

City of Greenbelt, Maryland

Adoption of Organic Land Care Standards and Organic Pest Management (OPM) for Care of Public Lands and Phasing out of chemical pesticides by 2010

1. City Council set a goal for Greenbelt of meeting the Northeast Organic Farming Association Standards for Organic Land Care and adopting a program of Organic Pest Management (OPM) for all public lands of Greenbelt by January 2010. A copy of these standards has been provided to city staff.
2. City Council set a goal of phasing out the cosmetic use of chemical pesticides on public lands by 2010 and providing City staff with adequate resources to do so. By cosmetic use is meant any use other than the direct protection of the public and environmental health.

Formal Written Policies and Procedures for Organic Land Care for City Staff and Contractors

3. City staff develop formal written policy and procedures with regard to pesticide use by Public Works staff that is consistent with goals noted above of meeting Organic Land Care and Organic Pest Management standards and the “pesticide as the last resort” guideline as defined in the Maryland Integrated Pest Management in Schools legislation in its’ implementation of IPM.
4. The City require best Organic Pest Management and Organic Land Care practices among its contractors, and should include clauses in contracts requiring use of Organic Pest Management and Organic Land Care. The City should favor local businesses whenever possible.

Citizen Right to Know

5. City staff be required to report to the public on a yearly basis the brand names, listed ingredients, EPA ratings, planned locations, and amount and frequency of use of any pesticides applied to public lands within Greenbelt by the city staff or city contractors, and that this be publicized in a widely read publication, such as the News Review, well ahead of dates of application.

City Staff Training and Professional Development

6. Council provide funding for adequate training and professional development in Organic Land Care methods for city staff such as the organic land care certification programs now offered by the Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOPFA), Society for Organic Urban Land Care (SOUL), and other groups.

Partnerships with Other Government Entities, Local Businesses, and Citizen Groups

7. The city of Greenbelt partner wherever possible with: federal, state, other local government entities, national and local environmental and watershed groups; and other interested civic groups in obtaining funding, technical support, and volunteers to help achieve the goal of Organic Land Care for Greenbelt by 2010.

A Comprehensive Study of All of Greenbelt's Impact--with Metrics and assessment of what Must be Done to Reduce Pollution and Restore Health of the Chesapeake Bay.

8. REAC recommends that the City seek funding and/or volunteers to conduct comprehensive study designed to assess impact from Greenbelt upon the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, and develop specific goals, metrics, and practices that will be necessary to reduce the on-going environmental degradation. As noted in the body of this report, The Chesapeake Bay has been described as a "system in crisis," and on a per acre basis the urban areas have been estimated to contribute 7 times the pollution into the Bay as rural areas.

9. The study should also address the impact of land care practices and pesticide use by private citizens and businesses within Greenbelt. REAC was able to find little information about the extent of pesticide and chemical fertilizer use by residents and businesses. As we proceeded, we became convinced that addressing citizen use on private property must be a significant part of any effort to reduce usage. The study might also access public support for policies or legislation that would prohibit pesticide use for cosmetic purposes. The city should also seek counsel concerning the legality of legislation such as the Canadian By-laws against cosmetic use of pesticides within Maryland.

Public Outreach and Education Campaign

10. The City and partners engage in a strong public education campaign designed to inform residents of Bay friendly and Organic Land Care, and to provide interested citizens with knowledge of alternatives to pesticide use. Outreach and education tools include: household brochures, workshops, Greenbelt Recreation Department courses, and experimental community demonstration gardens.

Appreciation, Encouragement, and Rewards for City Staff

11. City staff be given appreciation, encouragement, and rewards for their efforts to transition the city to Organic land Care and help to restore the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Thanks to the efforts of dedicated city staff, Greenbelt is known for its beautiful gardens, and hopefully will soon be known as a leader and innovator in the area of Organic Land Care.