

Carcinogens on Campus

Our Jefferson Union High School District (JUHSD) is purchasing and applying poisons, including a suspected carcinogen, on its campuses. A late-posted notice at Oceana High School lists the chemicals and their manufacturers, including the notorious Roundup (glyphosate), which is banned in Europe as a suspected carcinogen. The four herbicides listed on the notice are being applied just before rains, so the effectiveness of the application is in doubt. The chemicals will likely drain into the soil.

What are the noxious weeds that JUHSD wants to eliminate? Is the district's maintenance crew applying poisons because they've always done that? Because Monsanto gave them a good price? Because they need to be busy? Weeds are hardly a detriment to student learning. A cost-benefit analysis is needed.

What other poisons do they use and how much does the district spend on poisons? Rodenticides kill not only gophers but also hawks, herons, and coyotes that prey on gophers. Does JUHSD have a policy on maintaining campuses using environmentally benign practices and eliminating toxins?

Attorneys are soliciting clients who believe their cancer was caused by Roundup. Will the staff or students sue the district some day? At this writing, the district has not responded to calls and emails for answers.

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