

What BC's Political Parties said about Cancer Issues for May 12, 2009 Election.

The Canadian Cancer Society, BC and Yukon Division, wrote the BC Liberal Party, the BC NDP, the Green Party of BC, and the BC Conservatives asking how the parties are addressing four important cancer-related issues.

Here's how the parties responded on a provincial pesticide ban and right to know legislation:

If elected, will your party ban, the sale, use and application of pesticides on private lawns and gardens as well as public parks, and recreational facilities for cosmetic purposes? (Question 5)

BC Liberal Party

"We are always prepared to look at any proposals that aim to reduce the risks of cancer. With respect to this particular idea, the Minister of Environment has been on the record stating that he has directed his ministry to prepare an options paper to examine the basis for this proposal and potential actions. We have requested that Health Canada, the responsible agent, review whether the use of herbicide fertilizer lawn products should be discontinued. Additionally, in 2005, we enacted the new Integrated Pest Management Act that for the first time in BC requires notification and consent from individuals before pesticides can be used around their property.

The BC Liberal government will continue to work with Health Canada to ensure that British Columbians enjoy safe and healthy surroundings."

BC NDP

"Yes. The NDP will end the sale of pesticides for residential and cosmetic use to help protect public health, safety and the environment, following the lead of 17 municipalities and the provinces of Ontario, Quebec and PEI. This approach is not intended for the agricultural sector which is separately regulated; golf course use will be specifically addressed."

Green Party of BC

"Yes. There are many non-toxic ways to deal with undesirable plants in our lived environment. Pesticides have no place in a healthy society."

If elected, will your party implement Right to Know (product labelling) Legislation? (Question 6)

BC Liberal Party

"Product Labelling is the responsibility of the federal government under the Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act. It is difficult for any individual province to implement a mandatory labeling scheme. Both the cost and the small market size are prohibitive. The federal government is best equipped to review labelling from a national perspective."

BC NDP

"Yes. The NDP introduced a Private Members' Bill, the Right to Know Act, 2007, that requires suppliers and producers to warn consumers if their products expose them to recognized toxic substances or to genetically engineered foods. This includes using hazard labels that clearly identify carcinogens, reproductive and developmental toxins, hormone disruptors, mutagens and sensitizers with a clear signal."

Green Party of BC

"Yes."

Note: The BC Conservatives did not respond.

Source: Canadian Cancer Society BC and Yukon Division website May 29, 2009. For responses to all questions, see <http://advocate.ccsbcy.ca/BC-Political-Parties-Responses>.