


Paul Melsom Submission for Pesticides Amendment Bill 2013 (short version)

Please refer to the Long version of the pesticide Amendment bill Power Point.

I implore you to read this to understand some of the serious health and safety issues linked to pesticides especially facing children and grasp the full severity of the situation.

My Background

- I am U.K. college trained horticulturalist in the safe use of pesticides in plant nurseries as well as in a U.K. government experimental Horticultural centre.
- I have been working in Hong Kong since 1997.
- I have not used pesticides for over 30 years because of their risks to health.
- For the last 11 years I have been teaching Organic Eco-education in Hong Kong.



I have been appalled beyond belief by the complete lack of controls and guidelines for pesticides used in schools. These are in my experience **non-existent**, exposing children to some of the worst neurotoxic pesticides around and seriously increasing their health risks for getting serious diseases in the future.


Many parents are deeply worried by this unbelievable situation.

I have contacted the relevant government departments on numerous occasions and I have found the pesticide guidelines and risk assessment guidelines to be completely useless. (For comments see slides 26-37 in long version).

Plants with recently sprayed with pesticide in a school. The children play hide and seek and the pesticide can be absorbed into their skin. Even when the pesticide dry's it is still active and can still be absorbed into the skin of the children


Freshly sprayed pesticide pooling on leaves and drying in concentrated form on lower leaf.





Immediately Suspend all Dangerous pesticides immediately from being used in schools.

- These should include the neurotoxin pesticides the 'Organophosphates' which includes Diazinon.
- Review all pesticides used in schools.
- New enforcement measures must be introduced for pesticides used in public places including schools with severe penalties for any breaches.



There should be full public engagement, education and consultation on pesticides.

PESTICIDE FREE SCHOOLS


Hong Kong's aim should be for pesticide free schools to ensure the long term health of children, staff and susceptible foetuses in pregnant women.

- New York & Connecticut campaigned and won a victory for Pesticide free schools in 2010.
- Website:
 - <http://www.citizenscampaign.org/campaigns/pesticide-free-schools.asp>
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Innocent inquisitive children touching and playing around plants

Children are very vulnerable and can absorb pesticides through their exposed skin especially in the summer



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- As a parents we should have the right to know what pesticides are used around our children and have a voice in protecting our children from these life threatening poisons. (see Govt. guidelines in long version).

Many pesticides used in Hong Kong are banned or have restricted use and cannot be used in schools or domestic use in other countries.

Pesticides are poisons

Pesticides are toxic poisons made in industrial factories to kill insects.

- The pest control applicators in Hong Kong need no licence, recognised certificate or qualification to spray hazardous pesticides in schools. This is wrong.


Pesticides not only kill insects they make children and people very sick. In some cases terminally ill.

- Pesticides are known to cause
 - Many types of Cancers
 - Affect foetuses in pregnant women
 - Endocrine disruption (Hormones)
 - - Reproductive system
1. Parkinson's disease

*Attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder
(ADHD)*

Many studies list many cancers resulting from pesticide exposure, especially is concern for children

- **Childhood and adult leukemia**
- **Childhood brain cancer**
- **Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma**
- **Neuroblastoma**
- **Brain cancer**
- **Prostate cancer**
- **Kidney cancer**
- **Pancreatic cancer**
- **Lung cancer**

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- Although I applaud the government for proposing to adopt the Stockholm convention and the Rotterdam convention on Pesticides, these fall along way short of safe guarding the public and children from pesticides.

Diazinon

- Banned in the UK since 2001
- Banned in the whole of EU (27 Countries) since March 2012.

This insecticide has been used in schools for pest control of mosquitoes, although not recommended in the AFCD 'Pesticides used for Outdoor Mosquito control'. **There is no restriction for this being used in classrooms.**

Safe and Natural alternatives
should be sought for pest control

- The government should adopt a much safer Integrated Natural Pest control methods.