

URGENT MESSAGE TO ALL THOSE WHO LOVE TO PLAY GOLF

November 18, 2011

The Government of the Province of British Columbia is currently conducting a consultation exercise to determine if it should establish "NEW LEGISLATION" prohibiting the use and sale of all "cosmetic" pesticides in BC. A bipartisan special committee has been established to gather information and make recommendations to the Legislative Assembly on how to proceed on this issue. The special committee has invited all to participate in the consultation by completing an on-line questionnaire or by sending a written submission, **GO TO:** <https://www.leg.bc.ca/pesticidescommittee/> .

THE CONSULTATION PROCESS IS ONLY OPEN UNTIL DECEMBER 16, 2011 AND THE GOLF INDUSTRY NEEDS YOUR HELP TO ENSURE THAT GOLF COURSES WILL NOT BE PREVENTED FROM USING THESE PRODUCTS.

OUR POSITION:

ALL PESTICIDES USED IN THE GOLF INDUSTRY ARE THE MOST STRINGENTLY TESTED AND RIGOROUSLY REGULATED PRODUCTS THAT ARE FEDERALLY REGISTERED AND APPROVED BY HEALTH CANADA FOR USE ON TURFGRASS. THESE PRODUCTS ARE APPLIED ONLY BY PROVINCIALLY LICENSED PROFESSIONALS AND POSE NO UNACCEPTABLE RISK WHEN USED ACCORDING TO MANUFACTURERS' DIRECTIONS.

STRONG EXISTING LEGISLATION:

Existing legislation mandates that Integrated Pest Management (IPM) be used. As turfgrass managers we do not make the distinction of "cosmetic and non-cosmetic" pesticides, but make every effort to have the strongest stand of turfgrass possible by practicing good IPM and turf managers would also call it "Integrated Plant Management". Good IPM includes using pesticides when environmental conditions make it absolutely necessary, as well as best water management, cultural practices (topdressing and aerifying), fertility, and mowing practices to maintain acceptable playing conditions. Pesticides are significantly more expensive than any other product used on golf courses and are often used as a last resort to control pests.

WHAT TURF DAMAGE CAN BE EXPECTED WITHOUT USE OF PESTICIDES:

There are some diseases and insect activity (Figure 1.) that if left untreated can kill turfgrass in as little as 24 hours when environmental conditions favour the pest.



FIGURE 1. DAMAGE FROM ANIMALS DIGGING FOR INSECT GRUBS IN TURFGRASS OVER NIGHT and PYTHIUM ROOT ROT TURF DISEASE.

Without the use of fungicides (which are pesticides) snow mold would kill much of the turfgrass (see figure 2.) on putting greens, tees, and fairways every winter, leaving the golf course with unplayable conditions and costly repairs.



FIGURE 2. FUSARIUM (SNOW MOLD) DAMAGE ON PUTTING GREEN AND TEE DECK AND FAIRWAYS.

Turfgrass damage and recovery varies from year to year depending on the weather. For snow covered courses, turfgrass managers could anticipate, on average, that it would take until mid-June to get back to industry standard playing conditions. For those golf courses in more temperate climates, fusarium patch (snow mold) has similar potential to do turfgrass damage throughout the whole year if left unchecked.

OUR POSITION:

- 1) THE PEST MANAGEMENT REGULATORY AGENCY (PMRA) HAS INDICATED THAT ALL PESTICIDES USED IN THE GOLF INDUSTRY ARE THE MOST STRINGENTLY TESTED AND RIGOROUSLY REGULATED PRODUCTS AND POSE NO UNACCEPTABLE RISK TO HUMAN HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT WHEN USED ACCORDING TO MANUFACTURERS' DIRECTIONS.
- 2) WE DO NOT MAKE A DISTINCTION BETWEEN "COSMETIC AND NON COSMETIC" PESTICIDES.
- 3) EXISTING FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION IS MORE THAN SUFFICIENT TO PROTECT HUMAN HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

CALL TO ACTION:

As your turfgrass managers, we are asking for your support in making yours and our voices heard to the provincial government. Tell the special committee all of the reasons why golf is important to you; including the benefits to, golfer's health, the environment, the economy, and charitable events in our province.

THANK YOU, AND PLEASE, IF YOU VALUE YOUR GOLF COURSE'S PLAYING CONDITIONS, GET INVOLVED BEFORE DECEMBER 16, 2011.

Respectfully submitted,
Your Turfgrass Manager / Superintendent
BC's Golf Courses

We (the turf managers) do not presume to tell anyone how they should answer each question, or how to write a submission, however we believe these answers will give us the best opportunity to succeed in letting the government know how to proceed on these issues from the golf industry's perspective. **GO TO:** <https://www.leg.bc.ca/pesticidescommittee/>.

QUESTIONNAIRE:

Do you believe some uses of pesticides are solely cosmetic? NO

Do you support a ban on the sale and use of pesticides used solely for cosmetic purposes? NO

Why do you oppose a ban on the sale and use of pesticides, including those used solely for cosmetic purposes? EXISTING LEGISLATION IS SUFFICIENT.

Which of the following outdoor areas should be included in a possible ban on the sale and use of pesticides, including those used for cosmetic purposes? I OPPOSE A BAN.

When deciding which pesticides to ban or restrict, what criteria should be used? I OPPOSE A BAN.

Which of the following business sectors should be exempt from a possible ban on the sale and use of pesticides, including those used for cosmetic purposes? ALL.

How could a ban on the cosmetic use of pesticides be best implemented? EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGNS

In which cases do you consider the use of pesticides unnecessary? OTHER. I oppose a ban, however if a ban where to be placed it should only be on private citizens/home owner applying pesticides on their own to RESIDENTIAL LAWNS AND PRIVATE GARDENS

Which statement best describes your view? PESTICIDES SHOULD BE APPLIED ONLY BY TRAINED INDIVIDUALS.

WRITTEN SUBMISSION:

To whom it may concern;

I am sure you are fully aware of the significant contribution that golf, in all its facets, makes to the many parts of British Columbia. Economically speaking golf contributes over \$4 BILLION in gross production and employs nearly 50,000 people in BC alone. The government's tax revenue from golf exceeds \$400 million annually and draws nearly 2 million players to BC each year. Golf is the most played sport in Canada, 15% more than even hockey and in BC alone there are over 25,000 charitable events at golf courses. Golf adds to the health of an individual; in fact golfers on average live healthier lifestyles than a non golfing person and live 2.5 years longer. In BC, golf courses contribute over 200,000 hectares of green space to the urban/sub-urban environment, including over 40,000 hectares of wildlife habitat in unmanaged areas.

Please carefully consider that Health Canada and the professional scientists at the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) have already done what is necessary to protect all the citizens of Canada equally thru current, very stringent, legislation on pesticides. Any change in legislation will undermine the public's trust in the PMRA and maybe viewed unfavorably by the federal government.

The golf industry does not view pesticides as cosmetic and without these tools as part of the existing Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategy a change in legislation will threaten all aspects of the golf industry in BC. We will lose our standing as a world class destination for golfers to come play golf. We will be a "have not" province with respect to golf.

Respectfully submitted,
