



Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments

Bringing Science and Passion to the Environmental Health Movement

May 27, 2021

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Today, CA-ANHE is stands in solidarity with farmworkers and their communities and along with [Californians for Pesticide Reform](#), and other groups around the state, [calling on the Department of Pesticide Regulation](#) to require County Agricultural Commissioners to publicly post online all Notices of Intent to use pesticides that are classified as Restricted Materials: the most hazardous and drift-prone pesticides which can only be applied by licensed professionals with a permit.

It is the birthday of Rachel Carson who drew attention to the dangers of pesticides over 60 years ago when she published Silent Spring. Pesticides are present in farmworker communities in even larger amounts now exposing workers, families, and community members. More than 200 million pounds of agricultural pesticides are used each year on California fields which are linked to both acute and chronic illness including asthma and other respiratory ailments, cancer, learning disabilities, birth defects, reproductive and other disorders. Pesticides are inhaled and absorbed through the skin. Children and pregnant women are at greatest risk. Farmer worker communities are predominantly Latinx. This is an Environmental Justice issue of great magnitude.

Farmers are required to notify the County Ag Commissioner prior to spraying these highly toxic chemicals which drift well into community neighborhoods. The communities need to know where when and what is being applied (sprayed) prior to application so they can take protective actions for their families. Nurses, nurse practitioners and all health providers we need to know where, what is sprayed to help inform diagnoses of symptoms that individuals present with acutely and over time.

This is a shameful situation; we allow agribusiness to use known harmful toxic chemicals on food which exposes the workers planting the food and state policy is to not notify these workers in advance. ANHE supports requiring of "notice of intent" to spray in all of California's counties.

Bianca Lopez a community member from Modesto sums the issue up in her comment: "if our agricultural system continues to depend on vast inputs of pesticides, the state must do better at letting people know what's planned on our farms and fields. Many of these chemicals are highly toxic and yet they continue to be sprayed by the millions of pounds on our food crops, right next to homes and schools, endangering residents and workers alike. The lack of transparency needs to end. We want to know where and when those 200 million pounds are being sprayed before it happens, not years after."

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