

Date: Tuesday 15 November 2016
Time: 4.00pm
Meeting Room: Council Chamber
Venue: Henderson Civic Centre
6 Henderson Valley Road
Henderson

Henderson-Massey Local Board

OPEN MINUTE ITEM ATTACHMENTS

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Item 8.1

Attachment A

Noting the unanimous resolution passed by Auckland Councillors at the Regional Strategy & Policy Committee meeting of 1 September 2016 to “*express its concerns about the use of glyphosate [in public places on streets and parks] to the incoming Council*”-- we request the support of Henderson-Massey Local Board to agree to, and communicate to Council, the following two resolutions:

- 1. That Henderson-Massey Local Board supports all public places (i.e. streets and parks) in our local board area being free from chemicals for weed and vegetation control - excluding its appropriate and safe use for pest plants. (1)**
- 2. In order to achieve this, Henderson-Massey Local Board requests of Council that the 2017 Annual Plan require and make full regional financial provision this year for the total replacement of glyphosate in all public places across the city by non-chemical methods for weed management and vegetation control - in its own operations and those of Auckland Transport.**

This would finally implement the key objectives in Auckland Council’s 2013 Weed Management Policy – noting Council’s full support for the implementation of this Policy at the same 1 September 2016 meeting.

(1) We confirm and agree with councillors at that meeting that it is the use of glyphosate in public places for vegetation control that is of concern - not its appropriate use for pest plants and problem weeds as directed by Council’s Best Practice Reference Group.

IN SUPPORT OF THIS REQUEST we note that:

- The Policy recognises that agrichemicals like glyphosate can be harmful to human health and the environment and prioritises its key objectives to protect people over cost.
- The Policy states that non-chemical techniques should be used for weed management and vegetation control whenever they are “available and effective”.
- It also recognises that agrichemicals should only be used if non-chemical methods and techniques are not “practical or adequate” at achieving the necessary level of control.
- 20 years after its adoption in the legacy Auckland and North Shore Cities, roadside vegetation is still being managed ‘practically’ and ‘adequately’ by nonchemical methods - including in rural areas like Waiheke.
- These nonchemical methods, are ‘effective’ and ‘available’ for use over the entire Auckland region, with new integrated best practice methodologies now costing no more than using glyphosate.

Glyphosate’s total replacement with non-chemical methods would therefore not only be consistent with Council’s own Policy, but with the growing trend of local authorities and countries around the world stopping its use in public places after the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) released its findings in 2015 that glyphosate was a probable human carcinogen.

Well before this ruling, Aucklanders recognised that all agrichemicals carry risks for human health, and the adoption of non-chemical weed and vegetation control twenty years ago was as a direct response to reported adverse health effects.

As detailed in the latest international monograph on glyphosate by lead author, Auckland’s Dr Meriel Watts, there is a huge body of independent scientific evidence linking glyphosate to adverse effects – not just cancer - on human health and the environment.

In this respect Dr Watts notes that some members of the public in Auckland are known to be especially sensitive to the effects of glyphosate, experiencing disabling acute and ongoing chronic effects of being

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exposed to roadside and park spraying. But every single person in Auckland is vulnerable to the "hidden" effects of glyphosate, because everyone is exposed and no-one can avoid its use in public areas.

- **Acute effects** of glyphosate exposure include skin problems, headaches, dizziness, severe fatigue, abdominal pain, gastrointestinal problems, acute respiratory infection, conjunctivitis, fever, allergies, and death.
- **Breast cancer:** glyphosate at minute levels of exposure causes breast cancer cells to grow, increasing the risk of breast cancer for women.
- **Reproductive:** glyphosate causes cell death in human umbilical, embryonic and placental cells, at dilutions far below those used in vegetation control. These effects together with the endocrine disrupting effects can result in pregnancy problems leading to abnormal foetal development, low birth weights, or miscarriages. It also kills testicular Sertoli cells and causes abnormal levels of testosterone, luteinizing hormone and follicle-stimulating hormone; and impairs male reproductive development and function including damaging sperm, in laboratory studies.
- **Birth defects:** there is evidence from both animal studies and exposed humans of birth defects.
- **Neurological:** glyphosate kills nerve cells; it also depletes the neurotransmitters serotonin and dopamine, and damages the substantia nigra region of the brain, implicating it in Parkinson's disease.
- **Kidney:** glyphosate causes kidney abnormalities, and is thought to be a causative factor in a form of kidney disease that is killing thousands of farmers in some countries.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS of glyphosate are not insignificant either

- Glyphosate is considered a widespread environmental contaminant found in soils and sediments, surface water, ground water and even rain. This is hugely relevant in Auckland with our unique relationship with our marine environment.
- Glyphosate runoff from hard surfaces is increasingly seen around the world as a source of water pollution, like here in Auckland where glyphosate and its breakdown product AMPA has been found by NIWA in marine sediment in the Waitemata Harbour and Hauraki Gulf, believed to have come largely from roadside spraying.
- Glyphosate can cause significant effects on species that underpin the entire aquatic food chain. It can alter the composition of natural aquatic communities, tipping the ecological balance, changing clear water to turbid water, giving rise to harmful algal blooms, and reducing species richness. It can have profound impacts on microorganisms, plankton, algae and amphibia at low concentrations.

Coupling all this with the adverse effects of glyphosate on soil microorganisms, bees and other beneficial insects, Auckland's ability to move rapidly, practicably and efficiently to nonchemical weed and vegetation control and protect our health and environment, would be a blessing we all would recognise.

Finally we hope you can take it as read, that you have the support of tens and thousands of people in both your community and the wider city to take this course of action, as evidenced in the submissions, petitions, reports and delegations that have been made over the years.

Our expectation that all the hard work in bringing the Weed Management Policy to life would be realised, may now be actioned – even if it is three years late. Thank you all for your support.

Hana Blackmore
Weed Management Advisory
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