

# Laura Plascencia

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Dept. of Pesticide Regulation  
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Director Henderson,

Hello, my name is Laura Plascencia, and I am a resident of Stanislaus County and a community organizer with Valley Improvement Projects, a local non-profit organization focused on social and environmental justice issues. We are very grateful for farmers efforts to grow our food and for the advancements in the statewide pesticide notification system and thank you all for your efforts in getting us to this point. California is leading these efforts for better transparency and accessibility regarding pesticide use, and we are proud of that. But we are not at the finish line, because we continue to hear our communities needs for better protections.

The town of Grayson in our county participated in one of the beta tests. The community was able to test its use and see its benefits, including knowing what pesticides are being sprayed and when. However, as the community mentioned during the beta testing to provide the utmost protection, especially to the most marginalized communities who live, work, or go to school in areas surrounded by agricultural fields, knowing the exact location of pesticide applications is crucial. Not knowing this information places a large burden on these communities, leaving them at high risk of exposure.

Unfortunately, I vehemently disagree with your new pesticide notification system that does not contain the MOST important component, the exact location. I am deeply concerned that the system only provides partial information about the location of proposed pesticide use, describing a one-square-mile area rather than giving detailed information. If you live or work or your children attend a school surrounded by agricultural fields, if you are told everyday that within a square mile there was a pesticide application; how helpful would that information truly be, when you already know that you are surrounded by ag fields? It's simply not just or helpful that adequate information is left out preventing effective proactive self protection.

The town of Grayson in Stanislaus County participated in one of the pilot tests. Participants voiced their need for an exact location for an effective system. To provide the utmost protection, especially to marginalized communities near agricultural fields, knowing the exact location of pesticide applications is crucial. Not knowing this information places a large burden on these communities, leaving them at high risk of exposure, impacting their health and their livelihood. Considering pesticides can and do drift with the wind, knowing exactly where they are coming from is crucial. A one-square-mile radius notification does not provide sufficient information for the most impacted community members to take proactive measures to protect themselves. These measures include:

- Adjusting schedules and walking routes
- Ventilating and taking shelter, such as closing windows or moving indoors
- Assessing wind drift and other environmental factors

Farmworkers, who are the most exposed, can take extra safety precautions and perform additional safety precautions if they know which fields have been sprayed. This aids in faster emergency

preparedness in case of exposure to pesticide drift, which has been demonstrated by 2 recent school drift incidents in our community in the last two years.

Lastly, I am dissatisfied with the name "Spray Days." These are restricted chemicals, many of which are carcinogenic, and the name downplays the severity and need for safety concerns. The term "days" misrepresents the year-round use of pesticides. I suggest renaming it to the "Pesticide Notification System" to better reflect the program and avoid confusion.

Additionally, I am happy to hear that DPR will be looking into integrating new languages into the system, making it more accessible for all community members. Looking forward to seeing that be represented based on demographics.

Many of my community members that live the closest to agricultural fields have experienced some level of pesticide drift, higher depending on proximity and wind patterns. Knowing exactly when and where pesticides will be used allows people to know exactly from where pesticides are coming given a specific wind pattern and understanding the directions. Without knowing exact location, one cannot make the correct important assessment of where drift could be coming from that in a way defeats the purpose of the program, when it is not protecting those most put at harm's way. Given the \$10 M dollars invested in this program, it would be a shame to see it fail the people who are most at threat from this exposure. With that money you guys should be able to provide the information necessary for people to protect themselves.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I urge you to provide more precise information in the notification system to ensure the safety and well-being of our communities.

Sincerely,

Laura Plascencia