

# Trump's EPA Sued for Not Banning Brain-Damaging Pesticide

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*Chlorpyrifos producer Dow Chemical falsely claims the pesticide “protects.” It’s been poisoning the earth and people for nearly half a century.*

The Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) “for a healthy planet and safer world” said Dow is the main beneficiary of the EPA’s failure to ban chlorpyrifos.

The agency “said (it’s) OK to spray this brain-damaging chemical on the array of fruits, nuts, vegetables, and cereal crops that we and our children consume on a daily basis,” UCS explained, adding:

“With this decision, the EPA continues to sideline science, put public health at risk, and roll back public safeguards in favor of private interests.”

Chlorpyrifos is a significant health hazard to pregnant women, their fetuses, young children, farmworkers, and virtually everyone else eating the crops they harvest.

Friends of the Earth (FOE) denounced Trump’s ecocidal threat to people and the planet by gutting environmental protections — serving corporate polluters at the expense of public health.

FOE explained that

“(c)hlorpyrifos is a pesticide that was designed to attack the brain and nervous system — and studies show links to brain damage in children.”

[Earth Justice](#) attorney **Patti Goldman** said the

“EPA has repeatedly found chlorpyrifos unsafe, especially to children, yet time and time again it refuses to protect kids.”

“But Earth Justice and our clients won’t stand for this. The science and the law call for a chlorpyrifos ban. We are hopeful the courts will do the same for the sake of children and farmworkers.”

Chlorpyrifos is an organophosphate pesticide in use since 1965. It’s harmful to human health if touched, inhaled or otherwise ingested.

It blocks an enzyme that controls messages between nerve cells. When blocked, the nervous system can't send normal signals, causing it to malfunction — how it kills pests.

Exposure to small amounts of the pesticide can cause headaches, nausea, dizziness, abdominal muscle cramps, muscle twitching, tremors, weakness, loss of coordination, diarrhea, and blurred or darkened vision.

Heavy exposure resulting in severe poisoning can cause unconsciousness, loss of bladder and bowel control, convulsions, difficulty in breathing, and paralysis. It's not believed to be carcinogenic.

In 2000, the EPA banned chlorpyrifos for household use. In 2007, the Pesticide Action Network North America (PANNA) and Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) unsuccessfully petitioned the EPA to ban all uses of the pesticide.

In 2015, the Obama regime announced it would ban its use, based on scientific evidence and assessment of EPA scientists of its risk to human health. It didn't happen.

In March 2017, shortly after Trump took office, his EPA rejected a petition to ban the pesticide, falsely claiming the decision was based "sound science."

Hawaii banned chlorpyrifos. California announced it'll follow suit. New York approved legislation to ban it by December 2021. New Jersey and Maryland are considering statewide bans. The EU may ban it in 2020.

Earth Justice, health, and labor organizations are suing the EPA for not prohibiting its use.

National Hispanic Medical Association **Dr. Elena Rios** said

"scientific evidence (of chlorpyrifos' toxicity) has been clear for years," adding:

"Trump's EPA might want to dismiss the science and the law to protect corporate profit, but we are confident the courts won't stand for this."

According to Farmworker Justice attorney **Iris Figueroa**,

"Trump's EPA has yet again failed farmworkers and children when it refused to ban chlorpyrifos despite all the science that called for the opposite," adding:

"We hope the courts will take the lead and amend this grave mistake. Farmworkers, families, and developing children must be safe from chlorpyrifos and most importantly, from preventable illness."

Pesticide Action Network executive director **Kristin Schafer** expressed outrage over having to ask a court to force the EPA to do its job.

Established by Richard Nixon's July 1970 executive order, the EPA is mandated to protect human and environmental health. The agency's website states:

EPA works to ensure that:

“Americans have clean air, land and water...reduce environmental risks...based on the best available scientific information (so that) human health and the environment are” protected.

Most often the EPA protects the sales and profits of corporate polluters at the expense of public health and welfare.

Straightaway in office, Trump proved he’s no friend of the earth, letting Big Oil, Big Chemical, and other corporate polluters contaminate air, water, and soil unobstructed for profit.

According to the Center for Public Integrity, corporate polluters, oil and drug giants, insurers, tobacco companies, automakers, and tech giants bought Trump straightaway by donating millions of dollars to his inauguration.

Dow Chemical alone donated \$1 million in December 2016. Numerous other companies made six-figure or larger contributions to the event.

United Farm Workers of America national vice-president **Erik Nicholson** said

“(h)aving chlorpyrifos in our fields means that women and men who harvest our food are in harm’s way every day.”

“We will fight to right this wrong in the court of law and the court of public opinion until a ban is in place.”

Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) senior scientist **Miriam Rotkin-Ellman** stressed that the

“EPA knows this stuff is toxic. Its own scientists have been sounding the alarm for years now, but this administration is shameless in its push to keep it on the market.”

“We are urging the court to side with children over a powerful chemical industry with friends in high places. Chlorpyrifos does not belong on our food or in our fields.”

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