

Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment – the national voice of physicians on the environment and health

CAPE Pesticide Campaign Wins in London



The London Free Press

WORLD WATCHING CUP
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SPORTS D1, 6

STANLEY CUP
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SPORTS D1

IN THE SWING
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TODAY C1

Partly sunny. High 24° Low 14° Details on Page B2

TUESDAY, JUNE 13, 2006

www.lfreepress.com section A

London bans pesticides

The 13-6 vote, after a two-hour debate, allows exemptions such as sports fields and farms.

BY JOE BELANGER
Free Press City Hall Reporter

In two years, Londoners won't be allowed to kill their dandelions — or any other weeds — with pesticides. Sensing the political winds in an election year, city council voted 13-6 last night in favour of a bylaw banning the cosmetic use of pesticides.

The bylaw takes effect in September 2008, giving industry and residents three growing seasons to adjust. "It's the right thing to do," said an elated Coun. Bill Armstrong, who led the push for a bylaw. Two key issues to be resolved are how the bylaw will be enforced and the breadth of a public education campaign.

City staff estimate enforcement will cost up to \$300,000 a year, while an education campaign could cost \$300,000 — nearly \$1 million over three years.

HOW COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTED

► **In favour of a pesticide ban:** Mayor Anne Marie DeCicca, Controller Gord Hanes and councillors Fred Tenequik, Bevie MacDonald, David Winesinger, Susan Eagle, Sandy White, Judy Bryant, Ab Chabuz, Cheryl Miller, Joni Baechler, Bill Armstrong and Harold Usher.

► **Opposed:** Deputy Mayor Tam Cozzell, controllers Ibad Pabball and Ross Monteith and councillors Roger Carand, Bob Rider and Paul Van Meerbergen.

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A CAPE CAMPAIGN TO PHASE-OUT TOXIC LAWN PRODUCTS ENDED in victory this summer when London city council voted 13-6 to ban most pesticide applications on private and public property.

The new bylaw comes into effect in September, 2008.

"It's an enormous victory," said CAPE's Executive Director, Gideon Forman. "The way we see it, the new bylaw protects 350,000 people. That's a huge number of citizens who will no longer be exposed to some very toxic substances."

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From the President's Corner

IT'S AUTUMN AGAIN, AND OUR MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT HAVE GONE back to their seats. Government is back in full operation and the environment is high on the agenda. The Harper government has a new clean air plan and the Green Party has a new leader. Liberal Party leadership hopefuls are launching their environment platforms, while the NDP is promoting its 5-point green plan.

...continued on page 2

UPCOMING AGM – Notice of the Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment, November 5th - 6th, 2006 (Sunday and Monday) in Toronto at CAPE's office: 130 Spadina Avenue, Suite 301
Mark your calendar and see you in Toronto!

CAPE Wins Gold!



Pesticide work honoured with national award

ON JUNE 5TH, CAPE RECEIVED A PRESTIGIOUS CANADIAN Environment Award (Gold) at a gala presentation in Vancouver. Sponsored annually by the Government of Canada and *Canadian Geographic Magazine*, the Canadian Environment Awards recognize "individuals and groups of Canadians who have made outstanding contributions" to the protection of the country's ecology. CAPE was honoured in the "Environmental Health" category for its cross-Canada pesticide education work.

It was a doubly exciting evening as Groupe Eco-Action – a leader in the movement to make hospitals and health clinics more environmentally friendly – was also honoured. Groupe Eco-Action is the brainchild of CAPE Vice President Dr. Jean Zigby.

After winning the Award – which came with \$5,000 cash – CAPE received generous letters of congratulation from the President of the Canadian Medical Association and the CEO of the Ontario College of Family Physicians. The prize money will go toward CAPE's on-going pesticide bylaw campaign.

"This award recognizes work done by CAPE members over many years," said Executive Director Gideon Forman. "We're deeply appreciative of their contributions to environmental health."

CAPE Pesticide Campaign ...continued from page 1

CAPE, in partnership with the Canadian Cancer Society, the Ontario College of Family Physicians, and the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, launched its London pesticide campaign in December, 2005. In February, CAPE and the Cancer Society released polling showing 74% of Londoners favour a pesticide phase-out on private property. The poll is widely credited with re-igniting the city's pesticide debate and alerting local politicians to the issue.

"The *London Free Press* said 'the tide turned' when we released our poll," Forman explained. "I think that's true."

CAPE doctors, led by Chair of the Board John Howard, met with London councillors to explain the science behind pesticides and the very real health risks – especially for children. "I think we won because we never engaged in mudslinging," said Dr. Howard. "We presented the research and stuck to the science."

President's Corner...continued from page 1

There's even more action happening in government department offices and parliamentary committee rooms. Health Canada and Environment Canada have finished their categorization of the Domestic Substances List in time for the long awaited September 14th deadline. The categorization looked at the list of 23,000 chemicals historically used in Canada, flagging about 4000 substances as the most worrisome.

The excitement now is over what will happen next. There is no deadline for dealing with the 4000 substances. We will have to wait to see how quickly the government will act to eliminate the worst chemicals and to manage those that can't or don't need to be eliminated completely.

The review of the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act* (CEPA) has restarted and groups like CAPE are pushing for strong deadlines to deal with the dirty 4000. But the review will take time to complete and a government commitment to action is needed now. CAPE sent a letter to the Ministers of Health and of the Environment, asking them to honour their commitment to protect Canadians and their environment from persistent and toxic chemicals.

Both the Senate and House environment committees are reviewing CEPA, listening to presentations, and sifting through the submissions. Health groups, environmental and labour organizations, aboriginal groups and scientists have all expressed their concerns about the legislation. The chemical industry, the fertilizer companies, the consumer products trade organizations, and the mining associations have expressed theirs.

CAPE's plan for strengthening CEPA was captured in a written submission. A summary of our recommendations can be found on page 3.

In addition, a CEPA sign-on letter to the Prime Minister has been circulated by prominent scientist Dr. David Schindler calling for certain key changes to improve the Act. Scientists and health professionals who would like to sign on should email their full name, title, department, institution, telephone and email to cepaletter@medialine.ca.

Dr. Kapil Khatter, CAPE President



As part of the campaign, CAPE and its partners launched a series of advertisements in local newspapers. The ads featured a photo of two young children and the caption, "London's pesticide debate isn't about politics. It's about our kids."

"I think the ads were very useful," said Forman. "They helped focus the debate right where we wanted it – on children's health. I remember one city councillor who was wavering on the issue clipped the ad and taped it to his office door. After that, I knew we had his vote."

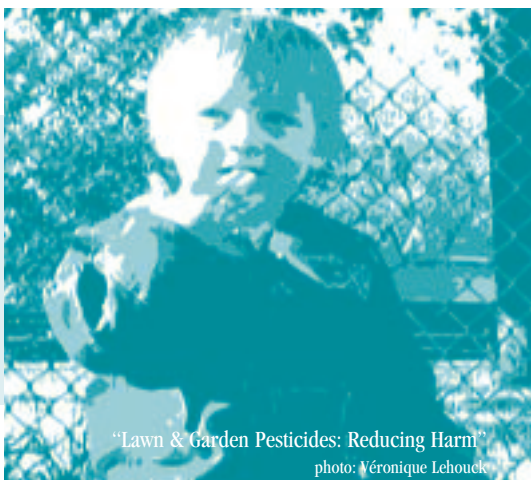
Although centered in London, the campaign was national in scope. "CAPE members from across the country wrote letters, made calls, and sent e-mails," said Forman. "It was a team effort and my warmest thanks goes to our members in every province."

The Canadian Environmental Protection Act: Not Suitable for Young Children

A PARLIAMENTARY REVIEW OF THE CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION Act (CEPA) is currently underway. This presents a critical opportunity to make changes to the legislation in order to better protect Canadians, especially children, from exposure to harmful pollution and toxic substances. CAPE has submitted recommendations to the federal government strongly urging the following key changes to the Act:

- The categorization of CEPA substances should include special consideration and explicit provisions for the protection of children and other vulnerable populations.
- CEPA should be amended to prescribe swift mandatory timelines for all potentially toxic substances from assessment through to regulation including virtual elimination.
- CEPA should explicitly assign the burden of proof to manufacturers (and importers) to demonstrate substances in use are safe, similar to the clause in the Pest Control Products Act.
- CEPA should explicitly provide the authority to regulate toxic substances in consumer products. This regulation should occur on a substance basis, rather than a product basis, so that toxic substances are banned or restricted in consumer products broadly.
- CEPA should be amended to include a requirement that chemicals should be substituted for safer alternatives where they exist.
- CEPA should explicitly declare the Great Lakes basin a “vulnerable” area and commit to specific pollution reduction targets consistent with the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

To advocate for these recommendations or to make a submission to government, write to: House Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development: envi@parl.gc.ca; and, Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Sustainable Development: eenr-eern@sen.parl.gc.ca.



“Lawn & Garden Pesticides: Reducing Harm”
photo: Véronique Lehouck

Lawn & Garden Pesticides: Reducing Harm NOW AVAILABLE!

CAPE’s long-awaited video on lawn and garden pesticides. This unique 10 minute video sets out the scientific evidence linking common household pesticides to a variety of serious illnesses, including cancer, reproductive problems, and neurological diseases. It offers information from the Ontario College of Family Physicians’ ground-breaking pesticide study and sets out safe lawncare alternatives. *Excellent for showing at public meetings or for educating local politicians.*

To order your copy of the video, please contact Farrah Khan, Executive Assistant, at : farrah@cape.ca

I would like to join CAPE in working for a healthier environment

Last Name/First Name _____

Dr Ms. Mr. Miss Mrs. Other _____

Address _____

City _____ Province _____ Postal Code _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Membership

- Members \$100
- Supporters (*Honorary mention and a free copy of The Canadian Guide to Health and the Environment*) \$200
- Students, retirees, those with limited income \$25
- Member Organizations (*one vote per organization*) \$50
(*My cheque is made out to the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment*)
- I would like updates on CAPE-related activities. Please put me on the CAPENEWS listserv (*for members only*).
- I want to get involved in CAPE.

Donations

I am sending a donation of:

- \$50 \$100 \$500 \$1000 Other _____ to support CAPE's environmental advocacy work (*My cheque is made out to the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment*).
- Please take a donation of \$ _____ from my account each month. (*I have attached a voided cheque and signed below*)

Signature _____

- I would like a charitable tax receipt for my donation. I understand that these donations will only be used for research and education activities. (*My cheque is made out to the Canadian Health and Environment Education and Research Foundation (CHEER)*)
- Check here if you do not want your name shared with other like-minded organizations.

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ECO Friends

This feature section contains a brief synopsis of a group that shares CAPE's basic perspectives.

Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO)

The RNAO promotes the nursing profession and healthy public policy. Their assistance with CAPE's campaigns over the years has proven to be invaluable.

CAPE first linked arms with the RNAO during the Toronto pesticide campaign, which resulted in a pesticide bylaw in 2003. They went on to support successful pesticide campaigns in London and Peterborough, and continue to assist with similar efforts in other municipalities.

The RNAO is also concerned with other determinants of health and advocates on issues related to air pollutants, greenhouse gases, and toxic emissions. Currently, they are developing a position paper on the health impacts of global warming.

For more information about the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, please contact Kim Jarvi, kjarvi@rnao.org.

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The London Community Foundation
Hundreds of individual CAPE members