

February 16, 2015

To: Weed Subcommittee of the CCC IPM Advisory Committee
From: Susan JunFish, Parents for a Safer Environment

Re: Parents for a Safer Environment's Accountability Concerns regarding the CCC's weed control programs:

1. Several Decision Making Flow Charts have been created by each Department to explain why they use certain pesticides for a given pest problem. For example, one Flow Chart asserts that goat grazing costs much more than herbicide spraying, however it appears that the cost of grazing during the in-season are being compared with herbicide usage. Other case studies we are evaluating show that grazing is cost effective and even cheaper than herbicide usage. Also, the factor of risk to the environment and public health from herbicides are not even mentioned on the flow chart.

The IPM Advisory Committee has not yet reviewed several key data in the Flow Charts that justify using broadcast herbicide spraying along Right of Ways and rodenticide usage in open space. County staff believe that costs are prohibitive to replace a significant number of sites that are currently being treated with herbicide spraying with grazing and competitive planting and restoration of California natives.

The community believes that a close look at the premise or data provided in the flow chart would provide valuable information.

2. **High Risk Pesticides linked to chronic toxicity used per the FY 13-14 pesticide use reports of the Programs in Public Works Department (Grounds Dept, Right of Ways, and Special District) where people are likely to come into contact. Are these absolutely necessary?**

Grounds:

- a. Fusilade II Turf and Ornamental herbicide, 100-1008-AA, 24.5% Fluazifon-P-butyl used to drench turf to kill broadleaf weeds. This is a **Prop 65 developmental toxin.**
- b. Gallery 75, 62719-145-AA, 75% Isoxaben, **possible human carcinogen and a potential ground water contaminant.**
- c. Weevilcide Weevilcide rodenticide, 70506-13, 60% aluminum phosphide. Acutely toxic, **toxic air contaminant, Bad Actor.**
- c. JT Eaton Answer for control of Pocket Gophers, 56-57, .005% diphacinone. **Secondary poisoning risk.**
- d. JT Eaton Bait Block Rodenticide, 56-42, .005% diphacinone. **Secondary poisoning risk.**

Right of Ways:

- a. **Adjuvants that may be linked to Bee Colony Collapse Disorder** warrants investigation: First Choice No Foam A, Foam Fighter 72, Chem-Trol, Silicone Super Wetter.
 - b. Proclipse 65 WDG 228-434-11, **a possible human carcinogen and a hormone disruptor.**
 - c. **Telar XP 352-654-AA, a known human reproductive/developmental toxin Prop 65 listed chemical and Bad Actor** and a potential groundwater contaminant **Bad Actor.**
 - d. Gallery 75 Dry, 62719-145-AA, **a possible human carcinogen** and potential ground water contaminant.
 - e. Riverdale Vanquish, 228-397-AA. **known human reproductive/developmental toxin Bad Actor (TRI)** and a potential ground water contaminant.
3. **Use of paraquat for Aquatic Weed Control and other broad applied Bad Actor Pesticides by the Department of Agriculture.** We wish to see how much research has been conducted to investigate what other communities have tried for similar aquatic weeds, perhaps even in other countries such as the South American Sponge Plant. What methods have been tried and have there been successes from alternative methods to Bad Actor herbicides?

February 17, 2015

Public Comments to the Weed Sub-Committee of the County's IPM Advisory Committee

My name is Shirley Shelangoski and I am a retired Pleasant Hill resident. I have been attending nearly every meeting of the county's IPM program over the past three years and have learned much. I wish to address the three key *transparency* issues that Parents for a Safer Environment see as major voids in the weed control program of Contra Costa County.

First, what is the Committee's position in the priority or value of **each county pest control program tracking its pesticide usage and making that information available publicly?** This includes posting pesticide usage reports online. Each program is already submitting monthly usage reports to the State Department of Pesticide Regulation as required. Does the Committee believe in prioritizing access to this information to the public as promised? A copy can be uploaded simultaneously for the current IPM website. The Public Works Department has slipped backwards in transparency after adopting electronic data tracking via Maintstar. We applaud the move to a more efficient system, and we have urged the county to input data electronically as to not waste time transcribing the same data to many forms. However, the community finds it difficult to understand why usage data is not available distinctly for each roadside and the flood control program. Staff states that the data is tracked distinctly for staff but it is not readily available information for the public. I must then ask how can staff track pesticide usage for each program if the data is not readily available? We contacted Maintstar database technical staff who confirmed that separating pesticide usage data is routine using this database system, being a common querying or sorting tool in any database management system and the county only has to ask. Why isn't it being done?

Two, do you think that **implementing posting on the website and on site where the public has foot access** is important? This includes access roads in the flood control district used by the community as major walking trails and roadsides where people are known to walk, jog, ride bikes, or push strollers.

Disclose where and when pesticides are being applied, including along the 120 miles of roadside, 70 miles of creek and flood control channels/creeks, empty lots and in thousands of acres of open space. Include contact info and a scanned link to either the PANNA or Pesticide Research Institute database, provide contact info and name of pesticide, registration #, quantity planned for treatment, known half life and the target pest.

Post signs on location and on the county website 48 hours prior to applying pesticides+ and leave the signs up until their half-life (when 50% of the chemical breaks down).

Post original pesticide use reports within 2 weeks of application and post all spreadsheet calculations and graph the trend in usage on the website within 2 months so that progress of usage can be assessed for each pest program.

Three, Bad Actor Pesticides are still not properly identified by the county's IPM program. County staff missed all the US EPA Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) reproductive/developmental toxins as listed by the US EPA. The county annual progress report also never references the significant finding after Dr Kegley's presentation on what constitutes a Bad Actor. Staff acknowledged at that special meeting that for years, county had been omitting many acutely toxic and developmental/reproductive Bad Actors. However, staff did not disclose this finding in any written documentation. County needs to start identifying TRI developmental/reproductive Bad Actor pesticides as referenced by Pesticide Action Network, North America (PANNA). I hope you can support one of the toxicologists Patti or Cheng to review this issue since it's their area of expertise and report back to the full Committee at the March 4th IPM full meeting.

Shirley Shelangoski
Pleasant Hill Resident

Dear Tanya, Michael, Cece, and Chad:

February 20, 2015

I am writing this letter because I was not able to provide input during the Weed Subcommittee meeting Tuesday, 2-17-2015 due to time constraints. The process and resulting conclusion of the first meeting on Tuesday is what I am questioning. How could staff advise the subcommittee to work on the weed issues concerning the *Grounds Program* of the Public Works Department?

Last year, I attended the Cost Subcommittee meetings, with all four of you as members, although I believe Chad came in mid-way in the year. At one of the meetings, I distinctly remember Tanya's response "there are so little herbicides used by the Grounds Program, so it would be a waste of time to address costs of using them" when someone brought up that the Subcommittee should review this information. She wanted to maintain focus on water consumption and other landscaping issues that did not pertain to pesticide usage. I remember clearly that Michael Kent asked, "But isn't that what this Committee is suppose to do, address cost issues of pesticides?" No one challenged this further and the Subcommittee produced no recommendations regarding any pesticide application program nor mentioned pesticide costs nor that of alternative methods in its final report.

At Tuesday's meeting, I was frankly surprised when everyone agreed that the Subcommittee should address the Grounds program pesticide spraying. This was after Tanya confirmed that the largest amount of pesticides were applied to Roadside and Flood Control District Programs. The community has been providing you with photos of children walking along the Flood Control Channel trails where pesticides are applied and expressing concern for years about exposure to the community in these areas. I am confused as to why you all agreed that that there were no significant herbicides used in the Ground program last year and now you want to prioritize Grounds program weed problems this year. Weed problems have not changed much from last year to this year.

Several members, both staff and community volunteers, asked which programs were most likely to expose the public and perhaps the environment to pesticides. It was very apparent that the Subcommittee members did not have the information needed to determine which programs used the most pesticides, the Bad Actors or the most dangerous pesticides where exposure may occur. These questions came up repeatedly and finally it was agreed that the staff should present the information at the next meeting in March. However, Tanya advised that a decision of what to address should be done that day since waiting for information regarding the pesticide usage in each program would stall the process. So everyone followed the suggestion to evaluate the Grounds Program's weed problems without questioning why it was not worthy to address last year due to insignificant use of pesticides (per Tanya).

It makes sense that Tanya, the IPM Coordinator, can provide the information of how much pesticides are being applied for each program, how much of the Bad Actors are also being used and how, so that with the feedback from staff, the Subcommittee can

decide which program to choose to evaluate **innovative technologies, posting and transparency issues, cost issues, and a decision making process** as agreed upon at the January 14th IPM Advisory Committee meeting. Couldn't some of this information be sent to the Subcommittee in advance so members can review it and look up information on their own if they wished before the next meeting?

Parents for a Safer Environment members provided verbal and public comments with issues that the committee can address and these were disregarded. When Susan JunFish asked Tanya to provide input as to what pest problems were requiring the largest use of pesticides or the most toxic pesticides in the Grounds Program, Tanya responded that she could not say without looking at the data. However less than 30 minutes later when someone asked her about this, Tanya said that she has "spent a tremendous amount of time going over the herbicide usage of grounds over the past years." So if Tanya looked so carefully at herbicide usage of Grounds, then why was the information not provided at this subcommittee meeting on Tuesday?

Michael Kent's statement that transparency issues regarding posting and tracking of pesticides "cannot be discussed at the Subcommittee meeting for Weeds" does not make sense to me. There are specific transparency issues pertaining to the weed control programs that do not pertain to the rodent control and other pest programs. Posting before spraying for weeds is still not being done where children and pets can be exposed; tracking of pesticides for each weed control program in the flood control district and the roadsides where people use for walking, biking, jogging, stroller rolling are not being posted nor are the pesticide usage provided to the community upon request as distinct programs. Without tracking quantity, location, and when applications are made, it is difficult for the departments or the community to assess progress and consider least toxic options. Michael Sullivan, a community member, also asked that posting and tracking of pesticides as well as Bad Actors be properly identified and no one responded about these transparency issues.

In the past, I have also witnessed pesticide spraying around the perimeter of the Hazardous Materials County building at Pacheco Blvd without posting anywhere in sight. Both my own experience, photos of children walking along flood control district "truck access roads" that are used as paths connected directly from sidewalks, and statements/documents provided by county staff make it clear that there is no consistent posting where people have access by foot or recreate.

I don't think it's a very complicated task to address posting with one format and guideline. I do have a problem with avoidance of the crucial issues that will work to protect people, pets, wildlife and the environment. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Shirley Shelangoski, PfSE