



BECOME A GLYPHOSATE FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Healthy Schools Act – Go a step further for the sake of your school district's students

Dear Integrated Pest Management Coordinator,

A Voice for Choice Advocacy has partnered with a number of different organizations to aid schools in complying with California's Healthy Schools Act and taking it a further step to ensure the children of California have the least toxic burden when it comes to pest management in their schools. **We ask you to stop using Glyphosate containing products for pest management completely by 2020, and remove Glyphosate school-wide by 2022.**

Your school district already has to comply with the Healthy Schools Act, which states that the use of the least toxic integrated pest management practices are the preferred method of managing pests in an effort to reduce toxic exposure to students at public school sites.¹

While we know schools are trying to use the least toxic pest management practices, our concern at this time is the use of Glyphosate containing products used to control weeds on school grounds. Over 90% of California schools use glyphosate containing products to treat weeds during the school year. Products which contain glyphosate include, but are not limited to, Ranger, Razor, Rodeo, Aquamaster, and a variety of Roundup products. In 2015, the International Agency on Cancer stated "There is strong evidence that exposure to glyphosate or glyphosate-based formulations is genotoxic based on studies in humans in vitro and studies in experimental animals."² In 2017, Glyphosate was added to Prop 65, which identifies chemicals known to cause cancer, birth defects, or other reproductive harm, because of its carcinogenic properties.³ While glyphosate is not on the HSA/EPA prohibited list, its addition to Prop 65 shows that the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) understands its toxicity. There have been three successful lawsuits so far against Monsanto (Bayer) awarding hundreds of millions of dollars in health damages due to its glyphosate herbicide, Roundup, causing cancer. The first award was to a school groundskeeper who worked spraying glyphosate for a school district in Northern California.⁴ Glyphosate has not only been found to be cancer causing, but has also been linked to heart disease, autism, Alzheimer's disease, obesity, diabetes, cataracts, celiac disease, liver disease, lung disease, asthma, deterioration of joints, acid reflux and other digestive disorders, birth defects, infertility, sterility, skin disorders, scleroderma and more.

The main consequences of glyphosate are twofold: it disrupts important cellular functions in plants, humans and other mammals, and it destroys important compounds in soil that are needed for human health. Children are especially vulnerable to the health effects of pesticide exposure because of their age-appropriate hand-to-mouth behaviors, their closer proximity to the ground, and their higher breathing rates. Pesticides also negatively affect cognitive health and hormone development in adolescents.

¹ https://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/pestmgt/pubs/hsa_factsheet.pdf
https://apps.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm/school_ipm_law/hsa_faq.pdf

² <https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanonc/article/PIIS1470-2045%2815%2970134-8/fulltext>

³ <https://oehha.ca.gov/proposition-65/chemicals/glyphosate>

⁴ <https://www.baumhedlundlaw.com/pdf/monsanto-documents/johnson-trial/Johnson-vs-Monsanto-Verdict-Form.pdf>



There are easy non-toxic alternatives to weed management, which in the long run are more cost effective than using glyphosate containing products. Having healthy soil, using at least two native turfgrasses, proper watering, and a sensible landscape design can all help your lawn ecosystem develop a natural resistance to weeds.

Many school districts across California, and recently the University of California⁵, have stopped spraying glyphosate and successfully implemented non toxic alternatives. We live in an ever busy world, which is why we, and the organizations we have teamed up with, would like to partner with you to ensure that your school district finds an alternative non-toxic weed management plan to eliminate the use of Glyphosate by December 2020. This requires rethinking not only the products which should be replaced by non-toxic ones, rather than just replacing them with another chemical product, but also changing weed prevention practices to ensure the conditions to prevent problems in the first place. Specifically, Beyond Pesticides (www.beyondpesticides.org) and Herbicide Free Campus (www.herbicidefreecampus.org/) have aided numerous schools and cities shift to least-toxic management methods, specifically not using Glyphosate.

Included with this letter are the following:

- Requested Resolution to be signed by your school board committing to becoming Glyphosate free in your pest management by 2020.
- List of organizations supporting this project and urging your school district to become glyphosate-free.
- Beyond Pesticide's Maintaining Sustainable Lawns and Landscapes which shows how lawns can be pesticide free (<https://www.beyondpesticides.org/assets/media/documents/lawn/documents/MaintainingSustainableLawns.pdf>)
- Useful links to documents and websites to assist with making the conversion to be a Glyphosate Free School.

Please join us in putting your school district's students' health first and to stop using glyphosate containing products. Our goal is to have 100% of schools in California sign the resolution by July 2020, with 100% of schools becoming Glyphosate Free in their pest management by December 2020, and completely Glyphosate Free by 2022.

Please respond to this letter indicating when the resolution will be put on your school board's agenda.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

Christina Hildebrand
President, A Voice for Choice Advocacy, Inc.
christina@avoiceforchoiceadvocacy.org

Giving issues a voice, A Voice for Choice Advocacy advocates for people's rights to be fully informed about the composition, quality, and short- and long-term health effects of all products that go into people's bodies, such as food, water, air, pharmaceuticals and cosmetics.

⁵ https://davisite.typepad.com/files/napolitano_051419-1.pdf



Organizations Supporting Glyphosate Free Schools





**Useful links to documents and websites to assist
with making the conversion to be a Glyphosate Free School**

Health Schools Act requirements:

https://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/pestmgt/pubs/hsa_factsheet.pdf

Glyphosate Free Schools:

www.glyphosatefreeschools.com

Beyond Pesticides Children and Schools Overview:

<https://beyondpesticides.org/programs/children-and-schools/overview>

Beyond Pesticides Organizational Resources:

<https://beyondpesticides.org/programs/children-and-schools/resources/organizations>

Alternative weed management:

The easiest way to identify safer materials is to start by identifying the problem. Find information on least-toxic solutions (including prevention) tied to specific pests at the Beyond Pesticides [ManageSafe](#) page.

Pesticide Free School Success Stories:

<https://beyondpesticides.org/assets/media/documents/schools/publications/IPMSuccessStories.pdf>

The Grass Is Greener at Harvard (NY Times Article):

And also cheaper - <https://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/24/garden/24garden.html>