



Nature Regina

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Presentation to City of Regina Council on Motion to Regulate the Non-essential (Cosmetic) Use of Pesticides

March 16, 2022

I am Gail Fennell in Ward 6 represented by Dan LeBlanc. I am speaking in favour of the motion to regulate non-essential pesticide use. Thank you to the Councillors sponsoring the motion.

I am one of the Nature Regina volunteers who cares for a public garden at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum and am speaking on behalf of Nature Regina.

For almost 30 years, Nature Regina volunteers have shown a garden can be successfully cared for with no pesticides or herbicides. Pesticides and fertilizers would have been easily available through Wascana Park. We chose instead to create a healthy sustainable urban habitat using neither.

The biodiversity in this one garden is far beyond that of the much larger area of the park surrounding it. The garden is a thriving community of 120 native plant species growing in a healthy clay soil, 45+ resident and migrating bird species, 80 identified pollinator and invertebrate species and several small mammal species.

The garden could not be a designated Monarch Way Station nor a designated David Suzuki Foundation Butterflyway pollinator hotspot if we used chemicals to control the unwanted plants and insects or to enhance plant growth.

In December 2021, the Society for Organic Urban Landcare awarded Greener Greenspaces recognition to the Nature Regina garden at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum and to the Peace Garden at Knox Metropolitan United Church along with 24 other public gardens across Canada.

Greener Greenspaces recognizes sites that exemplify greener greenspace stewardship. The program showcases examples of ecologically-focused land care as a means to inspire others across Canada.

Forward thinking landscape designers and land care companies are making the change away from chemicals and carbon-expensive yard care to methods causing less collateral damage to non-target species, including humans, and the environment.

I understand that some people worry Regina will be overrun with weeds if cosmetic use of pesticides is restricted. Yet, restricting cosmetic use of pesticides is an important and easily attainable component

of urban land care. Fears and myths around restrictions are being dispelled as more cities turn to regulation for aesthetic purposes.¹

Wise choices in plants and care techniques means there is no space for unwanted plants to gain a foothold and beneficial insects are in sufficient numbers to control any outbreaks of unwanted insects. This in turn limits aesthetic damage to plants. All done without any chemicals.

There are successful alternatives to chemicals for aesthetics. Regulation will support and complement green infrastructure which in turn will reduce the cost of maintaining and renovating landscaped spaces.

2022 is SOUL's Year of the Ecological Garden. Volunteers caring for the public gardens at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum and Knox Metropolitan United Church have shown that healthy, biodiverse chemical-free gardens can be successfully maintained over many years.

Councillors, will you celebrate healthy, sustainable care of Regina's greenspaces in 2022 by committing to join the 300+ Canadian communities and 7 provinces who regulate cosmetic chemical use for yard care?

Can I and Nature Regina count on you, Mayor Masters and Councillors, to make Regina a healthier place for people, pets, birds and pollinators by voting in favour of the Motion to Regulate the Non-essential (Cosmetic) Use of Pesticides?

Thank you for the time to speak to you this afternoon.

Respectfully submitted,
Gail Fennell

Nature Regina volunteer garden leader
David Suzuki Foundation Butterflyway volunteer Ranger
Ward 6 represented by Councillor Dan LeBlanc



¹<https://ecojustice.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Backgrounder-Busting-the-myths-about-cosmetic-pesticide-bans-September-2012.pdf>