

# Toxic Hangover

## How the EPA is Approving New Products with Dangerous Pesticides It Committed to Phasing Out

### Methods

For this analysis we set out to determine what pesticide products have been approved in recent years to determine whether highly hazardous pesticides were still being approved in new, updated products.

A Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request was made to the EPA for “a list of the applications submitted to EPA’s Office of Pesticide Programs seeking to register a new pesticide product in a manner that would require issuance of a unique EPA registration number.”<sup>1</sup> EPA subsequently supplied a list of product applications that were submitted to the agency between the dates of Jan 1, 2016 and May 13, 2019. For the present analysis, we pared down this list to only include products that were approved by the agency in 2017 and 2018. The spreadsheet supplied by the EPA was incomplete with respect to the active ingredients in each product, so the Pesticide Product Label System (PPLS) database<sup>2</sup> was searched to fill in the missing information on which active ingredients were in each product. Additional information on how many active ingredients were in each product, the type of pesticide and the restricted use status of the pesticide were added to the spreadsheet from the pesticide label. Technical or manufacturing use products – products that are intended for formulation or repackaging into end-use products – were removed from the list because they are not intended for use by the public.

To determine an approval rate for pesticide products during this time period, the above mentioned FOIA request also sought “Any denial decisions EPA made, generated in connection to the applications” requested above. This second request was similarly narrowed to only include official agency denials made in 2017 and 2018. The provided denials came in two forms; EPA either 1) outright rejected the application due to failing its technical screening process, or 2) notified the registrant that the agency was not granting approval for the product requested due to an inadequate submission. For the second type of denial, the registrant was given the opportunity to satisfy EPA’s requirements by supplementing its application in the future.

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<sup>1</sup> Data provided to the Center for Biological Diversity in response to FOIA request # EPA-HQ-2019-005048.

<sup>2</sup> EPA. Pesticide Product and Label System Database. Found here: <https://iaspub.epa.gov/apex/pesticides/f?p=PPLS:1>.