



summer • 2009

Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment

— the national voice of physicians on the environment and health

CAPE's Anti-Pesticide Campaign Goes National

MDs bolster political activism across the country

by Farrah Khan

CAPE's many successes with anti-pesticide campaigns have inspired bans in municipalities across the country. Now, CAPE has a strong presence at the provincial level, which means environmental protection for millions of Canadians.

By partnering with groups in New Brunswick and British Columbia, CAPE is able to influence legislation in these provinces that will ban lawn and garden poisons for both use and sale.

Experience in Ontario has shown that physicians bring credibility to environmental-health issues. It's part of what makes CAPE such a successful organization. "Doctors are an influential group on the front-line of healthcare. If doctors say we should be doing things differently in terms of prevention, people will listen," says Liz Smith, Environmental Programs Coordinator at the New Brunswick Lung Association (NBLA).

The NBLA, the Canadian Cancer Society (CCS) New Brunswick Division, the David Suzuki Foundation and other environmental groups in the New Brunswick Environmental Network are working with the government towards a province-wide ban on lawn and garden pesticides.



CAPE Executive Director, Gideon Forman (left), delivers 10,000 of your petitions to Member of Parliament, Olivia Chow. The petitions ask Prime Minister Harper to ban lawn and garden pesticides across Canada.

Smith called upon CAPE to make the campaign more effective by getting doctors on-board. "CAPE has had many recent successes with pesticide bans," says CAPE's Executive Director, Gideon Forman. "It made sense for us to partner with the Lung Association, Cancer Society and other groups in New Brunswick because our doctors have done ground-breaking research on the ways pesticides harm human health."

...continued on page 3

The President's Corner



CAPE President, Dr. Kapil Khatter, with his new wife, Kelly Langgard, at their wedding reception

Canada continues to be a major exporter of chrysotile asbestos to less developed countries, despite the known human health impacts and the damage it is doing to our international reputation. In fact, the federal government supports the industry by funding a Canadian asbestos trade organization, the Chrysotile Institute. And the Canadian delegation recently teamed up with other asbestos-exporting countries to block its listing on the international Rotterdam Convention, a listing that would only acknowledge that chrysotile is a carcinogen and that countries have a right to know before importing it.

The Canadian asbestos industry is fragile though, and the pressure on it is increasing. Canadian asbestos mines have closed down and public calls for a stop to asbestos exports have increased, including a biting editorial in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* this past October.

The Canadian Cancer Society (CCS) has also joined the chorus. Barb Whyllie, President and CEO of the CCS, recently wrote a letter asking the federal government to stop funding the Chrysotile Institute. The letter also calls for legislation for worker safety, an agreement to add asbestos to the Rotterdam Convention, and the phasing out of the use and export of asbestos.

...continued on page 2

Ontario Bans 250 Pesticide Products

CAPE Campaign

Keeps Prohibited List Strong

Ontario's new ban on lawn and garden pesticides came into effect April 22nd (Earth Day), giving the province the most health-protective law of its kind in North America.

CAPE played a key role in winning the legislation – commissioning opinion polls, writing letters and newspaper articles, running advertisements, and holding direct talks with Ontario Environment Minister John Gerretsen.

“We had several face-to-face meetings with Minister Gerretsen, urging him to pass the most health-protective legislation possible,” said CAPE Executive Director Gideon Forman. “Industry was pushing the Minister to shorten the list of banned chemicals. I personally asked him to keep the banned list strong – and much to his credit, he did that.”

The new law surpasses even the good pesticide legislation in Quebec. Ontario is banning the use and sale of over 80 pesticide ingredients (including the common herbicides 2,4-D and glyphosate) used in 250 products.

“Ontario is a true leader. There is nothing like this anywhere else on the continent,” said CAPE President, Dr. Kapil Khatter. “Quebec bans 20 pesticide ingredients. Ontario is banning four times that number. The U.S. can't even agree to ban 2,4-D, while Ontario is protecting us from 2,4-D and 81 other toxic chemicals as well.”

CAPE is confident the Ontario ban will foster pesticide restrictions in other provinces.

“With our members' wonderful support, we're now working on regulations in Atlantic Canada and the Prairies,” said Dr. Khatter. “Our victory in Ontario will help us achieve success right across the country.”

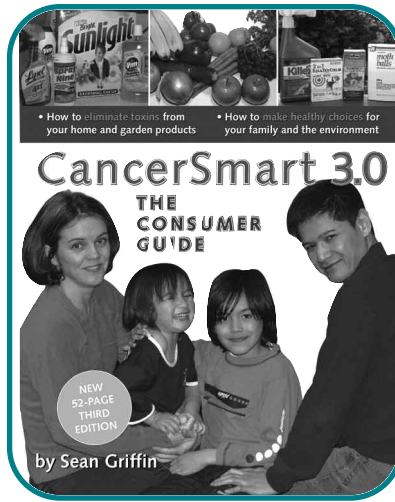
Doctors' environmental group sees tenfold rise in members since 2006

by Joe McAllister

TORONTO | The Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE) now has more than 4,000 members, a tenfold increase from the 400 members the association had in 2006.

CAPE executive director Gideon Forman said in 2006 almost all CAPE members were doctors. Now about half of the members are MDs, with the rest being members of the public who trust a doctors' organization speaking on environmental issues.

CAPE has concentrated over the last few years on a municipality by municipality campaign to ban lawn pesticides and herbicides. Their biggest success was a ban last June across the entire province of Ontario on the cosmetic use on lawns of pesticides and herbicides.



CancerSmart 3.0: The Consumer Guide

is the latest edition of a popular publication by the environmental-health group Toxic Free Canada. It identifies potentially toxic

ingredients in household consumer products, ranging from cleaners to domestic pesticides and home maintenance products, and offers safer, healthier alternatives. The Guide is a highly readable source of information, with tables of brand-name products and alternatives, and is thoroughly referenced, using such sources as the International Agency for Research on Cancer. Says CAPE board member Dr. Alan Abelsohn: “The CancerSmart Consumer Guide is very useful to me and my patients, as a trusted source of information about carcinogens in our homes. I would highly recommend it as a tool for cancer prevention.”

AVAILABLE ONLINE

for \$10 plus postage from
www.toxicfreecanada.ca

Fan Mail: Your Letters to CAPE

Each week, CAPE receives letters from supporters across the country, praising the work that doctors do to protect the environment. Here is a sampling of what we've heard from you. Please keep your letters coming – your support is much appreciated!

“Thanks for doing things that benefit all Canadians. Keep up the good work. We have lots of grand children and great grand children that will benefit.”

- Mr. Scot and Ms. Carol Steele, Edgerton AB

“You are excellent at getting the word out, making CAPE more visible and accomplishing the tasks to clean the environment – well done!”

- R.D., Kirkland Lake ON

“I love your work. I have chemical sensitivity and cannot wait for the day when cosmetic pesticides are banned in Sask.”

- Mr. Phil Boychuk, Regina SK

“Carry on the good work! I appreciate very much the work you do. It has been bothering me for years how recklessly poisons are sprayed.”

- A.B., Mission BC

The President's Corner *continued from page 1*

CAPE is developing its own science-based position statement to add to the voices of Canadian doctors who are calling for a ban on chrysotile mining and export. Working with Ban Asbestos Canada, CAPE will continue to

advocate for an end to Canada's asbestos industry and a just transition for its workers.

Dr. Kapil Khatter, CAPE President

ECO-LEADERS' CORNER

Eco-Leaders' Corner is a new column that features news for, about, and from CAPE Eco-Leaders.

by Carol Watson

In January 2009, CAPE launched Eco-Leaders, a new and exciting giving circle in which donors support CAPE with gifts of \$1,000 or more. The purpose of the Eco-Leaders circle is to build CAPE as an organization – with an eye to the future. We want to ensure doctors take the lead in protecting our health and the environment. Alison Scott Butler is a lawyer in Nova Scotia and a director on the CAPE board. She was one of the first to become an Eco-Leader. Here, she tells us why she gave \$1,000 to CAPE this year.

If you'd like to become an Eco-Leader yourself – or receive more information – please call me, Carol Watson, Fundraising Manager, collect at (416) 840 0264 or email carol@cape.ca.



CAPE board member and Eco-Leader, Alison Scott Butler

Why I Became an Eco-Leader

by Alison Scott Butler QC

I am a long-time advocate for the elimination of cosmetic pesticides, as well as the drastic reduction of toxics from all aspects of human endeavour, and I have been elated at the progress made by CAPE. CAPE is a small organization with only part-time employees, but it has made tremendous strides by promoting pesticide bylaws in municipalities across Canada. The new Ontario provincial law, together with regulations – effective April 22 – which eliminates cosmetic pesticide use is the culmination of a tremendous effort on CAPE's part. The power of physician advocacy cannot be underestimated. Physicians who provide care for patients are hard pressed to undertake advocacy individually. But, collectively they can be very effective. They can raise public awareness and change laws to improve our environment and thereby improve our health. Financial resources are essential, and I have not come across any organization that uses its resources more effectively than CAPE.



Lawn & Garden Pesticides: Reducing Harm

NOW AVAILABLE! This unique 10 minute DVD sets out the scientific evidence linking common household pesticides to a variety of serious illnesses. It offers information from the Ontario College of Family Physicians' groundbreaking pesticide study and sets out safe lawncare alternatives. **Excellent for showing at public meetings or for educating local politicians.**

To order your copy, please contact Farrah Khan: farrah@cape.ca

Anti-pesticide Campaign Goes National... *continued from page 1*

The New Brunswick public is also on-side. Earlier this year, CAPE, NBLA and CCS released an Ipsos Reid poll that showed New Brunswickers would like to see an end to toxic lawn chemicals. Results show that an overwhelming 79 per cent of New Brunswick residents support a ban on the use of non-essential pesticides.

Liz Smith thinks it's no surprise there is so much public support for a ban. As someone who became interested in environmental issues as a young mother, she understands that we need to take steps to protect our planet and our health – especially children's health. NBLA first got involved with the pesticide issue because they started hearing from concerned citizens across the province. "We got phone calls from people whose asthmatic or chemically sensitive family members were experiencing adverse reactions when their neighbours' lawns were sprayed with pesticides. It's an indication that all is not well," says Smith.

Talk of a pesticide ban is also brewing in British Columbia. CAPE board member and past President, Dr. Warren Bell, has joined the board of directors of the Canadian Cancer Society's B.C. and Yukon division and is heavily involved in anti-pesticide advocacy at the provincial level. Dr. Bell was invited to join the CCS board specifically because of his interest and expertise in environmental-health issues. In B.C., CAPE has partnered on the ban campaign with the CCS, David Suzuki Foundation and Toxic Free Canada and met with the Ministry of Environment. Legislation was drafted by Jonathan Aiyadurai (a student at the Environmental Law Centre, University of Victoria) and has been presented to B.C. Environment Minister, Barry Penner.

As the coalition awaits a response from the government and opposition parties, Dr. Bell is hopeful that a ban is imminent, despite the current economic climate. "A negative effect on the economy is a myth, so there is no reason for the B.C. government to hold back," Dr. Bell explains. CAPE's work in other jurisdictions has shown that pesticide prohibitions can bolster the lawn-care industry by as much as 50 percent.

Pesticide bans are also on the horizon elsewhere in the country. Last year the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities voted unanimously in favour of a provincial ban and P.E.I. is well on its way to outlawing these toxic substances. These signs of action are very hopeful. According to Dr. Bell, "we are heading towards a world in which synthetic chemical pesticides will be reserved for the occasional and rare crisis." CAPE will continue its advocacy until all provinces and territories in Canada have laws which protect all Canadians against exposure to pesticides for generations to come.

The following very generous people donated \$1,000 or more to CAPE's Eco-Leaders circle of support.

THANK YOU SO MUCH TO EACH ONE!

Dr. Scott Daley • Dr. Richard Denton • Dr. LeeAnn Gallant • Dr. Jim Hollingworth
Dr. John Howard and Dr. Nicole le Riche • Dr. Roy and Ms. Cathy Jeffery
Dr. Cortlandt MacKenzie • Dr. David Rainham • Mr. Leonard Schein
Ms. Alison Scott Butler • Dr. MaryJane Shankel • Dr. Marlene Spruyt
Dr. Tomislav Svoboda • Dr. Michelle Tan • Ms. Cindy Tuer
Dr. Trish Van Boekel ...and two anonymous donors



Support Green Energy and Save \$25

CAPE Becomes bullfrogpowered

CAPE is pleased to announce a new partnership with Bullfrog Power. Founded in 2005, Bullfrog Power is Canada's leading 100% green electricity provider and the only company offering everyone in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia a 100% low-impact renewable electricity choice. Any home (including condos and apartments) and any business (including leased premises) can be bullfrogpowered. With Bullfrog Power, thousands of Canadians are taking a stand for low-impact renewable electricity, reducing their environmental impact and creating a cleaner world for today and tomorrow.

As of April 1st 2009, CAPE's head office has been "bullfrogpowered." This means Bullfrog will ensure that as much low-impact renewable electricity is injected into the electricity grid as CAPE uses. Bullfrog Power's green electricity comes exclusively from wind and hydro facilities that have been certified as low impact by Environment Canada under its EcoLogo^M program.

Switching to Bullfrog Power is easy. Signing up takes a few minutes online and no special equipment is required. Plus, now CAPE members can receive \$25 off their first residential bill when they quote the following promotional code: CAPE. Simply type this code into the promotion code field in Bullfrog's online signup form.

Please consider signing up for Bullfrog Power today!

Visit www.bullfrogpower.com to learn more.

CAPE ACKNOWLEDGES, WITH GRATITUDE, THE GENEROSITY OF OUR FUNDERS:



- Alterna Savings
- Canadian Auto Workers
- Canadian Cancer Society
- Canadian Health & Environment Education & Research Foundation (CHEER)
- Canadian Union of Postal Workers
- Citizens Bank of Canada
- David Suzuki Foundation
- Ontario College of Family Physicians
- Pilkington-Henniger Charitable Trust
- Over 4,000 individual CAPE members

Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment

EXECUTIVE

- Chair Dr. John Howard
- President Dr. Kapil Khatter
- Vice-president Dr. Jean Ahmed Zigby
- Executive Director Gideon Forman
- Secretary-treasurer Dr. Victoria Lee

BOARD MEMBERS

- Dr. Alan Abelsohn • Dr. Warren Bell • Dr. Hilary DeVeber • Dr. Scott Findlay • Alison Scott Butler
- Dr. Cathy Vakil • Dr. Art Wiebe

- Executive Assistant/Managing Editor Farrah Khan
- Fundraising Manager Carol Watson
- Newsletter Editor Alison Scott Butler

Suite 301-130 Spadina Avenue
Toronto ON M5V 2L4

tel (416) 306-2273 fax (416) 960-9392
email gideon@cape.ca
web www.cape.ca

100% recycled paper, chlorine-free
Print run 6,000 copies emerging design

We're growing!

Since 2006

CAPE has grown from 450
to over 4,000 members.

I would like to support CAPE for a healthier environment!

Last Name/First Name..... Dr. Ms. Mr. Miss Mrs. Other.....

Address..... City..... Province..... Postal Code.....

Telephone..... Email.....

DONATIONS: Single Gifts: \$50 \$100 \$500 \$1000 (this makes you an Eco-Leader!) Other \$.....

Monthly Gifts: \$5 \$15 \$30 \$85 (this makes you an Eco-Leader!) Other \$..... per month

My cheque is made out to the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE), or marked "VOID" for monthly donations.

VISA MASTERCARD Card #..... Expiry Date Signature.....

I would like a tax receipt for my donation. I understand that this donation will only be used for research and education.

My cheque is made out to the Canadian Health and Environment Education and Research Foundation (CHEER).

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PHYSICIANS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

130 Spadina Ave., Suite 301, Toronto, Ontario M5V 2L4 Donor support line 416.840.0264 email carol@cape.ca www.cape.ca



NOW You Can Donate On-line at www.cape.ca

Now it's easier than ever to support CAPE's vital environmental work.

Go to www.cape.ca and hit the "Donate Now" button on our home page.