



YREA Autumn 2019 News & Views

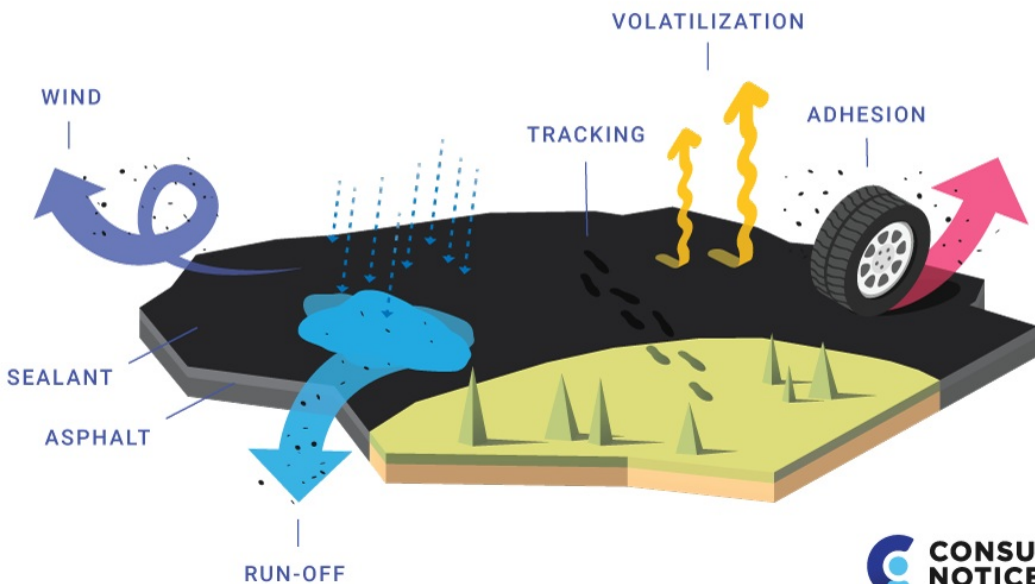


Time to ban coal tar sealants

In YREA's [spring 2018 news & views](#) we drew attention to the increase in paving of properties for more parking space and its contribution to the urban heat island (UHI). Exacerbating the UHI and polluting our environment unnecessarily is the re-tarring of driveways. These toxic sealants contain polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) that are known carcinogens. They increase the risk of a wide

range of cancers, making their way into homes via dust, where young children are the most vulnerable. Scientists estimate that PAHs released to the atmosphere each year from applications of coal tar driveway sealants are similar to or greater than annual PAH emissions from vehicles.

Coal Tar-Based Sealer Contamination



Contaminating our waterways, these chemicals adversely affect aquatic life and reduce the number of species able to survive. A US report found coal tar sealants to be responsible for half the hazardous chemicals in 40 lakes - spurring several states to ban their use. What of the clean up costs? What of the human health costs? Isn't it time municipalities in Ontario & Canada looked to similar bans?

Learn more about the health hazards and [dangers of coal tar sealants](#).

See what a [borough in Montreal](#) is doing to combat their UHI.

Richmond Hill Centre Secondary Plan

There were some good concepts at first public meeting, but for the most part featured far too much concrete & paving. YREA has repeated ad nauseam that there is nothing very SMART about centres that have one story of retail with a huge parking lot in the centre. Imagine instead, one story of retail with condos and apartments above, parking underground and replacing all that paving - a core of green space comprised of community gardens, well treed parks and playgrounds. Detroit has resurrected itself with their [agrihoods](#) which are springing up in many parts of the USA. It shows how creative, holistic alternatives to the concrete jungle are emerging. We need mixed use, compact communities with enough green space to support human and environmental health in developments everywhere. Just like image below.



plants serve a purpose.

A good year for bees & butterflies

Although [Texas](#) weather this year is getting credit for the upsurge of Monarch populations, it is heartening to see more local naturalized gardens and roadsides being left unmowed. This, along with the growing number of [Bee Cities](#) & [regenerative agriculture](#) have contributed to the increased number of pollinators spotted this year. Letting up on our compulsive need to dominate nature will further the pollinator cause. Spotting migratory Connecticut Warblers feasting on thistles and ragweed helps us to see first hand how even these much maligned

Organic lawn care that won't cost the Earth

If your lawn needs sprucing up, fall is a great time to do some overseeding. Check out YREA's downloadable [lawn care workshop](#) for organic lawn info. There are more than 18,000 lawsuits pending against Monsanto/Bayer due to cancer contracted from the use of Roundup. Montreal is looking to ban [Roundup/glyphosate](#) but until we can take these chemicals off the shelves of retailers, the unwitting continue to put themselves, their families, pets and the environment at risk. Please GO ORGANIC.

Plastic free troops on the ground

Enterprising people have been sewing reusable produce bags to sell or give out at farmers' markets. One such group is [Plastic Free Aurora](#). They have made some nifty bags from repurposed curtains and fabrics. [Bulk barn](#) and other retailers are selling organic cotton reusable bags and encouraging shoppers to bring their own containers. A very good beginning. See more [plastic reduction tips](#).



Enjoy autumn outdoors by registering for a few activities -

[TRCA](#) has a lineup of fun things to do in Toronto & the GTA. [York Region](#) has local nature outings right into December. If you plan on attending the [Forest Festival](#) Sept. 21, 2019 in Whitchurch - Stouffville, come by for a chat with YREA. We will be there!



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