

Board of Health

Monthly Report- March 28, 2002

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We welcome your
comments and
suggestions for
the Board Report at
board@healthunit.org

City of Brockville Pesticide Committee

Submitted by Henry Garcia, Director of Health Protection

The City of Brockville, like many municipalities across the province is considering the regulation of pesticides use in their community.

The Supreme Court of Canada decision which upheld a municipal by-law enacted by the Town of Hudson, Quebec to restrict the cosmetic use of pesticides in that community has prompted Brockville to move forward in this endeavor.

The general public has also requested that their governments start looking into the process of regulating pesticides within their communities, as there is sufficient suggestive evidence of health and environmental threats from pesticide use to warrant actions to protect the public.

The City has moved forward in appointing a pesticide subcommittee to review the application of pesticides within the City of Brockville. This subcommittee is to report back to Council with recommendations aimed at reducing reliance on the use of pesticides for aesthetic or non-essential purposes within in the City of Brockville. The Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit was asked to be a member of this subcommittee representing the Health Profession. Joan Mays, Public Health Inspector, was appointed as the Health Unit representative. Other members serving on the committee are from city council, city staff, the general public, the pesticide industry, and a sports group.

The committee meets monthly and has begun gathering and reviewing information from other municipalities that have already adapted pesticide use policies within their communities. The goal of this committee, as directed by city council, is to bring forward recommendations to council regarding pesticide use. These recommendations will then be used by council to formulate a pesticide use by-law. The recommendations may involve alternative pest management strategies that will work towards reducing the reliance on pesticides within the community, as well as developing educational information for the general public. As a member of this committee the Health Unit will assist in developing sound health and environmental directives that will become an integral part of the recommendations to council.



Photo: Environment Canada

Rural Expo 2003 – Lanark County

Submitted by Henry Garcia, Director of Health Protection

During September 17 to 21, 2003, the International Ploughing Match will be held in the Township of Beckwith just southeast of the Town of Carleton Place. The planners for this five-day event are anticipating about 70,000 people to attend the various functions. A temporary trailer park will also be established on the property to accommodate approximately 1,100 mobile homes.

Staff of the Health Unit have been participating at committees in the planning of issues related to our mandate which includes: the provision of safe water in sufficient quantity to meet the projected needs, ensuring that foods offered for sale at the event are from approved sources and are maintained, prepared and served in a safe manner, solid and liquid wastes are stored and disposed of sanitarly, the operation of activities do not present a health or safety hazards to participants, ensuring adequate resources to meet potential outbreak of disease or illnesses and ensuring that adequate resources are available to respond to emergencies.

The Health Unit intends to be on site during the event in a command centre and to establish the necessary links with all groups and organising committees in order to assist in the provision of a safe and healthy environment for all participants at this event.

The Health Unit also intends to participate as an exhibitor of our services.



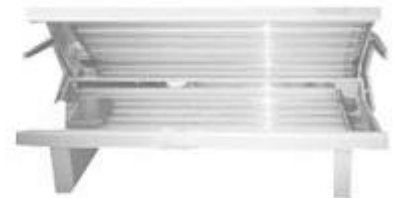
Tanning Bed Press Release Draws Attention

Submitted by Susan LaBrie, Public Health Nurse

On January 11, 2002, the Health Unit distributed a media release throughout the tri-county on the dangers of tanning beds. Although the information contained in the warning was not new, it was successful in generating a considerable amount of attention.

The warning outlined many of the dangers involved with regular exposure to ultraviolet (UV) lights in tanning beds. These risks include:

- ⊙ Skin damage and photo-aging (i.e. premature wrinkling and sagging of the skin)
- ⊙ Development of skin cancer – including Malignant Melanoma (the most dangerous form of skin cancer)
- ⊙ Skin irritation and eye damage
- ⊙ Exposure to high amounts of UV radiation – tanning bed lights can emit 2-5 times more UVA radiation than natural sunlight (which increases the risk of developing the problems listed above)



Our main goal was to emphasize the fact that **there is NO such thing as a safe tan.**

The press release prompted a number of radio stations, including Ottawa's 93.9 Cool FM, to report the tanning bed warning to their listeners. Various articles about the dangers of indoor tanning have been published in local newspapers, including Brockville's "Recorder and Times" and the Ottawa Valley's monthly paper "News from the Valley". The media release also drew attention from Kingston's television station, resulting in a television interview with a CKWS reporter on their 6 o'clock news.

Our hope is that this attention will decrease visits to local tanning salons and ultimately reduce the incidence of skin cancer in the tri-county.

How do parents know if their child is developing 'on schedule'?



Submitted by Erin McLean, Public Health Nurse

A tool that is currently being distributed to parents is the Nipissing District Developmental Screen. This screening tool allows a parent to answer a series of questions, based on their child's age and their answers will indicate if there could be a problem in their child's development.

At the end of the screening tool, the parent is directed to call the Health Unit's Health Action Line if any concerns are raised. A public health nurse will refer the parent to the appropriate agency or health provider for a more thorough assessment.

A second resource being distributed to new parents is from 'Invest In Kids' and is called 'The Years Before Five Last the Rest of Their Lives'. It is a booklet that emphasizes the importance of these early years and gives a broad description of what a child should be able to do as they are growing from birth to age 5. It gives suggestions for age appropriate activities and games as well as where to look for more information.

Parents who attend a Baby Talk session are provided with a diaper changing pad that has a series of messages regarding the normal physical and cognitive development of infants through their first two years. To round the process off, parents are given a 'Child Health Passport' to keep track of their child's progress through the early years of life.

There are a great many books and resources available to parents to guide them through these important early years. As well, there are many agencies providing services to parents in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark Counties if their child needs some assistance in achieving their developmental milestones. Public health nurses in the Community and Family Health Department steer parents to these resources through home visiting, Baby Talk Groups, the Health Action Line and through the Health Unit's web site.

Please note page 4 was removed for posting on the web as it contained large file size graphics It was promoting the website, Babies and Children, Nutrition (coming soon) and Tobacco. Please visit those sections of our site.