



## MARYLAND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH NETWORK

### **House Bill HB275 – Pesticides – Use of Chlorpyrifos – Prohibition**

Committee: Environment and Transportation

February 13, 2019

**Position: SUPPORT**

The Maryland Environmental Health Network supports Bills that are consistent with scientific research in the fields of public and environmental health, and those which advance social justice and equity. Marylanders are more likely to achieve health and longevity when we live in environments of clean air and water, strong local economies, and meaningful community engagement in policy-making. As a statewide network, we draw on a diverse constituency of health advocates, educators, researchers, health care professionals, and community leaders to evaluate legislative proposals. For these reasons, we heartily support House Bill 275 banning the sale and use of chlorpyrifos in the state of Maryland to protect human health.

As you are aware, Chlorpyrifos was first introduced as a pesticide in 1965, to control pests such as aphids, armyworms, beetles and various types of mites. It is sold under many brand names including Lorsban, Andersons Golf Products, Eraser, Warhawk, Duraguard, Cheminova, Drexel, and Helena Chemicalecticide. After years of review, the EPA, with input in 2015 from its Science Advisory Panels, determined that the pesticide should be completely banned given that it was found to be unsafe at minimally detectable levels in foodstuffs. Because of a voluntary agreement with manufacturers of chlorpyrifos in 2000, the EPA banned the residential use of chlorpyrifos except for contained bait stations and put in place some restrictions for certain crops in agricultural settings after a plethora of research demonstrated harm to children, including prenatal exposure.

Chlorpyrifos belongs to a class of pesticides which can impede the nervous system after just a relatively short periods of low dose exposure.<sup>1234</sup> Other pesticides in this grouping have been linked to debilitating cognitive diseases like Parkinson's.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Eskenazi, B., Bradman, A., and Castorina, R. (1999). Exposures of Children to Organophosphate Pesticides and Their Potential Adverse Health Effects. *Environmental Health Perspectives*, 107, Supplement 3, 409-19.

<sup>2</sup> Davis, DL and Ahmed, AK. (1998). Exposures from Indoor Spraying of Chlorpyrifos Pose Greater Health Risks to Children than Currently Estimated. *Environmental Health Perspectives*, 106, 6, 299-301.

<sup>3</sup> Landrigan, PJ, et al. (1999). Pesticides and Inner-City Children: Exposures, Risks, and Prevention. *Environmental Health Perspectives*, 107, Supplement 3, 431-37.

<sup>4</sup> Gurunathan, S, et al. (1998). Accumulation of Chlorpyrifos on Residential Surfaces and Toys Accessible to Children. *Environmental Health Perspectives*, 106, 1, 9-16.

<sup>5</sup> Paul, KC et al. (2017). Organophosphate pesticides and PON1 L55M in Parkinson's disease progression. *Environment International*, 107, 75-81.

<sup>6</sup> Paul, KC et al. (2017). Organophosphate pesticides and PON1 L55M in Parkinson's disease progression. *Environment International*, 107, 75-81.

Any substantive review of potential harm must consider the dose, duration, and exposure in addition to personal traits, habits, and the presence or interaction of other chemicals. In reaction to research on health impacts the EPA was poised to execute a ban by March of 2017, until the current federal administration announced that it would continue to allow use, against cumulative evidence to the contrary.

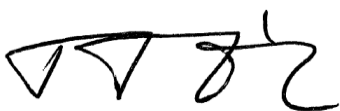
A chorus of public health and medical professionals have responded to the federal about-face on chlorpyrifos, which is summed up best by Dr. Elena Rios, President and CEO of the National Hispanic Medical Association, when she said, "EPA's refusal to ban chlorpyrifos is shameful. EPA eliminated this neurotoxic threat from household uses years ago, but not from agriculture to protect workers and their families. How much longer must we wait for EPA to do the right thing? This pesticide will continue to poison children and many others."<sup>7</sup>

Chlorpyrifos has been consistently included in a list of dangerous chemicals which have poisoned children and the agricultural workers who make up the workforce that drives national food production. The weight of the evidence is in favor of a prohibition in the State of Maryland.

As a matter of health and one of conscience the health impacts of chlorpyrifos use far outweigh any benefit Marylanders could derive from its use as an agricultural pesticide.

As a network we support policies guided by science, and in the face of federal uncertainty or disinterest, we are look to the wisdom of our state leadership to protect our health and that of future Marylanders. We applaud the leadership of this body for heeding the precautionary principle by taking the reins by banning needlessly harmful chemicals. We support a ban on chlorpyrifos and request a favorable report from this committee in furtherance of health protections for every Marylander.

Thank you for your consideration.



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<sup>7</sup> <https://earthjustice.org/features/reactions-to-the-epa-s-refusal-to-ban-chlorpyrifos>