



winter • 2013/2014

Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment
– the National Voice of Physicians on the Environment and Health

Manitoba Proposes Lawn Pesticide Ban *Industry determined to block it*

ON JUNE 28, CONSERVATION MINISTER GORD Mackintosh announced Manitoba would soon introduce a province-wide ban on toxic lawn pesticides. The proposed legislation would prohibit the sale and use of these harmful chemicals on home lawns, school grounds, children's sports fields, and child-care centres.

CAPE and its local partner, the Winnipeg-based Green Action Centre, applauded the move, saying it would represent the first province-wide pesticide ban in western Canada.

"I was privileged to speak at the Minister's press conference when he announced the ban," said CAPE Executive Director Gideon Forman. "I told the Minister the new law will have the support of doctors across the country."

Forman said the proposed legislation – which is expected to be introduced in the fall of 2013 – is a very good first step but needs to go further. "CAPE would like to see the ban offer children more protection by also prohibiting pesticides on golf courses and gardens," he said. "We'll be pushing for that during the government's public consultations."

**No matter where you live, please send an e-mail to Manitoba's Conservation Minister, Gord Mackintosh: "I support a ban on lawn and garden pesticides."
minconws@leg.gov.mb.ca
THANK YOU!**

Scientific research shows people exposed to pesticides are at greater risk for cancer and neurological illness. Children are especially vulnerable.

Following its success banning pesticides in eastern Canada, CAPE began its Manitoba campaign in 2012. In February 2013, the organization released a scientific poll showing over 70% of Manitobans support a pesticide phase-out on lawns and gardens. The poll was featured on the front page of the *Winnipeg Free Press*.

The mainstream lawn care industry has vigorously opposed the ban. This past spring they sent the Minister's office thousands of anti-ban postcards. "The industry is desperate to kill the legislation because it could lead to other bans in western Canada," said CAPE President Dr. Jean Zigby. "We're urging all our members – no matter where they live in Canada – to tell Manitoba's Conservation Minister that they support the ban."

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CAPE Eco-Leader, Dr. Tomislav Svoboda

Why I Became an Eco-Leader

by Dr. Tomislav Svoboda

I WAS INTERESTED AND BECAME INVOLVED IN protecting the environment at an early age due to values instilled by my parents. I went into medicine with an interest in bringing health issues into community and global environmental protection efforts. I learned as a student activist that one can do more by being part of an organization of like minded individuals working toward similar goals. I supported CAPE early on, pleased that there was an organization of physicians with similar goals as myself, not knowing how I might, if ever, be more involved with them.

On November 13 2012, I joined an 18 month campaign by engaged citizens and city transportation activists to protect the 2 km Jarvis St. bike lane from being removed in Toronto. While other leading North American cities were adding dozens of km's of bike lanes each year, Toronto was removing them, falling from 'best cycling city' on the continent to 'bike collision capital of Canada'. Among other acts of peaceful civil disobedience, I sat on the lane, blocking its removal, until I was arrested and charged with mischief and interference with police. Colleagues joined me and signed onto a letter as individuals at a press conference we held on January 18 2013 at City Hall. More importantly, CAPE, as a staffed expert organization, representing hundreds of physicians, stood by us, joining our media conference panel. CAPE provided medical research and information material. Farrah Khan, one of CAPE's staff campaigners, helped answer hard hitting questions by the press with medical evidence, when we discussed the merits of active transportation for global, individual and public health.

I'm very grateful to CAPE for helping me grow as an Eco-Leader, an expert, a resource, an advocate, and as such a better citizen and physician for my community.

ECO-LEADERS' CORNER

CAPE'S ECO-LEADERS SUPPORT THE LONG-TERM VISION OF CAPE with annual gifts of \$5,000 (Gold), \$2,500 (Silver) or \$1,000 (Bronze).

If you'd like to become an Eco-Leader, give a gift of stock, or name CAPE in your will, please contact our Fundraising Director, Josh Bowman at josh@cape.ca.



The following very generous people donated to CAPE's ECO-LEADERS CIRCLE OF SUPPORT.

THANK YOU SO MUCH!

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CAPE President and Eco-Leader, Dr. Jean Zigby

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

PHYSICIANS HAVE TRADITIONALLY BEEN important figures in protecting the health of their communities. Whether it was by a phone call, letter or meeting, we have historically been able to mobilize the media, institutions or government, for the benefit of our people and environment.

Yet, by the late 1990s, there was growing awareness in higher education circles that the role of physicians in protecting the health of their patients and communities was at risk of being eroded by changes in the practice of medicine and politics in Canada. Whether it was the loss of control of medical research into the hands of corporations, increased bureaucratic complexity, discouraging remuneration, or the fragmentation of the physician-patient relationship by modern, group and multidisciplinary practice, Canadian physicians

(with many exceptions, of course!) had begun to feel less confident and less willing to represent their communities' health interests. And we were failing in teaching how.

Realizing its importance, the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons and the College of Family Physicians of Canada enshrined the concept and values of health advocacy within their newest framework of professional education and practice: CanMEDS (Canadian Medical Education Directives for Specialists). This framework set out to concretize a set of roles physicians occupy in society (such as health advocate and medical expert) and establish criteria for promoting them, for all medical schools and practicing physicians. Unexpectedly, CanMEDS has become an international standard of teaching being promoted across the globe!

However, the 2005 CanMEDS Framework left medical teachers largely on their own to define the skills and evaluation process around health advocacy. This inevitably led to a general feeling of isolation by those inspired to teach medical students and residents. Educators of the health advocate role became pigeon-holed as activists representing disenfranchised populations such as prisoners, the homeless, or psychiatrically ill. Unlike the other roles, 'health advocate' looked to many learners like something of interest to a few dusty corners of medicine, but not necessary for the vast majority of specialties. It became clear that medical learners and physicians needed to be reminded and taught how to mobilize forces external to their offices for the benefit of their patients and communities – and reminded why it matters.

The good news: over the next year or two, CAPEsters will be collaborating with the Colleges to make sure the skills of health advocacy will be enshrined and fleshed out in CanMEDS 2015. The goal: to have all medical learners in Canada understand their potential to influence health in their communities, not only illness, especially at a time when governments are slashing budgets.

While CanMEDS 2015 may sound like a northern vacation resort, it may represent one of the best opportunities to change medical education across Canada to better serve the public and the environment.

Jean Zigby, MD, CAPE President

URGING ONTARIO TO RAMP UP RENEWABLES!

CAPE board members Dr. Cathy Vakil (left) and Dr. Hilary de Veber (right) ask Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne to expand renewable energy's share of the electricity grid



CAPE VICTORIES

Thanks to you!

By supporting CAPE's work, you have helped our doctors win real environmental and health protection across the country. Here are a few examples of what you've helped us achieve:

- 2008** Ontario pesticide ban
- 2009** New Brunswick pesticide ban
- 2010** Permanent closure of 4 Ontario coal-fired units
- 2010** Nova Scotia pesticide ban
- 2011** Newfoundland and Labrador pesticide ban
- 2011** Permanent closure of 2 Ontario coal-fired units
- 2012** Closure of Ontario's Atikokan coal-plant (for conversion to biomass)
- 2012** Quebec government withdraws financial support for asbestos industry
- 2012** Quebec closes Gentilly-2 nuclear plant for decommissioning
- 2013** Ontario announces early closure of 2 coal plants

CAPE's 2013 AGM will take place November 30th and December 1st 2013 in Toronto.

At this meeting new by-laws will be considered for approval as required by the updated Not-for-Profit Corporations Act SC 2009 c.23 and Regulations. For details please contact Tamara Brownstone at tamara@cape.ca or (416) 306-2273

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



- Canadian Auto Workers
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- Canadian Health & Environment Education & Research Foundation (CHEER)
- Canadian Union of Postal Workers
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- Dianne Saxe
- Gencon Foundation
- McLean Foundation
- Nature's Path
- Ontario Lung Association



- Pembina Institute
- Pilkington-Henniger Charitable Trust
- Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario
- TD Friends of the Environment Foundation
- Tides Canada
- Over 5,900 individual CAPE members

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Incorporated physicians can write off CAPE membership as a business expense.

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PHYSICIANS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
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