



PO Box 7114  
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norwalkriver.org

March 5, 2020

Re: SB 301 AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF CHLORPYRIFOS &  
SB 292 AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS AND PESTICIDE REGULATION IN THE  
STATE

Dear Co-Chairs and Members of the Environment Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Norwalk River Watershed Association which represents over 1500 participants in the seven watershed towns of Norwalk, Wilton, Ridgefield, Redding, Weston, New Canaan, and Lewisboro NY to ask for your support of SB 301, a ban on the highly toxic pesticide chlorpyrifos, and for SB 292, a bill to digitize pesticide application records.

Scientific studies have linked chlorpyrifos to brain damage in children, autism, cancer, Parkinson's disease, and other negative human health issues. Chlorpyrifos is also known to be extremely harmful to birds, fish and insects. Federal scientists have concluded this pesticide poses a risk to about 1,800 critically threatened or endangered species. The United Kingdom banned chlorpyrifos after a disaster in which two teaspoons of this poison wiped out all bug life in a ten-mile stretch of river. Read more about this incident here: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2402491/Pesticide-ban-river-Kennet-disaster-2-teaspoons-poison-wiped-bug-life-10-mile-stretch.html>

In 2015 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed banning chlorpyrifos after decades of scientific studies led to the conclusion that there is **no safe amount of chlorpyrifos for any use**. But the current administration reversed course and has not followed through on the ban. States are stepping in. NY, CA, and HI have taken steps toward banning chlorpyrifos. It's time for CT to act. We read that CT DEEP's current position is it to follow EPA guidelines and therefore oppose the ban. This means that Connecticut's environmental health is in the hands of the Trump Administration's EPA, which is in large part run by industry lobbyists. This is not acceptable to your constituents here in Norwalk River watershed.

According to CT DEEP's data, farms only account for 10.8% of chlorpyrifos used. Golf courses account for 86% of its use in CT, totaling more than 590 gallons in 2019—here's a list of where it was used in 2018 and 2019: <https://norwalkriver.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Chlorpyrifos-Use-in-CT-6.xlsx>. On this list are Shorehaven Golf Club in Norwalk and Longshore Golf Club in Westport, both along the coast adjacent to the shellfish beds that make up over a third of the state's \$30 million shellfish industry. Using chlorpyrifos to "beautify" golf courses while putting human health and shellfish industry jobs at risk makes little sense.

We are thankful that a resourceful Fairfield mom looked through boxes of pesticide applications in Hartford to find out where chlorpyrifos is being used. CT needs a better system for tracking and permitting highly toxic chemicals. NRWA supports SB 292 as a possible way to improve the system, but it seems that a better option would be to set up a system whereby permit applications are submitted online from the outset. We know DEEP is sorely understaffed. Digitizing the process by having applicants apply online makes more sense than having DEEP type in information submitted on paper.

Thank you for the chance to submit this testimony. We hope you will support SB 301 to protect CT's rivers, Long Island Sound, its fish and wildlife, and its children from this highly toxic pesticide.

Sincerely,

Louise Washer, President  
Norwalk River Watershed Association

New Canaan, Norwalk, Redding, Ridgefield, Weston, Wilton, Lewisboro NY