

## Glyphosate herbicide cancer fears could turn electricity, microwaves into viable weed-killing tools

Concern about glyphosate – the world’s most widely-used weedkiller – has been growing since 2015, when the World Health Organization’s International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) [said it was probably carcinogenic](#).

**[Editor’s note: Most experts say glyphosate probably [doesn’t cause cancer](#).]**

...

In their efforts to minimize pesticide use, some are refining abandoned weed-killing technologies of the past – such as zapping weeds with electricity.

“The first patents were in the 19th Century: there were trials on the railroad but they never succeeded because the energy was hard to control,” says Karsten Vialon of precision farming supplier AGXtend.

...

But, he says, as weeds have developed resistance to herbicides, and environmental and health concerns have come to the fore, electricity has become a viable alternative once again.

The XPower system .... kills plants in less than a second by pulsing electricity through them....” We can destroy any plant ....” [Vialon said].

Meanwhile, a new device created by the University of Melbourne and spun off into a company called Growave is undergoing trials in Victoria.

Just as a domestic microwave warms food, so the microwaves emitted by the Growave system heat up the water molecules within weeds and cause them to vibrate. This ruptures the cell walls, killing the plant.

[Read the original post](#)