

Ban pesticides provincewide, survey says

BY SERENA WILLOUGHBY
Staff Writer

Three-quarters of Ontarians support a provincewide ban of lawn and garden pesticides, says a poll commissioned by Markham lobby group Pesticide Free Ontario.

The group worked with Canadian Physicians for the Environment and hired Oracle to do a random survey of 1,000 Ontario residents in January. With a margin of error of about 3.1 per cent, the group found 71 per cent support a ban.

Pesticide Free Ontario is calling on the province to restrict lawn and

garden pesticides.

"Every resident of Ontario is entitled to protection from these unnecessary poisons," the group's spokesperson, Sari Mersen, said.

Pesticide Free Ontario is a network of 117 groups working with The Canadian Cancer Society, Ontario College of Family Physicians and the Canadian Medical Association.

It presented the findings to policy advisers in Environment Minister Laurel Broten's office Monday.

While Ms Mersen was encouraged by the meeting, the advisers admitted there was little chance of

drafting provincewide legislation before the next provincial election in October.

"This is not a political issue anymore; in addition to being harmful to human health, pesticides are petroleum based products and increase the production of greenhouse gases," Ms Mersen said.

In discussions regarding municipal bylaws, industry representatives have repeatedly stated all chemicals in lawn pesticides have been approved by federal regulators.

In York Region, Markham, New-

market, Georgina and Vaughan have pesticide bylaws in the works.

But Oak Ridges Conservative MPP Frank Klees says municipalities shouldn't have to struggle with the issue one by one. He was surprised the amount of people who support a pesticide ban is not higher.

"Very few people want to take a risk with their lives or the lives of their children when it comes to pesticides," he said.

The poll also showed there was little correlation between what political party the residents voted for and their view on pesticides. When those

polled were broken down by political party support, more than 60 per cent still supported a ban.

The Canadian Cancer society has called for controls on pesticides, since it has found chemicals in most pesticides are known carcinogens.

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For more information about pesticides, go to www.pesticidefree.ca

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York Region Transit Mobility Plus is a specialized shared-ride public transit service reserved for those persons who, due to physical or functional limitations, are unable to access conventional transit services. The York Region Transit Mobility Plus Eligibility Appeal Panel is a three member panel being established to hear appeals from persons who have been determined to be ineligible to receive Mobility Plus service. Two appointees are being sought to join the Manager of Mobility Plus on the Appeal Panel, as follows:

- Disabled Community Representative (1)
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Interested applicants are encouraged to review the Mobility Plus web site at <http://www.yrt.ca/specialized.asp> for more information.

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