



*Office of the Auditor General / Bureau du vérificateur général*

**AUDIT OF THE CORPORATE PESTICIDE USE POLICY**

**2007**

**Chapter 4d**

**VÉRIFICATION DE LA POLITIQUE DE LA VILLE CONCERNANT  
L'UTILISATION DE PESTICIDES**

**2007**

**Chapitre 4d**



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## Executive Summary

### **Background**

The Corporate Pesticide Use Policy for City of Ottawa Property (the Policy) was approved and became effective on August 25, 2004. The Policy's objective is to eliminate the use of pesticides for cosmetic or aesthetic purposes on City-owned and operated outdoor land and facilities. The Policy lays out a specific review and approval process that must be followed prior to making a decision to apply pesticides, and all such decisions must be approved by the Medical Officer of Health as well as relevant operating personnel.

The Policy applies to City-owned outdoor property. The Policy also included phased-in application to outdoor property owned by other parties upon which the City operates programs and activities – or where the City provides services through use and lease agreements – where it was to be applied on a voluntary basis until 2006, at which point it became compulsory. The Policy only permits the use of the least-risk pesticide in a situation where human or environmental health is threatened or there is a risk to corporate assets, and where all other pest management methods have either failed or are neither practical nor feasible.

The City of Ottawa branches involved in policy implementation, monitoring, and reporting, include the Office of the Medical Officer of Health, Real Property Asset Management, Surface Operations, and Planning, Environment and Infrastructure Policy.

### **Audit Objectives**

The purpose of the audit was to determine if the City has consistently implemented the *Corporate Pesticide Use Policy for City of Ottawa Property 2004* on City-owned and leased outdoor property.

Specific audit objectives were to determine if:

1. The principles of the Policy have been consistently understood and applied by City staff in the Public Works and Services Department, Business Transformation Services Department, and Community and Protective Services Department;
2. The required process for determining which management practice to use in controlling a pest has been consistently applied by City staff;
3. The procedure for documenting and reporting pest management decisions (both for the use of an alternative method and the use of a pesticide) has been consistently applied by City staff;
4. Public notification requirements have been met; and,

5. Annual reports have been compiled for 2005 and 2006 and have been presented to Council.

### **Organizational Strengths**

The City of Ottawa's pest management activities have been consistent with the goals and intent of the Policy. Chemical pesticides have not been applied to City-owned properties for cosmetic or aesthetic purposes since the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy came into force on August 25, 2004. Chemical pesticides have only been used in circumstances where a pest must be controlled and other pest control techniques cannot be applied or have previously failed.

City staff follows a consistent process to assess pest infestations, and the Medical Officer of Health assumes the lead role in the decision-making process where a request for pesticide application is made by operational staff. City Staff demonstrated a high level of awareness of the Policy requirements and familiarity with governing regulations for pesticide application.

### **Findings**

#### **Policy Application to City-owned Properties**

Chemical pesticides have not been applied to City-owned properties for cosmetic or aesthetic purposes since the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy came into force on August 25, 2004. There is evidence that the City has used mechanical and cultural practices, as well as investigated and used a small number of alternative methods to chemical pesticides in its pest control activities. Chemical pesticides have only been used in circumstances where a pest must be controlled and other pest control techniques cannot be applied or have previously failed.

City staff is adhering to the fundamental principles of the Policy aimed at protecting residents and the environment, while at the same time protecting community and City-owned assets. The required process for determining which management practice to use in controlling a pest, as provided in 5.0 *General Provisions* of the *Corporate Pesticide Use Policy*, is consistently applied. There have been no known contraventions of the Policy to date.

City staff does not select the specific pesticide to be applied when approval for pesticide use is provided, but rather delegate this decision to professional pesticide contractors. City staff consistently noted that a very small number of pesticides are available to choose from and they were familiar with the results achieved by these different pesticides. City staff are accountable for ensuring that the City is in accordance with the terms of the Policy and, as such, appropriate oversight and controls should be established for delegation of the responsibility for choosing the pesticide to apply to a third party.

### **Policy Application to Outdoor Property Owned by Other Parties and Outside Contractors**

The City has applied the Policy to some outdoor property owned by other parties upon which the City operates programs, activities or provides services (i.e., where it is the tenant/lessee) through standard use and lease agreements, taking into consideration the City's complex leasing arrangements. It was noted that the City has varying degrees of control over property maintenance practices at these facilities. The City is able to have more control in instances where it is leasing the land or facilities to other parties and in cases where it is leasing the majority, or all, of a facility. The City has less control over property maintenance practices in instances such as where the City is leasing part of a facility, owns land that is subject to federal legislative requirements (i.e. rail corridors), small parcels of land it leases to the public, and community gardens.

The Policy has not been incorporated into all relevant agreements with outside contractors. There is a risk that the Policy will not be implemented on all City-owned or leased property as relevant lease agreements and contracts do not require conformance with the Policy as part of the contractual requirements.

### **Documenting and Reporting Pest Management Decisions and Pesticide Use**

City staff does not use the City of Ottawa Pest Monitoring Report as required by the Policy. The Medical Officer of Health gave City staff approval to provide required information via email because it was found, by both staff and the Medical Officer of Health, that the Pest Monitoring Report was labour intensive, inefficient, and focussed on sportsfield applications. City staff and the Medical Officer of Health both report that all parties provide enough information and sufficient communication via email and telephone to make a valid decision on pesticide application in compliance with the Policy, without using the Pest Monitoring Report. In instances where an alternative method of pest control has been implemented, the decision and results of the practice were not documented or reported.

There is a low risk that there would be insufficient communication and/or documentation between the Medical Officer of Health and City staff by not using the City of Ottawa Pest Monitoring Report if there were to be a controversial or appealed pesticide application decision.

### **Public Notification**

The City has placed notices on its website that inform residents of planned sportsfield management activities, including information on when the application will occur and the specific pesticide that will be used.

There is evidence that City staff ensures that signs have been posted by contractors in accordance with all federal and provincial regulations, to both inform the public of a pesticide treatment and to remind them to keep away from the treated area for the

requisite time. A check of signage is completed by either the project manager for the field or by Surface Operations staff.

Signs have not been posted when the City is implementing an alternative pest management practice (as required by Section 7.4 of the Policy) to make the community aware there is a pest present and that the City is addressing the situation through alternative practices.

During on-site observation of an upcoming pesticide application on O-Train property, the audit team observed that a sign was posted to inform the public of pesticide application activities, identify pesticides to be sprayed as required by Transport Canada, and provide the name and phone number of a contact person. The contact person, who was a contractor, was not informed that his name and phone number were placed on the sign and was not provided with speaking points by the City. The contractor was not able to provide the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) or specific name of the pesticides being used and was not sure how long people were required to stay off the sprayed area. The contractor indicated that he had received numerous calls about the pesticide application.

When signs are posted with contact information for the public, there is a risk involved when the City, or a contractor working on its behalf, is not able to provide sufficient information about the pesticide application. This situation may undermine public confidence in the Policy.

### **Annual Report**

Part 6.0 of the Policy states that an annual report is to be compiled by Planning, Transit and the Environment and presented to Council. The City has not identified the specific data and information required for the Annual Report, and it was noted that managers and supervisors of the departments responsible for implementing the Policy do not actively monitor conformance with the Policy.

No annual reports have been prepared to date or presented to Council. Without annual compilation of information, it is difficult for the City to monitor corporate pesticide use, evaluate effectiveness of the Policy and the approval process, and develop recommendations to improve the process. With pesticide use being such a controversial issue, the City may be vulnerable to criticism from the public for not reporting on its use of pesticides.

### **Policy Review**

The Policy has not been reviewed or updated since it came into force on August 25, 2004. In the absence of any review or update of the Policy since its coming into force, any changes in City organization, changes in responsibilities, content updates, and/or lessons learned in the initial years of Policy implementation have not been incorporated



into the Policy. Without regular review of the Policy, the City is unable to fully understand the impact, relevance, and effectiveness of the Policy in achieving its goals.

## ***Recommendations***

### **Recommendation 1**

**That all City lease agreements and relevant contracts incorporate the requirements of the most current Corporate Pesticide Use Policy, taking into consideration the City's complex and unique leasing situations, and that situations where implementation of the Policy is not possible be identified in Section 10 Exemptions of the Policy.**

#### **Management Response**

Management agrees with this recommendation.

Since May 2007, the requirements as outlined in the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy for City of Ottawa Property 2004 have been incorporated into new lease agreements as part of standardizing lease contracts.

Post amalgamation leases (2000 to 2006) contain a general clause that the lessee must abide by City policies. As these leases come up for renewal, specific reference to the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy for City of Ottawa Property 2004 will be specifically identified. In addition, all new relevant Purchase of Service Agreements with outside contractors will contain specific reference to the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy.

### **Recommendation 2**

**That management amend the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy to include a clear statement on the frequency of policy review, and update the Policy to reflect current City organization, responsibilities, and refinements based on Policy implementation to date.**

#### **Management Response**

Management agrees with this recommendation.

A formal review of the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy is scheduled for early 2008. The review will include revisions to the policy to clearly set out the frequency of future policy reviews, and will update the policy to reflect corporate reorganizations, changing responsibilities, and other revisions related to implementation. It is anticipated that this activity will be completed by June 2008.

### **Recommendation 3**

**That management formally assign responsibilities for compiling data and information required to monitor conformance and implementation of the Policy.**

### **Management Response**

Management agrees with this recommendation.

While the audit confirms that the Policy provisions are being followed when going through the pesticide application approval process, clarification of the compliance monitoring responsibilities will be made as part of the scheduled review of the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy scheduled for completion by June 2008.

### **Recommendation 4**

**That management review and revise the Pesticide Monitoring Report Form in consultation with operations staff and the Medical Officer of Health to collect the data and information required to make and record pesticide application decisions for all types of City properties (i.e. not just sportsfields).**

### **Management Response**

Management agrees with the recommendation.

The current form was designed prior to implementation of the policy with a narrow focus on sports field weed issues. The policy affects many more properties than sports fields. During the formal review of the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy scheduled for completion in June 2008, representatives from affected departments, including the Medical Officer of Health, will assist in revising the form. The revisions will ensure that the form is an effective tool for collecting information required for the annual report and for decision-making regarding the use of pesticides on all City properties.

### **Recommendation 5**

**That City staff develop a short list of approved pesticides for use by pesticide applicators for specific and recurring circumstances that meet the requirements of the Policy. (Approval of the Medical Officer of Health would still be required prior to applying these approved pesticides.)**

### **Management Response**

Management disagrees with this recommendation.

The Ontario Ministry of the Environment (MOE) and the Federal Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) are mandated to approve and review pest control products that are available for use. The choice of pesticide selected needs to be justified on a site-by-site basis in consultation with the pest control applicator working on the site. The development of a short list would be time consuming and may restrict the number of options available.

In order to ensure that pest control product proposed for use on City properties meet the requirement of the policy (i.e. the least hazardous), management proposes that

the Medical Officer of Health (MOH) review each proposal in order to assess that the least toxic product is being used in each situation.

### **Recommendation 6**

**That management ensure that staff and contractors working on the City's behalf are familiar with the City's Corporate Pesticide Use Policy, and are able to provide information on the type of pesticide being used and any health and safety concerns surrounding its application.**

#### **Management Response**

Management agrees with this recommendation.

Managing Departments will be responsible for informing staff and contractors, working on the City's behalf, of this policy. Managing Departments will provide information on the type of pesticide being applied and the health concerns. This information will be forwarded to the Medical Officer of Health as required for reporting purposes.

As part of the policy review to be completed in June 2008, all managing departments will develop a communications strategy to ensure that staff and contractors working on behalf of the City are familiar with the policy.

### **Recommendation 7**

**That procedures be put in place to ensure the person whose name is posted as the contact for a given pesticide application is aware that their name and number is posted, and is provided with speaking points to ensure accurate and consistent information is provided to the public.**

#### **Management Response**

Management agrees with this recommendation.

During the formal review of the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy scheduled for completion in June 2008, specific procedures will be developed which incorporate the directives, within this recommendation, to ensure accurate and consistent information is provided to the public through identified contacts.

### **Recommendation 8**

**That the City post signs when it implements an alternative pest management practice to promote community awareness of the practice and to conform with the public notification requirements of the Policy.**

#### **Management Response**

Management agrees with this recommendation.

Management recognizes the importance of educating the public to promote community awareness of the practice of alternative pest management processes.

During the formal review process of the Corporate Pesticide Use policy scheduled for completion in June 2008, management will develop a communications strategy to achieve this objective.

### **Recommendation 9**

**That the City identify and systematically collect the information required for the annual report on pesticide applications and compile an annual report as per the requirements of the Policy.**

### **Management Response**

Management agrees with this recommendation.

Clarification of departmental responsibilities for data and information gathering and reporting, and the production of appropriate reports will be undertaken as part of the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy review scheduled for completion in June 2008. Staff is preparing the first report on pesticide application on City owned property, covering 2005 - 2007, which is scheduled for completion by the end of the first quarter 2008. Future reports will be strengthened by the outcomes of the first policy review, scheduled for early 2008.

### ***Conclusion***

The City of Ottawa's pest management activities have been consistent with the goals and intent of the Policy. Chemical pesticides have not been applied to City-owned properties for cosmetic or aesthetic purposes since the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy came into force on August 25, 2004. The City has used mechanical and cultural practices, as well as investigated and used a small number of alternative methods to chemical pesticides in its pest control activities. Chemical pesticides have only been used in circumstances where a pest must be controlled and other pest control techniques cannot be applied or have previously failed.

While the spirit and intent of the Policy is met for City-owned properties, there is a need for more consistent and formalized documentation and record keeping related to pesticide application decisions and the use of alternative practices. There is also a need for the City to monitor Policy implementation and effectiveness through compilation, analysis and reporting of related data and information on an annual basis. This information should be compiled in an annual report and presented to City Council. Given that the Policy has been in effect for three years, it would be appropriate to review and update it to reflect any changes in City organization, changes in responsibility, content updates, and lessons learned in the initial years of Policy implementation.

The Policy included a phased-in application to outdoor property owned by other parties upon which the City operates programs and activities - or provides services through use and lease agreements - where it was to be applied on a voluntary basis in the latter half of 2004 and 2005, and then become compulsory beginning in 2006. While the City has partially applied the Policy to these circumstances, staff should undertake a critical review of the degree to which full implementation is possible in different situations, and should develop an action plan to enhance implementation in those areas where it has direct control or influence.

### ***Acknowledgement***

We wish to express our appreciation for the cooperation and assistance afforded the audit team by management.

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## RÉSUMÉ

### **Contexte**

La Politique concernant l'utilisation de pesticides sur les propriétés de la Ville d'Ottawa (la politique) a été approuvée et est entrée en vigueur le 25 août 2004. Son objectif est d'éliminer l'épandage de pesticides à des fins esthétiques sur les installations extérieures et les terrains appartenant à la Ville et exploités par elle. La politique présente le processus particulier d'examen et d'approbation à suivre pour toute décision touchant l'épandage de pesticides, et toutes les décisions à cet égard doivent être approuvées par le médecin chef en santé publique et le personnel des services opérationnels touchés.

La politique s'applique aux propriétés extérieures que la Ville possède. Elle s'est appliquée aussi, sur une base volontaire jusqu'en 2006, aux propriétés extérieures appartenant à d'autres parties ou faisant l'objet d'une entente d'utilisation et de location par la Ville pour l'exécution de ses programmes et activités ou la prestation de ses services. En 2006, l'application de la politique est devenue obligatoire. La politique permet l'emploi des pesticides les moins nocifs seulement dans les situations où la santé des êtres humains et de l'environnement est menacée, ou encore, lorsqu'il y a des risques pour les biens municipaux et que toutes les autres méthodes de lutte antiparasitaire ont échoué ou ne sont ni pratiques ni faisables.

Les directions de la Ville d'Ottawa qui ont un rôle à jouer dans la mise en œuvre et la surveillance de la politique ainsi que dans la production de rapports à cet égard sont principalement le Bureau du médecin chef en santé publique, Gestion des biens immobiliers, Opérations de surface et Politiques d'urbanisme, d'environnement et d'infrastructure.

### **Objectifs de la vérification**

La vérification avait pour objectifs de déterminer si la Ville appliquait uniformément la Politique concernant l'utilisation de pesticides sur les propriétés de la Ville d'Ottawa dans les propriétés extérieures qui sont louées par la Ville ou qui lui appartiennent.

Plus particulièrement, les objectifs consistaient à déterminer si :

1. les principes énoncés dans la politique ont été bien compris et appliqués de manière uniforme par le personnel de Services et Travaux publics, de Services de transformation des activités et de Services communautaires et de protection;
2. la marche à suivre établie pour décider de la pratique de lutte antiparasitaire à utiliser pour contrôler un parasite a été respectée systématiquement par le personnel de la Ville;

3. les procédures concernant la documentation et la production de rapports relatives aux décisions sur la lutte antiparasitaire (qu'il s'agisse d'un pesticide ou d'une méthode alternative) ont été suivies systématiquement par le personnel de la Ville;
4. les exigences en matière d'avis à donner au public ont été respectées;
5. des rapports annuels ont été produits en 2005 et en 2006 à l'aide des renseignements compilés, puis soumis au Conseil municipal.

### ***Points forts sur le plan organisationnel***

Les activités de lutte antiparasitaire de la Ville d'Ottawa respectent les objectifs et l'intention de la politique. Aucun pesticide chimique n'a été épandu à des fins esthétiques sur les propriétés municipales depuis l'entrée en vigueur, le 25 août 2004, de la Politique concernant l'utilisation de pesticides sur les propriétés de la Ville d'Ottawa. Ces produits n'ont été employés que dans les cas où une plante ou un insecte nuisible devait être éliminé et où les autres techniques de lutte antiparasitaire ne pouvaient être appliquées ou avaient échoué auparavant.

Le personnel de la Ville suit un processus uniforme d'évaluation des infestations parasitaires, et le médecin chef en santé publique joue un rôle prépondérant dans le processus décisionnel lorsqu'une demande d'épandage de pesticides est soumise par le personnel opérationnel. Les employés municipaux ont montré qu'ils étaient bien au courant des exigences de la politique et qu'ils connaissaient bien les mesures régissant l'épandage de pesticides.

### ***Constatations***

#### **Application de la politique aux propriétés municipales**

Aucun pesticide chimique n'a été épandu à des fins esthétiques sur les propriétés municipales depuis l'entrée en vigueur, le 25 août 2004, de la Politique concernant l'utilisation de pesticides sur les propriétés de la Ville d'Ottawa. Il a été confirmé que la Ville a eu recours à des pratiques culturales et mécaniques, qu'elle a fait des recherches sur certaines méthodes autres que l'emploi de pesticides chimiques pour lutter contre les parasites et qu'elle en a utilisé quelques-unes. Les pesticides chimiques n'ont été employés que dans les cas où une plante ou un insecte nuisible devait être éliminé et où les autres techniques de lutte antiparasitaire ne pouvaient être appliquées ou avaient échoué auparavant.

Le personnel de la Ville adhère aux principes fondamentaux énoncés dans la politique et qui visent à protéger les résidents et l'environnement, tout en préservant les biens de la communauté et de la Ville. La marche à suivre pour déterminer la pratique de lutte antiparasitaire à employer pour contrôler un parasite, présentée à la section 5.0

*Dispositions générales* de la Politique concernant l'utilisation de pesticides sur les propriétés de la Ville d'Ottawa, est uniformément respectée. Aucun cas d'inobservation de la politique n'a été signalé jusqu'à présent.

Ce n'est pas le personnel de la Ville qui choisit le pesticide dont l'épandage a été approuvé : cette décision est la responsabilité d'entrepreneurs professionnels spécialisés dans le domaine des pesticides. De manière générale, les employés municipaux ont constaté qu'il existe un très petit nombre de pesticides sur le marché et ils ont affirmé bien connaître les résultats que produit chacun d'eux. Le personnel municipal est tenu de s'assurer que la Ville respecte les exigences de la politique et, à ce titre, que des mesures appropriées de surveillance et de contrôle sont mises en place en ce qui concerne la délégation à une tierce partie de la responsabilité de choisir le pesticide à employer.

### **Application de la politique aux propriétés extérieures appartenant à d'autres parties et à des entrepreneurs externes**

La Ville a appliqué la politique à certaines propriétés extérieures appartenant à d'autres parties et qui font l'objet d'une entente d'utilisation et de location standard par la Ville pour l'exécution de ses programmes et activités ou la prestation de ses services (c'est-à-dire dans les cas où la Ville est le locataire ou le preneur à bail), en tenant compte toutefois de la nature complexe des conventions de location de la Ville. On a constaté que la Ville exerce divers niveaux de contrôle sur les pratiques d'entretien de ces installations. Ainsi, elle peut avoir un plus grand contrôle lorsqu'elle loue un terrain ou des installations à d'autres parties et lorsqu'elle prend en location la majeure partie ou la totalité d'une propriété. Par contre, elle exerce un contrôle plus limité sur les pratiques d'entretien lorsqu'elle prend en location une partie seulement d'une installation, qu'elle possède une propriété régi par des dispositions législatives fédérales (par exemple, un couloir ferroviaire), ou qu'elle loue au public de petites parcelles de terrains ou des jardins communautaires.

Les ententes conclues avec les entrepreneurs externes ne tiennent pas toutes compte de la politique. Comme les dispositions des conventions et des contrats de location pertinents n'exigent pas le respect de la politique, il se peut que celle-ci ne soit pas appliquée sur toutes les propriétés louées par la Ville ou lui appartenant.

### **Documentation et production de rapports relativement aux décisions en matière de lutte antiparasitaire et à l'utilisation de pesticides**

Le personnel municipal ne se sert pas du Rapport de surveillance parasitaire – Ville d'Ottawa, comme l'exige la politique. Le médecin chef en santé publique a autorisé les employés à fournir les renseignements requis par courriel parce qu'il a été constaté, autant par le personnel que par le médecin chef, que la production du Rapport de surveillance parasitaire exige beaucoup de main-d'œuvre et est inefficace, et que le



rapport porte essentiellement sur les terrains de sport. Selon les employés municipaux et le médecin chef en santé publique, toutes les parties transmettent suffisamment de renseignements par courriel et par téléphone pour permettre qu'une décision valide soit prise sur l'épandage de pesticides, conformément aux dispositions de la politique, sans l'utilisation du rapport. Dans les cas où une méthode alternative de lutte antiparasitaire a été choisie, la décision et les résultats obtenus n'ont pas été documentés et n'ont pas fait l'objet d'un rapport.

Au cas où une décision serait controversée ou portée en appel, il existe un faible risque que la communication ou la documentation échangées entre le médecin chef en santé publique et le personnel de la Ville soient insuffisantes en l'absence d'un Rapport de surveillance parasitaire – Ville d'Ottawa.

### **Avis au public**

La Ville a affiché sur son site Web des avis qui renseignent les résidents sur les activités prévues de lutte antiparasitaire dans les terrains de sport, notamment sur le moment auquel des pesticides seront épandus ainsi que sur le type de produit qui sera employé.

Il a été confirmé que le personnel de la Ville veille à ce que des panneaux soient installés par les entrepreneurs conformément à tous les règlements fédéraux et provinciaux en vigueur afin d'informer les membres du public de l'épandage de pesticides et de leur rappeler de ne pas circuler sur la zone visée pendant la durée du traitement. Le gestionnaire de projet responsable du terrain ou un employé d'Opérations de surface est chargé de vérifier les panneaux.

Des panneaux n'ont pas été installés aux endroits où la Ville applique des méthodes naturelles de lutte antiparasitaire (conformément à la sous-section 7.4 de la politique) pour informer la communauté de la présence d'une infestation parasitaire et du fait que la Ville a recours à des techniques autres que les pesticides.

Pendant l'observation sur place de l'épandage de pesticides sur une propriété utilisée par l'O-Train, l'équipe de vérification a remarqué un panneau destiné à informer le public des activités d'application de pesticides, du type de pesticide employé, conformément aux exigences de Transports Canada, et des coordonnées d'une personne-ressource. Cette personne-ressource, un entrepreneur, ne savait pas que ses coordonnées figuraient sur le panneau et n'avait pas reçu de la Ville toute l'information lui permettant de bien renseigner le public. L'entrepreneur ne pouvait pas fournir la fiche signalétique (FS) des pesticides ni le nom précis des produits utilisés et n'était pas certain de la durée pendant laquelle il était interdit de circuler dans la zone de traitement. L'entrepreneur a affirmé avoir reçu de nombreux appels concernant l'épandage de pesticides à l'endroit en question.

Il est risqué d'installer à l'intention du public des panneaux d'information contenant le nom de personnes-ressources lorsque la Ville, ou un entrepreneur qui travaille pour le compte de la Ville, n'est pas en mesure de fournir les renseignements voulus au sujet de l'épandage de pesticides, ce qui peut ébranler la confiance de la population à l'égard de la politique.

### **Rapport annuel**

Selon la section 6.0 de la politique, un rapport annuel doit être préparé par le personnel d'Urbanisme, Transport en commun et Environnement, puis soumis au Conseil municipal. La Ville n'a pas déterminé les données et les renseignements qui doivent figurer dans le rapport annuel et on a constaté que les gestionnaires et les superviseurs des services responsables de l'application de la politique ne surveillent pas activement le degré d'observation de cette dernière.

Jusqu'à présent, aucun rapport annuel n'a été préparé et soumis au Conseil. Si les données ne sont pas compilées chaque année, il est difficile pour la Ville de surveiller l'utilisation des pesticides sur ses propriétés, d'évaluer l'efficacité de la politique et du processus d'approbation et de formuler des recommandations afin d'améliorer ce processus. Comme l'épandage de pesticides est un sujet controversé, la Ville peut faire l'objet de critiques de la part du public si elle ne rend pas compte de cet épandage.

### **Examen de la politique**

La politique n'a pas été examinée ou mise à jour depuis son entrée en vigueur, le 25 août 2004. De ce fait, elle ne tient pas compte des changements apportés à l'organisation municipale et aux responsabilités, des mises à jour du contenu ou des enseignements tirés au cours des premières années de sa mise en œuvre. Sans examen régulier de la politique, la Ville n'est pas en mesure de bien en comprendre l'incidence, la pertinence et l'efficacité pour la réalisation des objectifs fixés.

## ***Recommandations et réponses de la direction***

### **Recommandation 1**

**Que toutes les conventions de location et tous les contrats pertinents de la Ville incorporent les exigences de la version la plus récente de la Politique concernant l'utilisation de pesticides sur les propriétés de la Ville d'Ottawa, compte tenu de la nature complexe et des particularités de chaque convention de location, et que les cas où l'application de la politique est impossible soient inscrits à la section 10 *Exemptions à la politique*.**

### **Réponse de la direction**

La direction est d'accord avec cette recommandation.

Depuis mai 2007, les exigences énoncées dans la Politique concernant l'utilisation de pesticides sur les propriétés de la Ville d'Ottawa de 2004 ont été intégrées aux nouvelles conventions de location dans le cadre de l'uniformisation de tous les contrats de location.

Les contrats de location conclus après la fusion (de 2000 à 2006) comprennent une clause générale selon laquelle le preneur à bail doit respecter les politiques de la Ville. Chaque fois qu'un contrat sera renouvelé, un renvoi à la Politique concernant l'utilisation de pesticides sur les propriétés de la Ville d'Ottawa de 2004 y sera ajouté. En outre, toutes les nouvelles ententes d'achat de services pertinentes signées avec des entrepreneurs de l'extérieur feront référence à la politique concernant l'utilisation de pesticides sur les propriétés de la Ville d'Ottawa.

### **Recommandation 2**

**Que la direction modifie la Politique concernant l'utilisation des pesticides sur les propriétés de la Ville d'Ottawa en y ajoutant un énoncé clair sur la fréquence à laquelle la politique est examinée, et qu'elle la mette à jour pour qu'elle reflète les responsabilités et le contexte organisationnel actuels de la Ville ainsi que les améliorations découlant de l'application de la politique jusqu'ici.**

#### **Réponse de la direction**

La direction approuve cette recommandation.

Un examen en bonne et due forme de la Politique concernant l'utilisation de pesticides sur les propriétés de la Ville d'Ottawa est prévu au début de 2008 et comportera des modifications à la politique pour que la fréquence des examens futurs soit clairement établie, et une mise à jour qui reflétera les restructurations, les changements dans les responsabilités et d'autres rajustements associés à sa mise en œuvre. Il est anticipé que ces travaux devraient être achevés d'ici juin 2008.

### **Recommandation 3**

**Que la direction attribue officiellement les responsabilités associées à la compilation des données et de l'information nécessaires pour surveiller l'application et le respect de la politique.**

#### **Réponse de la direction**

La direction accepte cette recommandation.

Bien que la vérification confirme que les dispositions de la politique sont respectées tout au long du processus d'approbation des demandes d'épandage de pesticides, des éclaircissements seront apportés aux responsabilités associées à la surveillance de la conformité au moment de l'examen de la politique qui doit être achevé d'ici le mois de juin 2008.

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#### **Recommandation 4**

**Que la direction examine et révise le formulaire de rapport de surveillance des pesticides en consultation avec le personnel opérationnel et le médecin chef en santé publique dans le but de recueillir les données et l'information nécessaires pour prendre des décisions concernant les demandes d'épandage de pesticides sur tous les types de propriétés municipales (non seulement les terrains de sport) et pour les consigner.**

#### **Réponse de la direction**

La direction est d'accord avec cette recommandation.

Le formulaire utilisé actuellement a été conçu avant la mise en œuvre de la politique et porte essentiellement sur l'élimination des mauvaises herbes dans les terrains de sport. Or, la politique s'applique à bien d'autres types de propriétés. Des représentants des services touchés, y compris le médecin chef en santé publique, participeront à la révision du formulaire au cours du processus d'examen et de révision de la politique qui devrait être achevé d'ici le mois de juin 2008. Les modifications apportées au formulaire viseront à faire de celui-ci un outil efficace de collecte de l'information nécessaire à la préparation du rapport annuel et à la prise de décisions concernant l'épandage de pesticides sur toutes propriétés de la Ville.

#### **Recommandation 5**

**Que le personnel de la Ville dresse une courte liste des pesticides autorisés à l'intention des épandeurs de pesticides pour les cas particuliers qui respectent les exigences de la politique et sont susceptibles de se répéter. (L'épandage des pesticides autorisés serait toujours effectué avec l'approbation du médecin chef en santé publique.)**

#### **Réponse de la direction**

La direction n'est pas d'accord avec cette recommandation.

Le ministère de l'Environnement de l'Ontario (MEO) et l'Agence de réglementation de la lutte antiparasitaire (ARLA) ont pour mandat d'approuver et d'examiner les produits antiparasitaires disponibles sur le marché. Le choix du pesticide à utiliser doit être justifié au cas par cas, de concert avec l'épandeur qui travaille sur le terrain en cause. La création d'une courte liste des pesticides autorisés demanderait beaucoup de temps et pourrait restreindre le nombre de possibilités offertes.

Afin de veiller à ce que le produit antiparasitaire dont l'utilisation est proposée sur les propriétés municipales soit conforme aux exigences de la politique (c'est-à-dire qu'il est le moins dangereux), la direction propose que le médecin chef en santé publique examine chaque soumission pour déterminer le produit le moins toxique pouvant être épandu dans chaque cas.

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### **Recommandation 6**

**Que la direction s'assure que les employés et les entrepreneurs qui travaillent pour la Ville connaissent bien la Politique concernant l'utilisation de pesticides sur les propriétés de la Ville d'Ottawa et sont en mesure de fournir des renseignements sur le type de pesticide utilisé et sur toute préoccupation en matière de santé et de sécurité liée à son épandage.**

#### **Réponse de la direction**

La direction approuve cette recommandation.

Les services responsables de l'épandage seront chargés de fournir aux employés et aux entrepreneurs qui travaillent pour la Ville des renseignements sur la politique, notamment sur le type de pesticide épandu et les risques pour la santé. Ces renseignements seront transmis au besoin au médecin chef en santé publique en vue de la préparation de rapports.

Dans le cadre de l'examen de la politique qui sera achevé en juin 2008, tous les services responsables de l'épandage de pesticides élaboreront une stratégie de communication afin de veiller à ce que les employés et les entrepreneurs de l'extérieur embauchés par la Ville soient bien au fait de la politique.

### **Recommandation 7**

**Que des procédures soient mises en place pour que la personne dont les coordonnées figurent sur l'avis ou le panneau à titre de personne-ressource soit au courant du fait que ses coordonnées sont affichées et qu'elle dispose de toute l'information nécessaire pour fournir au public des renseignements précis et cohérents sur l'épandage de pesticides.**

#### **Réponse de la direction**

La direction accepte cette recommandation.

Au cours de l'examen en bonne et due forme de la Politique concernant l'utilisation de pesticides sur les propriétés de la Ville d'Ottawa qui doit être terminé en juin 2008, des procédures détaillées seront élaborées, lesquelles comprendront des directives conformes à la présente recommandation, qui viseront à assurer la transmission au public de renseignements précis et cohérents par l'entremise des personnes-ressources désignées.

### **Recommandation 8**

**Que la Ville installe des panneaux chaque fois qu'elle a recours à une alternative de lutte antiparasitaire afin de sensibiliser davantage la collectivité à l'utilisation de ces techniques et de respecter les exigences de la politique en matière d'avis à donner au public.**

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### **Réponse de la direction**

La direction est d'accord avec cette recommandation.

La direction reconnaît l'importance de sensibiliser davantage le public à l'utilisation de méthodes alternatives de lutte antiparasitaire.

En vue de réaliser cet objectif, la direction élaborera une stratégie de communication pendant le processus d'examen de la Politique concernant l'utilisation de pesticides sur les propriétés de la Ville d'Ottawa qui doit être achevé en juin 2008.

### **Recommandation 9**

**Que la Ville détermine les renseignements requis pour la préparation du rapport annuel sur l'épandage de pesticides, qu'elle les recueille systématiquement et les compile conformément aux exigences de la politique.**

### **Réponse de la direction**

La direction approuve cette recommandation.

Dans le cadre de l'examen de la Politique concernant l'utilisation de pesticides sur les propriétés de la Ville d'Ottawa qui doit être achevé en juin 2008, les responsabilités des services à l'égard de la collecte de données et d'information et de la reddition seront clarifiées et la préparation des rapports pertinents sera entreprise. Le personnel municipal travaille actuellement à la production du premier rapport sur l'épandage des pesticides sur les propriétés de la Ville, qui porte sur la période de 2005 à 2007 et dont la date de publication est prévue pour la fin du premier trimestre de 2008. Les rapports ultérieurs s'appuieront sur les conclusions du premier examen de la politique prévue au début de 2008.

### **Conclusion**

Les activités de lutte antiparasitaire de la Ville d'Ottawa respectent les objectifs et l'intention de la politique. Aucun pesticide chimique n'a été épandu à des fins esthétiques sur les propriétés municipales depuis l'entrée en vigueur, le 25 août 2004, de la Politique concernant l'utilisation de pesticides sur les propriétés de la Ville d'Ottawa. La Ville a eu recours à des pratiques culturelles et mécaniques, a effectué des recherches sur un petit nombre de méthodes autres que l'emploi de pesticides chimiques pour lutter contre les parasites et a utilisé quelques-unes de ces techniques. Les pesticides chimiques n'ont été employés que dans les cas où une plante ou un insecte nuisible devait être éliminé et où les autres techniques de lutte antiparasitaire ne pouvaient être appliquées ou avaient échoué auparavant.

L'esprit et l'intention de la politique sont respectés en ce qui concerne les propriétés appartenant à la Ville, mais il faut mettre en place des procédures officielles plus uniformes de documentation et de production de rapports relativement à la prise de décisions concernant l'épandage de pesticides et à l'utilisation de méthodes alternatives.

La Ville doit également surveiller chaque année l'application et l'efficacité de la politique au moyen de la compilation et de l'analyse de données et d'information liées à l'épandage de pesticides ainsi que de la publication de rapports à cet égard. Les renseignements ainsi recueillis devraient être consignés dans un rapport annuel, et soumis au Conseil municipal. Comme la politique est en vigueur depuis trois ans, il conviendrait de l'examiner et de la mettre à jour afin qu'elle tienne compte des changements apportés à l'organisation municipale et aux responsabilités, des mises à jour du contenu et des enseignements tirés au cours des premières années de sa mise en œuvre.

La politique a été appliquée progressivement aux propriétés extérieures appartenant à d'autres parties et qui font l'objet d'une entente d'utilisation et de location par la Ville pour l'exécution de ses programmes et activités ou la fourniture de ses services. Volontaire au cours de la deuxième moitié de 2004 et en 2005, l'application de la politique est devenue obligatoire en 2006. Même si la Ville a, jusqu'à maintenant, appliqué partiellement la politique dans ces circonstances, le personnel devrait entreprendre un examen critique de la mesure dans laquelle la mise en œuvre intégrale est possible dans diverses situations et élaborer un plan d'action visant à accroître le niveau d'application dans les secteurs sur lesquels la Ville exerce une influence ou un contrôle direct.

### **Remerciements**

Nous tenons à remercier la direction de sa bienveillante collaboration et de l'aide qu'elle a apportée à l'équipe de vérification.

## 1 Background

City of Ottawa Council (Council) adopted an interim Pesticide Use Policy in May 2001 in recognition of the need to reduce and potentially eliminate the amount of pesticides used on the City of Ottawa's (the City) properties and facilities. This interim Policy was based upon the policy in use by the former Region of Ottawa-Carleton (the Region), and was meant to address inconsistencies among the various pesticide use policies and practices brought to the amalgamated City by the previous municipalities. When they approved the interim Policy, Council also directed staff to develop a longer-term pesticide use Policy applicable to all City-owned and operated land and facilities in the amalgamated City:

*"That the General Manager, Development Services Department (now Planning, Transit and the Environment Department), undertake the development of a comprehensive Integrated Pest Management/Pesticide Use Policy for the City of Ottawa in partnership with other affected Departments."*

The Corporate Pesticide Use Policy for City of Ottawa Property (the Policy) was approved and became effective on August 25, 2004. The Policy's objective is to eliminate the use of pesticides for cosmetic or aesthetic purposes on City-owned and operated outdoor land and facilities. The Policy lays out a specific review and approval process that must be followed prior to making a decision to apply pesticides, and all such decisions may be approved by the Medical Officer of Health as well as relevant operating personnel. The Policy was prepared in consultation with City departments responsible for turf construction and management, park and sportsfield lifecycle management, provision of parks and sportsfield facilities, public health and environmental health.

The Policy is presented in 13 sections, with various sub-clauses in each section. The sections of the Policy include:

- 1.0 Policy Statement**
- 2.0 Scope of the Policy**
- 3.0 Principles of the Policy**
- 4.0 Definitions**
- 5.0 General Provisions**
- 6.0 Documenting and Reporting**
- 7.0 Public Notification**
- 8.0 Sportsfields**
- 9.0 Delegation of Authority for Emergencies**
- 10.0 Exemptions to this Policy**
- 11.0 Recommended Alternatives Substances**



## **12.0 Related Legislation, Regulations and Policies**

## **13.0 Responsibilities**

The City of Ottawa departments involved in policy implementation, monitoring, and reporting, include:

### **Business Transformation Services (formerly Corporate Services) Department**

- Real Property Asset Management (RPAM)
  - Design and Construction – Responsible for building a sportsfield and ensuring the establishment of healthy turf, prior to the field’s use (referred to in the Policy as Phase I).
  - Comprehensive Asset Management – Responsible for ensuring the re-establishment of a healthy turf, prior to the field’s return to use (referred to in the Policy as Phase III).
  - Venture Properties – Responsible for management of City-owned lands including administrative and operations buildings, OC Transpo, golf courses, public markets, and stadiums.
  - Real Estate Services – Responsible for City owned and leased property.

### **Public Works and Services**

- Surface Operations
  - Roads, Parks & Trees – Responsible for ensuring the continued presence of healthy turf during a field’s use and for pest management on City-owned park areas and general use land (referred to in the Policy as Phase II).

### **Community and Protective Services**

- Ottawa Public Health
  - Medical Officer of Health – Responsible for the administration, approval, documentation, monitoring, and reporting of pesticide applications.

### **Planning, Transit and the Environment (formerly Planning and Growth Management)**

- Economic and Environmental Sustainability (formerly Planning, Environment & Infrastructure) Policy.
  - The department is responsible for keeping the Policy current, for coordinating the monitoring and reporting aspects (including annual reporting) of the Policy in conjunction with the other departments, and for communicating and maintaining continuity of the Policy with other City pesticide reduction initiatives. (The branch responsible for implementing these activities is not specified in the Policy.)

The Policy applies to outdoor City-owned and operated lands and facilities as well as to private property leased by the City for its services, activities or programs. The Policy only permits the use of the least-risk pesticide in a situation where human or environmental health is threatened or there is a risk to corporate assets, and where all other pest management methods have either failed or are neither practical nor feasible. The Policy permits the use of pesticides on sportsfields under specific and limited conditions. The more "passive" use areas of City properties such as parks, boulevards, rights of way, and decorative turf areas surrounding civic facilities, are to be managed using alternative cultural and biological methods.

While the Policy is applied to all City-owned and leased property, section 8 of the Policy specifically governs pest management on sportsfields, according to three phases:

- Phase I - construction;
- Phase II - general maintenance (when the field is in use); and,
- Phase III - reconstruction, as part of field lifecycle management.

During Phases I and III, the sportsfields are essentially construction zones and are inaccessible to the public, while Phase II represents the time of community use of the fields. Herbicides can only be used during Phases I and III. Insecticides that may be necessary as a last resort to control major pest infestations that affect sportsfields can be applied during any of three phases to preserve the asset, but the decision to apply insecticides is subject to the approvals process outlined in the Policy.

Where the decision to use pesticides is made under the Policy, only the least-risk pesticides to deal with infestations are to be used on a 'spot-application' basis.

## **2 Audit Objectives and Approach**

### **2.1 Audit Purpose and Objectives**

The purpose of the audit was to determine if the City has consistently implemented the *Corporate Pesticide Use Policy for City of Ottawa Property 2004* on City-owned and leased outdoor property.

Specific audit objectives were to determine if:

1. The principles of the Policy have been consistently understood and applied by City staff in the Public Works and Services Department, Business Transformation Services Department, and Community and Protective Services Department;
2. The required process for determining which management practice to use in controlling a pest has been consistently applied by City staff;

3. The procedure for documenting and reporting pest management decisions (both for the use of an alternative method and the use of a pesticide) has been consistently applied by City staff;
4. Public notification requirements have been met; and,
5. Annual reports have been compiled for 2005 and 2006 and have been presented to Council.

## **2.2 Audit Scope**

The scope of the audit included an examination of Policy implementation, as applied to all City-owned and operated outdoor property and leased property,<sup>1</sup> from 2005 until present. The year 2005 was selected as the beginning of the audit period because the 2005 field season was the first full field season during which the Policy was applied. Due to constraints in the availability of data, the audit was not able to include an analysis of the total amount of pesticide used on City-owned property over time.

## **2.3 Approach**

The audit approach comprised four phases: audit planning; audit execution; analysis; and reporting. Key steps in the process included the following:

- Preliminary interviews with key individuals from the departments primarily responsible for implementing the Policy to provide a general understanding of how the Policy is being implemented.
- Development of audit criteria.
- Detailed interviews with a number of City staff involved in implementation, monitoring, and reporting of the Policy, and a detailed review of relevant documentation and records.
- Site visits to City-owned outdoor property to determine if notification was posted in accordance with the Policy, and to observe pest control practices.
- Evaluation of evidence gathered to determine overall level of implementation of the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy for City of Ottawa Property 2004.

## **3 Organizational Strengths**

The City of Ottawa's pest management activities have been consistent with the goals and intent of the Policy. Chemical pesticides have not been applied to City-owned properties for cosmetic or aesthetic purposes since the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy came into force on August 25, 2004. There is evidence that the City has used mechanical and cultural practices, as well as investigated and used a small number of alternative

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<sup>1</sup> Note that the Policy only applied to City leased property as of January 2006.

methods to chemical pesticides in its pest control activities. Chemical pesticides have only been used in circumstances where a pest must be controlled and other pest control techniques cannot be applied or have previously failed.

City staff follows a consistent process to assess pest infestations, and the Medical Officer of Health assumes the lead role in the decision-making process where a request for pesticide application is made by operational staff. City Staff demonstrated a high level of awareness of the Policy requirements and familiarity with governing regulations for pesticide application.

## **4 Findings and Recommendations**

### **4.1 Overall Findings**

**Implementation of the Policy meets the stated Purpose, Policy Statement, and Application of the Policy.**

#### **4.1.1 Policy Application to City-owned Properties**

Chemical pesticides have not been applied to City-owned properties for cosmetic or aesthetic purposes since the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy came into force on August 25, 2004. There is evidence that the City has used mechanical and cultural practices, as well as investigated and used a small number of alternative methods to chemical pesticides in its pest control activities. Chemical pesticides have only been used in circumstances where a pest must be controlled and other pest control techniques cannot be applied or have previously failed.

#### **4.1.2 Policy Application to Outdoor Property Owned by Other Parties and Outside Contractors**

The Policy applied to outdoor property owned by other parties upon which the City operates programs, activities or provides services on a voluntary basis until 2006, after which it became compulsory. Where the City is the user or lessee, it applies this aspect of the Policy through standard use and lease agreements. Where it is the landlord, the City applies this aspect through License of Occupation, General Lease Agreements and Purchase and Service Agreements.

The City has varying degrees of control over property maintenance practices at these facilities. The City is able to have more control in instances where it is leasing the land or facilities to other parties and in cases where it is leasing the majority, or all, of a facility. The City has less control over property maintenance practices in instances such as where the City is leasing part of a facility, owns land that is subject to federal legislative requirements (i.e. rail corridors), small parcels of land it leases to the public, and community gardens.

The City has partially applied the Policy to outdoor property owned by other parties upon which the City operates programs, activities or provides services (i.e. where it is the tenant/lessee) through standard use and lease agreements, taking into consideration the City's complex leasing arrangements.

The Policy has not been incorporated into all relevant agreements with outside contractors. The various lease agreements used by the City when it is the landlord do not include specific mention of the current Corporate Pesticide Use Policy for City of Ottawa Property 2004. While the License of Occupation Agreements contain a clause that references the 2001 Interim Pesticide Policy, other agreements such as General Lease Agreements and Purchase and Service Agreements only contain a clause that the lessee must abide by City policies, not the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy for City of Ottawa Property 2004 specifically.

There is a risk that the Policy will not be implemented on all City-owned or leased property as relevant lease agreements and contracts do not require conformance with the Policy as part of the contractual requirements.

### **Recommendation 1**

**That all City lease agreements and relevant contracts incorporate the requirements of the most current Corporate Pesticide Use Policy, taking into consideration the City's complex and unique leasing situations, and that situations where implementation of the Policy is not possible be identified in Section 10 Exemptions of the Policy.**

#### **Management Response**

Management agrees with this recommendation.

Since May 2007, the requirements as outlined in the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy for City of Ottawa Property 2004 have been incorporated into new lease agreements as part of standardizing lease contracts.

Post amalgamation leases (2000 to 2006) contain a general clause that the lessee must abide by City policies. As these leases come up for renewal, specific reference to the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy for City of Ottawa Property 2004 will be specifically identified. In addition, all new relevant Purchase of Service Agreements with outside contractors will contain specific reference to the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy.

## **4.2 Audit Objectives**

### **4.2.1 Audit Objective 1:**

**The principles of the Policy have been consistently understood and applied by City staff in the Public Works and Services Department, Business Transformation Services Department, and Community and Protective Services Department.**

City staff has consistently applied the Policy to all City-owned outdoor property. All operating practices under the Policy have been approved by the Medical Officer of Health and in consultation with relevant operating personnel.

There is evidence that City staff are adhering to the fundamental principles of the Policy aimed at protecting residents and the environment, while at the same time protecting community and City-owned assets. The Policy and its required processes for the approval of pesticide use have been strictly adhered to and there have been no known contraventions of the Policy to date.

The Policy has not been reviewed or updated from time to time as appropriate and to maintain current best practice since its coming into force. In the absence of any review or update of the Policy since its coming into force, any changes in City organization, changes in responsibilities, content updates, and/or lessons learned in the initial years of Policy implementation have not been incorporated into the Policy. Without regular review of the Policy, the City is unable to fully understand the impact, relevance, and effectiveness of the Policy in achieving its goals.

### **Recommendation 2**

**That management amend the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy to include a clear statement on the frequency of policy review, and update the Policy to reflect current City organization, responsibilities, and refinements based on Policy implementation to date.**

#### **Management Response**

Management agrees with this recommendation.

A formal review of the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy is scheduled for early 2008. The review will include revisions to the policy to clearly set out the frequency of future policy reviews, and will update the policy to reflect corporate reorganizations, changing responsibilities, and other revisions related to implementation. It is anticipated that this activity will be completed by June 2008.

#### **4.2.2 Audit Objective 2:**

**The required process for determining which management practice to use in controlling a pest has been consistently applied by City staff.**

The required process for determining which management practice to use in controlling a pest is provided in *5.0 General Provisions* of the *Corporate Pesticide Use Policy*.

Ongoing monitoring and reporting, as part of maintenance practices, is done by City staff or contractors, is informal in nature, and is usually verbally reported. Documentation and reporting of a pest problem is done on an “exception” basis, that is, reporting is done only when an application for pesticide application is made to the

Medical Officer of Health, however, the informality of this practice and the use of exception reporting has not impeded effective implementation of the Policy.

**Number of Pesticide Application Requests Approved**

**From January 1, 2005 – June 1, 2007**

A total of 12 sportsfields have been assessed since the inception of the Policy. There have been four assessment requests for non-sportsfields applications, which include O-Train property and City-owned property that adjoins to private property.

The number of pesticide application requests that have been approved by the Medical Officer of Health since Policy inception are as follows:

Phase 1: 1 approved out of 3 requests

Phase 2: 0 approved out of 1 request

Phase 3: 5 approved out of 8 requests

Other: 2 approved out of 4 requests (both for O-Train property)

While a pesticide application assessment was not formally requested by Surface Operations, the Medical Officer of Health also completed a preliminary assessment of 14 fields for white grub damage in fall 2005, in advance of the 2006 season.

There was consistent evidence that when City staff encounters a pest problem and considers the application of pesticides, they notify the Medical Officer of Health.

Staff supplies the required information regarding the pest problem to the Medical Officer of Health via email and telephone.

There was evidence that decisions for approval of use of pesticides was made taking into account the requirements of section 5.4 of the Policy, as well as population thresholds and monitoring techniques as required for sportsfields in section 8.4 the Policy. Document review and on-site observation revealed that a thorough decision process is used to determine whether or not to apply pesticides. The Medical Officer of Health consults with City staff involved with the request to use pesticides, as well as entomological and horticultural advisors for all application decisions.

The Medical Officer of Health has provided 'blanket approval' to Surface Operations for the spot spraying of bees/wasps and for contractors to spray poison ivy. All spraying

by Surface Operations, or by contractors on their behalf, is reported to the Medical Officer of Health annually.

City Staff, while not applying pesticides themselves, demonstrated familiarity with governing regulations for pesticide application. Where pesticides were applied, Staff reported that they ensure the contracted pesticide applicator holds a valid pesticide applicators license and that proper notification signs were posted. In some instances, Surface Operations staff applies small quantities of a pesticide (i.e. a portion of a spray can available for purchase from a local hardware store) for spot application on wasp/bee nests in or adjacent to high-traffic areas.

When chemical pesticides have been used on City lands and sportsfields, they have been applied on a "spot-application" basis whenever possible. This was consistently said to be the case when pesticides are applied to poison ivy by contractors and wasp/bee nests by Surface Operations staff.

Generally, chosen pest control practices are not pilot tested before use. However, it was noted the range of pesticides used is quite small, have similar properties, and are known to have consistent results. In some cases, alternative practices have been tested, such as steam treatment and pre-growing turf at a commercial nursery prior to laying it on the field (ongoing at the time of the audit).

The use of alternative substances for pest control was found to be infrequent. Some of the alternatives listed in the Policy were used by City staff (e.g. horticultural vinegar, corn gluten), but other methods that could be considered alternatives, such as steam treatment, are not included in the list of alternatives. Interviewees cited infrequent use of alternative substances for pest control (as listed in Section 11 of the Policy) because other methods, such as mechanical and cultural practices, are seen to be more viable methods to reduce pest infestations to a tolerable level. Some of the alternative methods are considered labour intensive, costly, or ineffective in some cases.

Section 9.0 of the Policy provides for the delegation of authority for emergencies. City staff indicated there have been no instances where a natural disaster has required the delegation of authority to other parties outside those specified in the Policy.

Staff demonstrated a clear understanding of the exemptions to the Policy, particularly as they apply to lands managed by Venture Properties and Surface Operations.

Managers and supervisors of the relevant departments identified in the Policy do not actively monitor conformance with the Policy. Policy provisions were followed when going through the pesticide application approval process, but ongoing monitoring of compliance is not done.



Based on the review of two complaints received from the public regarding pesticide applications on City property, the City's response was found to be timely and adequate. A review of summary data of public pesticides inquiries generated from the City's complaints register found that the majority of inquiries was received during the time when substantial debate was occurring over whether Council was going to pass a by-law prohibiting the cosmetic use of pesticides by the public on their own property. The summary from the complaints register does not indicate whether complaints were related to City-applied or publicly applied pesticides.

### **Recommendation 3**

**That management formally assign responsibilities for compiling data and information required to monitor conformance and implementation of the Policy.**

#### **Management Response**

Management agrees with this recommendation.

While the audit confirms that the Policy provisions are being followed when going through the pesticide application approval process, clarification of the compliance monitoring responsibilities will be made as part of the scheduled review of the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy scheduled for completion by June 2008.

#### **4.2.3 Audit Objective 3:**

**The procedure for documenting and reporting pest management decisions (both for the use of an alternative method and the use of a pesticide) has been consistently applied by City staff.**

City staff does not use the *City of Ottawa Pest Monitoring Report* as required by the Policy. The Medical Officer of Health gave City staff approval to provide required information via email because it was found, by both staff and the Medical Officer of Health, that the *Pest Monitoring Report* was labour intensive, inefficient, and focussed on sportsfield applications. City staff and the Medical Officer of Health both reported that all parties provide enough information and sufficient communication via email and telephone to make a valid decision on pesticide application in compliance with the Policy, without using the *Pest Monitoring Report*.

The Medical Officer of Health, along with an entomologist, horticultural advisor and the implementing department, have consistently undertaken an evaluation of Policy criteria and results, including alternative practices, for each request for pesticide application. The analysis and documentation is captured via meeting minutes, email correspondence and telephone conversations, rather than using the *City of Ottawa Pest Monitoring Report*. The audit found that, in most cases, the issue, analysis and results are captured in meeting minutes and email correspondence. However, in cases where telephone correspondence was used, only the Medical Officer of Health decision was

documented. The pest management decisions by the Medical Officer of Health were consistently detailed, providing a clear decision and the rationale for it.

There is a low risk that there would be insufficient communication and/or documentation between the Medical Officer of Health and City staff by not using the *City of Ottawa Pest Monitoring Report* if there were to be a controversial or appealed pesticide application decision.

Where an alternative method of pest control was implemented, the decision and results of the practice are not documented or reported. City staff indicated that alternative methods are not commonly used.

City staff does not decide which pesticide will be applied when approval for pesticide use is provided. Professional contractors decide which pesticide will be applied according to the type of pest involved and the site-specific conditions. City staff indicated they are comfortable having professionals decide which chemical pesticide to use. City staff consistently noted that a very small number of pesticides are available to choose from and they were familiar with the results achieved by these different pesticides. City staff are accountable for ensuring that the City is in accordance with the terms of the Policy, including choosing a pesticide that is: least hazardous to human health; least risk to non-target organisms; least disruptive to natural controls; least damaging to the environment; most likely to produce a long-term solution; most likely to be used correctly; and most cost effective in the long run. As such, appropriate oversight and controls should be established for delegation of the responsibility for choosing the pesticide to apply to a third party.

There is a low risk to human and environmental health if City staff are not responsible for choosing the pesticide to apply and ensuring that the City is in accordance with the terms of the Policy

When chemical pesticides are used, the project manager responsible for the field maintains a file that includes information on who implemented the pest management practice, what chemicals were used and what work was carried out. City staff indicated that no specific or formal monitoring, evaluation of monitoring data, tracking of results achieved, analysis of results, or future action(s) of the pesticide application occurs. Staff mentioned that the fields are monitored for their turf condition as part of routine operations and maintenance.

#### **Recommendation 4**

**That management review and revise the Pesticide Monitoring Report Form in consultation with operations staff and the Medical Officer of Health to collect the data and information required to make and record pesticide application decisions for all types of City properties (i.e. not just sportsfields).**

### **Management Response**

Management agrees with the recommendation.

The current form was designed prior to implementation of the policy with a narrow focus on sports field weed issues. The policy affects many more properties than sports fields. During the formal review of the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy scheduled for completion in June 2008, representatives from affected departments, including the Medical Officer of Health, will assist in revising the form. The revisions will ensure that the form is an effective tool for collecting information required for the annual report and for decision-making regarding the use of pesticides on all City properties.

### **Recommendation 5**

**That City staff develop a short list of approved pesticides for use by pesticide applicators for specific and recurring circumstances that meet the requirements of the Policy. (Approval of the Medical Officer of Health would still be required prior to applying these approved pesticides.)**

### **Management Response**

Management disagrees with this recommendation.

The Ontario Ministry of the Environment (MOE) and the Federal Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) are mandated to approve and review pest control products that are available for use. The choice of pesticide selected needs to be justified on a site-by-site basis in consultation with the pest control applicator working on the site. The development of a short list would be time consuming and may restrict the number of options available.

In order to ensure that pest control product proposed for use on City properties meet the requirement of the policy (i.e. the least hazardous), management proposes that the Medical Officer of Health (MOH) review each proposal in order to assess that the least toxic product is being used in each situation.

#### **4.2.4 Audit Objective 4:**

##### **Public notification requirements have been met.**

The City has placed notices on its website that inform residents of planned sportsfields management activities, including information on when the application will occur and the specific pesticide that will be used.

There is evidence that City staff ensures that signs have been posted by contractors in accordance with all federal and provincial regulations, to both inform the public of a pesticide treatment and to remind them to keep away from the treated area for the

requisite time. A check of signage is completed by either the project manager for the field or by Surface Operations staff.

Signs have not been posted when the City is implementing an alternative pest management practice (as required by Section 7.4 of the Policy) to make the community aware there is a pest present and that the City is addressing the situation through alternative practices. Some City staff were not aware of the City's Policy requirement to post signage when using an alternative method and other staff noted that there was no budget for promotional signage. Although this poses a low level of risk to the City, it would be in the City's best interest to post signage as a form of public promotion of its use of alternatives to pesticides.

During on-site observation of an upcoming pesticide application on O-Train property, the audit team observed a sign was posted to inform the public of pesticide application activities, identify pesticides to be sprayed as required by Transport Canada, and provide the name and phone number of a contact person. The contact person, who was a contractor, was not informed that his name and phone number were placed on the sign and was not provided with speaking points by the City. The contractor was not able to provide the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) or specific name of the pesticides being used and was not sure how long people were required to stay off the sprayed area. The contractor indicated that he had received numerous calls about the pesticide application.

When signs are posted with contact information for the public, there is a risk involved when the City, or a contractor working on its behalf, is not able to provide sufficient information about the pesticide application. This situation may undermine public confidence in the Policy.

### **Recommendation 6**

**That management ensure that staff and contractors working on the City's behalf are familiar with the City's Corporate Pesticide Use Policy, and are able to provide information on the type of pesticide being used and any health and safety concerns surrounding its application.**

### **Management Response**

Management agrees with this recommendation.

Managing Departments will be responsible for informing staff and contractors, working on the City's behalf, of this policy. Managing Departments will provide information on the type of pesticide being applied and the health concerns. This information will be forwarded to the Medical Officer of Health as required for reporting purposes.

As part of the policy review to be completed in June 2008, all managing departments will develop a communications strategy to ensure that staff and contractors working on behalf of the City are familiar with the policy.

### **Recommendation 7**

**That procedures be put in place to ensure the person whose name is posted as the contact for a given pesticide application is aware that their name and number is posted, and is provided with speaking points to ensure accurate and consistent information is provided to the public.**

#### **Management Response**

Management agrees with this recommendation.

During the formal review of the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy scheduled for completion in June 2008, specific procedures will be developed which incorporate the directives, within this recommendation, to ensure accurate and consistent information is provided to the public through identified contacts.

### **Recommendation 8**

**That the City post signs when it implements an alternative pest management practice to promote community awareness of the practice and to conform with the public notification requirements of the Policy.**

#### **Management Response**

Management agrees with this recommendation.

Management recognizes the importance of educating the public to promote community awareness of the practice of alternative pest management processes.

During the formal review process of the Corporate Pesticide Use policy scheduled for completion in June 2008, management will develop a communications strategy to achieve this objective.

#### **4.2.5 Audit Objective 5:**

**Annual reports have been compiled for 2005 and 2006 and have been presented to Council.**

Part 6.0 of the Policy states that an annual report is to be compiled by Planning, Transit and the Environment and presented to Council. No annual reports have been prepared to date or presented to Council. City staff interviewed was not aware of the requirement to prepare an annual report.

Staff in each of East, Central, and West divisions of Surface Operations provides the Medical Officer of Health with an annual summary of pesticides applied on a spot basis to poison ivy and bee/wasp nests as part of the "blanket approval" they have been

granted. Other implementing departments do not compile or report on pesticide applications for annual compilation or use in an annual report.

Completing an annual report on pesticide use at the City is a requirement of the Policy that was approved by Council. Without annual compilation of information, it is difficult for the City to monitor corporate pesticide use, evaluate effectiveness of the Policy and the approval process, and develop recommendations to improve the process. As well, with pesticide use being such a controversial issue, the City may be vulnerable to criticism from the public for not reporting on its use of pesticides.

### **Recommendation 9**

**That the City identify and systematically collect the information required for the annual report on pesticide applications and compile an annual report as per the requirements of the Policy.**

#### **Management Response**

Management agrees with this recommendation.

Clarification of departmental responsibilities for data and information gathering and reporting, and the production of appropriate reports will be undertaken as part of the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy review scheduled for completion in June 2008. Staff is preparing the first report on pesticide application on City owned property, covering 2005 - 2007, which is scheduled for completion by the end of the first quarter 2008. Future reports will be strengthened by the outcomes of the first policy review, scheduled for early 2008.

## **5 Conclusion**

The City of Ottawa's pest management activities have been consistent with the goals and intent of the Policy. Chemical pesticides have not been applied to City-owned properties for cosmetic or aesthetic purposes since the Corporate Pesticide Use Policy came into force on August 25, 2004. The City has used mechanical and cultural practices, as well as investigated and used a small number of alternative methods to chemical pesticides in its pest control activities. Chemical pesticides have only been used in circumstances where a pest must be controlled and other pest control techniques cannot be applied or have previously failed.

While the spirit and intent of the Policy is met for City-owned properties, there is a need for more consistent and formalized documentation and record keeping related to pesticide application decisions and the use of alternative practices. There is also a need for the City to monitor Policy implementation and effectiveness through compilation, analysis and reporting of related data and information on an annual basis. This information should be compiled in an annual report and presented to City Council. Given that the Policy has been in effect for three years, it would be appropriate to

review and update it to reflect any changes in City organization, changes in responsibility, content updates, and lessons learned in the initial years of Policy implementation.

The Policy included a phased-in application to outdoor property owned by other parties upon which the City operates programs and activities - or provides services through use and lease agreements - where it was to be applied on a voluntary basis in the latter half of 2004 and 2005, and then become compulsory beginning in 2006. While the City has partially applied the Policy to these circumstances, staff should undertake a critical review of the degree to which full implementation is possible in different situations, and should develop an action plan to enhance implementation in those areas where it has direct control or influence.

## **6 Acknowledgement**

We wish to express our appreciation for the cooperation and assistance afforded the audit team by the departments involved in development and implementation of the *Corporate Pesticide Use Policy for City of Ottawa Property*.