June 1, 2007

Jan Kasperski  
Chief Executive Officer  
The Ontario College of Family Physicians  
357 Bay Street Mezzanine  
Toronto, ON M5H 2T7

Dear Mr. Kasperski

Re: Pesticide By-law

At its meeting of May 30, 2007, Hamilton City Council considered your letter dated May 24, 2007 regarding the above-mentioned matter.

Please be advised that Council has received this correspondence and referred it to the Board of Health.

Yours truly,

[Signature]

Rose Gattini, B.Com, AMCT  
Deputy City Clerk/Manager of Legislative Services

RC: sr

File #C07-011

c.c. Ida Bedioui, Legislative Assistant, Board of Health
May 24, 2007

Mr. Fred Eisenberger
Mayor, City of Hamilton
City Hall - 1st Floor
71 Main Street West
Hamilton ON L8P 4Y5

Dear Mr. Eisenberger,

The Ontario College of Family Physicians represents close to 8000 family doctors who provide patient care throughout the province. As family physicians, we do everything that we can to keep our patients as healthy as possible for as long as possible. We believe that the avoidance of exposures to environmental contaminants is one way that people can stay healthy.

I am writing to you to ask you to support a strong cosmetic Pesticide By-law for the people who live in the urban and rural areas of the City of Hamilton. We urge you to follow our lead and that of our most respected health care authorities, including the Canadian Cancer Society and the Ontario Medical Association by putting children's health and that of the elderly above all other considerations. By supporting the passage of a strong By-law, you will be giving Hamilton's children and its most vulnerable citizens the same protection from toxic chemical that children in Toronto, Oakville, Montreal, Vancouver, Halifax and more than 120 other communities across Canada enjoy.

The OCFP is very concerned about the effects of pesticide exposure on human health. Recently, the OCFP performed a comprehensive literature review and found alarming evidence that pesticide exposure is not safe at any level and that children and pregnant women are especially vulnerable to health effects.

The principle findings of our review are:

- Many studies reviewed by the Ontario College show positive associations between solid tumours and pesticide exposure, including brain cancer, prostate cancer, kidney cancer and pancreatic cancer, among others.

- Previous studies have pointed to certain pesticides, such as 2,4-D and related pesticides, as possible precipitants of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma (NHL), and the findings of the College's review are clearly consistent with this.

Cont.....
• It is clear from the review that an association exists between pesticide exposure and leukemia. According to the College, the implication of pesticides in the development of leukemia warrants further investigation and also, political action.

• The review team uncovered a remarkable consistency of findings of nervous system effects of pesticide exposures such as depression and suicide, learning difficulties and chronic disorders such as Parkinson.

• Occupational exposure to agricultural chemicals may be associated with adverse reproductive effects including: birth defects, fetal death and intrauterine growth retardation. We are very concerned about exposures of pregnant women to pesticides.

Children are constantly exposed to low levels of pesticides in their food and environment, yet there have been few studies on the long-term effects of these exposures. Nevertheless, the College reviewed several studies that found associations between pesticide exposures and cancer in children. Key findings include:

• An elevated risk of kidney cancer was associated with paternal pesticide exposure through agriculture, and four studies found associations with brain cancer.

• Several studies in the review implicate pesticides as a cause of hematologic tumours in children, including non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and leukemia.

Some children have overall increased risk of acute leukemia if exposed to pesticides in utero or during childhood, especially for exposure to insecticides and herbicides used on lawns, fruit trees and gardens, and for indoor control of insects.

With such profound evidence that pesticides are affecting our health, we urge you to do everything in your power to reduce the public's exposure to these chemicals and ensure that our environment is less contaminated with chemical pesticides.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss this issue further.

Respectfully,

Jan Kasperski, RN, MHSc, CHE
Chief Executive Officer