



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

QON No. 55

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANNING, TRANSPORT, AND CITY SERVICES
JO CLAY MLA (CHAIR), SUZANNE ORR MLA (DEPUTY CHAIR), MARK PARTON MLA

Inquiry into referred 2019–20 Annual and Financial Reports and Budget Estimates 2020-21
ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Asked by Ms Clay: To the Minister for Transport and City Services

In relation to: Pesticides

Could we please get an update on progress on the phasing out of harmful pesticides and chemicals, including neonicotinoids, in line with agreed recommendations (p28, rec 52) from the Government response to the Nature in the City report?

Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

Initiatives have been underway for nearly 20 years to reduce the use of pesticides and herbicides by TCCS, to reduce environmental impacts and ensure greater operator safety.

Neonicotinoids were introduced in the early 1990s to replace a range of harmful pesticide chemicals, including organophosphates and carbamates. Over time, annual usage levels have fallen from 1100 litres per year to 40 litres. This reduction has occurred through changing practices to control pests while protecting pollinators and continuing to search for and then applying viable alternate treatment methods. Neonicotinoids are used only when there is no evident and viable replacement to control pests, such as the Elm leaf beetle which is capable of defoliating elm trees in our urban areas.

Efficient and effective application of herbicides also results in reduced chemical use. TCCS continues to examine and improve its operating procedures through self-audit and operator training. Further, alternative landscape management practices are being explored to contribute to a future reduction in herbicide application to maintain urban amenity and environmental values. Recent trials with steam, hot water and other new chemical options indicate that current practices are still the best balance of effectiveness, efficiency and safety.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Planning, Transport, and City Services

Signature:

Date:

18/3/21

By the Minister for Transport and City Services, Chris Steel MLA