

Farmworkers' group, nine states urge federal court to ban widely used insecticide chlorpyrifos

Farmworker advocates squared off with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency before a remote Ninth Circuit panel [July 28], arguing the agency's persistent allowance of the use of pesticide chlorpyrifos is illegal and hurting the neurological development of children.

The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) joined forces with nine states including New York to request the Ninth Circuit to order the EPA to revoke all tolerances of chlorpyrifos — essentially a ban of one of the most widely used pesticides in the United States.

"When the EPA denies a petition to revoke tolerances, it must do so only when it finds the pesticide safe," said Patti Goldman, an Earthjustice attorney, arguing on behalf of LULAC. "The findings here show that exposure, even at very low levels, causes permanent brain damage in children."

[The] hearing represented yet another chapter in an extensive saga of the EPA's allowance of the use of chlorpyrifos, which scientific studies have linked to developmental issues in children.

LULAC has been in court multiple times in the past few years, mostly in an attempt to get the EPA to actually rule one way or the other on chlorpyrifos.

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The Ninth Circuit ruled in the group's favor in April 2019, prompting the EPA to make a final decision on the safety of the insecticide. In July 2019, EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler declined to ban the pesticide

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