

# ***Pests, Pest Control and Pesticides: Safe Options for Our Environment***

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# Agenda

- **What are pesticides?**
- **How can pests be controlled?**
- **How are they being controlled in Clifton Park and Saratoga County?**
- **What are the risks to the current approach?**
- **Are there options that could be pursued?**
- **What can we do together?**



# What are pesticides?

- **A pesticide is any substance or mixture of substances used to:**
  - Prevent, destroy, repel or, reduce pests and the damage caused by pests.
- **Pests are living organisms that occur where they are not wanted or that cause damage to crops, humans, or other animals.**
  - Pests can include insects, weeds, fungi, and rodents.
- **The term pesticide can refer to insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, rodenticides, and various other substances used to control pests.**
  - Antimicrobial agents such as sterilizers, disinfectants, sanitizers, and antiseptics may be considered pesticides because they kill microbes.



# How can pests be controlled?

- **Pest control methods can be broadly grouped into four categories:**
  - Biological: use of one organism to control another
    - Milky spore disease, which attacks Japanese beetles.
  - Mechanical: Use of equipment to manage the pest
    - Mowing or weed-whacking the brush along a roadside
  - Cultural: Management of pests (insects, diseases, weeds) by manipulation of the environment or implementation of preventive practices
    - Using plants that are resistant to pests or mulching an area to prevent weeds from growing
  - Chemical: non-selective and selective use of pesticides to control or eliminate the pest
    - Applications of a herbicide to maintain bare ground around guard rails, barriers, shoulders and sign posts.



# How are they being controlled in Clifton Park and Saratoga County?

- **Route 146A west of Sherwood Forest entrance**



**Before**



**After**

# How are they being controlled in Clifton Park and Saratoga County? (Cont'd)

- **Clifton Common**



# How are they being controlled in Clifton Park and Saratoga County? (Cont'd)



**Plank Road at  
Dwaaskill Bridge**



**Vischer Ferry Road  
at Wildflower Way**

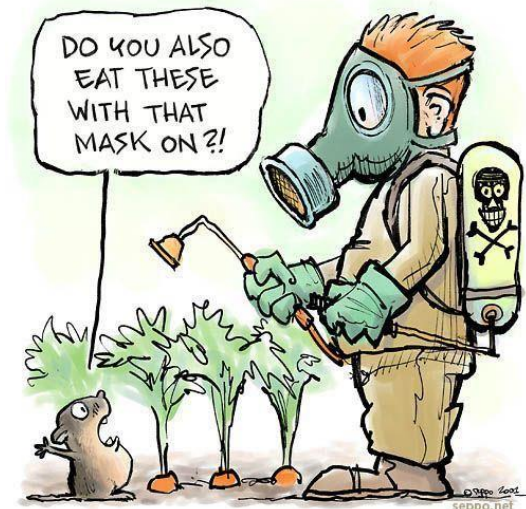
# How are they being controlled in Clifton Park and Saratoga County? (Cont'd)

- **Arongen/Shatekon Elementary Schools**



# What are the risks to the current approach?

- Per NYS DEC, “Pesticides ... are valuable, important and necessary to the welfare, health, economic well-being and productive and industrial capabilities of the people of this state. However, such materials, if **improperly used, may injure health, property and wildlife.**”
- **People risk exposure to pesticides by:**
  - being in treated areas
  - as a consumer of commodities that others have treated with pesticides
  - through food, water, and air that may have been contaminated with pesticides.
- **The potential for pesticides to harm people is related to the types and concentrations of chemicals in each product.**
  - It also depends on how much of the pesticide a person was exposed to, how long the exposure was, and how it enters your body.



# Are there options that could be pursued?

- **Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board (MPRB) adopted a formal Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Policy in 2008 & updated in 2016**
  - Liquid herbicides consistently reduced in parks and natural areas
- **Key strategies include:**
  - Encouraging naturally occurring biological control.
  - Adoption of cultural practices that include cultivating, pruning, fertilizing, maintenance and irrigation practices that reduce pest problems.
  - Changing the habitat to make it incompatible with pest development.

***Residents continue to push for a complete ban to the use of pesticides in Minneapolis parks .... “kids and dogs are playing on grass and walking through gardens and woods that have been treated with chemicals that could be harmful.”***

## Minneapolis Parks & Recreation Board (MPRB) (Cont'd)

- **The criteria used for selecting management options include:**
  - Minimization of health risk to employees and users.
    - EXAMPLE: All pesticide applications within 100 feet of any play area or wading pool are banned.
  - Minimization of environmental impacts (e.g. water quality, non-target organisms).
  - Risk reduction (losses to pests, or nuisance/threshold level)
    - EXAMPLE: Discontinue the use of herbicide treatments in neighborhood parks where glyphosate (or Roundup) is the active ingredient.
  - Ease with which the technique can be incorporated into existing management approaches.
  - Cost-effectiveness of the management technique.

## What can we do together?

- **Develop a Clifton Park Integrated Weed Management Plan that completely eliminates chemical pesticides**
- **Options**
  - Let the weeds grow where possible
    - Honey bees flock to dandelions when little else is in bloom.
  - Increased Use of Weed Barrier and/or natural mulch
    - Example: Woven polypropylene fabric
  - Increased use of weed-whackers
    - Rechargeable units reduce the need/cost of gasoline powered devices
  - Use of direct heat to the foliage of weeds
  - Non-toxic chemicals
    - Sodium chloride (Table Salt)
    - Acetic Acid (Vinegar)
    - Sodium Tetraborate (Borax)



# Next Steps

- **Develop a Clifton Park focus group**
  - ECC Sponsorship?
- **Document current practices**
- **Identify Possible Pilot Tests/Plan**
- **Obtain Town Board support**
- **Other?**

