

Submission to Wellington City Council on

Draft Annual Plan 2013

Supplementary Submission

This supplementary submission requests Wellington City Council to consider restrictions on the use of herbicides and pesticides in urban areas and to study the environmental damage caused by their use. While marine life is often the most sensitive to biocides – hence the concern with stormwater – adverse effects are frequently experienced by non-targeted species – soil organisms, bees, people, edible plants etc. - and the simplest remedy is non-use.

Restrictions could initially centre on information detailing adverse effects and monitoring sales.

Garden shops abound with pesticides and herbicides and gardeners are only alerted to adverse effects through media such as gardening, farming and organic magazines.

Just to quote two products and some of their effects:

Mould remover **Wet and Forget**, active ingredient alkyl dimethyl benzyl ammonium chloride is highly toxic to fish, very highly toxic to aquatic invertebrates, moderately toxic to birds, and slightly toxic to mammals.

RoundUp – active ingredient glyphosate.

A recent study of Roundup presents new evidence that the glyphosate based herbicide is far more toxic than the active ingredient alone. The study, published in the June 2005 issue of Environmental Health Perspectives reports glyphosate toxicity to human placental cells within hours of exposure, at levels ten times lower than those found in agricultural use.

This second comment is part of a widespread story that the adverse effects of pesticides are far greater than earlier understood. And also that long term effects are poorly understood.

Pesticides and breast cancer

wrote

Forty-three of the 101 pesticide ingredients with the potential to increase the risk of breast cancer are in use in New Zealand homes and gardens and on New Zealand farms.

A new three-year study by New Zealand scientist Dr Meriel Watts has highlighted the relationship between exposure to pesticides and breast cancer.

Comment

Personal observations concerning indiscriminate use of herbicides include loss of about 10 of our 14 tomato plants to spray drift this last year. This from a rented property where the owners are likely to spray in any weather conditions as they live away from the area.

Earlier years has seen the loss of strawberries due to drift from weed'n'feed.

Council contractors sprayed in the local stream despite being told not to do so.

Housing New Zealand contractors regularly spray a plot of land opposite our property. They do nothing with the land, just come along regularly to spray the weeds that will inevitably grow and regrow there.

I know a number of submitters who are also concerned about spraying in the city and believe concerns to be mounting generally.

I am sure Council recognises that the health of the environment is the primary requisite for a healthy city, for without that other systems will inevitably fail.

I also note that Greater Wellington is pulling back from investment in the environment within Wellington City which adds to the imperative for the Council, in partnership with its residents, to take an even greater role in protecting the natural environment.

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