

Corporate Report

NO: R082

COUNCIL DATE: April 28, 2003



REGULAR

TO: **Mayor &
Council** DATE: **April 15,
2003**

FROM: **City Manager** FILE: **5280-23**

SUBJECT: **Integrated Pest Management**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive this report as information.

BACKGROUND

Following the appearance of a delegation from the Cloverdale Community Association before Council at the Regular meeting of April 7, 2003, staff were asked to provide a report on integrated pest management and initiatives to increase awareness amongst the public about alternative methods of pest control to reduce the use of pesticides.

DISCUSSION

Integrated Pest Management in the City of Surrey

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission has recently adopted an Integrated Pest Management Policy to control weeds, insects, diseases, molluscs, rodents and other pests within City parks and facilities (see IPM Policy, Appendix 1). The fundamental elements of this Policy are also used by the Engineering Department and are considered de facto a Corporate Policy, although not formally adopted by Council.

The IPM Policy is based on widely held principles of plant health care, ecologically based horticulture and forestry programs, the need to minimize risk to people and the environment, and community values. The IPM Policy was developed after a careful review of available literature from across North America, but has been tailored to meet Surrey's specific needs.

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Department has now operated under the IPM Policy for one complete calendar year, finding it to be a thorough and practical document to guide the City in the management of its parks and facilities. Key areas of departmental change driven by the document have been the development of alternative cultural practices, changes in planting design and changes in planting specifications to favour native plants and drought tolerant species. The *Waterwise*

Garden developed jointly by the Engineering Department and the Parks Division is a wonderful example of a project that fully embraces IPM principles in its design and operation, while meeting the needs of water conservation programs. The City's residential boulevard tree planting program is another example of adherence to IPM principles, whereby tree species are mixed along street fronts, avoiding monoculture plantings that can lead to disastrous pest infestations and early tree mortality. Staff now also routinely select hardy native plant materials when developing new parks, and use biological methods such as ladybug insect release to control common pests such as aphids rather than relying strictly on chemical controls.

Public Education for Surrey Residents

The Pest Management Regulatory Agency of Health Canada outlines the following responsibilities relating to pesticide in the *Fact Sheet on The Regulation of Pesticides in Canada* (March 2003):

Federal	Provincial/Territorial	Municipal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pesticide registration and re-evaluation • Human health and safety • Environmental impact • Value • Alternative strategies • Compliance and enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation, sale, use, storage and disposal • Training, certification and licensing of applicators and vendors • Permits and use restrictions • Compliance and enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By-laws for municipal (and in some cases, private and residential) lands.

Based on the table above, the senior government has the lead role in educating the public on alternative strategies to pesticide use, and in fact has demonstrated their commitment to this through Health Canada's recent initiative, the **Healthy Lawns Strategy**. This strategy includes a package of tips for the home gardener (Appendix 2) that provides information on how to maintain a healthy lawn without using pesticides. The brochures are available online at www.healthylawns.net in a printable PDF format, or can be ordered online at a cost of \$1.48 per package. Information Officers at Health Canada indicate that there is interest from some retail lawn and garden stores, and that these materials may soon be available to homeowners through this a distribution mechanism.

In addition to senior government initiatives, the City of Surrey can make its case for being involved in public education at a civic level on the following basis:

- Decreased anxiety amongst some residents about the effect of pesticides in the environment.
- Reduced numbers of complaints and enquiries of City staff.
- Lessened impacts on natural watercourses.
- Lowered amounts of pesticide containers/pesticide residues in the solid waste stream.
- Reduced volumes of pesticides in the liquid waste stream.
- Better quality green waste products, due to lower amounts of pesticide residues in green waste.

In a joint project between the City and the Surrey Environmental Education Centre, a brochure entitled "*Natural Home and Garden Care*" was produced for distribution to residents through civic facilities. This brochure focused on promoting reduced reliance on pesticides in home gardening. At the present time, the brochure is out of print, but will be updated and printed for circulation again. Staff will explore the potential to post this information to the City's website, and may be able to provide a link to Health Canada's *Healthy Lawns* web site as well. The Summer Leisure Guide will contain an article that promotes alternative gardening practices to reduce reliance on pesticides, and a similar article will also be placed in City Page at the start of the summer.

In January of this year, staff joined an inter municipal committee whose goal is to develop generic educational materials for public distribution at a cost that will be lower than would otherwise be achievable by individual cities. The committee is developing these materials in a template format that will then be used by the cities and municipalities in delivering public education. This committee has had discussions with the BC Landscape and Nursery Association that may lead to joint development of these materials.

CONCLUSION

The City has a new, comprehensive Integrated Pest Management Policy in place, and is working within the Policy to reduce reliance on pesticide use. Information on alternative gardening practices to reduce homeowner reliance on pesticides is available in a brand new pamphlet from Health Canada, available as download from their web site, or as a printed pamphlet available for \$1.48 each. The City will continue to produce information for residents, making the information available through the Leisure Guide, on City Page, and through updating and re-printing of an existing brochure. An inter municipal initiative is now underway to produce templates for generic public information, into which Surrey will be able to add its logo and critical messaging.

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Appendix 1

Integrated Pest Management Policy

Appendix 2

Health Canada's Healthy Lawns Tips