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Contact: Jan Whitney, Parkinson Association of Northern California
916-390-7366, jan@panctoday.org

CALIFORNIA PARAQUAT CANCELLATIONS MARK MAJOR STEP FOR WORKER AND PUBLIC HEALTH

All manufacturers have voluntarily canceled California registrations for pesticide products containing paraquat

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — The Parkinson Association of Northern California (PANC) welcomes the voluntary cancellation of every California pesticide-product registration containing paraquat dichloride, a highly toxic herbicide associated in scientific studies with an increased risk of Parkinson's disease.

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation just announced that all manufacturers of paraquat products have voluntarily canceled their registrations in the state. The cancellations began in April 2026, and the final registrant canceled its registration on August 6, initiating the phaseout of paraquat in California.

"This is an important victory for farmworkers, agricultural communities and everyone working toward a safer food system," said PANC President, Harry Starkey. "California should now ensure that paraquat is removed from use as quickly as the law allows and help growers transition to safer, sustainable weed-management practices that keep public and agricultural worker health standards a priority."

Paraquat is a restricted-use herbicide employed primarily to control weeds in agricultural settings. Its acute toxicity is well established, and a substantial body of scientific research has examined the relationship between paraquat exposure and Parkinson's disease.

Several epidemiological studies involving agricultural workers have reported significant associations between paraquat exposure and Parkinson's disease. Laboratory research also provides biologically plausible explanations for how paraquat could contribute to the disease process.

Paraquat can promote oxidative stress and mitochondrial dysfunction which are forms of cellular damage that may injure or kill dopamine-producing neurons. The progressive loss of these neurons in the brain is a defining feature of Parkinson's disease.

The federal National Toxicology Program (NTP) has identified a considerable body of evidence relevant to paraquat exposure and Parkinson's disease.

Paraquat is banned in more than 70 countries, including throughout the European Union and the United Kingdom, because of concerns about its acute toxicity and risks to human health and the environment. Effective November 2026, Vermont is the first state to pass a law that allows limited permitted uses of paraquat through 2030, before full prohibition. Additionally, Congresswoman Anna Paulina Luna (FL-13) with co-lead Rep. Chellie Pingree introduced a federal paraquat ban bill in Congress on June 18, 2026.

California initiated a reevaluation of paraquat in November 2024 and required manufacturers to provide additional scientific data addressing gaps in the state's health and environmental assessments. Rather than provide all the requested data, manufacturers began voluntarily canceling their registrations.

The cancellations do not immediately eliminate paraquat use. Under California law, licensed pesticide dealers may possess and sell a voluntarily canceled product for as long as two years after that product's cancellation takes effect. Existing products must continue to be handled and used according to their labels and all state and federal requirements.

"Cancellation should be the beginning, not the end, of California's work," said Starkey. "The state should closely supervise the phaseout, protect workers from remaining stocks, prevent stockpiling and invest in effective alternatives that do not place human health or the environment at unnecessary risk."

PANC calls on state officials to:

- Establish a transparent timeline for removing remaining paraquat products from commerce and use.
- Publicly report remaining sales and agricultural use during the phaseout.
- Strengthen protections and outreach for farm workers and communities near treated fields.
- Prevent stockpiling or improper disposal of canceled products.
- Expand assistance for growers adopting safer, sustainable weed-management practices.

Additional information is available from the [California Department of Pesticide Regulation](#) and the [National Toxicology Program's review of paraquat and Parkinson's disease](#).

PANC extends our sincere gratitude to the organizations, advocates, researchers, farmworkers, families affected by Parkinson's disease, and public officials whose persistent work helped bring about this change. Your research, testimony, education, legal advocacy, and courage turned concern into meaningful public-health protection.

About the Parkinson Association of Northern California

For more than 25 years, the Parkinson Association of Northern California has been providing programs and services to improve the quality of life for those facing Parkinson's disease throughout the region. Our programming emphasis supports the fact that while there is no cure for Parkinson's, those diagnosed with the disease can take steps to live well. For more information on PANC, visit panctoday.org.