

## 2017-19 Biennium Budget Decision Package

**FINAL**

**Agency:** 303 Department of Health

**Decision Package Code/Title:** 1A Investigate Pesticide Exposures

**Budget Period:** 2017-19

**Budget Level:** M2-Inflation and Other Rate Changes

**Agency Recommendation Summary Text:**

The Department of Health requests \$480,000 General Fund-State to address the significant increase in reported pesticide illness and exposure investigations within required timelines. Adequate investigation staffing levels reduce the risk of individual pesticide exposure, especially to populations most at risk such as farmworkers and families living near agricultural operations.

**Fiscal Summary:**

Operating Expenditures	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
Fund 001-1	240,000	240,000	240,000	240,000
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>240,000</b>	<b>240,000</b>	<b>240,000</b>	<b>240,000</b>
Staffing	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY 2019</b>	<b>FY 2020</b>	<b>FY 2021</b>
FTEs	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
<b>Object of Expenditure</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY 2019</b>	<b>FY 2020</b>	<b>FY 2021</b>
A - Salaries and Wages	156,000	156,000	156,000	156,000
B - Employee Benefits	55,000	55,000	55,000	55,000
E - Goods and Services	22,000	22,000	22,000	22,000
G - Travel	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
T- Intra-Agency Reimbursements	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000

**Package Description**

The Pesticide Illness Monitoring and Prevention Program investigates pesticide-related illnesses of individuals, particularly farmworkers, who come into contact with pesticides occupationally, or are living near agricultural operations that apply pesticides. Data and root-cause information from these investigations is used to design illness prevention messages and strategies that include national efforts to change labels and practices, remove unsafe products from the marketplace, and improve farmworker and pesticide handler training. Federal, state, and local governments, advocacy groups, and legislators use the data for similar purposes. Therefore, it is critical that pesticide exposure

claims are investigated so that accurate data is available for state and national prevention efforts to be effective.

The Department of Health (DOH) receives reports of suspected pesticide illness events from multiple sources including the Washington Poison Center (WPC), Department of Labor and Industries (L&I), Department of Agriculture (WSDA), health care providers, and others. The typical case investigation involves interviewing symptomatic people and witnesses, reviewing relevant medical records and lab test results, and obtaining pesticide spray records or interviewing the applicator to confirm the pesticide product involved. Suspected violations are referred to WSDA or L&I.

The Pesticide Program has experienced a rise in both reports of illness, investigations opened, and detection of new pesticides for several years. So far this year, DOH has opened 61% more cases than usual. Over the last five years, DOH has opened an average of 67 cases from January 1 to June 1. In the same time period in 2016 DOH opened 108 investigations, an increase of 41 investigations. The increase in cases is driven by a rise in illness reporting by the Washington Poison Center. In the period from January 1 to June 1, DOH generally receives about 575 reports from WPC. This year in the same time period, DOH received 723 reports—a 26% increase.

New pesticides are appearing with more frequency, making investigations take longer. 38% of cases in 2015 involved pesticides DOH had not seen before. Locating the necessary toxicology information to characterize human health effects takes more investigator time than for familiar, older products that information is available for. A workload analysis shows average hours spent per case increasing from approximately 20 hours to 28 hours.

Insufficient investigative capacity for the program is resulting in approximately 125 pesticide cases per year being delayed or not completed. This will reduce the availability of pesticide exposure data used by state and national efforts to prevent pesticide exposure, particularly to those most at risk, such as farmworkers who come into contact with pesticides occupationally, and families living near agricultural operations that apply pesticides. Additionally, violations normally referred to the WSDA and L&I will also be delayed or not completed.

Increasing staffing levels by 2.0 FTE Public Health Advisors allows the completion of all pesticide illness investigations within a 12 month cycle and the publishing of complete data in an annual report by November 30th. This request for 2.0 FTE is based on the need to address 125 additional cases annually. Cases average 28 hours each totaling 3,500 hours. Factoring in annual leave, holidays, and potential sick leave, this consumes 2.0 FTE.

**Contact Information:**

Financial Operations – Kristin Bettridge (360) 236-3007  
Subject Matter Expert – Lauren Jenks (360) 236-3325

**Base Budget:**

The base budget for the pesticide program is 3.2 FTE and \$461,000 in fiscal year (FY) 18, and 3.2 FTE and \$465,000 in FY19 of fund 173, State Toxics Control account.

**Decision Package expenditure, FTE and revenue assumptions, calculations and details:** Agencies must clearly articulate the workload or policy assumptions used in calculating expenditure and revenue changes proposed.

Workload Assumptions: 125 cases at an average of 28 hours per case equals 3,500 hours. Factoring in annual leave, holidays, and potential sick leave, this consumes 2.0 FTE.

This request is for 2.0 FTE Public Health Advisor 3, with associated indirect of 0.2 FTE Health Services Consultant 1, and 0.3 FTE Fiscal Analyst 2 to assist with increased division and agency workload. Total annual costs of \$240,000 include salaries, benefits, associated goods & services, and travel. (FY 2018 and ongoing – 2.5 FTE, \$240,000)

## **Decision Package Justification and Impacts**

### **What specific performance outcomes does the agency expect?**

Describe and quantify the specific performance outcomes the agency expects as a result of this funding change. ([results washington link](#))

### **Performance Measure detail:**

Performance Targets:

- 1) Case Completion. Complete all pesticide illness investigations, and enter information into the database by March 31 of each following year.
- 2) Data Publishing. Publish each year's data sets by November 30 of each year.

## **Relation to Agency Strategic Plan and Results WA**

### **Agency Strategic Plan:**

Goal 1: Protect everyone in Washington from communicable diseases and other health threats.

### **Results Washington:**

Goal 4: Healthy and Safe Communities

### **Fully describe and quantify expected impacts on state residents and specific populations served:**

This work supports the improvement of health equity since pesticide exposure disproportionately affects people of color and low-income groups. US Census reports show that Latinos composed about 10% of Washington's population in 2011 but accounted for 45% of pesticide-illness cases that year. The greater representation of Latinos among pesticide illness cases is likely due to the fact that in Washington, a high percentage of agricultural workers are Latino.

An area of major work in the program is agricultural pesticide drift. This is a topic of continued focus by farmworker advocates, industry, and the legislature. Funding this proposal is critical to providing ongoing data and analysis for the understanding of this issue.

**What are other important connections or impacts related to this proposal?** Please complete the following table and provide detailed explanations or information below:

Impact(s) To:		Identify / Explanation
Regional/County impacts?	Yes	Identify: Counties with higher concentration of Agriculture
Other local gov't impacts?	No	Identify:
Tribal gov't impacts?	No	Identify:
Other state agency impacts?	No	Identify: Department of Agriculture, Department of Labor and Industries, Washington State University.
Responds to specific task force, report, mandate or exec order?	No	Identify:
Does request contain a compensation change?	No	Identify:
Does request require a change to a collective bargaining agreement?	No	Identify:
Facility/workplace needs or impacts?	No	Identify:
Capital Budget Impacts?	No	Identify:
Is change required to existing statutes, rules or contracts?	No	Identify:
Is the request related to or a result of litigation?	No	Identify lawsuit (please consult with Attorney General's Office):
Is the request related to Puget Sound recovery?	No	If yes, see budget instructions Section 14.4 for additional instructions
Identify other important connections		

**Please provide a detailed discussion of connections/impacts identified above.**

DOH works in collaboration with WSDA and L&I in corresponding compliance investigations. WSDA relies on DOH case work to verify if human illnesses are associated with a violation. Additionally, university researchers rely on DOH's data to help them understand issues contributing to pesticide related illnesses.

**What alternatives were explored by the agency and why was this option chosen?**

One alternative is to continue without additional funding. This would severely limit the program's ability to conduct investigations, reducing investigation turn-around time and frequency, as well as curtailing the program's illness prevention work.

The other alternative considered was requesting this funding from the State Toxics Control Account. That account is significantly over obligated for the current biennium, and anticipated to decline more in the coming biennium, so DOH chose to request general fund state.

**What are the consequences of not funding this request?**

Without increased funding, the program's ability to reduce the risk of pesticide exposure will be diminished, compromising public health. The state's Hispanic population is disproportionately exposed to pesticides, mostly through farm labor occupations, and without funding, the health disparity for this population will increase.

**How has or can the agency address the issue or need in its current appropriation level?**

A value stream mapping event was conducted for this program. Implementation of efficiencies improved the timeliness of the data. However, even with DOH's more efficient process, in 2015 investigators could complete only 52% of their total cases by the target date.

**Other supporting materials:** Please attach or reference any other supporting materials or information that will help analysts and policymakers understand and prioritize your request.

Please attach or reference any other supporting materials or information that will help analysts and policymakers understand and prioritize your request.

Data on investigated cases (people considered to have been made ill from pesticide exposure) for 2010-2014 indicate an upward trend.

From the Washington Tracking Network:

Year	Cases
2010	128
2011	170
2012	172
2013	180
2014	253

Due to the backlog at DOH, the data for 2015 and 2016 is incomplete

**Information technology:** Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, services (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No



Yes Continue to IT Addendum below and follow the directions on the bottom of the addendum to meet requirements for OCIO review.)