



City of Port Moody

Report/Recommendation to Council

Date: August 19, 2021
Submitted by: Community Services Department – Environment Division
Subject: Rodenticide Use Policy

Purpose

To summarize efforts taken to date to implement Council's resolutions to prohibit the use of anticoagulant rodenticides on all City-owned properties, and to present a draft Corporate Policy on Rodenticide Use and associated recommendations.

Recommended Resolution(s)

THAT Corporate Policy – 11-5280-2021-01 – Rodenticide Use be adopted as recommended in the report dated August 19, 2021, from the Community Services Department – Environment Division regarding Rodenticide Use Policy.

Background

Rodenticides are pesticides used to control rodent populations. The most common rodenticide products have active anticoagulant ingredients that cause internal bleeding after ingestion. After feeding on these products, rodents first become lethargic and display abnormal behaviour, becoming easier targets for predators. Predators that consume multiple poisoned prey can accumulate these toxic ingredients in their bodies to lethal levels. Small- to mid-sized raptors (e.g., hawks, owls) and mammals (e.g., raccoons, bobcats, coyotes) are vulnerable to this secondary poisoning. These products are commonly used by pest management service providers, as permitted by provincial regulations.

In recent years, there has been a growing concern about the use of anticoagulant rodenticide as studies have demonstrated the significant extent of secondary poisoning of wildlife. The BC Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) has initiated a campaign for a provincial ban of these products, and municipalities have been encouraged to support this initiative by banning or limiting the use of rodenticides on municipal land. At least six municipalities in Metro Vancouver have taken steps or are investigating options to reduce or eliminate the use of these products.

At the Regular Council Meeting held on September 8, 2020, the following resolution was passed:

RC20/350

THAT staff be directed to report back with a Bylaw to prohibit the use of rodenticides on all Port Moody-owned properties as recommended in the report dated July 30, 2020, from Councillor Meghan Lahti regarding Rodenticide-Ban Bylaw;

AND THAT the City of Port Moody only use the services of companies that do not use anticoagulant rodenticides when providing vector control on private property;

AND THAT staff be directed to communicate to residents and businesses on the City of Port Moody Council's direction in this matter, including information regarding the harmful impacts of anticoagulant rodenticides, and provide options for better alternatives that are available;

AND THAT Council send a letter to the Province of BC, copying all MLAs, requesting a province-wide ban on the use of rodenticides;

AND THAT the recommendations from this report be forwarded to all BC municipalities and submitted to UBCM as a late resolution.

On July 21, 2021, the Province announced an 18-month temporary ban and additional restrictions to the sale and use of second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs) while the government conducts a scientific review and steps up the promotion of alternatives. The provincial ban restricts who can buy and use SGARs, requires that SGARs are used as part of an Integrated Pest Management program, and includes requirements for vendors and product disposal.

Discussion

The provincial ban and restrictions announced in July are temporary and only prohibit and/or restrict the use of some anticoagulant rodenticides. Other anticoagulant rodenticides that have similar impacts on rodents and non-target wildlife are still permitted for use. Under the *Community Charter Spheres of Concurrent Jurisdiction*, local governments only have the authority to restrict pesticide use for cosmetic landscaping purposes on residential or municipal lands and cannot exercise authority over the use of pesticides to buildings¹. Under current legislation, the City cannot enact a City-wide ban or any Bylaw controlling the use of rodenticides on private property. However, as a land manager, the City can lead by example and implement policies that limit rodenticide use on municipal property or by City-contracted services and encourage similar actions on private property.

¹ From *Community Charter, Spheres of Concurrent Jurisdiction – Environment and Wildlife Regulation*: (1)(b)(ii) ... a municipality may... regulate, prohibit and impose requirements in relation to... the application of pesticides, except excluded pesticides, for the purpose of maintaining outdoor trees, shrubs, flowers, other ornamental plants and turf on a parcel or a part of a parcel if the parcel or part is used for residential purposes, or on land vested in the municipality; and (2)(c) a municipality may not exercise the authority ... (c) to buildings or inside buildings.

Following Council direction, staff have worked to transition pest management practices through the following actions:

- assessment of and improvements to reduce potential access points and attractant areas around the City Hall complex (City Hall, Recreation Centre, Works Yard);
- immediate removal of anticoagulant rodenticide bait boxes around the City Hall complex. Bait boxes were replaced with alternative bolt traps as part of a pilot project to test effectiveness. Bolt traps are being monitored and maintained by City staff;
- subsequent removal of remaining anticoagulant rodenticide bait boxes around all City facilities. These bait boxes were replaced with snap traps. Snap traps are being monitored and maintained by the City's pest management contractor²;
- installation of wildlife cameras to monitor activity and provide additional information on trap locations and effectiveness;
- documentation on trapping results (where available);
- presentation to the Environmental Protection Committee; and
- convening two municipal roundtables on rodenticide issues.

Staff have worked with the existing pest management contractor to change current practices. Anticoagulant rodenticide bait boxes are not currently at any City facility. No rodent infestations have been reported to date. Monitoring of alternative traps (bolt and snap traps) by staff and contractors has been done within existing budgets and duties. The effectiveness of alternative traps, as well as required service levels, is still currently in the process of being monitored and evaluated.

Recommendations:

Staff recommend that a Corporate Policy on Rodenticide Use be adopted to formalize this work (**Attachment 1**). The purpose of this policy is to prohibit the use of anticoagulant rodenticide or other regulated substances for rodent management on all City-owned properties, except where expressly authorized by the City as a last resort option. The Corporate Policy would also apply when the City is required to provide vector control on private property, and to discourage the use of anticoagulant rodenticide on private property.

The Rodenticide Use policy outlines the steps that pest management contractors must take to manage rodents on City-owned properties, or if they are working under contract for the City. These steps follow an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Framework that focuses on non-lethal measures for pest management (access prevention, attractant management, education) and humane population control methods that are less harmful to other species. The implementation of an IPM Framework will ensure that pest management activities are following best practices and provincial requirements. If all exclusion and attraction reduction attempts have been completed, and alternative population control measures are unsuccessful, the Policy allows for the use of anticoagulant rodenticides or other regulated substances as a last resort. This last resort option would require senior management authorization and would be

² Note that the snap traps used by the pest management contractor currently use the same black exterior boxes as anticoagulant rodenticide bait boxes. Staff are working with the contractor on addressing this issue.

implemented with a targeted and short-term approach to avoid risks to buildings or their occupants and pest infestations.

Other recommendations include:

- continue work to reduce use of anticoagulant rodenticides (i.e., site assessment, access prevention, and attractant management and education at all facilities);
- evaluate effectiveness of alternative traps and servicing requirements;
- raise awareness about the concerns with anticoagulant rodenticides to encourage residents, strata, and businesses to adopt methods of controlling rodents that are more humane and less harmful to other species; and
- continue to work with regional partners to advance understanding of alternative traps and effective pest management practices.

By adopting this Policy, the City can lead by example while reducing harm to the environment and non-target wildlife and demonstrating ethical and humane treatment of pests and other wildlife.

Other Option(s)

THAT the report dated July 16, 2021, from the Community Services Department – Environment Division regarding Rodenticide Use Policy be received for information.

Financial Implications

No financial implications have been identified at this stage of the transition away from anticoagulant rodenticides. The costs associated with replacing anticoagulant rodenticide bait boxes with snap and bolt traps will be monitored, and budget requests will be incorporated into 2022 or 2023 financial planning cycles. Initial costs may be higher where effort is needed to address building conditions or to purchase and monitor alternative trap options. However, alternative measures may demonstrate cost savings over the long term, as pest management service levels could be reduced.

All changes to date have been done within existing contract terms, operating budgets, and work duties; however, as service levels for Facilities staff and pest management contractors return to normal (post-COVID-19), the costs of access prevention, attractant management, and trap monitoring and maintenance may require additional operating budget for pest management.

Communications and Civic Engagement Initiatives

Per Council direction, staff will implement a communications strategy in fall/winter 2021 with the aim of informing and educating residents and business owners about the harmful effects of rodenticides, promoting alternative pest management methods, and highlighting the City's commitment to the use of alternative pest management methods on City-owned property. The strategy will include a variety of communication channels and tactics such as information posted to the City's website, a brochure, Focus newsletter article, and social media campaign. As COVID-19 protocols allow, the strategy will be expanded to include outreach at future City-organized and community-organized events.

Council Strategic Plan Objectives

This project supports the following Council Strategic Plan Environmental Leadership Objectives:

- maintain and enhance Port Moody's natural and built assets while reducing the impact on our planet; and
- expand and enhance policies to guide environmental goals and sustainability programs.

Attachment(s)

1. Draft Corporate Policy – 11-5280-2021-01 – Rodenticide Use.

Report Author

Julie Pavey-Tomlinson
Director of Environment and Parks

Karen Devitt
Environmental Technician

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Rodenticide Use Policy.docx
Attachments:	- Attachment 1 - Draft Corporate Policy - 11-5280-2021-01 - Rodenticide Use.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Sep 8, 2021

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Robbie Nall for Julie Pavey-Tomlinson, Director of Environment and Parks - Aug 20, 2021 - 12:25 PM

Ron Higo, General Manager of Community Services - Aug 20, 2021 - 4:44 PM

Tracey Takahashi for Dorothy Shermer, Corporate Officer - Aug 20, 2021 - 5:19 PM

Valentin Tepes, Manager of Facilities - Aug 23, 2021 - 8:56 AM

Lindsay Todd for Rosemary Lodge, Manager of Communications and Engagement - Aug 25, 2021 - 3:01 PM

Paul Rockwood, General Manager of Finance and Technology - Sep 7, 2021 - 8:56 AM

Tim Savoie, City Manager - Sep 8, 2021 - 9:23 AM