

# Council Communication

## October 5, 2015, Study Session

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### Discussion of glyphosate use in the City of Ashland

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**FROM:**

Dave Kanner, city administrator, dave.kanner@ashland.or.us

**SUMMARY:**

Councilor Voisin has requested a Council discussion of glyphosate use in the City of Ashland. Glyphosate is a systemic herbicide used to kill weeds, first marketed under the brand name “Roundup,” but now used in dozens of different herbicides since Monsanto’s patent expired in 2000. Under ORS 634.057, cities are prohibited from regulating the sale or use of pesticides and herbicides except as it pertains to use on their own properties.

**BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:**

According to [Wikipedia](#), glyphosate “is a broad-spectrum systemic herbicide used to kill weeds, especially annual broadleaf weeds and grasses known to compete with commercial crops grown around the globe.” The Environmental Protection Agency last reviewed glyphosate in 1993 and considers it to be noncarcinogenic. In March 2015, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (part of the U.N.’s World Health Organization) determined that glyphosate is “probably carcinogenic in humans.” The Ashland Municipal Code and Parks Commission policy require mechanical and cultural methods of weed control whenever practical, but do not prohibit the use of chemical herbicides and pesticides ([AMC 9.28](#), [APRC Integrated Pest Management Policy](#)). The Dutch Parliament has banned the sale of glyphosate to private parties, France has banned over-the-counter sales of glyphosate and Sri Lanka has banned the import of glyphosate. Oregon cities are pre-empted by state law (ORS 634.057) from regulating the sale or use of herbicides and pesticides.

The following was submitted by Councilor Voisin, from the group “Advocates for Healthy Landscapes:”

Advocates for Healthy Landscapes (AHL) is a group of concerned citizens working to educate the public to end the use of certain toxic herbicides in Ashland - specifically glyphosate (found in Roundup and other brands) and 2,4-D (Crossbow and other brands). Our request is *not* for a ban of these products. Rather, AHL is asking the City to pass a Resolution encouraging everyone - citizens and businesses - to discontinue the use of these products and promote safe solutions for weed control.

Numerous studies have shown that glyphosate and 2,4d cause great harm to human health and the environment. Education of consumers, retailers, landscapers, HOAs, and landowners is key, and the City can help us open the door. Yes, people can read the news (or not) about the dangers of these products, but that is not enough - *we believe a City has a role to play, because what one person sprays affects all of us - children, pollinators, earthworms, you and me - thru the air we breathe, the soil and grass we walk on, and the water we drink.*

Four Articles: *(read number 3 if you have time for only one article)*



1. March 2015: from International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) that classifies glyphosate as a *probable carcinogen*: <http://www.iarc.fr/en/media-centre/iarcnews/pdf/MonographVolume112.pdf>
2. June 2015: from IARC that classifies 2,4d as a *possible carcinogen*:  
[http://www.iarc.fr/en/media-centre/pr/2015/pdfs/pr236\\_E.pdf](http://www.iarc.fr/en/media-centre/pr/2015/pdfs/pr236_E.pdf)
3. September 2015: *California EPA will begin labeling glyphosate as a carcinogen*:  
[http://oehha.ca.gov/prop65/CRNR\\_notices/admin\\_listing/intent\\_to\\_list/090415LCset27.html](http://oehha.ca.gov/prop65/CRNR_notices/admin_listing/intent_to_list/090415LCset27.html)
4. July 2015: from Journal of Environmental Biology on the detrimental effects of glyphosate on the *navigational abilities of honeybees*:  
<http://jeb.biologists.org/content/early/2015/07/09/dev.117291.short>

**COUNCIL GOALS SUPPORTED**

N/A

**FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:**

N/A

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND REQUESTED ACTION:**

N/A

**SUGGESTED MOTIONS:**

N/A. This item is for discussion and direction to staff only.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Resolution proposed by Advocates for Healthy Landscapes



**RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**A RESOLUTION IMPLEMENTING A PROGRAM TO DISCOURAGE THE USE OF HIGH-  
HAZARD HERBICIDES FOR WEED ABATEMENT ACTIVITIES  
IN THE CITY OF ASHLAND**

**RECITALS:**

- A. The City of Ashland and Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission recognize the dangers that toxic herbicides and pesticides pose to humans, (especially children), animals, water quality, and other natural resources;
- B. In 1996, the City adopted a Pesticide Policy, Ashland Municipal Code 9.28, via Ordinance #2790, to limit the use of pesticides and to ensure that cultural, mechanical, and biological pest control methods are employed before toxic pesticides are introduced into the environment;
- C. Since 1996, the City has amended the Pesticide Policy to allow for the application of synthetic pesticides on areas maintained for the City of Ashland including non-park areas such as median strips, parking lots, the Ashland Municipal Airport, and the City maintenance yard on 'B' Street;
- D. In May, 2010, the Ashland Parks and Recreation Department adopted an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Policy, to guide the work of the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission (APRC) and Parks Staff in weed and pest control;
- E. Since 2010, the APRC has amended the IPM Policy to permit the use of glyphosate-based pesticides in the bullpens, infields and warning tracks of North Mountain Park, and the golf course.
- F. The City and the Parks and Recreation Department require that any person applying a toxic substance shall be properly trained in the appropriate and safe methods for application and handling;
- G. The IPM Policy of the Parks and Recreation Department states that when developing and updating the IPM Policy, Parks staff will rely on current peer-reviewed scientific publications about potential materials and methods, including science-based information from regulatory agencies, state university departments, university extension scientists, and other experts. The IPM Policy also states that only the safest, lowest toxicity products available will be used, that no "restricted use" pesticides will be used, and that the IPM Policy shall comply with all local, state, and federal regulations;
- H. In March, 2015, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), the specialized cancer agency of the World Health Organization (WHO), issued a statement declaring that glyphosate is a 'probable carcinogen (Group 2A)';
- I. In June, 2015, the IARC issued a statement declaring that 2,4-D is a 'possible carcinogen (Group 2B)';
- J. Increasing numbers of scientific studies are being published stating that exposure to glyphosate and 2,4-D can lead to endocrine disruption, birth defects, fetal deaths, cancer, DNA damage, and other serious illnesses;
- K. Following the IARC's statement, the California EPA announced that glyphosate will be placed on the list of chemicals hazardous to human health under the state's Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, requiring a "clear and reasonable" warning that its chemical compound is a known cancer agent.

- L. Because glyphosate and 2,4-D can persist in soil, water, and animal tissue for prolonged periods of time, even low levels of exposure could still be harmful to humans, animals, and the environment;
- M. There are many solutions to weed abatement that do not require the use of such hazardous chemicals, including, but not limited to, natural herbicides (like acetic acid and essential oils), steam weeders, infrared weeders, goats, hand weeding, sheet mulching, the use of native plants, and planting competitive or **cover crops**.

**THE CITY OF ASHLAND RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:**

- A. Beginning on the effective date of this resolution, the City of Ashland shall begin educating its residents and businesses, including HOAs, landscapers, nurseries, farms and orchards, about the dangers of glyphosate and 2,4-D, to encourage an attitudinal shift leading them towards discontinuing the use of these products, and to use safe solutions instead;
- B. The City of Ashland shall consider assigning the work of educational outreach about weed control products containing glyphosate and 2, 4-D, and safer weed management practices, to a sub-committee or a commission of the City which includes at least two community members;
- C. The City shall use all feasible and reasonably affordable outreach methods to encourage residents to follow their example of avoiding the use of glyphosate and 2,4-D products, including, for example, public service announcements, website postings, newspaper ads, and other appropriate means;

This resolution was duly PASSED and ADOPTED this \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ 2015, and takes effect upon signing by the Mayor.

\_\_\_\_\_  
CITY RECORDER

SIGNED and APPROVED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR

Approved as to form:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Attorney

State of Oregon        }  
County of Jackson        : ss.  
City of Ashland        }

I certify that the foregoing is a true copy of Resolution No. ??, finally passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Ashland this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.