

THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 1603
Author: Schultz (D)
Amended: 7/8/26 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE: 4-2, 6/24/26
AYES: Blakespear, Allen, Gonzalez, Menjivar
NOES: Valladares, Dahle
NO VOTE RECORDED: Hurtado

SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE: 4-1, 6/30/26
AYES: Caballero, Ashby, McNerney, Padilla
NOES: Alvarado-Gil

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: Senate Rule 28.8

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 42-21, 5/27/26 - See last page for vote

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

SOURCE: Environmental Working Group

DIGEST: This bill requires the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) to indicate if a pesticide contains per- or polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) pesticide ingredients in the pesticide use reporting database and submit a list of those pesticides to the County Agricultural Commissioners (CACs).

ANALYSIS:

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) §§ 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 § 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 Agriculture Code (FAC) §§ 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. (FAC § 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. (FAC § 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. (FAC § 12825.5)
- 5) 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 (CCR) § 6220)
- 6) Prohibits the use, sale, and manufacturing of PFAS in many consumer and industrial products, including menstrual products, juvenile products, textiles, food packaging, cosmetics, and firefighting foam. (Health and Safety Code (HSC) §§ 25258 et seq.; HSC §§ 108945 et seq.; HSC §§ 108970 et seq.; HSC §§ 109000 et seq.; HSC §§ 108980 et seq.; and HSC §§ 13061, 13062)

This bill:

- 1) Requires DPR to indicate if a pesticide contains PFAS pesticide ingredients in the pesticide use reporting (PUR) database and include PFAS as a category of interest.
- 2) Requires DPR to include any pesticide use trends of PFAS pesticide ingredients from the PUR database in the pesticide use annual report and other relevant reporting documents.
- 3) Requires DPR to publish a list of all registered pesticides that contain PFAS pesticide ingredients on its internet website and submit this list to the CACs.

Background

- 1) *The problem with PFAS.* Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a broad class of man-made chemicals consisting of chains with bonded carbon and fluorine atoms. Because of their physical and chemical nature, PFAS are very durable making them extremely useful in many industrial and commercial applications. As a consequence of their durability, they are persistent, meaning that they do not degrade easily in the environment and can bioaccumulate in living things.^{1,2,3} According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), there are nearly 15,000 PFAS compounds.

PFAS compounds have been detected globally in soil, groundwater, and surface water. Plants can uptake PFAS and bioaccumulation can occur within their tissues and the animals that eat them. Primarily, human exposure occurs through consuming food and drinking water. Exposure to certain PFAS may lead to adverse health outcomes, including reproductive and developmental effects, increased risk of cancer, suppressed immune systems, and endocrine disruption.⁴ It has been estimated that the cost associated with the contribution of PFAS exposure to disease and disability in the United States is at least \$5.5 billion and upwards of \$62 billion.⁵

Because of its hazard and prevalence, the Legislature has previously taken action to ban PFAS as a class from products that were more likely to release PFAS into the environment, come into close physical contact with the human body, were considered unnecessary for the products' function, and led to higher potential exposures. The category of products ranged, including, but not limited to: a ban on PFAS in menstrual products (AB 2515, Papan, Chapter 1008, Statutes of 2024); textiles (AB 1817, Ting, Chapter 762, Statutes of 2022); cosmetic products (AB 2771, Friedman, Chapter 804, Statutes of 2022); food packaging (AB 1200, Ting, Chapter 503, Statutes of 2021); new juvenile products (AB 652, Friedman, Chapter 500, Statutes of 2021); and firefighting foam (SB 1044, Allen, Chapter 308, Statutes of 2020). PFAS is typically regulated as a class, because regulating a subset of PFAS tends to lead to their

¹ National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. (2025). [Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances](#).

² Henry, B. J., et. al. (2018). [A critical review of the application of polymer of low concern](#).

³ Jacobs, S. A., et. al. (2024). [Assessment of Fluoropolymer Production and Use With Analysis of Alternative Replacement Materials](#).

⁴ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2026). [Our Current Understanding of the Human Health and Environmental Risks of PFAS](#).

⁵ Obsekov, V. (2023). [Leveraging Systematic Reviews to Explore Disease Burden and Costs of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substance Exposures in the United States](#).

replacement with other chemistries within the class that have similar hazards, thus becoming regrettable substitutions.⁶

- 2) *PFAS in pesticides*. Pesticides are used to kill or suppress unwanted organisms in homes, on farmland, in the environment, and in other areas where people live and work. Although pesticides are often efficacious at exterminating or thwarting the growth of target organisms, they can also cause serious unintended harm to both humans and nontarget plants and animals. Over 1,000 types of pesticides are approved for use in California, and approximately 176 million pounds of pesticides were used in California in 2023 alone.

In pesticide products, there are active and “inert” ingredients and PFAS can be utilized for either purpose. Active ingredients are the primary ingredients that kill or suppress the targeted organism and are disclosed on a pesticide’s label. Inert ingredients are added to increase the efficacy of the active ingredient, and include emulsifiers, solvents, carriers, propellants, fragrances, and dyes.⁷

For active ingredients, the fluorination in PFAS is used to improve stability and increase residual activity in pesticides. Of the 471 unique conventional pesticide active ingredients that are registered in the United States, 23% contained at least one carbon-fluorine bond and 14% met the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development definition of PFAS.⁸ DPR indicates that there are 53 active ingredients with at least one fully fluorinated carbon registered in California, and 1,153 products currently registered for use in California that contain at least one of those 53 pesticide active ingredients.

In contrast, PFAS ingredients that are inert can expedite the dispersal of sprayed pesticides and facilitate the penetration of the pesticide into the target pest.⁸ A 2022 public records request to the U.S. EPA revealed that there were 24 registered inert ingredients that were identified as PFAS or suspected to be PFAS.⁸

Pesticides are composed of a small fraction of the active ingredients, as those ingredients can be considered the most toxic, while inert ingredients make up the majority of a product.⁷ Inert ingredients can influence the toxicity or alter the bioavailability of the active ingredient. Inert ingredients can also increase

⁶ Balan, S.A., et. al. (2021). [Regulating PFAS as a Chemical Class under the California Safer Consumer Products Program.](#)

⁷ Bruce A. B., et. al. (2023). [Assessing the scientific support for U.S. EPA pesticide regulatory policy governing active and inert ingredients.](#)

⁸ Donley, N., et. al. (2024). [Forever Pesticides: A Growing Source of PFAS Contamination in the Environment.](#)

mobility and persistence in the environment.⁷ These ingredients are not required to be disclosed on the label and minimal testing is conducted.⁸

A 2025 analysis found that California agricultural fields are treated with an average of 2.5 million pounds of PFAS pesticides every year, and that between 2018 and 2023, nearly 15 million pounds of PFAS pesticides were applied to California farmland.⁹ The analysis further revealed that 85% of PFAS pesticides used in the state were used for crop production. The remaining 15% were used for various structural practices, such as insecticide for termite control, herbicide for landscape maintenance, and rodenticide.⁹

- 3) *PFAS pollution through pesticides.* PFAS contamination is ubiquitous in the environment, with various sources contributing to pollution of the air, water, and soils. The vast majority of pesticides containing PFAS have three fluorine molecules. It is possible that these pesticide ingredients could degrade into trifluoroacetic acid (TFA), which are part of a subclass of PFAS known as ultrashort-chain perfluoroalkyl acids (PFAAs).¹⁰ TFAs are extremely persistent and mobile substances that can be found in the environment at concentrations that are orders of magnitude higher than that of other PFAS.¹¹ TFA has been found to be ubiquitous in drinking water sources and bioaccumulates most readily in plants. While some studies have concluded that the risk of TFA to humans and the environment is negligible, other studies have indicated that TFA could be toxic to the liver and reproductive systems in humans. It has been classified in the EU as harmful to aquatic life with long lasting effects.¹¹ The toxicity of TFA is still being understood and it is possible that there are other unknown environmental health impacts uncovered by the current science.

This bill increases transparency of the use of pesticides with PFAS pesticide ingredients by requiring DPR to indicate whether a pesticide includes these ingredients and communicate to CACs the list of pesticides that contain these ingredients.

Comments

- 1) *Purpose of Bill.* According to the author, “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

⁹ Environmental Working Group. (2025). 2.5 million pounds of PFAS pesticides spread on California farmland annually.

¹⁰ Joerss, H., et. al. (2024). Pesticides can be a substantial source of TFA to water resources.

¹¹ Arp, H. P. H., et. al. (2024). The Global Threat from the Irreversible Accumulation of Trifluoroacetic Acid.

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 pesticides now.”

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/10/26)

Environmental Working Group (source)
 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
 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 Health Coalition Advocacy
 California Nurses Association
 California Nurses for Environmental Health & Justice
 California Nurses for Environmental Health and Justice
 California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation
 California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation (crla 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 Asthma Collaborative
Central California Environmental Justice Network
Central California Environmental Justice Network
Ceres Community Project
Cft
Cft- a Union of Educators & Classified Professionals
Children Now
City of Sacramento Department of Utilities
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
Communitiy 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
Environmental Protection Information Center
Erin Brockovich Foundation
Erin Brockovich, INC.
Facts Families Advocating for Chemical and Toxics Safety

Facts: Families Advocating for Chemical & 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
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
Jacobs Farm Del Cabo
Klamath Forest Alliance
LA Waterkeeper
Leadership Council for Justice and Accountability
Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability
Lideres Campesinas
Lift Economy
Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts
Lymphoma Foundation of America
Mamavation - Non-toxic Products for Healthy Families
Maryland Pesticide Education Network
Mixteco Indigena Community Organizing Project
Mixteco/indigena Community Organizing Project
Monterey Bay Central Labor Council, Afl-cio
Mothers Out Front Silicon Valley
Natural Resources Defense Council
Non-toxic Neighborhoods
Northcoast Environmental Center
Parents Against Ssfl
Pesticide Action & Agroecology Network
Pesticide Action and Agroecology Network
Physicians for Social Responsibility - Los Angeles
Physicians for Social Responsibility - Sacramento Chapter
Physicians for Social Responsibility/sacramento

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
Seiu 521
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
Sustainable Agriculture Education
Teamsters Local 856
The 5 Gyres Institute
The Transformation Co.
Topanga Town Council
Toxic Free North Carolina
Ufcw Local 5
Union of Concerned Scientists
Unite Here Local 11
Unite Here, Local 19
Valley Improvement Projects
Valley Improvement Projects
Water Replenishment District
West Berkeley Alliance for Clean Air and Safe Jobs
Wholly H2o

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/10/26)

African American Farmers of California
Agricultural Council of California
Almond Alliance of California
American Chemistry Council
California Agricultural Aircraft Association
California Agricultural Commissioners & Sealers 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

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 42-21, 5/27/26

AYES: Addis, Ahrens, Alvarez, Arambula, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Caloza, Connolly, Dixon, Elhawary, Fong, Gabriel, Garcia, Mark González, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Jackson, Kalra, Lee, Lowenthal, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Ortega, Papan, Patel, Pellerin, Ransom, Rogers, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Stefani, Ward, Wicks, Zbur, Rivas

NOES: Alanis, Ávila Farías, Castillo, Chen, Davies, DeMaio, Ellis, Flora, Gallagher, Jeff Gonzalez, Hadwick, Hoover, Johnson, Lackey, Macedo, Pacheco, Patterson, Soria, Ta, Tangipa, Wallis

NO VOTE RECORDED: Aguiar-Curry, Bains, Calderon, Carrillo, Gipson, Irwin, Krell, Nguyen, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Blanca Rubio, Solache, Valencia, Wilson

Prepared by: Taylor McKie / E.Q. / (916) 651-4108
8/12/26 16:18:49

****** END ******