

Glyphosate Talking Points

San Diego County

Product Safety

Glyphosate-Based Herbicides Have a Long History of Safe Use

- More than 40 years on the market.
- When it comes to safety assessments, no other pesticide has been more extensively tested than glyphosate with more than 800 safety studies submitted to regulators.
- The US EPA recently reaffirmed there are [no risks](#) to public health when glyphosate is used properly.
- No regulatory agency in the world has concluded that glyphosate is a carcinogen. Glyphosate has been approved for use in 160 countries.
- The [2018 Agricultural Health Study](#), the largest epidemiologic study on glyphosate-based herbicides supported by the U.S. National Cancer Institute, followed over 50,000 licensed pesticide applicators for 20 years (1997-2017), found no associations between glyphosate use and cancer risk.
- Glyphosate works by inhibiting a specific enzyme that plants need to grow.

International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) Classification of Glyphosate

- IARC's determination is an outlier inconsistent with the overwhelming consensus of regulatory authorities and other experts around the world
- Classification does not reflect real world exposure levels which are essential to assess any risk to the human population.
- Based on a limited and selective consideration of prior scientific research. They did no original research themselves.
- The glyphosate litigation is based largely on IARC's opinion. After IARC's opinion was announced in 2015, U.S. trial lawyers started running advertising campaigns to recruit people for lawsuits against Monsanto.
- Since IARC's 2015 classification was made, glyphosate has undergone additional review by independent scientific bodies in Japan, the EU, Germany, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Korea, Brazil, as well as the US EPA, none of whom have determined it to be a carcinogen.

Glyphosate's Role in Effective Integrated Vegetation Management

Fire Prevention

- Glyphosate enables vegetation control along roadsides, county-owned property and waterways that assists with fire prevention and the protection of adjacent private property.
- Poor vegetation control is being cited by home owners who are [suing](#) the City of Redding, CA over losses suffered in the 2018 Carr Fire.

Flood Protection/Riparian Habitat Restoration

- Keeping flood channels and natural water courses free of invasive species such as Giant Reed (*Arundo donax*) helps to combat floods, re-charge groundwater, prevent fires, and restore habitat for native plant species.
- The [Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego County](#) and [the Mission Resource Conservation Districts](#) are involved with *Arundo donax* eradication projects in the County.
- Glyphosate is used to keep flood control levees free of weeds. Excessive vegetation creates habitat for burrowing animals which in turn can compromise the structural integrity of levees.
- Glyphosate is a key tool in combating noxious and or invasive weeds as highlighted by the California Invasive Plant Council's [Glyphosate Policy](#).

Maintenance of Infrastructure and Roadways

- When not effectively controlled, weeds create cracks and damage hardscapes, roadways, structures and site amenities. The use of glyphosate extends the life of these valuable community assets.

Public Safety

- Glyphosate helps keep sidewalks, trails, courts, etc. free of weeds which create surface cracks and uneven surfaces that could result in tripping hazards.
- The use of glyphosate facilitates the control of brush along roadsides that can obscure signs, intersections, and general lines of sight.

Worker Safety Challenges and Costs of Alternatives

- A decision to stop spraying glyphosate-based herbicides will increase San Diego County's costs due to the need to use labor for mowing or hand weeding. Mowing is not only expensive, but also increases the potential for worker injury from equipment and exposure to traffic and driver injury from thrown rocks.
- Many herbicide alternatives are not as effective as glyphosate thereby requiring multiple applications at a greater overall cost. Some herbicide alternatives, such as acetic acid, can expose applicators to painful skin burns and severe eye damage.

Impacts to Private Property

- If San Diego County does not implement proper weed management in their responsibility areas, those lands increase fire risk, noxious weed movement, etc. that in turn require additional vegetation management practices on private lands.