

Town Council supports moves to ban neonics blamed for bee deaths

Orangeville Council has voted to follow municipalities like Mono in banning the use of Neonicotinoid Pesticides (Neonics) in the Town of Orangeville, and send a request to the provincial and federal governments, to phase out the use of all neonics in both agricultural and ornamental use, and to work with the agricultural community to provide a transition to an alternate pesticide.

‘This resolution followed the decision of some of our neighbouring municipalities, typically rural ones where there is lots of farming going on,’ explained Councillor Sylvia Bradley, who put forward the motion.

‘These pesticides are causing damage to our pollinators, like bees, butterflies and other creatures that pollinate crops. We are just supporting most of the other agricultural communities in Ontario that would like to see a ban of pesticides, which has already been done in Europe.’

A similar resolution passed earlier by County Council approved sending a letter to the senior governments requesting action.

‘It is persuasive to me that County Council has adopted the same stance,’ said Councillor Scott Wilson. ‘While we do not have any farmers on council here, there is at least one on County Council, where this has already been approved. I would support this motion.’

Neonics are a systemic pesticide that is applied to the seed of plants, which causes the chemicals to spread into the plant and all its tissues (including leaves, flowers, roots, stems, pollen and nectar).

There has been a large number of concerns raised, particularly in 2014 as bee farmers begin to see an increase in their hives' deaths and a decrease in production. Further concerns have been raised as to the impact these chemicals can have both on humans who consume the foods, as well as other animals, since the chemicals remain in the plant.

Most pesticides used are typically sprayed on the plants above ground, which allows for them to wash off, adding yet another reason why Neonics are cause for concern.

‘The problem with this pesticide is that it not only goes into ground and contaminates the ground, but it also contaminates plants,’ said Councillor Bradley.

‘If the bees are dying from this, what is it doing to humans? Birds are also dying. It's a serious problem. It's not something that will affect Orangeville residents directly, but it's really in support of our agricultural community.’

The motion was passed and council will proceed with taking the matter forward to the senior governments.