

## Sunshine Coast Regional District

### BOARD POLICY MANUAL

Section:	Planning and Development	BRD-0340-50
Title:	Pesticide Use and Invasive Species Management	028

#### POLICY

The use of pesticides and herbicides for cosmetic purposes is discouraged and will not be used on SCRDP property.

The use of the class of insecticides called neonicotinoids is strongly discouraged due to the unacceptably high risk neonicotinoids pose to bees and other pollinators.

#### DEFINITIONS

**“Invasive species”** means highly competitive plants and animals which spread aggressively into environments where they are not normally found and whose introduction does or is likely to cause environmental or economic harm, or harm to human health.

**“Noxious weeds”** means plant species that are capable of inflicting agricultural loss or ill health on people, or are designated by regulation to be a noxious weed, and includes the seeds of the noxious weed;

**“Pesticide”** means any substance designed to prevent, destroy, repel, or mitigate injurious, noxious, or troublesome living organisms. The term “pesticide” encompasses the more specific terms such as insecticides (for insects), herbicides (for plants) and fungicides (for fungal diseases).

#### SCOPE

This policy is applied to all Sunshine Coast Regional District property and all Electoral Areas within the Sunshine Coast Regional District.

#### REASON FOR POLICY

The risks associated with the use of pesticides include impacts to human health, non-target plants and animals (including pets), pollution of watercourses, and long-term contamination of soil and groundwater. Research has demonstrated links between pesticide exposure and several types of cancer, as well as hormone disruption. Young children are at greater risk from the effects of pesticides due to their undeveloped immune systems, more permeable skin, and behaviours (e.g. playing on lawns, putting objects in their mouths). The Canadian Cancer Society has documented a growing body of evidence showing a link between the use of pesticides and an increased risk of cancer.

Pesticide use contributes to the cumulative chemical impact on the natural environment. These chemicals are not easily confined to a single location, and as they move through the air, water, and land, there can be many unforeseen impacts to plants and animals throughout those ecosystems. The Sunshine Coast Regional District supports the “precautionary principle” regarding pesticides, thus being pro-active in reducing possible threats to human health and the natural environment.

## **EXEMPTIONS**

The spread of invasive species (both plants and animals) has become a major concern for residents, ecologists, naturalists and land and water managers across BC. The spread of invasive species is second only to habitat loss, as the major cause of declining biodiversity. The Sunshine Coast Regional District is committed to preventing new invasive species from becoming established and controlling those of major concern for human health and the health of natural ecosystems. Several new invasive species that may warrant rapid response to contain their spread come to our attention each year.

Pesticide use is only acceptable when:

- a) noxious weeds or invasive species pose significant risk to the environment, economy, or public health; and
- b) defensible, appropriate scientific study does not support the success of alternative methods of control or eradication; and
- c) the pesticide proposed for use is effective in the control of the target species and is registered in Canada for the use proposed.

## **AUTHORITY TO ACT**

Retained by the Board

## **PROCEDURE**

1. Necessary provincial and/or federal permits for the pesticide must be obtained.
2. Industry best-practices, and all federal and provincial standards and regulations shall be met with respect to the pesticide proposed for use, including transportation, storage, application, personnel safety and training, public safety, and environmental protection.
3. Foliar or sprays of herbicide applications are generally discouraged and will not be used on SCRD property unless provincial or federal authorities determine it an effective treatment for the invasive species. The preferred methods are stem injection, stump cut, basal bark, and hack and squirt treatments, or similar application methods.
4. Pesticide use will be undertaken to minimize potential environmental risks through use of the lowest effective toxicity, the smallest effective amounts, and the most conservative methods of application timed to optimize effects on the target species.
5. Extra caution should be exercised in riparian areas, waterways and ecologically sensitive areas including the use of appropriate setbacks.

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