
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
Senator Anna Caballero, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: AB 1603 **Hearing Date:** 6/30/26
Author: Schultz
Version: 6/10/26
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: Reichel Everhart

Subject: Perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS): Department of Pesticide Regulation

SUMMARY:

This bill prohibits registration of new pesticides that contain perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), beginning January 1, 2027. This bill also requires the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) to post and annually update on its website a list of all registered pesticides containing PFAS pesticide ingredients, distribute the list annually to the county agricultural commissioners, and identify them within the annual Pesticide Use Report (PUR).

BACKGROUND AND EXISTING LAW:

Existing federal law:

- 1) Provides for federal regulation of pesticide distribution, sale, and use under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA); requires that all pesticides distributed or sold in the United States be registered (licensed) by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA); and requires, before U.S. EPA registers a pesticide under FIFRA, the applicant to show that using the pesticide according to specifications will not generally cause unreasonable adverse effects on the environment (*7 United States Code (USC) Sections 136 et seq.*).
- 2) Defines, under FIFRA, “unreasonable adverse effects on the environment” to mean the following:
 - a) Any unreasonable risk to man or the environment, taking into account the economic, social, and environmental costs and benefits of the use of any pesticide; or
 - b) A human dietary risk from residues that result from a use of a pesticide in or on any food, as defined (*7 USC Section 136(bb)*).

Existing state law:

- 1) Authorizes the state's pesticide regulatory program and mandates the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) to provide for the proper, safe, and efficient use of pesticides essential for the production of food and fiber, for the protection of public health and safety, for the protection of the environment from environmentally harmful pesticides, and to assure agricultural and pest control workers safe working conditions where pesticides are present by prohibiting, regulating, or otherwise ensuring proper stewardship of those pesticides (*Food and Agricultural Code Section 11401 et seq.*).
- 2) Requires the Director of DPR to endeavor to eliminate from use in the state any pesticide that endangers the agricultural or nonagricultural environment, is not beneficial for the purposes for which it is sold, or is misrepresented (*Food and Agricultural Code, Section 12824*).
- 3) Authorizes the Director of DPR, after a hearing, to cancel the registration of, or refuse to register, any pesticide that fulfills these, among other, criteria:
 - a. That has demonstrated serious uncontrollable adverse effects either within or outside the agricultural environment.
 - b. The use of which is of less public value or greater detriment to the environment than the benefit received by its use.
 - c. For which there is a reasonable, effective, and practicable alternate material or procedure that is demonstrably less destructive to the environment; or
 - d. That, when properly used, is detrimental to vegetation, except weeds, to domestic animals, or to the public health and safety (*Food and Agricultural Code Section 12825*).
- 4) Requires a registrant to submit scientific evidence to DPR if during or after the registration of a pesticide the registrant has factual or scientific evidence of any adverse effect or risk of the pesticide to human health, livestock, crops, or the environment that has not been previously submitted (*Food and Agricultural Code Section 12825.5*).
- 5) Requires the director to develop an orderly program for the continuous evaluation of all pesticides registered (*Food and Agricultural Code Section 12824*).
- 6) Prohibits a person from using or possessing a pesticide designated as a restricted material for any agricultural use except under a written permit of the

County Agricultural Commissioner (CAC) (*Food and Agricultural Code Section 14006.5*).

- 7) Authorizes the director of DPR to, at any time, evaluate a registered pesticide to carry out specified statutory requirements; requires the director to investigate all reported episodes and information received by the director that indicate a pesticide may have caused, or is likely to cause, a significant adverse impact, or that indicate there is an alternative that may significantly reduce an adverse environmental impact; and requires, if the director finds from the investigation that a significant adverse impact has occurred or is likely to occur or that such an alternative is available, the pesticide involved to be reevaluated (*3 California Code of Regulations, Section 6220*).

PROPOSED LAW:

This bill, as amended on 6/24/26 in the Senate Committee on Environmental Quality:

- 1) Would prohibit the registration of new pesticides that contain PFAS pesticide ingredients unless an application was received by the department no later than January 1, 2027.
- 2) Would require DPR to identify and list pesticides that contain PFAS in the Pesticide Use Reporting database, list all pesticides that contain PFAS, provide the list to county agricultural commissioners, and publicly post the list on their website.
- 3) Would define “perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances” to mean a class of fluorinated organic chemicals containing at least one fully fluorinated carbon atom.
- 4) Would define “PFAS pesticide ingredients” to mean PFAS that are intentionally added to a pesticides active, adjuvant, or inert ingredients.

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: According to the author:

“PFAS are a large class of chemicals that are used in many consumer products and industries because they are long-lasting and waterproof. However, they are also associated with numerous serious human health effects and build up in water, soil, and our bodies – they don’t go away.

Because of PFAS' very problematic properties, the California legislature has acted in recent years to prohibit their use in many consumer products, such as textiles, food packaging, and cosmetics. And state officials have limited PFAS use in carpets and upholstery and are about to regulate PFAS in cleaners. All prior state legislation banning PFAS in products bans PFAS as a class. There are no "good" PFAS when it comes to impacts on human health and our environment.

PFAS pesticides are being spread in large quantities across our most valuable agricultural land and on our most popular crops. These chemicals are highly persistent, take a very long time to break down, and can contaminate soil and ground water for years to come. In addition, PFAS are associated with a range of serious health harms. Very low doses of PFAS in drinking water have been linked to the suppression of the immune system and are associated with an elevated risk of cancer, increased cholesterol, and reproductive and developmental harms, among other serious health concerns. For most people, food and drinking water are the primary routes of exposure to PFAS. That makes the use of these chemicals in agriculture especially concerning; PFAS do not belong on our food or dinner tables. We should not eat them. We need to end the use of these very problematic PFAS pesticides now.

To start, California should prohibit new PFAS pesticides from being registered for use in the state. There are PFAS pesticides not only being used for agriculture but in consumer goods used in our homes. By reducing PFAS at the source, we can begin to stop this pollution from entering our bodies, the soil and the state's waterways."

A coalition letter from various organizations wrote in support of the bill stating, among other things:

"...On behalf of our hundreds of thousands of members and supporters, the undersigned organizations write today to express strong support for AB 1603 (Schultz), a bill that would:

- Beginning January 1, 2027, prohibit registration of all new PFAS pesticides, except for any PFAS pesticide registration applications submitted to the California Department of Pesticide Regulation before January 1, 2027.
- Recognize PFAS pesticides by using the definition of PFAS that is consistent with the international scientific consensus, and is in line with California's, the majority of other state's, the California

Department of Toxic Substances Control's, and the Biomonitoring California's definitions.

- Require the California Department of Pesticide Regulation indicate, in the Pesticide Use Reporting database, that a pesticide contains PFAS pesticide ingredients, and that DPR include, in its Pesticide Use Reports and other relevant pesticide use reporting documents, PFAS as a category of interest and any associated PFAS pesticide use trends...

...Assembly Bill 1603 calls for greater transparency around PFAS pesticide usage in California and halts new approvals of PFAS pesticides. The bill will begin the process of shielding *Californians and people in other states* from additional PFAS exposure, bioaccumulation and chronic, environmental persistence.

While we were disappointed that in order to secure the necessary Assembly votes, Assemblymember Schultz had to commit to remove sections of AB 1603 that would have banned all agricultural uses of PFAS pesticides, we strongly believe this bill—with a moratorium on new PFAS pesticides and increased transparency—remains critically important to protecting Californians' health and environment.”

ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION:

A coalition letter from various organizations wrote in opposition to the bill, stating, among other things:

“On behalf of a coalition representing farm, commercial, residential and industrial users, pest management professionals, and manufacturers, we respectfully oppose AB 1603 (Schultz), which would broadly restrict pesticides containing per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) for use in agriculture, and prohibit the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) from registering any new pesticides containing PFAS ingredients. We recognize the June 19th amendments taken by the author removes the ban on existing pesticides on the market, however, we still oppose the remaining provisions that will still have significant consequences for California agriculture, public health, and pest management.

California's agricultural industry produces nearly \$50 billion in revenue annually, and grows half of the country's fruits and vegetables, including 400 commodity crops. However, growers in the state face significant and

increasing challenges including competition from growers out of state and out of the country. AB 1603 would leave California growers unable to access new innovative products that will be available to growers in other states and countries, creating another significant obstacle to growing crops economically and with a high enough yield to remain profitable. The same will be said for commercial and industrial products that will not be accessible in a safe manner to California consumers. In short, AB 1603 will not change consumer exposure to PFAS on pesticides, which falls below federally established tolerance levels.”

COMMENTS:

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), a pesticide cannot be registered unless USEPA determines its use will not pose unreasonable adverse effects on human health or the environment. The same standard applies to pesticides that contain a single fluorinated carbon. Regardless of whether a chemical meets a specific structural definition or is part of a category or class of chemicals, the Agency utilizes a comprehensive assessment process under FIFRA to evaluate the potential risks of pesticide use. This robust, chemical-specific process considers both hazard and exposure in determining whether the pesticide under review may pose risk to human health and the environment.

USEPA's rigorous evaluation process concludes no human health risks of concern when approved pesticides are used according to their approved labels. This assessment includes comprehensive toxicity studies across multiple species and life stages, specific evaluation of children's safety and developmental effects, assessment of reproductive and chronic health impacts and environmental fate and exposure analysis.

These pesticides undergo the same scientific evaluation required for all EPA pesticide registrations, including studies mandated by 40 CFR 158. Uses of single fluorinated carbon compounds can represent significantly reduced risks and greater benefits over older alternatives¹.

A February, 2026 study conducted by USGS² assessed pesticide application contributions of PFAS in agricultural streams. While the analysis of California surface-water monitoring data found PFAS contamination in waterways across

¹ <https://www.epa.gov/ingredients-used-pesticide-products/pesticides-containing-single-fluorinated-carbon>

² <https://www.usgs.gov/publications/assessing-pesticide-application-contributions-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas>

multiple agricultural counties and pointed to PFAS pesticides as a likely contributor, it also noted that additional investigation of pesticide transformations into terminal and ultra-short-chain PFAS is needed to fully quantify pesticide contributions to environmental PFAS contamination.

What is the role of DPR? Pest management is **critical** to protecting Californians and the environment. DPR was established in 1991 to act as an independent department to manage the state's pesticide regulatory programs, which were previously housed under CDFA. The purpose of DPR is to protect human health and the environment by regulating pesticide sales and use. They accomplish this by:

- Evaluating pesticides for potential risks, and impacts to people and the environment,
- Evaluating pesticides for efficacy, before they are registered for use in California.
- Continuously evaluating pesticide risks and impacts following registration.
- Mitigating risks to people and the environment.
- Protecting worker health and safety.
- Enforcing pesticide use laws and regulations.
- Advancing the availability and adoption of sustainable pest management.

All pesticides must be registered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) before they can be used in any state. DPR evaluates all pesticides before they can be used in California.

DPR's pesticide use report (PUR) data greatly increases the accuracy and efficiency of continuous evaluation of pesticides by providing details on each application, including date, location, site (e.g., crop), time, acres and units treated, and the identity and quantity of each pesticide product applied. This data allows scientists and others to identify trends in pesticide use, compare use locations with other geographical information and data, and perform quantitative assessments and evaluations of risks that pesticides may pose to human health and the environment.

In 1990, DPR significantly expanded the quantity and quality of pesticide use data collected across the state. Prior to this expansion, the regulatory program's estimates of pesticide use frequently assumed pesticide use to be equivalent to the maximum rates and number of applications as listed on the label, which was not always the case. Use of the PUR data allowed risk assessments and policy decisions to be based on the actual reported pesticide use rates from the PUR database, rather than the label rate assumptions previously used. Over the years, PUR data has been used by a variety of individuals and groups, including

government officials, scientists, growers, policy makers, and public interest groups.

DPR uses the PUR data throughout its pesticide regulatory programs in ways that can be broadly grouped as temporal (time), geospatial (place), and quantitative (amount), often combining elements of each.

As amended by the Senate Committee on Environmental Quality on 6/24/26, the bill now focuses on two issues:

- 1) Prohibiting DPR from registering a pesticide that has not been previously registered by the department and contains PFAS pesticide ingredients, defined as PFAS that are intentionally added as active, adjuvant, or inert ingredients, unless an application for registration of that pesticide was submitted to the department before January 1, 2027.
- 2) Requiring DPR to make available to the public and shall post and annually update on its website a list of all registered pesticides containing PFAS pesticide ingredients, distribute the list annually to the county agricultural commissioners and identify them within the annual pesticide use report (PUR).

The bill is would place a ban on registering pesticides containing PFAS that have not been previously registered by DPR unless an application for registration of that pesticide was submitted before January 1, 2027.

DPR has currently registered 53 PFAS pesticides, used in approximately 1,200 products. PFAS pesticides are used in industrial agriculture, residential pest control, and landscape maintenance across the United States. These pesticides are used for their ability to kill or suppress pests in homes, on farmland, and in the environment. PFAS can be an active ingredient, or it can be an inert ingredient. When PFAS is an active ingredient, it is the primary ingredient that kills or suppresses the targeted organism. Inert ingredients are added to increase the efficacy of the active ingredient.

For example, for the tree nut industry in California, the following active ingredients are used as the **safest product or needed for an emergent pest outbreak**.

List of Pesticides that contain PFAS

almonds	pecans	pistachios	walnuts
Bifenthrin	Bifenthrin	Bifenthrin	Bifenthrin
Flazasulfuron	Flonicamid	Flazasulfuron	Flazasulfuron
Flonicamid	Oxyfluorfen	Flonicamid	Fluazifop-P butyl
Fluazifop-P butyl	Penoxsulam	Indoxacarb	Fluopyram
Fluopyram		Metaflumizone	Norflurazon
Hydramethylnon		Oxyfluorfen	Oxathiapiprolin
Indoxacarb		Penoxsulam	Oxyfluorfen
Mefentrifluconazole		Penthiopryad	Penoxsulam
Metaflumizone		Trifloxystrobin	Saflufenacil
Norflurazon			Trifloxystrobin
Oxathiapiprolin			Trifluralin
Oxyfluorfen			
Penoxsulam			
Penthiopryad			
Picoxystrobin			
Saflufenacil			
Sulfoxaflor			
Trifloxystrobin			
Trifluralin			

It is important to note that, unlike consumer products, agricultural pesticides are subject to a distinct regulatory framework. Because pesticides are intentionally designed to control pests, they undergo rigorous evaluation and are regulated through extensive requirements, restrictions, and safeguards to protect public health and the environment. This bill would remove the department’s ability to evaluate and register future pesticide products that may contain PFAS but are formulated with other active or inert ingredients that present a lower overall risk to human health or the environment.

Suggested Amendment: The author and the Committee may wish to consider removing the provision that prohibits the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) from registering a pesticide containing PFAS ingredients unless the application for registration was submitted before January 1, 2027.

RELATED LEGISLATION:

AB 2146 (Bauer-Kahan, 2022) would have prohibited, beginning January 1, 2024, a person from selling, possessing, or using a neonicotinoid pesticide, as defined, for application to outdoor ornamental plants, trees, or turf, except for use on, or for the protection of, an agricultural commodity. This bill was vetoed by Governor Gavin Newsom.

AB 567 (Bauer-Kahan, 2021) would have prohibited, on and after January 1, 2024, the use of a neonicotinoid on a seed. The bill was not heard in the Assembly Committee on Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials and the bill subsequently died on file.

SB 458 (Durazo, 2019) would have prohibited the use of pesticides that contain chlorpyrifos in California until DPR adopts specified control measures for chlorpyrifos. This bill was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

AB 1817 (Ting, Chapter 762, Statutes of 2022) prohibits, beginning January 1, 2024, a person from distributing, selling, or offering for sale in the state a textile article, as defined, that contains regulated PFAS, and requires a manufacturer to use the least toxic alternative when removing regulated PFAS in textile articles to comply with the provisions of the bill.

AB 2771 (Friedman, Chapter 804, Statutes of 2022) prohibits, commencing January 1, 2025, a person or entity from manufacturing, selling, delivering, holding, or offering for sale in commerce any cosmetic product that contains intentionally added PFAS.

AB 1200 (Ting, Chapter 503, Statutes of 2021) prohibits, among other requirements, commencing January 1, 2023, the sale of food packaging that contains PFAS.

AB 652 (Freidman, Chapter 500, Statutes of 2021) prohibits, on or after July 1, 2023, a person from selling or distributing in commerce any new juvenile products that contain PFAS.

SB 1044 (Allen, Chapter 308, Statutes of 2020) prohibits the manufacture, sale, distribution, and use of firefighting foam containing PFAS chemicals by January 1, 2022, with some exceptions, and requires notification of the presence of PFAS in the protective equipment of firefighters.

AB 841 (Ting, Chapter 372, Statutes of 2019) would have required the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) to assess PFAS substances, especially as they might be found in drinking water, to determine which might

pose a potential risk to human health. The contents of this bill were deleted in the Senate and amended with unrelated content.

PRIOR ACTIONS:

Assembly Floor:	42 - 21
Assembly Appropriations Committee:	10 - 4
Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee:	5 - 2

SUPPORT:

1000 Grandmothers for Future Generation
2100 Iff Strategies
350 Bay Area Action
Access to Thrive, INC
Acevedo Media LLC
Active San Gabriel Valley
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments
American Nurses Association/california
Bay Area-system Change Not Climate Change
Benicia Good Neighbor Steering Committee
Berkeley Center for Green Chemistry
Beyond Pesticides
Breast Cancer Prevention Partners
California Coastkeeper Alliance
California Environmental Justice Coalition
California Environmental Voters
California Farmer Justice Collaborative
California Federation of Teachers
California Food and Farming Network
California Nurses Association
California Nurses for Environmental Health & Justice
California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation
California Water Association
Californians for Pesticide Reform
Calpirg, California Public Interest Research Group
Campaign for Organic and Regenerative Agriculture
Campesinas Unidas Del Valle De San Joaquin
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for Environmental Health

Center for Farmworker Families
Center for Food Safety
Center for Public Environmental Oversight
Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment
Central California Asthma Collaborative
Central California Environmental Justice Network (CCEJN)
Ceres Community Project
Children Now
Clean Air Coalition of North Whittier and Avocado Heights
Clean Water Action
Cleaneearth4kids.org
Climate Action California
Climate Health Now Action Fund
Coalition Advocating for Pesticide Safety - Tulare
Coalition Advocating for Pesticide Safety 805
Comite Civico Del Valle
Community Water Center
Consumer Attorneys of California
Cool Petaluma
Earthjustice
Encampment for Citizenship
Endangered Habitats League
Environmental Action Committee of West Marin
Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC)
Environmental Working Group
Erin Brockovich Foundation
Facts Families Advocating for Chemical and Toxics Safety
Farm2people
Feather River Action!
Foodwise
Fresh Approach
Fresnans Against Fracking
Friends Committee on Legislation of California
Friends of the Earth
Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA)
Gmo Science
Go Green Initiative
Green Science Policy Institute
Greenaction for Health and Environmental Justice
Indivisible: LA Honda and Coastal Communities
Integrated Resource Management

Jacobs Farm
Klamath Forest Alliance
LA Waterkeeper
Leadership Council for Justice and Accountability
Lideres Campesinas
Lift Economy
Lymphoma Foundation of America
Maryland Pesticide Education Network
Mixteco/indigena Community Organizing Project (MICOP)
Monterey Bay Central Labor Council, Afl-cio
Mothers Out Front Silicon Valley
Non-toxic Neighborhoods
Northcoast Environmental Center
Parents Against Ssfl
Pesticide Action & Agroecology Network
Physicians for Social Responsibility - Los Angeles
Physicians for Social Responsibility - Sacramento Chapter
Poison Free Malibu
Re:wild Your Campus
Recolte Energy
Resource Renewal Institute
Safe Ag Safe Schools
Safe Alternatives for Our Forest Environment
San Francisco Bay Physicians for Social Responsibility
San Francisco Baykeeper
Sierra Club California
Sierra Harvest
Socal 350 Climate Action
Sonoma County Conservation Action
Sonoma County Youth Environmental Action Committee
South Yuba River Citizens League
Sunflower Alliance
Sustainable Agriculture Education
The 5 Gyres Institute
The Transformation Co.
Topanga Town Council
Toxic Free North Carolina
Union of Concerned Scientists
Valley Improvement Projects
Water Replenishment District

West Berkeley Alliance for Clean Air and Safe Jobs
Wholly H2o

OPPOSITION:

African American Farmers of California
Agricultural Council of California
Almond Alliance of California
American Chemistry Council
California Agricultural Aircraft Association
California Association of Pest Control Advisers
California Association of Wheat Growers
California Bean Shippers Association
California Chamber of Commerce
California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association
California Farm Bureau Federation
California Fresh Fruit Association
California Grain & Feed Association
California League of Food Producers
California Manufacturers & Technology Association
California Pear Growers Association
California Seed Association
California Strawberry Commission
California Table Grape Commission
California Walnut Commission
California Warehouse Association
Chemical Industry Council of California
Croplife America
Golf Course Superintendents Association of America
Household and Commercial Products Association
Nisei Farmers League
Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment - Rise
United Ag
Western Growers Association
Western Plant Health Association
Western Tree Nut Association

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