

# Tofino Pesticide Fact Sheet

On September 22<sup>nd</sup> 2009, the District of Tofino passed a new bylaw regulating how pesticides can be used on residential and public lands: **Bylaw No. 1102, 2009 “A Bylaw to Regulate the Nonessential and Cosmetic Use of Pesticides.”** You can read the bylaw at the District office or on the District of Tofino’s website [www.tofino.ca](http://www.tofino.ca) – follow the links to *regulatory bylaws*. The purpose of this fact sheet is to briefly explain the bylaw and to provide you with some hint, tips and safe alternatives to pesticides.



## **Frequently Asked Questions:**

**What is a “pest?”** A pest is “an injurious, noxious or troublesome living organism.” It can be a fungus, a weed, an insect, or a rodent that is troublesome to people, and that people generally want to get rid of. It doesn’t include a virus, bacteria, fungus or internal parasite that exists on or in humans or animals – such as dog fleas.

**What is a pesticide?** A pesticide is a microorganism or chemical substance used to control or kill weeds or unwanted plants, insects, animals or fungal pests. You may also know them as herbicides, insecticides, rodenticides and fungicides. DDT is a notorious pesticide originally used to control mosquitoes.

**What is the cosmetic use of a pesticide?** This refers to the use of pesticides to enhance the appearance of private and public lands by controlling unwanted pests on lawns, trees, shrubs, ornamental plants, etc. The cosmetic use of pesticides has no benefit to human health.

**What does the Tofino bylaw cover?** The pesticide bylaw applies only to cosmetic uses of pesticides, by anyone (residents, municipal staff, landscaping companies) on *residential property or on public lands*. It does not apply to indoor uses, such as getting rid of rats, fleas or bed bugs. While it does not apply to commercial properties such as hotels, many local businesses are already practicing pesticide-free gardening that meets the spirit of this bylaw.

**Does the bylaw permit the use of any pesticides for cosmetic purposes?** Yes, there is a list of reduced-risk or “permitted” pesticides you can still use, such as vinegar, soaps, diatomaceous earth, and others. These are regulated for use in BC by the provincial government. See the bylaw for a full list.

**I think I have a really good reason to apply a non-permitted pesticide. Are there exemptions under the bylaw?** Exemptions to the pesticide bylaw are possible under certain circumstances, for example to reduce the threat of an imminent pest infestation to a sensitive ecosystem. Please see the bylaw or contact the District office at 250-725-3229 for more details.

**How can I safely dispose of pesticides that I have at home?** Never dispose of leftover pesticides down the sink, into the toilet, or down a sewer or street drain. Pesticides interfere with the operation of wastewater treatment systems and pollute waterways. Pesticides harm fish, frogs, plants, and other living organisms. For containers with a poison logo (the skull and crossbones), take them to the Nanaimo Recycling Exchange (477 Kenworth Rd., Nanaimo BC. Open 7:00 am to 7:00 pm daily. Call 250-758-7777).



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Contact the Raincoast Education Society at 250-725-2560 or [info@raincoasteducation.org](mailto:info@raincoasteducation.org)

***Turn over for some hints, tips and alternatives to using pesticides!***



Canadian Cancer Society  
Société canadienne du cancer

*The Raincoast Education Society, with support from the Canadian Cancer Society, will host a Dandelion Tea in Spring 2010 to provide information and celebrate pesticide-free gardening. We'll also be providing businesses, home owners, and the municipality with stickers for their establishments declaring them, "Pesticide-Free"*

## What Can I Do Instead of Using Pesticides?

Use the following practices to reduce or eliminate the use of pesticides around your yard and garden (source: Municipality of Delta).

- Overseed your lawn every year to create a dense lawn that will crowd out weeds
- Fertilize naturally with manure and compost
- Encourage good bugs: worms, lady bugs and spiders
- Mow less often. Keep grass 6cm tall to crowd out weeds and grow longer roots
- When watering, allow the sprinkler to soak the grass, to build deep roots
- Rake out thatch to discourage pests
- Dig out any weeds by hand
- Rotate the species of vegetables and flowers in your garden from year to year, or at least rotate the same species between locations to discourage soil diseases and insects from setting in
- Schedule the planting and harvesting of your plants to avoid the times when insects are most abundant and damaging
- Put bird feeders and bird houses in your yard; birds are a natural form of insect control

### To get rid of:

### Try:

#### Weeds!

- Boiling water will control weeds on hard surfaces. Look for alternative products such as EcoClear & Scott's EcoSense. These are soap-based herbicides and weed oils.
- Landscape fabric under organic mulch or compost will help prevent weed growth specifically for rhododendrons & roses. Use TurfMaize™, a corn-gluten based product, early in season to inhibit weed growth before they emerge.
- Manual removal of dandelions and other broadleaf weeds using a dandelion puller is the most effective method.
- For removing algae in ponds: manually rake or remove as much algae as possible; add nitrifying bacteria to help remove algal nutrients.

#### Insects

- Use insecticidal soaps and oils for white flies & spider mites.
- Diatomaceous earth is useful for crawling insects.
- For hornets & wasps, physically remove nests (carefully, of course!)

#### Fungus, mold and rusts

- Try borax, fungicidal soap, sulphur based fungicides.
- For black spot fungus (common to roses) try a solution of 1 tsp. baking soda and 2 tsp. horticultural oil in 4 litres of water.
- Sulphur-based fungicides are also effective against black spot fungus.



**Starting your fall garden clean-up?** Don't dump the plants and soil from your hanging baskets and pots in the forest or at the edge of the lawn...this is one of the most common ways that **INVASIVE PLANTS** can be introduced, such as English Ivy, Lamium (also known as 'silver nettle vine') and blue periwinkle. Instead, throw away the plants and soil in the **garbage**.

**Need more information? Please consult with one of Tofino's nursery, landscaping or garden businesses and organizations! Ask your neighbours and friends for hints and tips that have worked for them.**