



Letter to the Park Ridge-Nile...



Dear Members of the Board,

Go Green Park Ridge is aware that the school district's contract with TruGreen is up for renewal in January. The district pays for fertilization and weed control five times per year and pest control at an unnecessary cost to the district and community. We feel that these five applications are excessive and add no benefit. According to Cornell University's recommendations for lawn fertilization and other lawn care experts, the small amount of green space the district maintains may only require as little as two applications. Please

see <https://gardening.cals.cornell.edu/files/2015/12/How-Best-To-Fertilize-Your-Lawn-111312-13n9osb-1wwdshe.pdf>

Another cost to the district and community is the use of toxic herbicides on the lawns. Although TruGreen applies one organic treatment in summer, the other four are labeled "CAUTION" by the EPA. Applying a poisonous substance on the lawns where our children play is not in their best interest. The children roll in the grass and put it in their mouth. Moreover, they track the toxic herbicide into their homes and school. Even if the poisonous substance is dry, it still has the potential to do harm. Most cancer and chronic disease is not immediate. It can take years for mutations to do harm to a person's body. There



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at a lower cost. If the district decides to renew with TruGreen, just two applications of organic fertilizer per year is less than the one organic and four synthetic applications the district currently pays for. Although the savings would not be large, it is less and does no harm.

2) We would also like to ask the district to adopt the practice of aerating their lawns, mowing high and leaving the clippings on the lawn. These practices will reduce the need for lawn fertilizers and contribute to the health of the soil. Ideally, we would like to see the district come to adopt natural lawn care and the least toxic integrated pest management practices for all their green spaces.

Go Green Park Ridge's mission is not only to advise the community and provide resources on environmental sustainability, but to encourage conservation practices as well. Conservation will always lead to savings. We understand that the bottom line is vital to a fully functioning school district that provides adequate, if not excellent, training for the youth of the 21st century. Moreover, as per training, "...the state of Illinois recognizes the importance of [Environmental Education] and requires public schools to include instruction, study, and discussion of environmental problems," (105 ILCS 5/27-13.1) <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2872569/>.

We would like Niles-Park Ridge School District 64 to employ what is called "The Precautionary Principle". This states that "[when] an activity raises threats of harm to the environment or human health, precautionary measures should be taken even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically." <http://www.sehn.org/ppfaqs>.

Adopting natural lawn care practices coincides with the state recommendations and ISBE learning and science standards. It does nothing to teach children lessons about the environment from a book if they do not see it come to life in their schools and the community that surrounds them. As leaders of our community you can ensure consistency in our children's education.

Furthermore, you have the power to do the right thing by providing a platform for our children to carry these lessons forward to future generations. That is ultimately why we protect and educate our children.

Sincerely,

The NLC committee people (add names alphabetically)

Resources:

1.

<https://beyondpesticides.org/assets/media/documents/lawn/documents/OrganicFallLawn101.pdf>

2.

http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/p2/individual/organic_lawn_care_calendar.pdf

3. <https://richsoil.com/lawn-care.jsp>

4.

http://www.savingwater.org/cs/groups/public/@spu/@conservation/documents/webcontent/01_025113.pdf

5.

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001395/139578e.pdf>

6. <http://midwestpesticideaction.org/understanding-organic-fertilizers/>