



City of North Port
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
DEPARTMENT
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the North Port Commission

THRU: A. Jerome Fletcher II, ICMA-CM, City Manager

THRU: Jason Yarborough, ICMA-CM, Assistant City Manager

THRU: Alaina Ray, AICP, Development Services Department, Director

THRU: Lori Barnes, AICP, Development Services Department, Assistant Director

FROM: Jeremy Rogus, Arborist, Staff Liaison to the Environmental Advisory Board

SUBJECT: Advisement to City Commission from the EAB to reduce or eliminate usage of toxic pesticides/herbicides and substitute environmentally friendly non-toxic products

DATE: January 8, 2024

Honorable Mayor and Members of the North Port Commission,

Code of the City of North Port Chapter 4, Boards and Committees – Article IX, Environmental Advisory Board – Section 4-182, states that The Environmental Advisory Board (EAB) shall advise the City Commission on matters pertaining to preserving and promoting wildlife, habitat protection, trees, the City’s natural and environmental resources, its flora and fauna, tree planting and care, beautification of public spaces, and safeguarding environmental quality for the future.

On January 8, 2024, during their regular meeting, the EAB discussed and made motion to approve the attached advisement to City Commission to reduce or eliminate usage of toxic pesticides/herbicides.

Attachments:

- A. Advisement to City Commission from the EAB to reduce or eliminate usage of toxic pesticides/herbicides and substitute environmentally friendly non-toxic products

Attachment A
Page 1 of 3

Dear Mr. Fletcher and North Port City Commissioners,

As decision makers, it is imperative that you become aware of the growing body of evidence in scientific literature showing that pesticide exposure can adversely affect endocrine, neurological, immune, and respiratory systems in humans, even at low levels.

Pesticides are designed to be toxic. The suffix 'cide' is derived from Latin. It means 'to kill'. Of the most commonly used pesticides, nineteen (19) are linked with cancer, twenty-one (21) with reproductive effects, thirteen (13) are linked with birth defects, twenty-six (26) with liver or kidney damage, fifteen (15) with neurotoxicity, and eleven (11) with disruption of the endocrine (hormonal) system.

Children are especially sensitive to pesticide exposure. Children take in more pesticides relative to their size and weight, are more physical in their environment, running, touching, and playing outdoors, and their bodies and brains are still developing. Acute and chronic, high and low level exposures to chemicals in the environments of children may cause damage during periods of special vulnerability.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has stated, "...Children's exposure to pesticides should be limited as much as possible."

In 2016, dozens of public health experts stated in a scientific consensus statement about children's brain development that, "the current system in the United States for evaluating scientific evidence and making health-based decisions about environmental chemicals is fundamentally broken. To help reduce the unacceptably high prevalence of neurodevelopmental disorders in our children, we must eliminate or significantly reduce exposures to chemicals that contribute to these conditions."

We are awaiting the list of specific environmental chemicals utilized by the City of North Port but research suggests it may include Glyphosphate, 2, 4-D, BTI, Naled or Dibrom, Anvil, and Zenivex or Etofenprox.

You can play a key role in protecting those most vulnerable and preventing diseases linked to pesticide exposure. There are proven alternatives to using toxic pesticides in our public spaces/schools/ common areas.

Organic land management practices are cost-effective, and are increasingly being implemented in communities throughout the U.S.

Examples include Harvard and Yale Universities, Irvine, California, Springfield, Massachusetts, Montgomery County, Maryland, Yellow Springs, Ohio and many others.

Attachment A
Page 2 of 3

Please find included a cost comparison report between natural organic turf and conventional below. Organic saves money in the long term due to reduced inputs, including the need for less fertilizer and irrigation.

The Environmental Advisory Board would like to recommend that City Commission, the new Natural Resources Manager, and the City of North Port Public Works Department work to make North Port, FL a non-toxic community and push us to the forefront of environmental conservatorship. Our current and future generations are depending on us to make beneficial decisions that will prevent harm to all living creatures. As my daughter always says... if there are no bees then there is no me.

Thank you,

Environmental Advisory Board:

Desiree Holland
William English
Jessica Eik
Erin Hall
Casey McGowan
Lola Robinson
Linda Amos
Amber Clayton

References

Pesticide-Induced Diseases Database <http://www.beyondpesticides.org/resources/> pesticide-induced-diseases-database/overview

Health effects of 30 commonly used pesticides <http://www.beyondpesticides.org/assets/media/documents/lawn/factsheets/30health.pdf>

Children and Pesticides Don't Mix <http://www.beyondpesticides.org/assets/media/documents/lawn/factsheets/Pesticide.children.dontmix.pdf>

"Pesticide exposure in children." Roberts, James R., and Catherine J. Karr. Pediatrics 130.6 (2012): e1765-e1788.

Children's Exposure to Pesticides and Childhood Cancers <https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/pages/Children's-Exposure-to-Pesticide-and-Childhood-Cancers.aspx>

Children and chemicals, World Health Organization <http://www.who.int/ceh/capacity/>

Project TENDR: Targeting Environmental Neuro-Developmental Risks The TENDR Consensus Statement <https://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/doi/10.1289/EHP358>

Attachment A

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Map of US Pesticide Reform Policies - pesticide policies adopted by local communities

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1VLpVWvifO2JOrgxf1-d1DLyDruE&ll=29.015963011806722%2C-76.59037817578127&z=4>

Resources

A Cost Comparison of Conventional (Chemical) Turf Management and Natural (Organic) Turf Management for School Athletic Fields <http://www.grassrootsinfo.org/pdf/turfcomparisonreport.pdf>

Beyond Pesticides list of products compatible with organic landscape management
<https://beyondpesticides.org/programs/lawns-and-landscapes/tools-for-change/> products-compatible-with-organic-landscape-management