

GROW GREEN & HEALTHY HALLOWELL - LET'S KEEP HALLOWELL TOXIN-FREE!

A PROPOSAL TO LIMIT SYNTHETIC CHEMICAL USE ON YARDS & LANDS IN HALLOWELL

The citizen coalition, **GROW GREEN & HEALTHY HALLOWELL**, grew out of a concern for the **health** of the residents and the **environment** of **Hallowell**, and is in line with the new Comprehensive Plan proposed for Hallowell.

THE PROBLEM: Toxic pesticide* use in our City poses a serious and unnecessary health risk, especially to our children, adults, family pets, wildlife, essential pollinators, aquatic life in the Kennebec River and the Vaughan Brook Watershed, and to essential soil microbes. Vaughan Brook is officially listed as “Threatened” by the Maine DEP for being significantly impacted or have the threat of significant impact from NPS pollution. Nonpoint Source (NPS) pollution is caused by rain and snowmelt runoff that picks up excess natural and man-made pollutants. See the list of toxic pesticides frequently purchased in the Hallowell area. See the “Health Effects” and “Environmental Effects” of 30 Commonly Used Lawn Pesticides.

THE SOLUTION: Limit the use of synthetic pesticides and synthetic fertilizers in an effective and sustainable way by **passing a Landcare Management Ordinance** (with exemptions for infestations of deer tick, brown tail moth, etc.). Provide on-line educational materials and resources for maintaining a yard without pesticides. This is the kind of city we want to live in. 30 Maine towns already have limited pesticides to varying degrees, by ordinance!

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR HALLOWELL TO DO THIS?

The City of Hallowell has a duty to safeguard the health & welfare of all residents and to conserve and protect our lands, waters, and our natural resources.

Because harmful synthetic pesticides are not necessary for a healthy green lawn & gardens. There are many safe, simple, effective, alternative strategies and products. Toxic chemicals should not be used for cosmetic purposes.

Because what you SPRAY IN YOUR YARD DOES NOT STAY IN YOUR YARD: it spreads as run-off downhill, drifts through the air, leaches into the soil and the water table.

Because we treasure our CHILDREN. They are vulnerable because their immune, nervous, and digestive systems are still developing. And they are less able to detoxify chemicals. Tiny amounts of pesticide can harm their hormone function at critical stages (endocrine disruptors). Childhood exposure is linked to brain tumors, leukemia, asthma, decreased cognitive function, a higher risk of ADHD and autism. Our outdoor spaces, walking paths and sports fields need to be free of pesticides!

Because “The EPA, The Committee on Environmental Health of the American Academy of Pediatrics, The National Academy of Sciences, and the President’s Cancer Panel have all

concluded that exposure to many **synthetic pesticides is linked to reproductive disorders, birth defects, learning disabilities, neurological disease, endocrine disorders, and cancer.**"

Because we want healthy **PETS**, free of cancer (bladder, liver, lymphoma,) caused by pesticides.

Because we need healthy **WILDLIFE** to sustain a healthy ecosystem: mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, birds, critical insects including pollinators are all adversely affected by pesticides.

Because we need **CLEAN WATER**, free of toxic **pesticide** and **fertilizer** pollution, which harms aquatic life including fish (sturgeon & salmon are endangered), and leaches into the drinking water-table and negatively impacts recreation: fishing, swimming, birding...

Because we want healthy **PLANTS**, uncontaminated by neighborhood pesticide drift or run-off. This includes our native plants, chemical-free vegetables that many residents grow, and our lawns.

Because we want healthy **SOIL, THE FOUNDATION OF OUR ECOSYSTEM**. Pesticides kill many of the vital living microorganisms in the soil. Healthy "living" soils sequester more carbon and hold more water, helping with storm water run-off, a Climate Change issue. Healthy soils foster strong disease-resistant plants.

Because an **EPA registration does not mean a pesticide is safe**. The testing and health data used by the EPA comes from the manufacturer of the pesticide! And by law, the EPA is not obligated to look at peer-reviewed studies (and often has not). Testing is done only on the "Active ingredient which is a mere 1-5% of the product. The remaining "inert" ingredients are "trade secrets"; many are toxic, and have synergistic effects, making the product even more toxic. PFAS "forever chemicals" have been used as one type of "inert" proprietary ingredient. Often the EPA registers pesticides under "conditional registration" without required data on health and environmental impacts. All this is shocking when you consider the grave health implications.

Note: This ordinance also includes some limits on the use of synthetic fertilizers, which harm the environment and are easy to replace.

*Pesticide: is a general term that includes herbicides, fungicides, insecticide.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: growgreenhallowell.org

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