



## CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PHYSICIANS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

*The National Voice of Physicians on the Environment and Health*

### FIRST PROVINCE-WIDE PESTICIDE BAN IN WESTERN CANADA Manitoba prohibits use, sale of lawn herbicides

Doctors say  
**Lawn & Garden Pesticides  
Hurt our Kids.**

To learn more, visit [CAPE.CA](http://CAPE.CA)

DESPITE PRESSURE FROM THE CHEMICAL PESTICIDE industry, Manitoba has followed in the footsteps of Ontario, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, NFLD, and Quebec, by passing legislation to protect children's health and prohibit the use of toxic lawn pesticides.

CAPE began its Manitoba pesticide ban campaign in 2012, joining forces with the David Suzuki Foundation, the Winnipeg Humane Society, and local partner the Green Action Centre to educate residents and politicians about the human, animal, and environmental health benefits of pesticide reduction and build support for a ban. A scientific poll released in February 2013 found that more than 70% of Manitobans supported a phase out of lawn and garden pesticide use.

CAPE and its partners worked tirelessly to encourage people from across Canada, and especially Manitoba residents, to contact Manitoba's Minister of Conservation Gord Mackintosh to voice support for a province-wide prohibition. We arranged for

physicians to meet with members of the Manitoba provincial government and explain the scientific rationale and human health benefits of a pesticide ban. Even singer, children's rights advocate, and CAPE Honourary board member Raffi Cavoukian lent his support to the campaign.

The ban was announced on Earth Day 2014 (April 22<sup>nd</sup>) and passed third and final reading in the Manitoba legislature in June. Under the new law, only lower-risk pest control products will be allowed on lawns, sidewalks, patios, school grounds, playgrounds, playing fields, hospital grounds, and childcare centre grounds across the province.

"This legislation will have a lasting, positive effect on the health of all Manitobans, just as other provinces with the courage to take this step have seen," said Gideon Forman, CAPE's executive director. "The benefits extend well beyond the immediate protection of children and pets to the environment itself, as fewer chemicals will leach and drain their way into provincial rivers, streams and lakes."

CAPE has worked throughout the summer and early fall to ensure that the final regulations are as strong as possible. Our most heartfelt thanks to all our supporters whose letters, emails, deputations, financial support, and phone calls contributed to the success of this campaign.

"Science has shown that people exposed to pesticides are at a greater risk for cancer and neurological illness and the province of Manitoba should be congratulated for taking this step," said Dr. Debbie Pollock, a Winnipeg family physician and mother. "This will help reduce the number of toxic chemicals in our ecosystem and lead the way for broader pesticide bans across western Canada."

### POLLINATORS IN PERIL CAPE launches new campaign to ban bee-killing "neonic" pesticides

by Tamara Brownstone

MORE THAN ONE-THIRD OF THE WORLD'S FOOD PRODUCTION IS RELIANT on pollinators. Every year, millions of honey bee hives are contracted out by beekeepers to pollinate commercial crops. But these vital creatures are now in peril, threatened by a new class of pesticides called neonicotinoids ("neonics") which are used on almost all corn and canola seed in Canada.

Neonics are a class of powerful neurotoxic agricultural chemicals. They are systemic pesticides, which means they are absorbed and incorporated into every part of the plant from the leaves and stems to the fruit, pollen, and nectar. They are strong and long-lasting, remaining toxic for months after application. They are also highly water-soluble, so they can easily contaminate ground and surface water and can persist in soil and water for a long

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## 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 would 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](mailto:josh@cape.ca).

The following very generous people donated to CAPE's ECO-LEADERS CIRCLE OF SUPPORT. THANK YOU SO MUCH!

### Why I Became an Eco-Leader

by Dr. Sadhana Prasad, Geriatrician and CAPE member

GROWING UP IN INDIA IN THE LATE 1950'S AND early 1960's, I enjoyed a relatively pesticide-free environment and the food was non-modified—as original as it could be; and vegetables were bought fresh daily at the local market. The vegetables were small in size but the taste was unbeatable. As I grew older and had a family of my own in my new home in Canada, I came to realize the importance of doing more with less if we are to give our children and grandchildren the best environment to thrive in. Ecologically sound practices and harvesting our natural resources in a controlled, sustainable, and ethical manner are key to our future well-being: related to our health, environment, and economy. And that is why I am a member and supporter of CAPE. Because as an association we have a stronger voice and can continue to work toward that sustainable future.

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*"Pollinators in Peril" continued from page 1*

time, accumulating as the chemicals are used repeatedly. A growing body of scientific evidence indicates that neonics are killing or harming bees and other insects as well as animals farther up the food chain such as birds.

The danger from neonics is so great that leading health and environmental organizations are calling for a Canada-wide ban on these chemicals. Last year, the European Commission took a huge step to protect pollinators and banned the use of three major neonic pesticides because of their risk to bees. Said the European Environment Agency's Executive Director Jacqueline McGlade: "Based on the body of evidence, we can see that it is absolutely correct to take a precautionary approach and ban these chemicals."

The Canadian government, however, has refused to prohibit these pesticides. That's why CAPE has launched a new campaign calling on the provincial governments to take action. We must ban neonics as part of a global initiative to protect pollinators, food systems, and ultimately our own health.



## GUEST PRESIDENT'S CORNER 2015 is Coming

by Dr. Courtney Howard, CAPE Board member

CAPE IS OFTEN ASKED BY PHYSICIANS, AND NON-PHYSICIANS, WHAT AN individual MD can do to ensure that environmental health is prioritized by those in power. To help us envision this, let's look at some stories of emerging MD advocacy from across Canada.

In the East, Dr Eilish Cleary and Dr Angie LeGresley in New Brunswick are pushing hard to ensure that public policy around hydrofracking takes human health considerations into account.

In Northern Ontario, ER docs Dr James Truong and Dr Scott Daley, among others, are making it clear that North Bay defends clean water against infringement by the TransCanada pipeline. In Ottawa, Dr Curtis Lavoie has been rallying climate efforts at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario and asking city hall to be more aggressive in its climate change strategy. Also in Ottawa, retired GP Dr Larry Dobson has been coordinating the "good news" webpage for 350 Ottawa.org's work on climate change, thereby making sure that the voice of health is represented within the climate movement there, and that the mental health and spirits of his colleagues are buoyed by the energy of hope and possibility. In Toronto, Dr Jesse McLaren is just back from the People's Climate March in NYC and Dr Melissa Lem has become medical advisor to the multidisciplinary EcoHealth Collaborative, working with urban planners, academics, public health reps, a conservation authority and the David Suzuki Foundation for human and planetary health.

In Alberta, Dr Joe Vipond and Dr Rocky Feroe have done a great deal of work to ensure that the province takes the respiratory health costs of coal-fired electricity production into account when it tallies the risks and benefits of various types of electricity production. Meanwhile, in British Columbia pediatrician Dr Mary Hay and other MDs from Prince George have been speaking out on behalf of clean air, land, and water and raising concerns about the risks posed by the proposed Northern Gateway Pipeline. In the NWT, fired up by the nasty mental health and respiratory health effects of a summer of smoke, physicians are starting to work with politicians and renewable energy experts to phase out diesel-power and remake our territory into the Land of the Midnight Solar Panels.

Surprise ending to this cross-Canada survey? Most of these MDs were not environmental-health advocates a year or two ago.

**NEVER HAS THE NEED BEEN GREATER FOR PHYSICIANS TO WORK OUTSIDE THE HOSPITAL TO PREVENT ILLNESS BY KEEPING OUR AIR AND WATER CLEAN AND OUR CLIMATE LIVEABLE.**

This sort of advocacy on behalf of our patient populations is cited as a key physician role by both the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and the College of Family Physicians of Canada. At the 2014 CMA General Council in Ottawa, that role was re-emphasized in multiple resolutions. Key ideas: that the CMA will develop an action plan to implement its policy on the Built Environment and Health; that the CMA supports the phase-out of coal-fired electricity generation in the next 10 years; that MDs will begin to sit beside people of other disciplines, such as urban planners, economists and policymakers to collaborate on climate change work; that public health physicians have a right and duty to freely advocate for their patient populations; and that bodies that conduct environmental assessments of industrial projects seek input from physicians.

Never has the need been greater for physicians to work outside the hospital to prevent illness by keeping our air and water clean and our climate liveable. Never have MDs had more support for their efforts from their professional bodies. And never has there been a greater need for their skills and their voice. Solar panel module costs have plummeted 80% in just the past 5 years. We know that a transition to a low-carbon world is economically possible and will yield better short and long-term health outcomes. All that is missing is the social and political will. That is a modifiable variable.

So—back to 2015. If you're a physician who is feeling increasingly compelled to speak out for the health of the ecosystems on which your patients depend, but are not sure where to start—contact us at CAPE. If you're a non-physician who is intimately involved in the quest for a liveable planet, a cardio-commuting city, a clean electricity grid, a carbon tax, or clean water and you'd like some support from your local MDs—know that there has never been a better time to ask for it.

As 2015 approaches—let us be brave. Let us be loud. Let us make climate-health the issue of the election. Let us do the next generation proud.

# CAPE VICTORIES *Thanks to you!*

By supporting CAPE's work, you have helped our doctors win real environmental and health protection:

- 2008** Ontario pesticide ban
- 2009** New Brunswick pesticide ban
- 2010** Nova Scotia pesticide ban
- 2011** Newfoundland and Labrador pesticide ban
- 2012** Quebec withdraws financial support for asbestos
- 2012** Quebec closes Gentilly-2 nuclear plant
- 2014** Coal-fired power 100% eliminated in Ontario
- 2014** Manitoba lawn pesticide ban

**CAPE's 2014 AGM will take place November 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> 2014 in Toronto. For details please contact Tamara Brownstone at (416) 306-2273.**



**DONATE AT [WWW.CAPE.CA](http://WWW.CAPE.CA)**

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



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