



SUN-TRIBUNE FILE PHOTO

## Herbicide to cost town \$1,120 per acre

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manager of facilities and parks.

Fiesta is a mineral-based herbicide that utilizes iron chelate as the active ingredient, according to the company's website.

Weeds hate the compound, while grass has no adverse reaction to it.

People and pets can use a treated area within a couple of hours after it is applied, according to the company's website.

Fiesta is currently being tested on about 50 per cent of the municipality's open space, most of which is in the urban area, according to Richardson.

"Even though many municipalities have had success with it, we want to make sure it works well here," he said.

So far, so good.

"We are very happy with Fiesta. It is quite effective. We will know for certain once we get the second treatment done," Richardson said.

Using Fiesta this year will cost \$1,120 per acre, according to Richardson. Weedman is the company doing the spraying. It is only being applied twice this season to the

open spaces

The town's 33 acres of sports fields are being treated the old fashioned way – an integrated pest management program (IPM) of aerating, top dressing, over-seeding and cutting.

That program costs \$1,600 per acre for the entire season, according to Richardson.

"We're constantly told we have the best fields," he said.

The open spaces not being treated with Fiesta are also undergoing a less-intensive version of the IPM program.

The grass was cut weekly during the spring and then in the summer it will be reduced to every other week or as needed, according to Richardson.

It's impossible to maintain the sports field level of upkeep on all open fields, he said because it is very labour intensive.

"If you can do it often enough, it's quite effective," he said.

In 2009, a number of Canadian provinces banned synthetic herbicides, insecticides and fungicides for cosmetic use.



Stouffville resident Souvankham Thammavongsa recently won the Trillium Book award for English language poetry for her book *Light*.



## Writer earns 'miracle' award for poetry

BY SANDRA BOLAN  
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Souvankham Thammavongsa was so prepared for someone else to win the Trillium book award for poetry, she started clapping when her name was called.

Once she understood she won, Thammavongsa, 35, began crying.

"I realized for the first time I wasn't alone in my feelings and that really moved me," she said.

"I was so happy for the gratefulness."

The Stouffville resident won the Trillium Book award for English language poetry for her book *Light*.

"This was my last chance to win it because it was my third book," she said.

This was, however, the first time one of her books was shortlisted for the award.

"It felt almost like a miracle, really," she said.

In the spring of this year, *Light* won the CBC Bookie award in Canadian poetry.

Thammavongsa is not only a writer, but also a visual artist.

She earned an honourable mention last year in Latham Gallery's annual juried show. Her artwork was also featured in the gallery's 2013 curated show Home: Stories From Here and Away.

The book's 42 entries share a common theme: light. Whether it be illumination, weight or what its linguistic equivalent is in other languages.

The book was inspired by Donald Judd's sculpture of 75 aluminum boxes.

"I thought it was so interesting you could repeat a material like aluminum, yet each one was so different, but pulled together to create one project," she said.

The poem 'Perfect', about a young homeless woman who does her homework under the streetlights, took 20 years for Thammavongsa to write.

Another of the book's entries – 'Parsley', about a herb field that looks like a crowd cheering a football game, took an afternoon to come together.

Thammavongsa has been self-publishing her work since she was 16, making books from stationary

bought at card stores.

In 2003, one of the people to purchase Thammavongsa's books ended up becoming her publisher.

Thammavongsa became a poet because she heard fiction and other genre writers say their work was only good when it read like a poem.

"Well, why not just start off being a poet," she reasoned.

Thammavongsa also knew there was no money in being a poet, so for the past 13 years she has been working in the research department of a downtown Toronto company that provides independent financial advice.

Next up for Thammavongsa is a collection of short stories centred around difficult or unlovable female characters.

Thammavongsa said she is going against the grain of having lovable protagonists, because "people are more complicated than that".

She will also use the \$20,000 she won from the Trillium award to have her roof repaired — something she has avoided the past number of years.

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