

## We Can Stop the Use of Pesticides on City Properties

Recently, my family and I were walking around Lower Harbor/Mattson Park in Marquette where we instantly detected the strong smell of herbicide granules (weed and feed) on the main grass area where teenagers were playing frisbee in their barefeet.

Progressive local governments across the United States and Canada have banned weed-and-feed and other products containing 2, 4-D (a neurotoxin once found in Agent Orange).

Weed-and-feed and other lawn chemicals have been linked to cancer, endocrine system disruption, neurological and immune system effects, asthma and respiratory effects, and behavioral and learning effects. Children are especially vulnerable to adverse effects of pesticides. Scientific studies show that children face elevated rates of diseases associated with pesticides (children's organs are still developing and are therefore less efficient at removing toxins and they will play in the grass and put things in their mouths).

Lawn applications of pesticides or herbicides by use of spray or granules are also prone to leaching and runoff, which contaminates water above and below ground. These chemicals have no boundaries and end up in Lake Superior and in our own bodies.

Chemical pesticides harm all forms of life including wildlife. Those that like to play on these lawns the most (ie: children and pets) can absorb it from skin contact and take it in orally by touching the grass or rolling in it. Below ground, pesticides harm microorganisms, and beneficial insects and earthworms.

Lawns are best managed successfully without a reliance on these toxic chemicals with a practice that addresses soil health, aeration, mowing height, proper organic fertilization, watering techniques, and appropriate grass varieties.

I find it disturbing enough when pesticides are casually used on lawns by homeowners but when municipalities do it- paid for by our city taxes- it is reckless. There were no warning signs posted either!

While I am not a Marquette resident, my family frequents the area. For those of us that are greatly concerned for the health of our local environment and therefore our personal health we need to kindly but firmly demand that the city no longer uses pesticides on any city properties.

For those that are still using lawn pesticides on home properties please consider checking out:  
<http://www.safelawns.org>.

If you also are concerned about this issue then please contact the Marquette City Commission and request that lawn pesticides be banned on city properties. To contact them by email go to:  
[http://www.mqtcty.org/commission\\_city\\_meet\\_your.html](http://www.mqtcty.org/commission_city_meet_your.html). If many of our voices are heard then this can very well happen.

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