

REGION OF OTTAWA-CARLETON
RÉGION D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT
RAPPORT

Our File/N/Réf. 03-07-98-0059
Your File/V/Réf.

DATE 19 November 1998

TO/DEST. Community Services Committee

FROM/EXP. Committee Co-ordinator

SUBJECT/OBJET **ENDORSEMENT OF LETTERS**

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

That the Community Services Committee recommend Council endorse the attached letters to Health Minister E. Witmer, Environment Minister N. Sterling and Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister A. Leach, and;

That this information be forwarded to other Regional Municipalities in Ontario to seek their support.

BACKGROUND

Councillor D. Holmes has submitted the attached documents and is requesting their endorsement by Committee and Council.

This material is respectfully submitted.

Approved by
M. J.

Beauregard

Attachs: (4)

REGION OF OTTAWA-CARLETON
RÉGION D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

MEMORANDUM
NOTE DE SERVICE

DATE October 30, 1998

TO/DEST. Members of the Community and Social Services Committee

FROM/EXP. Diane Holmes, Regional Councillor

SUBJECT/OBJET Endorsement of Letters

I will be requesting that Committee and Council endorse the attached letters to Ministers Sterling, Witmer and Leach.

I will also be asking that the RMOC send this information to the other Regional Municipalities in Ontario to seek their support.

Diane Holmes
Attach. (3)

October 7, 1998

The Hon. Elizabeth Witmer
Minister of Health
10th Fl., Hepburn Block
80 Grosvenor St.
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2C4

Dear Minister Witmer,

As we assume you are aware, federal pesticide registration policy has in the past focused on the effectiveness of pesticides and their use in agriculture and forestry. It has proven sadly inadequate to protect the health of Ontarians not in perfect health from incidental exposure to pesticides in crowded urban areas.

Although there are registered non-volatile attractant baits for cockroaches, the federal government still permits the spraying of entire apartments with diazinon, chlorpyrifos and xylene. There are municipal staff trained in forestry who consider it acceptable to spray the entire length of a residential street up to 20 meters in the air with nerve poisons because there might be aphids there, and the federal government still permits this to occur.

Your colleague, the Hon. Al Leach has drafted a new Municipal Act to provide, among other things, that Ontario municipalities may restrict pesticide use in urban areas for reasons of public health. However, the Pesticides Act, administered by the Ministry of the Environment, still prohibits all pesticide regulation other than what is provided by itself.

The **Health Dangers of Urban Use of Pesticides Working Group** of the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton therefore asks that you prevail on your colleague, the Minister of the Environment, to provide for an amendment to the Pesticides Act to permit municipalities to opt for a local preference option. This would allow for pesticide application in Ontario to be further restricted by municipalities for health reasons, or by Medical Officers of Health under the Health Protection and Promotion Act.

Yours truly,

Diane Holmes, Co-Chair
Health Dangers of Urban Use of Pesticides Working Group

cc: Alex Munter, Regional Councillor, Chair - Community Services Committee
Dr. Robert Cushman, Chief Medical Officer of Health, RMOC

October 9, 1998

The Hon. Al Leach
Minister of Municipal Affairs & Housing
17th Floor, 777 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5G 2E5

Dear Minister Leach,

We support the request of the Council of the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton that they be empowered to restrict pesticide use in their urban areas more than is appropriate in agricultural or forestry areas, for reasons of public health. As such, we have received a copy of your letter to the Regional Clerk informing her that you expect that the new Municipal Act will allow the RMOC to do that.

We welcome a clarification of the Municipal Act in this area, and trust that you will also make a matching provision in the Regional Municipalities Act. As Canadian courts have already ruled that powers equivalent to those in Ontario's present Municipal Act permit such municipal action in general, the problem in Ontario is not the Municipal Act, but the Pesticide Act.

The **Health Dangers of Urban Use of Pesticides Working Group** of the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton therefore asks that you prevail on your colleague, the Minister of the Environment, to provide for an amendment to the Pesticides Act to permit municipalities to opt for a local preference option.

Yours truly,

Diane Holmes, Co-Chair
Health Dangers of Urban Use of Pesticides

cc: Alex Munter, Regional Councillor, Chair - Community Services Committee
Dr. Robert Cushman, Chief Medical Officer of Health, RMOC

October 9, 1998

The Hon. Norm Sterling
Minister of the Environment
12th Floor, 135 St.Clair Ave. West
Toronto, Ontario
M4V 1P5

Minister Sterling,

As we trust you are aware, your colleague the Hon. Al Leach plans to introduce a new Municipal Act to specifically provide, among other things, that Ontario municipalities be empowered to restrict pesticide use in their urban areas more than is appropriate in agricultural or forestry areas, for reasons of public health. We welcome his clarification of the Municipal Act in this area. But, Canadian courts have already ruled that the powers equivalent to section 120 of Ontario's Municipal Act permit such municipal actions in general. The problem in Ontario is not the Municipal Act, but the Pesticides Act, for which you are responsible.

The federal registration system inadequately protects the health of Ontarians not in perfect health from incidental exposure to pesticides in crowded urban areas. Although there are registered non-volatile attractant baits for cockroaches, the federal government still permits the spraying of entire apartments with diazinon, chlorpyrifos and xylene. There have been incidences of municipal staff trained in forestry who consider it acceptable to spray the entire length of a residential street up to 20 meters in the air with nerve poisons because there might be aphids there. The laxity of the present legislation permits and possibly encourages the use of potentially very harmful chemicals.

The **Health Dangers of Urban Use of Pesticides Working Group** of the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton therefore asks that you provide an amendment to the Pesticides Act to permit municipalities to opt for a local preference option, allowing for pesticide application in Ontario to be further controlled by municipalities for health reasons.

Yours truly,

Diane Holmes, Co-Chair
Health Dangers of Urban Use of Pesticides Working Group

cc: Alex Munter, Regional Councillor, Chair - Community Services Committee
Dr. Robert Cushman, Chief Medical Officer of Health, RMOC