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GreenLatinos Joins in Appealing EPA's Refusal To Ban Dangerous Pesticide

Chlorpyrifos is linked to long-term damage in children's developing brains

Washington D.C. - GreenLatinos joined in filing [administrative appeal](#) to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, urging the federal government to ban chlorpyrifos (CPF), a widely used agricultural pesticide that has been linked to reduced IQ, loss of working memory and attention deficit disorder in children. Earthjustice filed the appeal on behalf of a dozen health, labor and civil rights organizations, including GreenLatinos

The Attorneys General of New York, California, Washington, Massachusetts, Maine, Maryland and Vermont filed their own appeal calling for a ban also Monday. It is now up to EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt to decide the appeal.

In March, the EPA [refused to ban chlorpyrifos](#) arguing the science is “[unresolved](#)” and that it would study the issue until 2022. The agency took this position even though EPA found CPF unsafe in drinking water in 2014 and 2015. And even though [in late 2016](#) EPA concluded there is no safe level of chlorpyrifos exposure in food or drinking water, and that workers are exposed to unsafe levels of the pesticide even with maximum protective controls. In 2016, the EPA also confirmed CPF is found at unsafe levels in the air at schools and homes adjacent to agricultural areas.

Chlorpyrifos was banned from residential use 17 years ago. Yet this organophosphate—which comes from the [same chemical family](#) as sarin nerve gas— is still widely used on strawberries, apples, citrus, and more. It is linked to long-term damage to children's developing brains and nervous systems at low levels of exposure during pregnancy and early childhood. It is also acutely toxic.

While families across the country are at risk, farmworkers and children in Latino communities in rural areas face disproportionate exposure. Just last month, in the most recent large case of exposure, it was reported that more than 50 farmworkers picking cabbage outside of Bakersfield, California, were likely exposed to CPF that may have drifted from a nearby [field](#). At least a dozen people suffered vomiting and nausea and were rushed to the hospital.

GreenLatinos will hold the EPA and Scott Pruitt accountable for the public health risk that they are perpetuating in our communities. Based on many scientific studies, the EPA has proven that there is no safe use of chlorpyrifos. Even the lowest levels of exposure to CPF can cause irreparable harm and damage to the developing brains of children. This is placing our farmworkers, their families and anyone else in contact with the neurotoxic chemical on the frontlines of disproportionate impact. We are unable to sit back and watch a decision be made that completely neglects the health of our families. We envision a world in which all impacted communities are treated fairly, justice and equitably with respect to their health and environmental concerns.

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GreenLatinos is a national non-profit organization that convenes a broad coalition of Latino leaders committed to addressing national, regional and local environmental, natural resources and conservation issues that significantly affect the health and welfare of the Latino community in the United States. For more information visit www.greenlatinos.org.