
Meeting Notes: Pesticide Application Safety Committee

Date: September 3, 2024

Time: 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Present: Lauren Jenks, Kelly McClain, Eddie Kasner, Rep Tom Dent, Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Sen. Judy Warnick, Ignacio Marques, Craig Blackwood, Calvin Ohlson-Kiehn, April Clayton, Lynn Olson, Matthew Keifer, Ofelio Borges

1. Welcome and Roll Call (9:00 - 9:10 AM)

- Griselda welcomed all attendees and conducted roll call.

2. Agricultural Leadership Program Update (9:10 - 9:20 AM)

- **Presenter: Ofelio Borges**
- The program has successfully addressed the issue of lacking bilingual instructors. Over the last year, nine new bilingual instructors have been trained through **Gonzaga University's Foundational Leadership course**.
- Upcoming ALP sessions will be held in **November 2024** and **May 2025**. There is significant interest with 15 participants already pre-registered.

3. Office of Drinking Water Update (9:20 - 9:35 AM)

- **Presenter: Deborah Johnson**
- Focused on the **wellhead protection** program. Emphasized that pesticides applied near wellheads could contaminate drinking water sources.
- Discussions covered how sanitary control areas around wells must remain free from pesticide contamination, and education efforts aimed at water purveyors to prevent such issues.

4. Public Comment (9:35 - 9:45 AM)

- A public comment period was opened. Heidi registered for comment just before the break. She provided input after the break.
 - Heidi Stephens urged the state to implement stricter pesticide regulations in groundwater protection districts, particularly in high recharge areas like Tacoma, where industrial zoning threatens water resources. She called for a complete ban on pesticide use in vulnerable areas, noting that current testing is not preventative. Heidi emphasized the need for more natural, chemical-free practices statewide.

5. Tri-Agency Update (9:45 - 10:00 AM)

- **Presenter: Griselda Arias**

- The update focused on the **collaborative data-sharing** efforts between the **DOH, WSDA,** and **L&I.**
- Efforts were aimed at improving pesticide illness reporting and data analysis.

6. DOH Pesticide Program Update (10:00 - 10:35 AM)

- **Presenter: Mirela Iancu, DOH Investigator**
- Significant improvements were made in closing pesticide exposure cases faster, reducing the time from four months to 45 days.
- Emphasis was placed on **prevention codes** and improving the quality of prevention narratives. Investigators now focus on creating rich, qualitative data to inform future pesticide safety training.
- Challenges faced included obtaining medical records and spray records in a timely manner, as well as worker reluctance to report pesticide exposures.

7. PASCO Extension Discussion (10:35 - 11:00 AM)

- Discussion led by Griselda and DOH staff on extending PASCO until **2035.**
- Proposed changes included eliminating teleconferencing requirements and assigning **DOH** as the sole administrator for PASCO to streamline operations.

8. Advisory Work Group Discussion (11:00 AM - 11:30 AM)

- Discussion plans for future actions of the advisory group, focusing on data collection, pesticide use reporting, and addressing climate change impacts as time allows.

9. Next PASCO meeting

- PASCO will reconvene post 2025 legislative session late April or early May.
- Advisory Work Group will reconvene in November 2024