

PRESS RELEASE

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City of Benicia Responds to Growing Concern Over Use of Herbicides in the News

Benicia, CA (August 17, 2018) — The City of Benicia is aware of the growing concerns surrounding the use of herbicides and are committed to providing beautiful parks and facilities that are safe for all people and pets to enjoy. Here are some of the ways we are reducing herbicide use and fulfilling that commitment:

To limit the use of herbicides and synthetic fertilizers, the City of Benicia uses an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to controlling weeds and other landscape related pests. Over the past several years we have eliminated the routine use of synthetic fertilizers in turf areas by grasscycling (mulching the grass clippings) and improving irrigation efficiency. The only time synthetic fertilizers are used is for turf renovation projects and new sod installations. In both cases, fields are closed to the public by fencing or locking the fields. We have not applied any pesticides or herbicides to the turf areas in the last several years with the exception of tree wells, fence lines, and around obstacles.

The City has discontinued the use of Glyphosate in favor of safer alternatives and organic products that are commercially available. To reduce the use of herbicides in general, we have implemented a mulching program to control weeds in landscaped areas. Recycled chips from tree pruning and removal operations conducted by the City of Benicia are stockpiled and applied to planter beds to improve the soil profile, help retain moisture, and inhibit weed growth.

Mulch has been applied in the following areas over the past year:

- Benicia Community Park planters at both canteens and parking lot medians
- Turnbull Park
- Overlook Park
- St. Catherine's Wood Park
- Civic Center Park
- East 2nd Street medians
- City Hall

- Library
- Senior Center
- Fitzgerald Field
- Tree turnaround at the foot of First Street
- Southampton Road medians
- Chelsea Hills Drive at Southampton Road

Herbicides are only used in areas where other mechanical methods are impractical. Herbicides are used to control weeds in tree wells, along fence lines, planter beds, etc. Herbicides are never applied to playgrounds. The herbicides and organic alternatives used are the safest, least toxic, and most effective products available for commercial use and they are applied with strict adherence to the label requirements and in accordance with a written recommendation from a Pest Control Advisor (PCA) licensed by the State of California Department of Pesticide Regulation (CDPR). All herbicides are applied by City of Benicia staff or contractors who are licensed or certified by CDPR. The City's pesticide storage area, application equipment, application records, and application methods are inspected annually by the Solano County Agricultural Commissioner's Office and pesticide application records are submitted monthly.

As part of our ongoing commitment, the City of Benicia will continue to review new products, technologies, and cultural practices as they become available in order to continue our effort to reduce herbicide use while providing the safest, well maintained parks and facilities for all to enjoy.

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