



Medical Advocates for Healthy Air



Action Now Clean Air and Water Matter

turninggreen



April 19, 2017

Felicia Marcus, Chair
State Water Resources Control Board
P.O. Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812-0100

Re: 1,2,3-Trichloropropane MCL – Support 5 ppt

Dear Chair Marcus and Board Members Doduc, Moore, D’Adamo, and Esquivel:

The undersigned organizations, on behalf of the hundreds of thousands of Californians we represent, urge the State Water Resources Control Board to adopt the Division of Drinking Water’s proposed **5 parts per trillion** (ppt) maximum contaminant level (“MCL”) for 1,2,3-trichloropropane (“TCP”) with all expediency. TCP is a solely man-made chemical that puts the health of Californians in at least 16 counties served by almost 100 water systems at risk.¹

1,2,3-TCP is a known human carcinogen

Since 1992, California has recognized TCP as a chemical “known to the State to cause cancer” under the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (Proposition 65, 1992).² Concluding that “1,2,3-TCP represents a significant carcinogenic risk when it occurs in drinking water,” the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (“OEHHA”) issued a Public Health Goal (PHG) for TCP in drinking water of 0.7 ppt in 2009.³ According to the State Water Board’s Standardized Regulatory Impact Assessment, “[e]xposure to concentrations of 1,2,3-TCP in drinking water that exceed the PHG will result in an increased risk for cancer.”⁴ To protect Californians from an increase in lifetime cancer risk due to TCP in water, the State Water Board should adopt an MCL **no greater than 5 ppt**, which is the detection limit for reporting purposes (“DLR”).

Disproportionate impacts in agricultural regions

Although small quantities of TCP have reportedly been used for industrial purposes, most of the TCP pollution of California’s groundwater is the result of its presence as an unnecessary

¹ http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/123TCP.shtml.

² <https://oehha.ca.gov/media/downloads/proposition-65/p65single01272017.pdf>, pg. 21.

³ <https://oehha.ca.gov/water/public-health-goal/final-public-health-goal-123-trichloropropane-drinking-water>

⁴ http://www.dof.ca.gov/Forecasting/Economics/Major_Regulations/Major_Regulations_Table/documents/Final_SRIA_10062016.pdf

impurity in soil fumigants manufactured by Shell Oil Company and Dow Chemical Company. These fumigants were used extensively in California from the 1950s through the 1980s. Shell and Dow neglected to disclose to farmers that TCP was a contaminant in their products or the harm it posed to human health.

TCP has been detected all over California, but more than half of the state's contaminated wells are found in the agriculturally rich San Joaquin Valley, particularly in Kern, Fresno, and Tulare Counties.⁵ TCP is not the only pollutant affecting water supplies in these rural, lower-income regions where residents are already threatened by disproportionate exposure to contaminated water and other pollution, and often lack the adequate resources to address these problems or the associated medical consequences.

Costs to water systems and the public should NOT change the 5 ppt recommendation

Health & Safety Code §116365(a) requires the State Water Board to establish a contaminant MCL as close to its PHG as is technologically and economically feasible, placing primary emphasis on the protection of public health. Given TCP's DLR, it is not technically feasible to set the MCL lower than 5 ppt. The only other factor the Board is permitted to consider is cost.

Because TCP is synthetic, manufactured chemical that does not occur naturally, viable responsible parties have been identified, and affected water suppliers have available legal remedies to recoup water treatment costs, choosing to allow greater cancer risk because of the economic factors benefits only the responsible parties. In fact, setting the MCL at 5 ppt would expedite cost-recovery efforts that have been pending for years, while providing strong health protection and limiting medical costs. Furthermore, the state's office of sustainable water solutions and complementary TA program is perfectly situated to ensure that small communities share in the benefits of drinking water free of this harmful carcinogen.

Adopt a health-protective MCL as soon as possible

The SWRCB's Standardized Regulatory Impact Assessment said, "Based on the inability to obtain alternative sources of drinking water, disadvantaged communities would continue to use and consume drinking water containing high levels of 1,2,3-TCP. In disadvantaged or severely disadvantaged communities, the incidence of cancer cases over a lifetime would be greater as compared to other impacted communities. Therefore, the proposed regulation would offer the most health benefit to these types of communities." Given that the state has recognized the dangers of TCP since 1992, it is critical to expedite water supply treatment so as to minimize and mitigate the harm to people who depend on water supplies contaminated with TCP. Consequently, the adoption of a 5 ppt MCL should not be delayed any further.

⁵ The exception to this is Los Angeles County, which is the second most effected in the state.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Asha Kreiling
Policy & Communications Analyst
Community Water Center

Andria Ventura
Toxics Program Manager
Clean Water Action

Jose Gurrola
Mayor
City of Arvin

Bill Allayaud
California Director of Government Affairs
Environmental Working Group

Rachel Doughty
President
Greenfire Law

Kyle Jones
Policy Advocate
Sierra Club

Susan JunFish, MPH
Executive Director
Parents for a Safer Environment

Colin Bailey
Executive Director & Managing Attorney
The Environmental Justice Coalition for
Water

Nayamin Martinez, MPH
Director
Central California Environmental Justice
Network (CCEJN)

Jason Pfeifle
Public Health Advocate
CalPIRG

Asociación de Gente Unida por el Agua
(Association of People United for Water)

Caroline Farrell,
Executive Director
Center for Race, Poverty, and the
Environment

Paul Towers
Organizing Director & Policy Advocate
Pesticide Action Network

Caty Wagner & Sal Cazarez
Co-founders
Progressives United for Social Justice and
Human Rights (PUSH)

Irma Medellin
Executive Director
El Quinto Sol de America

Horacio Amezquita
General Manager
San Jerardo Cooperative, Inc

Adam Scow
California Program Director
Food and Water Watch

Phoebe Seaton
Co-Director and Attorney at Law
Leadership Counsel for Justice and
Accountability

Cassie Burdyslaw
Advocacy & Policy Director
Turtle Island Restoration Network

Leah Campbell
Policy Analyst
California Coastkeeper Alliance

Kathryn Alcantar
California Policy Director
Center for Environmental Health

Sarah Aird, Esq.
Co-Director
Californians for Pesticide Reform

Helen Hutchison
President
League of Women Voters of California

Kevin Hamilton
Chief of Programs
Central California Asthma Collaborative

Kevin Hamilton
Medical Advocates for Healthy Air (MAHA)

Lisa Archer
Director, Food and Technology Program
Friends of the Earth U.S.

Patty Clary
Executive Director
Californians for Alternatives to Toxics

Eduardo Guevara
Executive Director
Promotores Comunitarios del Desierto

Lauren Ornelas
Founder/Executive Director
Food Empowerment Project

Dave Henson
Executive Director
Occidental Arts & Ecology Center

Belita Cowan
President
Lymphoma Foundation of America

Patty Pagaling
Executive Director
Transition to Organics

Renee Nelson
President
Clean Water and Air Matter

Judi Shils
Executive Director
Turning Green

Myra Duran
Senior Policy Manager
California Latinas for Reproductive Justice

Katie Huffling, RN, MS, CNM
Executive Director
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments

Lisa Arkin
Executive Director
Beyond Toxics

Pamela Miller
Executive Director
Alaska Community Action on Toxics

Mitzi Shpak
Executive Director
Action Now

Kimberly Baker
Executive Director
Klamath Forest Alliance

Thomas Wheeler
Executive Director
Environmental Protection Information
Center (EPIC)

Caitlin Alesio Maloney
Director of Campaign Operations and
Technology
Courage Campaign

Dr. Elizabeth Dougherty
Director
Wholly H2O

Lori de León
Business Manager
Dolores Huerta Foundation

Gavin Raders
Executive Director
Planting Justice

Jonathan Evans
Environmental Health Legal Director and
Senior Attorney
Center for Biological Diversity

Pamm Larry
Director
GMO Free California

Robert M. Gould, M.D.,
President
San Francisco Bay Area Physicians for Social Responsibility

Lucia Calderón
Organizer
Safe Ag Safe Schools

Cesar Lara
Executive Director
Monterey Bay Central Labor Council

Martha Dina Argüello
Executive Director
Physicians for Social Responsibility-Los
Angeles

Morgan Patton
Executive Director
Environmental Action Committee of
West Marin

Amy Vanderwarker
Co-director
California Environmental Justice Alliance