



Partners for Naturally Green

Pesticide Education & Awareness Campaign

**2005 Canadian Pollution Prevention
Roundtable Victoria, B.C. June 1, 2005**

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Background

2001: Supreme Court of Canada
decision on Hudson, Quebec

Public pressure for municipal bylaw
increased in Ontario

Public health concern associated
with cosmetic use of pesticides



Evolution of Partners for Naturally Green:

Four local municipalities & regional government

Duplication of efforts

Health concerns

Report to regional council



Partners:

Town of Halton Hills

Town of Milton

Town of Oakville

City of Burlington

Regional Municipality of Halton

Landscape Ontario



Education & Awareness Development:

Consultation with Stakeholders

Survey Research

Report to regional council

Budget \$100,000

Identity/brand development



Objective:

Increase awareness & educate the public on the potential health risks of pesticide use & alternative / preventative methods to create healthy lawns & gardens



Key Messages:

Be naturally green

Reduce pesticide use

Use preventative/alternative methods

Responsible use

Reduce health risks

Consider neighbours



Audience:

Homeowners

Community Groups

PAM (Pesticide Alternatives for Milton)

HOPE (Healthy Options People & Env't)

GOD (Gardens Off Drugs)

BSDC (Burlington Sustainable
Development Committee)



Activities:

Brochures, lawn signs, stickers

Print & radio ads 

P&R guides & partner websites

Displays – events & public sites

Direct mailings & newsletters

Media releases

Health notes articles

Backyard composters – logo



AVOID THE USE OF PESTICIDES & GROW A HEALTHY LAWN

NATURALLY GREEN

ABOUT PESTICIDES

Pesticides are chemical or biological substances used to destroy or control insects, weeds, plant diseases, and other pests. Pesticides are sold most commonly as liquid, granular, dusts, or baits. They can include:

- Herbicides** - lawn and garden products, such as weed and grass killers (weed & Feed)
- Insecticides** - chinch bug and grub control products, termite control products
- Fungicides** - disease control products (some duct) containing foot chemicals (chlorine), wood preservatives (Copper Chromium Arsenic)
- Other pesticides** - flea and tick sprays, some tickers, flea collars, and bath solutions

PESTICIDES & YOUR HEALTH

Pesticides can put children, adults, and even pets at risk. They can be exposed while pesticides are being sprayed or applied, and/or after they have entered the environment. Pesticides can enter the body by swallowing, breathing, and being absorbed through the skin.

Children are at greater risk than adults because of their small size and under-developed immune systems. Areas closest to the ground are often where higher levels of pesticides are generally found. This puts children at further risk because they tend to play on the grass and ground, pushing figures, objects, or even soil into their mouths.

Symptoms of accidental over-exposure to pesticides may include:

- headaches
- nausea
- dizziness
- stomach cramps
- drowsiness
- skin and eye irritation

If you suspect pesticide poisoning, contact your doctor or the poison control centre immediately at 1-800-368-8777.

PESTICIDES & THE ENVIRONMENT

When it rains, pesticides can be carried by runoff into our creeks, rivers, the waterfront and Lake Ontario. Some pesticides can also kill beneficial soil bacteria, earthworms, snails, fish, birds, fish, honeybees, and other similar species.

GROW A HEALTHY LAWN

A healthy lawn can:

- Control soil erosion
- Preserve quality of surface and ground water
- Provide clean air to breathe
- Reduce dust and pollen problems
- Purify pollution by reducing carbon dioxide and replenishing oxygen
- Reduce noise pollution
- Cool the air and act as a natural air conditioner
- Increase the market value of your property
- Reduce the stress of urban life

HOW NATURE HELPS

Nature provides its own form of pest control. Know your helpers and what they do:

Bats, weasels	Eat insects
Birds	Feed on grubs
Earthworms	Soil aerators Bring organic matter from the surface down to plant roots
Ladybugs, lace wings, dragon flies	Eat aphids
Spiders	Eat insects
Toads	Eat insects, worms, caterpillars, aphids, flies

SAFE SOLUTIONS TO LAWN CARE

Dandelions
Like many weeds, dandelions grow in bare patches and prevent grass from growing. Get rid of dandelions naturally by digging out the entire root to a depth of at least 7.5 cm (3 inches).

Grubs
Grubs can cause your grass to wilt and turn brown. Dig up a small section of grass. If you can see them, you have them. Control of grubs can also be successful by using nematodes (available at your garden centre).

Chinch Bugs
Chinch bugs live to eat grass. Grass infested with chinch bugs turns yellow and patches die off. Dry, sunny days and hot soil make them more active. Reduce chinch bug infestation naturally by watering them by aerating and top-dressing with compost, watering properly, and mowing high.

Catgrass
Catgrass is considered a weed, spread by seed and grows in poor soil and bare patches. Get rid of catgrass naturally by hand-picking it before it goes to seed.

Caring for flowers & shrubs

- Use pest-resistant plants
- Top-dress with 2.5 cm (1 inch) of compost to reduce weeds and improve soil health
- Use insecticidal soaps and horticultural oils directly on insects



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN HALTON?

A public education and awareness-raising program has been developed to inform the public about the potential risks of pesticide use and alternatives that are available. The Region of Halton, area municipalities, and Lambton Kent are delivering the program to the community. The program supports the policy of "providing evidence" if you do not need to use pesticides around your home, then you should avoid using them.

NATURALLY GREEN

Halton Region Millennium Garden

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Partners for Naturally Green:
905-825-8000
Toll Free: 1-888-ANALCON (1-888-442-5866)
TTY: 905-827-9533
www.region.halton.on.ca

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT (IPM)

IPM is an ecological approach to the management of pest health problems based first on horticultural practices, and when needed, control (biological, cultural, genetic, or mechanical), using chemical treatments only when necessary. IPM operates within a framework of protecting human health, respect for the diversity of ecosystems, and protecting the environment. IPM aims to reduce and control the populations of harmful organisms, rather than to destroy them.

SAFE USE

If you decide that a pesticide is necessary to control an infestation, consider the following:

- Consult with a licensed professional to treat the problem first before considering pesticide use
- Properly identify the insect, weed, disease, or other pest you are trying to control
- Read with an informed comprehension
- Compare labels and warning symbols
- Select products that are least toxic (e.g. insecticidal soaps) or non-toxic (biological pesticides (e.g. nematodes))
- Select products that are sold in small amounts and are easy to use
- Only apply the pesticide to the location where there is an infestation - spot treat
- Ask your lawn care company about alternatives that don't use pesticides
- Avoid buying unnecessary scheduled pesticide applications

PROTECT YOURSELF

In most cases, there is a safer, more natural way to deal with pests, but if you do feel that you need to use a pesticide, you should do the following:

- Read the label and follow directions
- Wear protective clothing (mask, goggles and gloves)
- Never spray in windy conditions
- Tell your neighbours ahead of time
- Keep people, especially children, and pets away from the pesticide-treated area
- If you smell your pesticides, look them up!

SAFE DISPOSAL

For safe disposal information and waste management services, call 905-825-8000. Toll Free: 1-888-ANALCON (1-888-442-5866). To safely dispose of pesticides and other Household Hazardous Waste free of charge, go to Halton's Household Hazardous Waste Depot at:

**6400 Regional Road #26, Milton
Monday through Saturday
8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.**

TEN STEPS TO BE NATURALLY GREEN

- 1. Overseed**
Overseeding your lawn, particularly on the bare patches in the spring or fall, followed by a light application of compost will thicken your lawn and crowd out weeds. Ensure soilless seedlings by harping with a rake or rolling. Be sure to keep seedbeds moist but not overly wet until established.
- 2. Mow high**
Set your lawn mower at 7.5 cm (3 inches) and mow your lawn when it reaches 11 cm (4.5 inches) in height to encourage deep roots. Never remove more than one-third of the grass blade at any one mowing, as this will weaken the grass. Sharpen mower blades regularly, because dull blades tear and stress grass, increasing the chance for disease.
- 3. Grasscycle**
Leave grass clippings on the lawn (as a natural mulch). This decreases needs by up to 50%, provides 30% of fertilizer needs and helps keep the soil cool and moist.
- 4. Spread compost**
Topdress lightly and frequently with compost, ideally after aeration. This helps reduce weeds, lowers water requirements, and decreases winter injury if done in late fall. Adding compost improves the soil, which is where plant health begins.
- 5. Water roots deeply**
Your lawn needs only 2.5 cm (1 inch) of water per week for deep, healthy root growth. If there's no rain, water your lawn twice a week, in early morning or early evening to avoid evaporation. Be sure to target brilliant material and not hard surfaces, as this is wasteful. Excessive watering is harmful to plants.
- 6. Help your lawn breathe**
Soil can get compacted from ordinary use. This restricts air, water, and compost from getting to the plant roots. The most effective method to relieve compaction is core aeration, where small, dense plugs of soil are removed (minimum depth 6 cm / 2 1/2 inches). They break up by raking and left on the surface. Core aerators can be rented.
- 7. Feed the soil**
Use organic or slow release fertilizer, which provides a natural slow-release nitrogen along with top-dressing and grasscycling. Available at garden centres, organic fertilizers can include bone and blood meal, fish emulsions, and seaweed. Soil tests are recommended to determine pH (phosphorous, potassium), pH, and micronutrient needs.
- 8. Protect your helpers**
Your lawn's soil is home to many living things. Most of these organisms are beneficial to your lawn and many are killed when pesticides are used.
- 9. Control pests naturally**
There are alternatives to pesticides! Weeds can be removed by hand. Nematodes, small worms purchased from garden centres, can be used for grub control.
- 10. Try something different**
Consider alternatives to grass, such as shrubs, vines, perennials and ground covers. Some native plants, including wildflowers, may be suitable for your yard. Ask your garden centre.

Pesticide Exchange:

Partner: Waste Management

Purpose: Encourage residents to turn in their old/unused pesticides in exchange for info and giveaways

Community Based Social Marketing:

Reinforce messages of campaign by engaging the community

Annual event





Partners for Naturally Green:

905-825-6000
1-866-4HALTON (1-866-442-5866)
TTY 905-827-9833
www.region.halton.on.ca

Get Rid of Your Pesticides & Be Naturally Green!



You are invited to turn in your old or unused pesticides in exchange for FREE gardening giveaways, info on growing a healthy lawn, and a chance to win a wagon full of lawn and garden supplies!

Pesticide-Exchange Day, Saturday, June 11, 2005 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Halton's Waste Management Site, 5400 Reg. Rd. #25, Milton

This event is part of a public awareness raising program developed to educate residents about the potential risks of pesticide use and alternative methods to creating healthy lawns and gardens. The Partners for Naturally Green include:



**Pledge to be Naturally Green and you will be entered into a
draw for a wagon FULL of lawn and garden supplies!**



PLEDGE TO BE NATURALLY GREEN & WIN!

I pledge to reduce pesticide use on my property, to be aware of alternatives to pesticides, and to encourage my neighbours to do the same.

First Name:

Last Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Please take a moment to answer a few questions:

1. So far this year, have you used pesticides on your lawn or garden?

Yes No

If yes, was this to treat individual weeds, or did you apply the pesticide to the whole lawn?

Individual weeds Whole lawn Both

2. How did you hear about this event? (please check all that apply)

Mail Newspaper Word of Mouth TV

Bring completed ballot to Halton Waste Management Site, 5400 Reg. Rd. #25 (Milton) Pesticide Exchange Day, Sat. June 11
OR mail to Halton Region Health Dept., 1151 Bronte Rd. Oakville, L6M 3L1 by June 30, 2005.

Point of Purchase

Pilot project with retailer: Burlington

Timing: April – October 2004

Purpose: To reach DIY homeowners - determine whether info about biological and cultural control methods would influence purchasing behaviour.

Materials: Shelf talkers & tear offs

Evaluation: Intercept interviews






TEN STEPS TO BE NATURALLY GREEN

- 1. Overseed**
Overseed lawn in spring or fall, and follow with a light application of compost.
- 2. Mow high**
Set lawn mower height at 7.5 cm (3") and mow lawn when it reaches 11 cm (4.5").
- 3. Grasscycle**
Leave grass clippings on lawn (as a natural mulch).
- 4. Spread Compost**
Top-dress lightly and frequently with compost, ideally after aeration.
- 5. Water roots deeply**
Your lawn needs only 2.5 cm (1") of water per week for deep, healthy root growth.


PARTNERS FOR NATURALLY GREEN
Tel: 905-825-6000 Toll free: 1-866-4HALTON (1-866-442-5886) TTY: 905-827-5833
www.region.halton.on.ca



- Spread compost on your lawn
- Overseed your lawn
- Leave grass clippings on your lawn
- Mow your lawn high (3")
- Water roots deeply (1" per week)
- Feed the soil with organic or slow release fertilizer
- Control pests naturally
- Try something different & select alternatives to grass



PARTNERS FOR NATURALLY GREEN



- 6. Help your lawn breathe**
The most effective method to relieve compaction is core aeration.
- 7. Feed the soil**
Use organic or slow release fertilizer, along with top-dressing and grasscycling.
- 8. Protect your helpers**
Most organisms in your lawn's soil are beneficial and many are killed when pesticides are used.
- 9. Control pests naturally**
Weeds can be removed by hand.
Nematodes (small worms) can be used for grub control.
- 10. Try something different**
Consider alternatives to grass, such as shrubs, vines, perennials and ground covers.

Evaluation:

Pesticide Exchange - vehicle and pesticide collection totals

POP - response rates, sales data, recommendations

RRFSS - survey & awareness level



Lessons Learned:

Partnerships in delivering the program – essential

Messaging with key stakeholders – need to align

Community Based Social Marketing – effective in raising awareness



Next Steps:

Demonstration sites

Informative Displays

Continue pesticide exchange

Advocacy strategies

Senior levels of government

Retail Council & Consumer Assoc.



Partners for Naturally Green

c/o Halton Region Health Department

Tel: 905-825-6000

www.region.halton.on.ca/health

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