



City of Cambridge

O-14.

IN CITY COUNCIL

May 7, 2001

COUNCILLOR BRAUDE
MAYOR GALLUCCIO
COUNCILLOR BORN
COUNCILLOR DAVIS
COUNCILLOR DECKER
VICE MAYOR MAHER
COUNCILLOR REEVES
COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN
COUNCILLOR TOOMEY

- WHEREAS: Children throughout Massachusetts are needlessly being exposed to arsenic, by playing on wooden playground and park equipment treated with the pesticide, Chromated Copper Arsenate (CCA);
- WHEREAS: Virtually all wooden playground and park equipment (e.g., picnic tables) in Massachusetts is injected with CCA, to kill insects and prevent rot;
- WHEREAS: CCA contains arsenic, a hazardous substance known to cause cancer, neurological problems, numbness, paralysis, and other human health problems including: nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea; decreased production of red and white blood cells; abnormal heart rhythm; blood vessel damage; and skin damage;
- WHEREAS: Studies conducted in Connecticut, Florida, California, and Maine show that significant amounts of arsenic leach from the wood and can end up on children's hands and in their mouths;
- WHEREAS: According to the Connecticut Department of Health, "It is important to prevent exposure because arsenic can cause cancer and other health effects" and "Young children are most at risk."
- WHEREAS: Several countries including Switzerland, Vietnam and Indonesia have banned CCA-treated wood and several other countries including Japan, Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Australia and New Zealand have significantly restricted the use of CCA- treated wood;
- WHEREAS: The state of Florida has declared a moratorium on the use of CCA-treated wood in state parks and is replacing it with arsenic-free alternatives;
- WHEREAS: There are a variety of arsenic-free alternatives to CCA-treated wood readily available throughout New England;

WHEREAS: Parents have no way of knowing that their children are being exposed to arsenic, because there is no warning sign on playground and park equipment containing arsenic;

WHEREAS: The state of Massachusetts does not require the sealing of playground and park equipment treated with arsenic in state parks, despite the fact that the Massachusetts Department of Public Health recommends resealing equipment every two years to “significantly reduce or eliminate exposures to arsenic residues from arsenic-treated wood.”

WHEREAS: Retailers such as Home Depot and Lowe’s sell billions of board feet of lumber annually to homeowners and are failing to warn consumers that they are purchasing wood containing arsenic, as required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; and

WHEREAS: Cambridge has already begun the process of replacing such pressure treated products; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the City Council urges the City Manager to develop a plan to:

- Conduct an immediate inventory of all City park equipment treated with CCA;
- Place an immediate moratorium on the purchase of wood treated with arsenic and instead purchase only arsenic-free alternatives;
- Replace all existing City playground and park equipment constructed with CCA-treated wood with arsenic-free alternatives on an expedited, specific timetable;
- Seal all existing City CCA-treated structures with a sealant every two years until such time that all structures have been replaced with arsenic-free alternatives;
- Put warning labels on all City playground and park equipment that contains arsenic;
- Ensure that arsenic-treated wood is not burned and is not used for wood chips or mulch; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the City Council calls on the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to:

- Stop purchasing wood treated with arsenic and to instead purchase only arsenic-free alternatives;
- Replace all existing state playground and park equipment constructed with CCA-treated wood with arsenic-free alternatives on an expedited, specific timetable;
- Seal existing state CCA-treated structures with a sealant every two years until such time that all structures have been replaced with arsenic-free alternatives;
- Put warning labels on all state playground and park equipment that contains arsenic;

- Develop a plan to completely phase out the use of arsenic- treated wood in the state;
- Provide funding for the conversion and sealing of playground and park equipment with arsenic;
- Ensure that arsenic-treated wood is not burned and is not used for wood chips or mulch; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the City Council urges Home Depot, Lowe's and other major building products retailers to stop selling arsenic-treated wood and instead offer arsenic-free alternatives.

In City Council May 7, 2001.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:- *D. Margaret Drury*

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

JB
AG

0-14

WHEREAS, children throughout Massachusetts are needlessly being exposed to arsenic, by playing on wooden playground and park equipment treated with the pesticide, Chromated Copper Arsenate (CCA);

WHEREAS, virtually all wooden playground and park equipment (e.g., picnic tables) in Massachusetts is injected with CCA, to kill insects and prevent rot;

WHEREAS, CCA contains arsenic, a hazardous substance known to cause cancer, neurological problems, numbness, paralysis, and other human health problems including: nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea; decreased production of red and white blood cells; abnormal heart rhythm; blood vessel damage; and skin damage;

WHEREAS, studies conducted in Connecticut, Florida, California, and Maine show that significant amounts of arsenic leach from the wood and can end up on children's hands and in their mouths;

WHEREAS, according to the Connecticut Department of Health, "It is important to prevent exposure because arsenic can cause cancer and other health effects" and "Young children are most at risk."

WHEREAS, several countries including Switzerland, Vietnam and Indonesia have banned CCA-treated wood and several other countries including Japan, Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Australia and New Zealand have significantly restricted the use of CCA-treated wood;

WHEREAS, the state of Florida has declared a moratorium on the use of CCA-treated wood in state parks and is replacing it with arsenic-free alternatives;

WHEREAS, there are a variety of arsenic-free alternatives to CCA-treated wood readily available throughout New England;

WHEREAS, parents have no way of knowing that their children are being exposed to arsenic, because there is no warning sign on playground and park equipment containing arsenic;

WHEREAS, the state of Massachusetts does not require the sealing of playground and park equipment treated with arsenic in state parks, despite the fact that the Massachusetts Department of Public Health recommends resealing equipment every two years to "significantly reduce or eliminate exposures to arsenic residues from arsenic-treated wood."

WHEREAS, retailers such as Home Depot and Lowe's sell billions of board feet of lumber annually to homeowners and are failing to warn consumers that they are purchasing wood containing arsenic, as required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council urges the City Manager to develop a plan to:

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- Replace all existing City playground and park equipment constructed with CCA-treated wood with arsenic-free alternatives on an expedited, specific timetable;
- Seal all existing City CCA-treated structures with a sealant every two years until such time that all structures have been replaced with arsenic-free alternatives;
- Put warning labels on all City playground and park equipment that contains arsenic;
- Ensure that arsenic-treated wood is not burned and is not used for wood chips or mulch.

FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council calls on the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to:

- Stop purchasing wood treated with arsenic and to instead purchase only arsenic-free alternatives;
- Replace all existing state playground and park equipment constructed with CCA-treated wood with arsenic-free alternatives on an expedited, specific timetable;
- Seal existing state CCA-treated structures with a sealant every two years until such time that all structures have been replaced with arsenic-free alternatives;
- Put warning labels on all state playground and park equipment that contains arsenic;
- Develop a plan to completely phase out the use of arsenic-treated wood in the state;
- Provide funding for the conversion and sealing of playground and park equipment with arsenic;
- Ensure that arsenic-treated wood is not burned and is not used for wood chips or mulch.

FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council urges Home Depot, Lowe's and other major building products retailers to stop selling arsenic-treated wood and instead offer arsenic-free alternatives.

WHEREAS: Retailers such as Home Depot and Lowe's sell billions of board feet of lumber annually to homeowners and are failing to warn consumers that they are purchasing wood containing arsenic, as required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; and

WHEREAS: Cambridge has already begun the process of replacing such pressure treated products; now therefore be it

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822-6459

W/A Cms has
already begun
the process of
~~replacing~~ replacing
such pressure treated
products

Message for

Margaret

11:55

5-2-01

Time

Date

WHEN YOU WERE OUT

M Jory Agate

Of _____

Area Code 617 Telephone No. 876-7772

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☒ Telephoned | ☐ Called to see you |
| ☒ Wants you to phone | ☐ Will call back |
| ☐ Will phone later | ☐ Returned your call |
| ☐ Wants to see you | |

Message: _____



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O-14.

IN CITY COUNCIL

May 7, 2001

COUNCILLOR BRAUDE
MAYOR GALLUCCIO

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Order #14

Urge Home Depot, Lowe's and other major building products retailers to stop selling arsenic-treated wood.

Councillor Braude and Mayor Galluccio

In City Council May 7, 2001

ORDER ADOPTED