

# Trump Administration Ends Long-standing Safeguards Protecting Kids from Dangerous Class of Pesticides

By [Center For Biological Diversity](#)

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*The Trump administration's Environmental Protection Agency [announced](#) today that it will end long-running safeguards meant to protect children from harmful pesticide ingredients used in bug sprays, pet shampoos and on fruits and vegetables.*

After receiving data from the pesticide industry – and ignoring contradictory evidence from peer-reviewed studies – the EPA says it will *triple* the amount of exposure to pyrethroids considered safe for children.

Studies have shown that repeated exposure to pyrethroid insecticides [can cause](#) learning deficiencies and neurodegenerative effects associated with Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases, among others.

Today's decision will make it easier for the pesticide industry to get new uses of these pesticides approved, including those previously off limits. For example, it could result in higher levels of the pesticides being used on fruits and vegetables and for flea treatment of pets.

**“Make no mistake, the Trump administration is selling out the health of America's children in order to boost the profits of pesticide companies,”** said **Nathan Donley**, a senior scientist with the Center for Biological Diversity. **“It's disgusting and absolutely repugnant.”**

One of the roles of the EPA is to establish what it considers to be safe levels for adult exposures to pesticides – and then it is supposed to set a more protective level for young children.

Under the Food Quality Protection Act, unless they have research supporting a less-restrictive level of protection, EPA officials must apply a standard safety factor of “10x,” meaning 10 times more protective for children than adults. The goal is to ensure that children – who are often at increased risk of harm from pesticides – are adequately protected.

For pyrethroids, the “10x” protections were replaced by “3x” protections in 2010. Under today's EPA proposal, the 3x level of protection will be eliminated. This means that the EPA has greenlighted exposing children under the age of 6 to three times more of the toxic

pesticide than is currently considered safe.

The EPA's decision to reduce the safeguard for children is based on studies and a model developed by a group called CAPHRA, a [working group](#) of pesticide companies that sell pyrethroids. That model estimated how quickly pyrethroids would be metabolized by adults and children under the age of 6. It concluded that there were no significant differences.

The industry group finding conflicts with [previous](#) peer-reviewed studies [showing](#) that children are more sensitive to pyrethroids than adults.

Epidemiological data has also [revealed](#) higher incidences of autism spectrum disorders and developmental delay among children whose mothers were living within 1.5 kilometers of sites of pyrethroid applications during the third trimester of pregnancy.

Pyrethroids are also highly toxic to honey bees and highly to very highly toxic to fish and aquatic invertebrates.

“Just as they did with the brain-damaging pesticide chlorpyrifos, Trump’s EPA is putting pesticide industry profits ahead of children’s health,” said **Lori Ann Burd**, environmental health director at the Center. “The fact that they released the decision to eliminate protections for kids from these neurotoxins less than two weeks after they decided to continue allowing use of chlorpyrifos makes clear exactly who they are interested in protecting.”

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