

Weed killer ingredient going on California list as cancerous

By **Scott Smith**
Associated Press

FRESNO, Calif. (AP) — Regulators in California took a pivotal step on Monday toward becoming the first state to require the popular weed killer Roundup to come with a label warning that it's known to cause cancer.

Officials announced that starting July 7 the weed killer's main ingredient, glyphosate, will appear on a list California keeps of potentially cancerous chemicals. A year later, the listing could come with warning labels on the product, officials said.

However, it's not certain whether Roundup will ultimately get a warning label.

Monsanto, the chemical's maker, has filed an appeal after losing in court to block the labeling, arguing that Roundup doesn't cause cancer and that the labels will harm the company's business.

State health regulators must also decide if there's a high enough amount of the chemical in Roundup to pose a risk to human health. State officials received more than 1,300 public comments.

"We can't say for sure," said Sam Delson, a spokesman for California's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment. "We're reviewing those comments."

Glyphosate has no color or smell. Monsanto introduced it in 1974 as an effective way of killing weeds while leaving crops and plants intact.

It's sold in more than 160 countries, and farmers use it on 250 types of crops in California, the nation's leading farming state.

Attorney Michael Baum, who represents more than 300 people who claim a loved one became sick or died from exposure to Roundup, says the fight to protect Californians is not over.

He said that the state's failure to set the proper risk level would undermine protections California put in place by listing harmful chemicals.

Scott Partridge, Monsanto's vice president of global strategy, said in a statement that glyphosate does not cause cancer and there's no need to list it as harmful in California.

"This is not the final step in the process," Partridge said. "We will continue to aggressively challenge this improper decision."

CODE ...

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Part of Dillinger's duties, and the most confrontational, consists of personally approaching loiterers and telling them to leave. "People feel the wrath when you tell them to move along and so they're a little disgruntled but there's no real shouting matches or anything," Dillinger said. However, he noted that there was a singular instance in the line of duty where he felt physically in danger after confronting an offender.

Dillinger is actively looking for volunteers to assist him in enforcing codes but so far has met with little success. "It's hard to go out and tell somebody to move along," Dillinger said, theorizing why he is having trouble finding a code enforcement volunteer to assist him, "Not everybody is comfortable in asking people to move along." Although someone who is willing to confront people in violation of city code would be most helpful, there are other duties that can be performed and anyone who is interested can pick up an application at City Hall. When turned in, they will go directly to Dillinger's hands for consideration.

Though his aim is to fulfill his campaign promise, he doesn't limit himself to only enforcing codes related to vagrancy and brings his focus to other code issues around the area. Currently, the city council is in the process of enforcing better business signage around town, enforcing weed abatement and addressing graffiti with a new ordinance that has recently passed.

Although the city has an ordinance that allows anyone in possession of graffiti tools to be penalized, it has thus far been ineffective. As such, the new ordinance allows the city to force business owners into dealing with graffiti. The businesses are first contacted by a letter of notification. On the topic, Dillinger noted that the Illinois Valley High School's principal is interested in creating a program for students to assist business owners in removing graffiti but, as it stands now, it hasn't been acted upon to any serious degree.

Additionally, the high school might also be willing to help "spruce up" the regular use banners commonly strung across the Redwood Highway in Cave Junction.

With regard to weed abatement, the city sends out letters every year to little effect because none of the penalties are enforced. This year, according to Dillinger, the council is planning on changing that by demanding that offenders comply or respond within 10 days or suffer the enforced consequences. Many of those who are notified are habitual and careless offenders who violate the code every year. The main goal of enforcing weed abatement, other than to beautify is to tackle the fire hazard that it causes before the fire department is forced to get involved.

"When you have a town that's just full of weeds and empty signs and things like that it's just uninviting," Dillinger said, hoping to make the town more appealing to tourists, outsiders and citizens alike.

"Slowly but surely I think that things are happening—nothing's going to be overnight."

Fire board shenanigans create a stir

Jason McMillen
IVN Contributing Writer

Carol Dickson, former IVFD board member, parted from the council with harsh words during her last meeting, June 8, after weeks of controversy regarding the actions of President Ron Humphres. "I would like to caution the board and new member coming on that you better have some back bone and you better stand up for what's right and you better vote your conscious because you can be sued personally, the board can be sued and this is not a good ol' boys system," Dickson said.

The controversy came to a head about two months ago when Dickson reportedly received a phone call from

the district's Fire Chief, Dennis Hoke. Dickson was told that Humphres and the former employee, who was leaving on disability, spoke with the chief about a policy that would give all employees who left in good standing and worked for 10 years or more in the department, lifetime medical coverage. Hoke did not agree that lifetime medical was practical and Dickson agreed, firmly rejecting the idea.

Soon after being told about the discussion, Dickson found that Humphres had signed a memorandum of understanding which granted all long-term employees six months of medical coverage without consulting the rest of the board. Allegedly it was time enough for the employee to start receiving disability

with Dickson going so far as to say that the memorandum was created specifically for them and was never intended to be permanent as it would be repealed quickly in the future before anyone else could benefit from it.

Dickson, outraged, said that Humphres didn't have the authority to sign such a memorandum without bringing the proposition to the board.

After debating over it, Hoke received a call from a lawyer's office informing him that there was a bill to be paid at a rate of around \$200 an hour. Since the special district has their lawyer fees compensated, if they go to their assigned lawyer, it was deemed unusual.

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(Photo by Dan Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

Graffiti (above) on the wall of C.J. Post Office June 26 is becoming all too common in Cave Junction.

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