

www.saveourtrees.net

Residents' Accounts of Adverse Effects and Concerns Regarding the Use of Pesticides in Western Australia: Government Herbicide and Pesticide Policies, Related Community Health and Environmental Impacts.

Following the 2008 www.saveourtrees.net petition that was promptly “finalized” by the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs in the Parliament of Western Australia, these accounts have been gathered from residents who want to see an end to the on-going questionable environmental management practices of our local and state government authorities.

Government policies that allow the widespread use of herbicides and pesticides and the destruction of trees are diminishing the health of our natural environment and posing serious risks to humans, pets and wildlife. Due to these policies, communities are faced with unsolicited exposure to toxic chemicals, reduced air, soil and water quality and the loss of a multitude of tree benefits.

The purpose of gathering these accounts is not to discredit any individual or authority but rather to provide a public record of the strong community opposition to current practices. Personal details and names of government authorities and staff have generally been deleted.

In the preparation of this component of the www.saveourtrees.net campaign, it has become apparent that many individuals and community groups such as the Multiple Chemical Sensitivity Task Force, the Alliance for a Clean Environment, the National Toxics Network, Midland Frogs and the Western Region Environment Network, with its assistance to Stirling residents in presenting the Pesticide Petition to Stirling Council, have all contributed countless hours in their efforts to protect public health. Our efforts, facilitated by Honourable Giz Watson and her research staff, will continue until the necessary laws to protect our health and environment are introduced.

Letters, emails and telephone conversations are included in the following:

1.

From: NAME DELETED
To: Alex Jones <alx_jones@yahoo.com.au>
Sent: Monday, 2 February, 2009 10:56:17 PM
Subject: RE: Weeding,Herbicides, PETITION outcome

Hi again Alex,

Good to hear that the ball is still rolling and that is what is needed, residents complaining about incidents affecting their or their pets' health as a result of being exposed to these poisons. In the 2 parks here near me, a weed only has to appear and suddenly it is covered with a green, blue or pink coating which is evidence of it having been sprayed.

Cheers, NAME DELETED (Nedlands resident, 2009)

Residents' Accounts of Adverse Effects and Concerns Regarding the Use of Pesticides in Western Australia: Government Herbicide / Pesticide Policies, Related Community Health and Environmental Impacts.

2.

From: NAME DELETED
Sent: Sunday, 1 February 2009 9:03 AM
To: NAME OF AUTHORITY DELETED
Subject: Tree spraying

To whom it may concern:

I have recently seen that all the trees in the local parks have been sprayed with some kind of bluish substance.

A neighbor told me it is some kind of poison to kill the grass.

My dog has been sick over 24 hours now, he does not eat and is vomiting- Very unlike him.

Just what kind of substance do you spray onto the trees?

Why is it that a poison (or any kind) is sprayed in a public space without a substantial way of notifying the public about it.

I strongly object to the spraying of any poisonous or toxic substance in a public place unless proven without a doubt that it is strictly necessary.

Grass? No, grass is not a strictly necessary cause. If a person can be standing there spraying a poison, then the same person can be there with a snipper and cutting the grass mechanically without the use of poisons or other noxious substances.

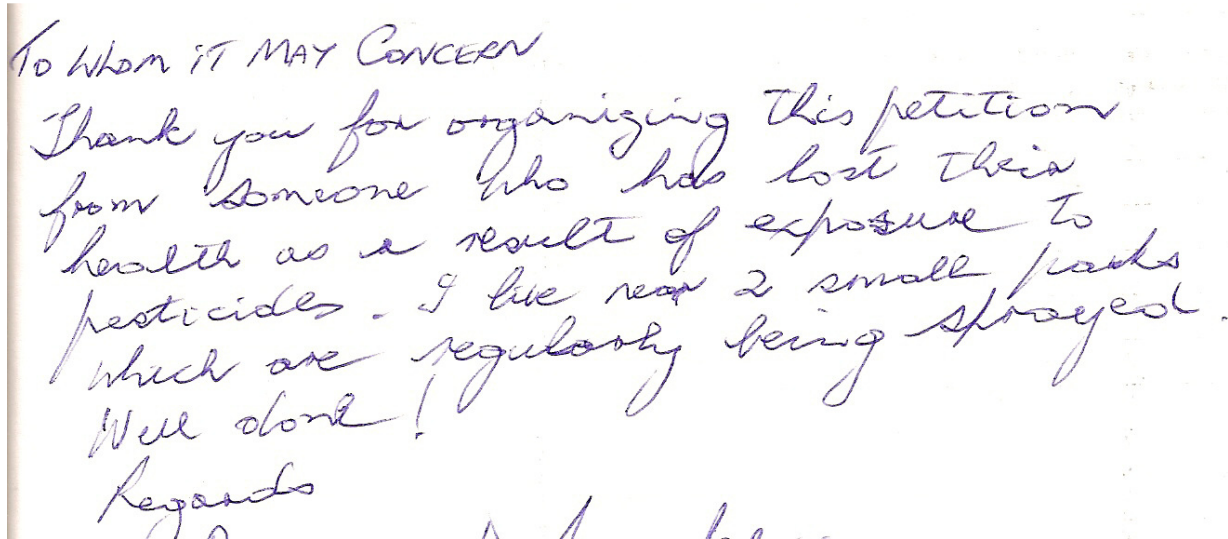
I would like to hear from the Council that this practice is stopping immediately.

We do not want poisons in our lives and in our neighborhood.

Regards,

NAME DELETED (Wembley resident, 2009)

3.



To Whom IT MAY CONCERN
Thank you for organizing this petition
from someone who has lost their
health as a result of exposure to
pesticides. I live near 2 small parks
which are regularly being sprayed.
Well done!
Regards

NAME DELETED (Nedlands resident, 2008)

Residents' Accounts of Adverse Effects and Concerns Regarding the Use of Pesticides in Western Australia: Government Herbicide / Pesticide Policies, Related Community Health and Environmental Impacts.

4.

From: NAME DELETED
To: COUNCIL NAME DELETED
Cc:
Sent: **Friday, 6 February, 2009 11:56:52 AM**
Subject: **Re: Grass trees / black boys**

Dear Sirs;

I am writing to you with some concerns about the practice of spraying 'roundup' and/or other poisons in public places.

My wife and I never had thoughts about it and have never been fully aware of what is going on in that regard. We do not believe that this practice has been advertised efficiently (if at all) to the public in general.

Our dog became ill about one week ago, he was vomiting, off his food and lethargic, which is very unlike him. We did not know what it was.

Then on the weekend at the park (DELETED reserve) a neighbour arrived with his dogs and kept them on the leash. He pointed out the 'bluish' patches around the trees and explained that they had been sprayed with poison. We since have noticed the bluish rings around trees also at DELETED reserve and the park in the corner of DELETED and DELETED road, which are parks we visit regularly. Our dog loves to go sniffing around trees as most do and rolling in the grass. We had no idea it was poison!!!

I wrote an email to the council on the 1st February about it and received a call from Mr NAME DELETED. On the phone he assured me that it was not only a common practice but it was likely to increase. His argument was that it was a practice that has been used for a long time and one that "everybody" practices. I guess Mr NAME DELETED believes we should reintroduce DDT? This product was widely used across the world. Nations in the know-how have now totally banned DDT. The big pharmaceutical companies are still selling it to third world countries because they can. That is the ethics of the business. To argue in favor of a practice simply because it has been around for some time is naive to put it mildly if not irresponsible in some cases. I think ALL kinds of poisons must be taken seriously.

Mistakes have been made in the past and I have no doubt that mistakes are being made today and will be made tomorrow.

We must learn and correct mistakes immediately. And I do not believe a word from sources with vested interests.

Since all this event came to light I found out that a neighbor of ours up the road that also uses regularly the DELETED reserve for his dog had the dog ill with exactly the same symptoms during the same period of time. Quite a coincidence wouldn't you think?

I want to reinstate that no poison should be sprayed in public places; period.

Residents' Accounts of Adverse Effects and Concerns Regarding the Use of Pesticides in Western Australia: Government Herbicide / Pesticide Policies, Related Community Health and Environmental Impacts.

4. Email continued

If there is a good reason to use a poison, then ALL neighbors MUST be POSITIVELY informed about the plan to use it and the details. Killing grass around the tree trunks is NOT a good reason.

And talking about "grass", now that we have been doing research and asking questions I want to inform you that over the years (we have lived in NAME DELETED for nearly 12 years now) we have noted regular deaths of Grass trees, particularly in the DELETED reserve and the park in the corner of DELETED and DELETED. With my wife we always wondered why. We thought that maybe they had been over watered and being a native they just rotted and died. Well, now I believe it is because of the regular spraying with poisons. In fact, I am convinced of this.

I ask the City DELETED to stop immediately the practice of spraying poisons in our parks and public places.

I would much rather prefer to live in harmony but we wont accept any more poisons in our lives. I can assure you I will now keep eyes wide open and will record every event that may indicate an effect from a poison. I will take photographs and keep a log book.

If our dog becomes ill again I will take it to the Vet to get it well and will do every single analysis under the sun to it. And I will pass the bill to the City NAME DELETED.

Kind regards

NAME DELETED (Wembley resident, 2009)

Residents 'Accounts of Adverse Effects and Concerns Regarding the Use of Pesticides in Western Australia: Government Herbicide / Pesticide Policies, Related Community Health and Environmental Impacts.

5.

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: NAME DELETED

To: NAME DELETED

Cc: NAME DELETED

Sent: Friday, 6 February, 2009 10:28:11 PM

Subject: Re: Grass trees / black boys

Dear NAME DELETED

Some comments from me.

In July 07 I met a lady in who lives in NAME DELETED who was very against the spraying of herbicides in her local park. From memory, she claimed 7 dogs died of cancer over a 6 month period after being taken for a walk in this park, including her own dog. She said her dog became covered in a skin disease and died a horrible death. A person living in house adjacent to the reserve had become quite sick, with no apparent cause. The Ciy's contractor at that time NAME DELETED sprayed around the park as witnessed by this lady. The City of NAME DELETED claimed no responsibility, said only "Glyphosate" was being used, and it appears nothing could be proved.

I have heard of cases where grassed areas near play equipment have been sprayed, the contractor has left, and then children start playing there soon afterwards, some accompanying mothers were pregnant. Did anyone get ill, or have long term health problems, as a result? We will never know, and if so, the connection with herbicide application could never be proved.

I understand NAME DELETED buys its herbicides directly from China. In fact, I believe many other companies are using Chinese herbicides because they can buy them cheaper from there. What about the herbicides and insecticides you can buy from DELETED? Many products from China have been found to be manufactured in fairly unregulated conditions, and some proven to be toxic (eg 20% of imported clothing is toxic!) so I wonder what incidental toxins Chinese herbicides might contain! No one ever spot tests imported herbicides to my knowledge. And was the contractor even using the herbicide the City thought they were using - no one at the City ever takes samples and tests them (which would have to be totally unannounced to be meaningful).

So I would agree we need to absolutely minimise the use of herbicides, and if we have to use them in some instances, there should be rigorous spot tests.

5. Email continued

The same applies to a whole range of chemicals used in our society that we have become totally dependent on, and to find another way now is going to take a lot of political will and a determined search for safer alternatives.

As for the grass trees, I know one large one mysteriously died in our local park DELETED Reserve a few weeks after the area around it was sprayed. The resident who lives adjacent to it (and can see it clearly from his backyard) spoke to me and claimed it was killed by the herbicide application - the timing was just too coincidental. I have also seen other large grass trees dead in a number of other parks with the City of DELETED. Given how ancient these plants are, this is a real shame.

I have also seen grass trees rot out in the crown, due to the frequent application of water over the crown by reticulation of the grass (and hence everything else) right through summer. Grass trees get fungal disease in the crown if they remain too wet during the hottest time of the year. To my knowledge, Councils are reluctant to re-configure their reticulation to avoid this happening - I tried for 10 years at DELETED Reserve with only limited success.

Regards,
NAME DELETED (Northern suburbs resident, 2009)
Tel: DELETED(H)
DELETED(M)

6.

The 2008 www.saveourtrees.net petition inspired some sufferers and adversely affected residents to contribute their stories. Their poor state of health does not allow them to pursue the matter with the relevant authorities such as local councils, state authorities, the Health Department, the D.E.C. and various committees. Many have expressed their concern that the insidious effects of these chemicals on unsuspecting passersby, especially children, the frail and our pets, are being ignored.

The letter on the following two pages, from a resident of Augusta, has been hand written in pencil because of the resident's sensitivity to many products in the modern environment, including inks. The scanned copy is difficult to read however, it has been included to show that the problem of exposure to chemicals is serious and that many in our community are suffering and are demanding changes to current practices simply to protect their health and that of their families.

Residents' Accounts of Adverse Effects and Concerns Regarding the Use of Pesticides in Western Australia: Government Herbicide / Pesticide Policies, Related Community Health and Environmental Impacts.

6. Letter from a resident of Augusta (page1)

Dear Alex,

13th October 2008

Recently Bob [unclear] told me of your intention to petition Parliament about herbicide & insecticide use. It is indeed most heartening to hear of a healthy person who is concerned enough to work hard to change our reckless reliance of these toxic chemicals.

I am one of 6+ people who have moved out of the urban setting in an attempt to improve our health & hopefully live a more normal, productive life. Most of us know we have been injured at work from a variety of chemicals - in my case formaldehyde, arsenic & mercury - & some of us are able to document subsequent exposure to herbicides & insecticides & the effects they have had on us. There have also been many times when each of us has suspected spray drift for a reaction, but have been unable to substantiate it.

Following are the cases where each of us is sure of cause & effect.

Individual A - The owner of his rented home put in fire breaks using round-up. On a very windy day he developed a very severe headache, felt extremely unwell & spent time in bed.

B. - Saw his neighbour spraying with round-up, even though he immediately locked himself in his house he had a bleed nose for 24 hours & subsequently over the next 2 days his nose bled on & off for a total of 6 hours. He also had a headache, could not think clearly & his muscles ached. He spent 24 hours in bed. (me!)

C & D - both attended a meeting in a hall that unbeknown to them had been treated for termites 2 days previously. My friend and

Residents' Accounts of Adverse Effects and Concerns Regarding the Use of Pesticides in Western Australia: Government Herbicide / Pesticide Policies, Related Community Health and Environmental Impacts.

6. Letter continued (page 2)

I sat at the back to avoid exposure to perfume, deodorant & washing powder but within 10 minutes we both knew something was wrong - more than the usual reaction to people & their cosmetics. Both of us had aching heads & bodies. Shortly after the start of the talk we decided to move onto the entrance porch & left as soon as the talk (about 40 mins) was finished. I had an awful migraine for 2 days & was unable to sleep.

My friend whose recovery is further along than mine was not so bad though she still had a headache & disturbed sleep.

Just a month ago I was in my back garden when I heard my neighbour moving around on his side of the fence just several metres away. In less than 5 minutes my head started spinning & I felt nauseous. I went inside & closed windows but went out after about 10 minutes & got the same reaction. My neighbour (only a holiday resident) is very understanding but he had forgotten to warn me before spraying for weeds. I checked with him the next day & he was very apologetic.

Alex, this letter is written in pencil, & quickly because ink & paper make me feel awful - spinning head, tight breathing, burning ribs, numb hands.

I hope the information is of use to you in your endeavours to better our environment. Thank you for your efforts & feel free to contact me if you wish - ph 9455 -

Yours sincerely,

Residents' Accounts of Adverse Effects and Concerns Regarding the Use of Pesticides in Western Australia: Government Herbicide / Pesticide Policies, Related Community Health and Environmental Impacts.

7.

RE: SPRAYING UNWANTED BEE COLONY WITH PESTICIDE "COOPEX"

DATE: 24 November, 2009 TIME: approx 9.15am to 10.30am

LOCATION: PLACE NAME DELETED mothers' group, corner STREET NAMES DELETED

WEATHER: Fine but some wind.

EVENT: Weekly meeting of mothers and young children at centre, and the subsequent unannounced spraying for bees, in the adjacent parklands to the group.

My daughter and her three children plus many other families were present at the PLACE DELETED when she noticed plumes of dust from the nearby spraying wafting into their play area. Children were playing outside, my daughter decided to leave as she was affected by the spraying. She observed a man (the one who was previously spraying the bees) in the car park about 10 to 15 metres away, who was inserting some dusty substance in a "bellows" type of equipment. The dust was spilled on the tarmac and was blowing all over the car park. Her children were bare footed and they walked on the substance as they accessed their vehicle. My daughter enquired to the applicator "that's not poisonous is it?" His reply was "no, it is only 99% talcum powder and 1% active ingredient."

My daughter subsequently rang NAME DELETED from the DELETED Council's Parks and Gardens to complain and question the spraying activity which he was aware of. He did not know the name of the pesticide being sprayed and insisted that "it was not harmful to other insects." My daughter told him, "If it's harmful to bees it would be harmful to other insects!" NAME DELETED made enquires and found out the substance used was called Coopex.

REASON FOR COMPLAINT:

- i) My daughter suffered severe headaches, itchy skin, irritation to nasal passages after the exposure to this spraying incident, required medical attention which took 6 weeks to clear AND her 6 month old baby was extremely unsettled for the following 48 hours.
- ii) Spraying to remove bee colony only relocated the hive to the children's play area further endangering them not only to the spraying but also possible bee stings!!
- iii) The concern for the babies, children, pregnant mothers and mothers a highly susceptible group who had to endure this activity.
- iv) The Chemical was not handled according to its Material Safety Data sheet, as witnessed by the blowing of the pesticide in the car park and blowing whilst being sprayed to bees, the absence of correct protective clothing for the applicator, no signage to advise bystanders on the process which was being performed and the complete disregard for the vulnerability of the mothers and children present.
- v) The DELETED Council has been approached in the past to make sure spraying/chemical use around this location is NOT done in the hours when children and mothers are present. Spraying around the perimeter has been done in the past when the facility was in use by mothers and children.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO THE DELETED COUNCIL REGARDING PESTICIDE AND HERBICIDE USE AROUND THE AREA ESPECIALLY WHEN BABIES AND SMALL CHILDREN ARE PRESENT.

IT APPEARS THAT THE COUNCIL HAS TAKEN NO COGNISANCE OF THE SAFETY OF THESE GROUPS.

Residents' Accounts of Adverse Effects and Concerns Regarding the Use of Pesticides in Western Australia: Government Herbicide / Pesticide Policies, Related Community Health and Environmental Impacts.

8.

Dear Alex, I wish to express my concerns in regard to the extensive use of herbicides in our local parks and gardens.

For a number of years now I have talked to the city of ~~DELETED~~ about the adverse effects of the herbicide spraying. At first I noticed that our much loved pet dog was experiencing severe rashes and vomiting after walking in our park opposite our house.

I had taken him to the vet and mentioned I thought it might be a problem with the chemical sprays they were using in the park. He responded with saying that it was more likely an allergy to some plants or grass or just a summer itch. He put him on cortisone. Our dog was on this medication for a long period of time and developed serious complications.

I was very distressed by this and began to talk to other local dog walkers in our park. To my horror discovered their dogs were also experiencing similar symptoms. Some to a lesser degree. Their vets were also saying the same story. A number of dogs had developed tumors and cancers. Their ages varied from young to old.

I rang the shire again to express my concerns and their response was the chemicals they were using were completely safe. I began to take notice when the spraying had occurred and realised the dogs were vomiting directly after the had sprayed. That there was an unusual burnt border around the vegetation and could tell there was a chemical burning.

I rang the shire once again and told them not only were the spraying too often they were not leaving signs out to alert people of the spraying. The response was the chemicals they were using were completely safe and that they evaporate very quickly. My step father is a farmer and would rest a paddock for several days before allowing stock to enter the area. They were spraying and immediately after pets and children were playing in the area.

My dog eventually developed a cancerous tumour. Because I was so concerned for his health. I decided to walk him elsewhere in a bushland that was zoned for a freeway. Not far from where the park was. The vegetation was similar but there was no chemical spray used in this area.

My dogs health improved and he had no rashes. Unfortunately They began to develop the area so we could no longer use the bushland so we went back to the park for walks and within 3 months he developed a rash and passed away with cancer that had gone through all his lymph glands. He was 11 yrs old and had suffered for 4yrs before he died.

I was so upset but was unable to prove it was definitely the chemicals. The very next day after he died I happened to go for a walk and there they were spraying chemicals. No signs out. I was so angry and approached the contractors but they totally ignored me and continued their work.

Several weeks later there was a story on the channel 7 news that the contractor working for the ~~DELETED~~ and ~~DELETED~~ cities had used a chemical hexazanine that remained in the ground water and was killing our beautiful large trees. Not only had the shire lied to me they refused to answer

Residents' Accounts of Adverse Effects and Concerns Regarding the Use of Pesticides in Western Australia: Government Herbicide / Pesticide Policies, Related Community Health and Environmental Impacts.

8. Letter continued

my calls when i left messages. I rang our local mp ~~DELETED~~, who was very helpful and passed on informationn and contacts of other concerned people who had similar concerns.

Eventually after some pressure from other groups and with the story exposing the contractors illegal use of chemicals the shire contacted me. They sent out a enviromental officer who was very nice and went on a walk through the parklands I was walking the dogs. By this time I had another young dog that was also experiencing the same rashes. I told him that this was far too coincidental but he insisted it could still be allergy to some plants or grass and that he would get back to me.

Not only did he not get back to me my messages were ignored. Meantime the list of dying pets were growing. Many residents were becoming concerned and agreed it was very unusual to have so many dogs die of cancers. On the perimeter of the park a resident had an unusual rash the specialist could not cure. They had a young dog that was vomiting when they sprayed the fence line. A previous owner of the house had died of a rare cancer.

The evidence was mounting, and the spraying continued. I began to diarise the times they sprayed and realised they had sprayed on the first day of the school holidays and that children and pets were in the park. I approached the contractor again and asked them why there was no signs. They had no answer.

With a few concerned residents we went to a council meeting and addressed the mayor with our story. He seemed quite shiocked that this incident had occurred and that they would look into it.

They now call me on the morning of the spraying and they seem to be doing it less often. Im pleased to say that they are now experimenting with the hydrothermal weed control. I believe they would not consider this if they didnt have concerns for the effect of the chemicals.. I have had some conversations with a toxicologist and they do say they cannot say without doubt that the regular use of glysohphate even can be totally safe.

Can this be the story of the canary in the coalmine. If our trees and pets are so badly effected then surely human life is also at risk. Therefore the money saved on weed controll with chemicals is far too greater risk to take.

yours sincerely ~~DELETED~~

Residents' Accounts of Adverse Effects and Concerns Regarding the Use of Pesticides in Western Australia: Government Herbicide / Pesticide Policies, Related Community Health and Environmental Impacts.

9.

16 March 2009

Alex Jones
SaveOurTrees.net
PO Box 474
Nedlands WA 6009

Dear Alex,

I just want to say thank you for all the hard work you have been doing in lobbying to see safer methods of weed control introduced in this State.

I am constantly horrified at the things that I see with regards to spraying of pesticides in open places. I have watched a huge oval in ~~DELETED~~ being sprayed with just two pathetic signs visible to the public. Not even one sign was located in the main car park to notify the public of what was occurring and clearly the public were totally oblivious to what was happening. The people I spoke with who were arriving to exercise their dogs did not have any idea what the truck was doing and when made aware were very quick to return their dogs to their cars and seek alternative exercise areas for the day. On an adjoining oval just minutes later on the same morning I watched in horror as a lady stood talking with a friend unaware that her labradore dog was busy licking up all the froffy white foam of the freshly sprayed pesticide.

I have watched with other parents in disbelief as pesticides were sprayed right in front of a cross walk attendant outside a primary school in ~~Street~~, as children were arriving at 8.30 in the morning. They certainly weren't concerned about the children – they didn't even stop spraying as they passed by the cross walk attendant who reported the smell to be overpowering.

My own parents live opposite a park and a drainage sump. Both their rose garden and that of their neighbours suffered damage just two or three years ago after spraying of the sump. Most of the native shrubs around that sump died not long after just like so many in ~~DELETED~~ and ~~DELETED~~ council areas did. My dad keeps his lawns well mowed and his edges trimmed neatly. He is infuriated a couple of times a year when the council blanket pours pesticides along his footpath and kills inches of his lawn edges every single time. His section is well maintained and does not need doing. What right does council have to pour these chemicals outside his property?

I have watched one of those chemical trucks going along a footpath spraying whilst closely following a woman pushing her baby in a pram. The lady was walking as fast as she could go to get away from the guy but he just kept right on her tail. I was again shocked that he would not have the decency to put distant between himself and her and allow her and her small infant to get out of there. Parents know all too well the dangers chemicals pose to such small body masses.

I am aware of children breaking out in rashes after soccer training on an oval south of the river. When the council was contacted it was discovered that the oval had been sprayed with pesticides that day. The public were unaware and the children paid the price.

I could go on and on but as you already know safer practices are urgently needed.

NAME DELETED (Doubleview resident, 2009)

Residents' Accounts of Adverse Effects and Concerns Regarding the Use of Pesticides in Western Australia: Government Herbicide / Pesticide Policies, Related Community Health and Environmental Impacts.

10.

Dear Alex,

11th June, 2009

DIARY: Council Spraying Inconvenience and Stress

Friday, 8th May 2009 - Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital- X-rays and Blood tests-am re-infected with same bugs as I had when I got pneumonia in Sept. 2008. 10 days on antibiotics-enormous nausea and bad reaction-bedridden.

Monday, 18th May,2009 - DELETED Council sprays verges – name DELETED, my husband stays home to help. Name DELETED and I go to my mother's place in DELETED. She has a small home and lives on a busy road- The car fumes make me very ill- No protection but better than pesticide risk.

Thursday, 21st May, 2009 - Heavy rains and I went home for weekend.

Monday, 25th May, 2009 - Woke up at 3:00am with the most raging headache –very ill. I came home too soon.

Tuesday 26th May, 2009 - Back to Mum's as Council resumes rest of their spraying.

Wednesday, 27th May, 2009 - Council starts spraying in wee hours of the night before dawn.(Midnight till dawn).

Friday, 29th May, 2009 - Came home- headache still not abated.

Thursday, 11th June - I have been generally dysfunctional, headachy, tired, ears sore, sleep disturbed by nightmares etc.

Letter to Ethnic Disability Advocacy Group

Dear name DELETED,

My name is DELETED. I was born in DELETED and came to Australia in 1956. 20 years ago I contracted tachycardia or racing heart which I discovered was caused by council spraying "roundup" on suburban verges in 2002. This discovery was when I walked on a recently sprayed field, and found that I collapsed on the way home. I rang my council, Town of DELETED and found that their spraying coincided with my attacks (heart) and hospitalisations. A respected medical professional has signed a document to say that I am affected by these sprays.

Residents' Accounts of Adverse Effects and Concerns Regarding the Use of Pesticides in Western Australia: Government Herbicide / Pesticide Policies, Related Community Health and Environmental Impacts.

10. Letter continued

As a result I was awarded a disability pension in 2003.

My continual fight against my council to not spray as it sends me into tachycardia has fallen on deaf ears, although the council has given me a 300 metre exclusion zone, which is of no benefit as sprays drift with slight wind movements. I have contacted the following:

WA Health Department

Politicians both Federal and Local

APVMA

Human Rights Commission

Newspapers which have published my story

Numerous public enquiries both state and federal

My condition to this susceptibility to sprays is under the umbrella of Multiple Chemical Sensitivity or my term M C Poisoning.

I have to vacate my home at least twice a year to escape me contacting spray in my suburb, which is at least 6 weeks per year.

I would be grateful if you could reply to my request as I believe no agency can help me and others with some sensitivities. I live under constant threat to all spray exposure and look forward to your anticipated response.

Thank you,

NAME DELETED (Western Suburbs resident, 2009)

Residents' Accounts of Adverse Effects and Concerns Regarding the Use Pesticides in Western Australia: Government Herbicide / Pesticide Policies, Related Community Health and Environmental Impacts.

11.

On 24th November 2008, I walked with my daughter around DELETED Lake and noticed a strange smell. It was difficult to describe the smell because although I knew that it was a chemical, it was an odd mouldy, musty, fungi kind of smell. We observed that the tall grass/ reeds around the lake had a strange colour and appeared to be dying. The strong smell made me instinctively want to avoid breathing deeply and we were keen to get away from the smell that was being carried by a strong wind in our direction. It became an unpleasant walk because we knew that we were being exposed to a chemical substance. The next day I contacted the local Council and was told that as it is a wetland it was managed by DELETED. When I finally spoke to the contractor involved, I was told that only Roundup Biactive is used at the Lake and in wetland areas and that the chemical has no smell. The Material Safety Data Sheet for Roundup Biactive describes the odour as "earthy" which I believe is an appropriate description of the chemical. Clearly the information given to me by the contractor was incorrect.

On Monday 24th August 2009 at about 1:00pm, I drove into Guger Street from DELETED Street and saw about three people working on the verges and medians in DELETED. One was spraying a liquid onto the woodchips. I asked the contractor what was being sprayed and was told that it was Glyphosate. When I commented that I disapproved of the spraying of herbicides in public places and advised that I was also concerned about the lack of protective clothing for the operator I was told that the chemical is safe and that they know to always stand upwind from the spray. I advised that the information that I had read about the product said that it was not safe and that it was linked to Non Hodgkins Lymphoma and other illnesses. The contractor said that they were employed by the council to treat for weeds. I also observed that it was a busy time of day with some pedestrians around and that there was moderate wind.

In 2007 I wrote a lengthy letter to DELETED authority about their management practices involving the use of herbicides in both the bushland and grassed areas. We supplied photographic evidence of our dog that was made very ill and almost died subsequent to repeated exposure to herbicides used in the areas that we frequently visited. We provided specific detail in regard to the locations and date when the spraying was observed and noted that the spraying on that occasion was without signage to alert the public. No written response to our concerns has been received.

NAME DELETED (Nedlands resident, 2009)

Residents' Accounts of Adverse Effects and Concerns Regarding the Use of Pesticides in Western Australia: Government Herbicide / Pesticide Policies, Related Community Health and Environmental Impacts.

12. Telephone conversation

Tuesday, 25th August

The park opposite my house was sprayed this morning by three sprayers from three different vehicles. There was no contractor's name on the vehicles. The park has a children's swing in it. I am concerned about the spraying because my health has been adversely affected by chemicals in the past.

NAME DELETED (Gosnells resident, 2009)

13. Telephone conversations

17th March 2009

On Monday 16th March at about 1:50 - 2: 00 pm., I was waiting at the bus stop on DELETED Street and noticed a tractor with liquid in the tank at the back. The person was spraying the median on DELETED Avenue, on the airport side of Second Street.

I did not see any signs warning of the spraying and the person next to me at the bus- stop commented that it was due to rain over the next few days.

As I am a sufferer of Multiple Chemical Sensitivity, I have taken an interest in spraying activities and I have observed that when there is rain after spraying, a few weeks later, there develops a problem with algal bloom in the Swan River. Rains wash the chemicals into the drains and the river where the problem becomes apparent. There are scientific reasons as to why this occurs.

In today's copy of the Southern Gazette, DELETED edition, the City's environmental team is asking for volunteers to remove the "nut grass" from DELETED Lake. This is a good initiative as weeds can be dealt with without the use of poisonous chemicals. Grass should simply be slashed when too long and not sprayed.

Anyone who is concerned about being poisoned by organophosphate pesticides should ask their doctor for two blood tests: 1. True Cholinesterase and 2. False Cholinesterase. However there needs to be prior testing to establish the baseline level of cholinesterase before the poisoning has occurred. Cholinesterase levels are lowered when poisoning has happened. Doctors need to be informed about these tests. It is very important for people to find out which chemicals are being used in our environment.

25th September 2009- I observed the hosing of a driveway with herbicide as I went past Epsom Avenue Belmont.

21st October 2009- The cycleway/walkway to the right of the entrance to Burswood Casino seems to be frequently sprayed.

NAME DELETED (South of river resident, 2009)

Residents' Accounts of Adverse Effects and Concerns Regarding the Use of Pesticides in Western Australia: Government Herbicide / Pesticide Policies, Related Community Health and Environmental Impacts.

14.

Testimonial Letter in the Perception of Public Safety Regarding the Use of Pesticides and Herbicides in the Perth Community.

I responded to a Letter written by Mrs. Jones in the local paper of the Perth Suburb of Subiaco several weeks ago, in which she telephoned me and asked me to write this Testimonial.

For many years, whilst driving in the City of ~~DELETED~~, I have noticed the lack of signage when Pesticide or Herbicides are sprayed. One area of continual concern is the long stretch of road being; High Road ~~DELETED~~. I have complained in writing to the Local Government and was told that only safe chemicals are used by employees and signage is unnecessary. I was satisfied with this answer, as it was the one I wanted to hear, at the time.

The community perception seems to be that all chemical spraying is relatively harmless, when used to Manufacturer Specifications and people who challenge this concept are either cranks or alarmists or both. This perception has been reinforced over the years little or no use of Personal Protective Equipment by the chemical sprayer or nearby co-workers. Young employees, spraying chemicals, may not be aware to the long term effects of chemical over- exposure. I am not an Industrial Chemist so I will not argue the toxically aspects any horticultural chemical treatments used.

Key point.

If the perception is that chemicals used by Local Governments and Agencies are relatively toxically safe, as we are led to believe, and precautions are subsequently downgraded, as they currently are, what are the Community Safe Guard Perimeters; when dangerous hazardous chemicals are used as a replacement?

There are several basic Occupational Health and Safety issues that we, community members, should pursue.

Residents' Accounts of Adverse Effects and Concerns Regarding the Use of Pesticides in Western Australia: Government Herbicide / Pesticide Policies, Related Community Health and Environmental Impacts

14. Letter continued

- What chemicals are actually used in the Community, are they really necessary, and what their long term effects to the eco-system, wildlife and us?
- Local Government (and Sub-contracted) Employee Safety and Training in Chemical Use; at least to a Recognized
- Certified Certificate 3 level. Independent industrial union involvement is deemed necessary for this.
- Establishment of a long term holistic Integrated Pest Management Plan to eradicate the over-use or use of herbicide and pesticides using alternative environmentally safer means.
- The compulsory use of detailed signage for all deemed necessary chemical spraying.

NAME DELETED (Resident of Ferndale 2009)

Residents' Accounts of Adverse Effects and Concerns Regarding the Use of Pesticides in Western Australia: Government Herbicide / Pesticide Policies, Related Community Health and Environmental Impacts

15.

Hi Alex

Just another story about COUNCIL NAME DELETED attitude to herbicides/pesticide/fungicide spraying. The PLACE NAME DELETED at SUBURB NAME DELETED, were sprayed with Bayer's "Spearhead" I looked at the data sheet for the product and Bayer recommended that the applicators should wear what read like a spacesuit specification whilst spraying. Bayer also insisted that applicators should not revisit the site for at least 3 days!! Such is the potency of "Spearhead"

The spraying ended on Friday and the very next day the venue users were playing on the sprayed fields!! I alerted personnel at DELETED, of this situation, however it appears to them that the venue users are not affected as are the applicators!! Justification of this event was that the fields had to be sprayed and COUNCIL NAME DELETED did not have the time to give 3 days grace as per manufacture's instruction. I also alerted the NAME DELETED Administration about the situation. Their reply, was they had full confidence in the way COUNCIL NAME DELETED was handling their grass courts.

I can only speculate what health issues came forth after the participants played on these sprayed courts. Bayer lists many symptoms which can be experienced on exposure to "Spearhead" not observing the withholding periods. I don't want to think of how many times this scenario has and still is happening and the resultant health issues and costs.

You can see the magnitude of the problem on the unsuspecting and uninformed public due to these toxic chemicals.

Regards

NAME DELETED (Western Suburbs resident, 2009)

sprayed with dangerous herbicides and other chemicals by local councils and their contractors.

Only for people such as Alex Jones of Save Our Trees and Daniel Boase-Jelinek of Friends of Underwood, to name a few of the limited number of environmentally aware activists, the planet would be even worse off than it is already.

We are regularly informed by Ms Jones and others of the damage that chemical spraying is doing to our waterways; the recent death of dolphins in the Swan River being but one example.

Unfortunately, Mr Boase-Jelinek seems to have to resort to one evil to combat the other evil. Maybe one action is cancelling out the good of the other i.e. herbicide spraying being so dangerous as to counter the benefits of killing a few weeds.

I have had the pleasure of stopping in Kings Park and helping, only for an hour, to pull weeds with the dedicated group of people who regularly turn up to weed.

If I had known that there was a possibility, as Ms Jones suggests, that I was kneeling in an area that had been sprayed I would have been out of there quick smart.

Many of us have seen the people spraying these chemicals. They are usually in full protective gear with face masks, which suggests to me that the product can't be good for man or beast. I urge our councils to find other friendlier ways to manage our environment besides spraying chemicals and cutting down healthy trees.

We need what's left of this planet for our children and their children.

Garin Foley,
City Beach.

Chemical sprays bring many concerns

ONE has to give credit where credit is due to a local newspaper that gives regular coverage to pressing environmental issues.

A recent issue comes to mind as a classic example of vital information being disseminated to a large group of readers in an area that is regularly

Residents' Accounts of Adverse Effects and Concerns Regarding the Use of Pesticides in Western Australia: Government Herbicide / Pesticide Policies, Related Community Health and Environmental Impacts

16.

Email

[Flag this message](#)

Spearhead

Wednesday, 21 July, 2010 12:05 PM

From:

[View contact details](#)

To:

"Alex Jones" <alx_jones@yahoo.com.au>

Hi Alex,

I went thru Perry Lakes this morning trying to follow the cockatoos who flew west. There are signs stuck onto posts to say that spraying has been conducted and to not go on the ground until it is dry. The sign has a number to contact; DELETED - Town of NAME DELETED. There was a terrible smell. I rang the number and NAME DELETED had a bit of information.

Sprayed 19-20 July, used spearhead. Sprayed for bindi and clover. The smell will hang about for a few days she said. I could be put thru to NAME DELETED but he probably would not have any further information, she said. I didn't ask to be put thru'.

NAME DELETED

Resident of Daglish

17.

Email

To: <alx_jones@yahoo.com.au>, Received: Friday, 27 August, 2010, 8:57 PM

OMG NAME DELETED that's awful! We had the same thing yesterday. Just as I was sending out my latest newsletter I found the council uselessly spraying the weeds over the road. The guy had no protective gear on and actually had no idea at all what he was spraying!

I have sent NAME DELETED'S questionnaire of the DELETED City Council. My girlfriend called today and expressed similar concern at Belmont and Melville so she expressed an interest in sending the questionnaire to her council's too! Thanks heaps NAME DELETED! ☺

I will be calling next week.

Onwards any upwards! We will not be defeated!

NAME DELETED

Resident of Mandurah

Residents' Accounts of Adverse Effects and Concerns Regarding the Use of Pesticides in Western Australia: Government Herbicide / Pesticide Policies, Related Community Health and Environmental Impacts

18.

Telephone conversation
Friday 1st October 2010

Hi Alex,

Guess what? - They've been spraying Signal Hill again; it's that bushland in DELETED near a residential area. I went past in the bus and saw three men all kitted up with protective clothing and getting ready to spray. One of them was adjusting his mask. There was a DELETED Council utility vehicle with all the gear in the back. The registration was DELETED. In the afternoon when I went past on the bus again I could see the blue dye in various parts of Signal Hill.

NAME DELETED
South of River Resident