



# SHAKER HEIGHTS

## Summary of Pesticide Use Best Practices on Public Lands

*Prepared by the Sustainability Committee of the City of Shaker Heights*

***Recommended appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs) of our community's landscaped and green spaces include limited use of herbicides on public property, with the exception of appropriate usage of herbicides in controlling invasive species and maintaining biodiversity.***

Pesticides are loosely regulated and relatively little is known about their long-term effects upon humans and the environment. In light of this uncertainty, herbicides and pesticides applied in public areas should be considered detrimental to human health unless proven otherwise.

### 1. Recommendations

The following recommendation is based on the concerns about health effects from toxic chemicals in the environment and to preserve ecological function and biodiversity. These recommendations have been adopted by many communities to effectively controlling pests and weeds and maintaining attractive yard space and fields while minimizing the effects of toxins on the environment and human health. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is considered to be the most environmentally preferable option when it comes to land management of green spaces. The Shaker Heights Sustainability Committee recommends the following BMPs in managing outdoor spaces:

- a) ***Pest Prevention*** - Eliminate conditions that attract pests, including standing water, cracks in walls, food crumbs and remove overgrown/unhealthy/infected vegetation. Monitoring areas and being familiar with common pests and vulnerable areas can be employed before biological controls are introduced.
- b) ***Biological Control*** - Introducing beneficial insects or other microorganisms to manage pests can be highly effective for reducing the need for pesticides and supporting a healthy environment. Pest populations can be reduced by introducing natural predators into the environment to control populations of destructive or invasive insect pests or weeds. Eliminating the use of pesticides can also support existing populations of beneficial insects.
- c) ***Cultural Control*** - Make the environment less desirable to pests by removing weeds and maintaining ground cover like mulch, maintaining healthy plants (leave grass clippings) and creating native habitat for native plants and insects; this also ensures a healthy, balanced ecosystem that can thrive without the use of pesticide treatments.
- d) ***Low-Toxicity Insecticides*** - Good integrated pest management programs use preventative, biological and cultural controls whenever possible; however there may be circumstances when these methods fall short in controlling pests; in which case lowest toxicity treatment can be implemented. Low-toxicity insecticides are derived from botanical chemical compounds such as simple soap and water mixtures, neem spray, and kaolin clay slurry. It is important to note that all

pesticides, including those considered low-toxicity and/or organic can have negative impacts on beneficial insects.

- e) **Conventional Pesticides** - Conventional synthetic pesticides - including insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, algicides, and rodenticides- are always a last resort option in IPM and special care should be taken to minimize impacts to the environment and health risks. They should be used in spot applications for the protection of human health and, for example, to preserve important trees that are susceptible to disease.

2. **Alternative Products to Glyphosate to Control Weeds**

- a. A comprehensive list of [Products Compatible with Organic Landscape Management](#)

3. **Commercial Application of Pesticides and Notification Requirements**

- a. Please see Ohio Revised Codes of Law for the [Chapter 921 Pesticides](#) and refer to [Rule 901:5-11-09](#) for details on Notification Requirements.
- b. Residents of all ages have the right to know where and when pesticides have been applied so they can respond according to their own determination of risk.
- c. Written notice can be included in the City's information channels