



September 7, 2011

Jane Parker, Chair
Monterey County Board of Supervisors
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION AGAINST THE USE OF METHYL IODIDE IN
MONTEREY COUNTY

Dear Supervisor Parker and Members of the Board of Supervisors:

The Leagues of Women Voters of the Monterey Peninsula (LWVMP) and the Salinas Valley (LWVSV) oppose the use of methyl iodide in Monterey County based on our natural resources position on hazardous materials. We support comprehensive measures to provide maximum protection to human health and the environment from the adverse effects of hazardous materials, including pesticides. An integrated approach should be taken to prevent harmful exposures through soil, surface and ground water contamination, bio-accumulation, air pollution and direct contact.

In December, 2010 the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) approved the registration of methyl iodide, allowing pesticide applicators to seek permits to fumigate with the highly toxic substance. Methyl iodide is the proposed replacement chemical for the banned ozone-depleting chemical methyl bromide. Methyl iodide is a known carcinogen, neurotoxin, and thyroid toxin, which can also disrupt fetal development, cause miscarriages and contaminate groundwater. It was nevertheless approved under lobbying pressure from the chemical manufacturer Arysta LifeScience.

Scientist John Froines, professor of environmental health at UCLA and Yale Ph.D chemist led the DPR scientific review of methyl iodide and he said that "Science was subverted" in the approval process and "there is no safe level of release" when it comes to the fumigant.

An education forum on methyl iodide and our community is planned for September 29, 2011 at Hartnell College in Salinas and speakers will include Assemblymembers Bill Monning and Luis Alejo, a local strawberry farmer, a biochemist from UC Berkeley and a physician.

The City of Watsonville, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (Region IX), the United Farm Workers, California Rural Legal Assistance, the California Federation of Teachers, Planned Parenthood Mar Monte, Citizens for a Sustainable Monterey County and many others have passed resolutions against methyl iodide. The Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board opposes methyl iodide due to potential drinking water contamination.

We urge you to pass a resolution opposing the use of methyl iodide in Monterey County.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Beverly Bean
President
LWVMP

Jane DiGirolamo
Legislative Action Chair
LWVSV