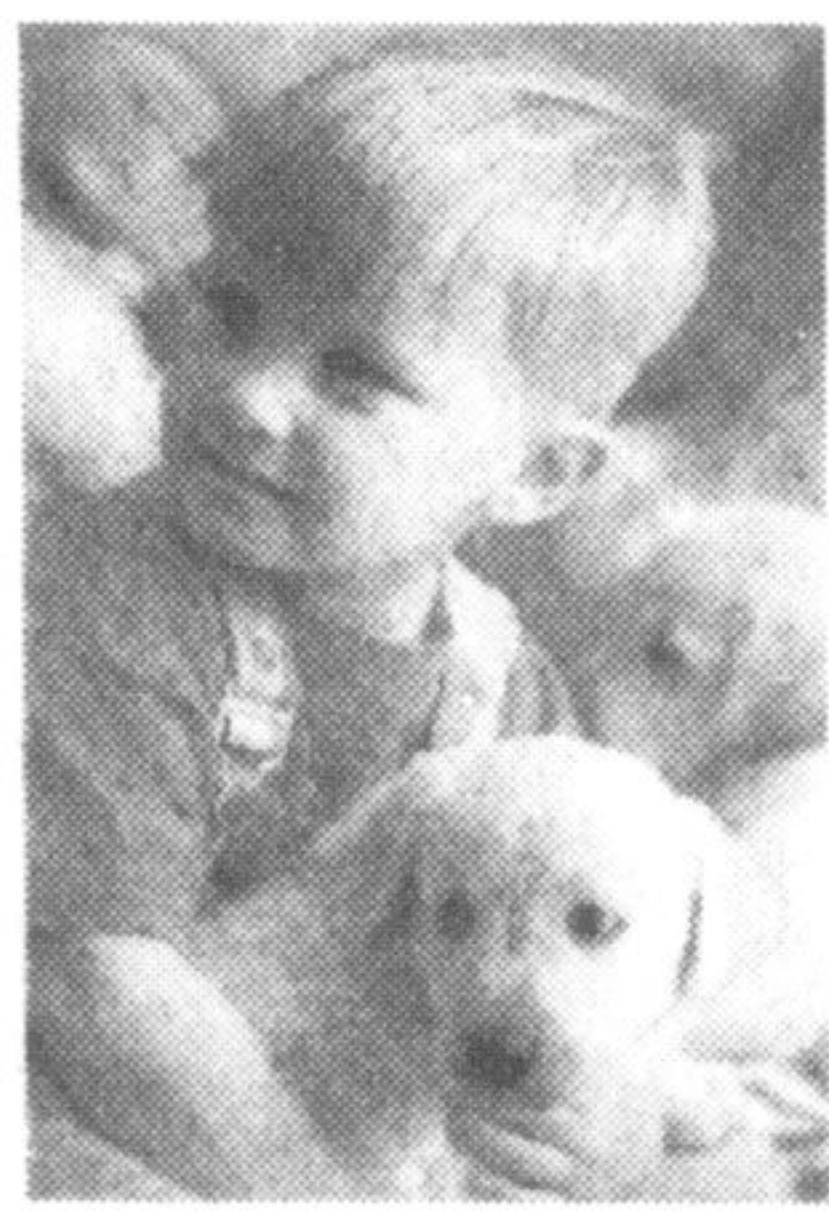


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# Region to launch education program on pesticide use

By **RICHARD VIVIAN**  
*The Champion*

Health hazards linked to pesticide use have led Halton Region to begin work on an education and awareness program on the cosmetic use of chemicals.

"Yes, there should be a little red flag raised — we should be concerned (about health effects relating to pesticide use), but cause and effect has not been shown. It may end up being shown (through future research) and that's why we need to exercise prudent avoidance," Dr. Bob Nosal, Halton's medical officer of health, told council Wednesday.

Dr. Nosal's comments follow the recent release of a report from the Halton Intermunicipal Review Committee on the Use of Pesticides. Outlined in the report are the health concerns — such as leukemias, lymphomas, reproductive effects and neurological effects — and how the public feels about pesticide use.

Based on a survey conducted as part of the report, 61.9 per cent of Halton residents feel pesticides have a somewhat negative or very negative impact on human health. Results also show 60.4 per cent of residents somewhat or strongly support a municipal ban on pesticide use for landscaping.

Included in the approved recommendation were the development of an educational program (including a point of sale component) and efforts to lobby the federal and provincial governments to continue aggressive pesticide research and to develop a "behind-the-counter" sales program.

Local municipalities were also encouraged to develop bylaws restricting the use of pesticides for cosmetic purposes.

Prior to approving Dr. Nosal's recommendation, councillors battled back and forth about whether it should be the municipalities or the Region that takes the lead role in developing an awareness program.

In a recorded vote of 10-7, the decision was made to make it a regional effort. "I think that we should continue to work as a team, because there are different levels of expertise. The way it reads now (before being amended to give the Region the leadership role) is that we're telling municipalities what to do," commented Burlington Councillor Mike Wallace, adding Burlington is currently taking a look at the use of pesticide use.

But the majority of councillors disagreed with suggestions it should be left to the municipalities, with several pointing to the individual smoking bylaws of each

municipality as an example of why a regional approach is needed.

"This isn't the big bad Region coming in and trying to take over. When the Town of Oakville and the City of Burlington open a health department, maybe I'll feel a little differently," said Oakville Councillor Kevin Flynn, pointing out the health expertise comes from the Halton Region Health Department.

"There is no intent here to not support the team on this. I think the intent here is to put the responsibility for health issues with the medical officer of health."

A pair of individual Oakville residents also spoke to the recommendation, saying the wording is too loose to be effective.

"These recommendations appear designed to allow the Region to carefully side-step responsibility for the general health and welfare of the populous. Furthermore, they provide only the most dilute directions to the four area municipalities," said Brian Hopkins, who's comments were echoed by Renee Lehnen.

"I would like to see firm recommendations to the area municipalities that they move forward with restrictions on the use of pesticides and that those directions be outlined in the recommendations."

# We Appreciate Your Patience

The Government of Ontario thanks everyone affected by the recent OPSEU strike for their patience. We would also like to welcome our OPSEU bargaining unit employees back to their jobs. The government values the work all civil servants do to serve the people of Ontario. It was not "business as usual" during the eight-week strike. Many of the services

the government provides to the public were disrupted. We look forward to fully restoring those services as quickly as possible, but it may take some time before all services are operating at the levels they were before the strike. Please check the Blue Pages in your telephone directory and call ahead, or check the list below for key information.

## Driver & Vehicle Licensing

- Driver's licences and driver instructor's licences with an expiry date of March 13, 2002 or later, will be extended to August 2, 2002.
- Disabled Persons Parking Permits, Oversize/Overweight Permits (annual), and Safety Standards and Safety Inspection certificates (partial list) will be extended to August 2, 2002.
- Driver exams missed as a result of the labour disruption will be rebooked on a priority basis.
- Vehicle licence plate stickers need to be renewed, as usual.
- ServiceOntario kiosk transactions will be available beginning May 21.
- For a complete list of driver and vehicle licensing services, please refer to [www.mto.gov.on.ca](http://www.mto.gov.on.ca) or call the MTO Info Line at 1-800-268-4686.

## Health Care Services

- If you require health services prior to renewing your health card or before you receive your new card, you will still be able to get health services and you may still use your expired card or health card number in most cases. For further information regarding health coverage, please call: toll-free: 1-800-268-1154, in Toronto: 416-314-5518, or TTY: 1-800-387-5559.
- The Assistive Devices Program will be accepting and processing all applications for funding on a first come first serve basis. Applications can be mailed, as usual, or couriered or dropped off at the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care offices at 5700 Yonge Street, seventh floor, Toronto, M2M 4K5.
- The Assistive Devices Program will be processing invoices for vendors. These should be sent directly to the ministry offices in Kingston.

## Services to Business and Consumers

- The following services are available May 6 to May 10, 12 noon to 5 p.m.:
  - Office of the Registrar General for birth-death-marriage certificates. (Emergency requests: proof of emergency circumstances must be presented.)
  - Business Registration or Incorporation.
  - Consumer mediation and consumer advice by telephone.
  - Land Registry Offices for essential and time-sensitive land registration transactions and searching; application review and emergency requests for birth-death-marriage certificates; and Personal Property Security Registrations and Incorporations (drop off for couriers at land registry offices to be sent to Toronto).
- Normal business hours resume May 13, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. for all services including searching of personal property liens and Ontario Business Connects.

## Social Services

- All Regional Offices of the Ministry of Community, Family and Children Services, including Ontario Disability Support Program and probation services, will be open to the public from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- In addition, probation services for young offenders may be arranged outside of these hours by appointment.
- The Family Responsibility Office will continue to process payments and resolve urgent issues. New issues can be faxed to (416) 240-2401. For payment or enforcement information, please use the automated information system: (416) 326-1818 or 1-800-267-7263.
- Adoption disclosure activities, approvals of international home studies and licences for private or international adoptions will be available from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

## Justice Services

- Some courthouses may have reduced court counter hours from 10 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. for up to a week, while other locations may have extended counter hours. Hours will be posted locally at each courthouse.
- Criminal Injuries Compensation Board offices will not conduct hearings until the week beginning May 27.
- All other services will continue to be provided.

## Education and Training Facilities and Programs

- W. Ross MacDonald School for the Blind and Deafblind will re-open Tuesday morning, May 7. All other Provincial and Demonstration Schools and residences will re-open Wednesday morning, May 8.
- Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) services for students studying in Ontario are available through financial aid offices at their institutions. All OSAP applications will be processed as they are received starting May 13. OSAP telephone services for students studying outside Ontario will resume on June 3. All students are reminded that they can apply for OSAP funding and check the status of their accounts through the web site at <http://osap.gov.on.ca>.
- Ontario Graduate Scholarship award winners will be informed of the outcome of the 2002-03 competition on or about May 27.
- Apprenticeship: some regional offices of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities will have reduced hours. Expect delays due to high volume of requests.

## Environmental Services

- Air Quality Index reports will be available within two

weeks on the Ministry of Environment and Energy's web site at: [www.airqualityontario.com/](http://www.airqualityontario.com/)

- There will be delays in processing approvals, permits, licences, water well records, Environmental Bill of Rights (EBR) information, and Environmental Assessment (EA) decisions.

## Workplace and Employment Services

- Employment Standards: if you have filed an employment standards claim during the strike, you will be advised in writing of the approximate length of time it will take to begin the processing of your claim.

## Government-owned and Operated Tourist Attractions and Parks

- Ontario Parks: Some provincial parks will re-open in time for the May 17 long weekend. Call your provincial park or visit [www.OntarioParks.com](http://www.OntarioParks.com) for the latest information.
- Hunters who want to renew their Outdoors Card or purchase a Moose Licence and enter the adult tag validation draw can now call the automated system at 1-800-288-1155. Please note: the deadline for applications to the draw is extended to June 14.

## Government Publications and General Information

- Publications Ontario telephone, online ordering and government bookstores — May 6 to 10: services available 12 noon to 5 p.m.
- Normal business hours resume May 13, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Government Information Centres are open.