

<https://www.cnn.com/2019/05/13/health/monsanto-roundup-cancer-verdict-bn/index.html>

Jury returns \$2 billion verdict against Monsanto for couple with cancer

By Michael Nedelman, CNN

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(CNN)A jury handed a \$2.055 billion verdict in favor of a couple in California who say their cancer was caused by long-term exposure to Monsanto's popular weed killer Roundup, according to the plaintiffs' attorneys.

The verdict in Oakland includes more than \$55 million in compensatory damages to the couple and \$2 billion in punitive damages, a statement said.

The verdict "is as clear of a statement as you can get that they need to change what they're doing," one of the plaintiffs' attorneys, Brent Wisner, told reporters Monday.

It follows [several recent losses](#) the company has faced in court concerning Roundup. Thousands of similar cases are pending at the federal or state level.

Bayer, the parent company of Monsanto, insists that glyphosate -- the key ingredient in Roundup -- is safe.

"Bayer is disappointed with the jury's decision and will appeal the verdict in this case," [it said in a statement](#) after Monday's verdict.

The septuagenarian plaintiffs, Alva and Alberta Pilliod of Livermore, used the weed killer on their property for more than three decades and were diagnosed with the same type of cancer, non-Hodgkin lymphoma, four years apart, according to their attorneys.

Bayer said the jury was presented with "cherry-picked findings" inconsistent with a [statement last month](#) by the US Environmental Protection Agency, which announced that glyphosate was not a carcinogen and posed no public health risk when used as directed.

"The contrast between today's verdict and EPA's conclusion that there are 'no risks to public health from the current registered uses of glyphosate' could not be more stark," Bayer said.

However, not all groups have mirrored the EPA's announcement. Cases like the Pilliods' surged after a World Health Organization report in 2015 suggested that glyphosate might cause cancer.

The report, by WHO's International Agency for Research on Cancer, said glyphosate is "[probably carcinogenic to humans](#)." Bayer's statement on Monday said the plaintiffs "relied

heavily" on the agency's 2015 assessment but called it "an outlier among international health regulators and scientific bodies."

Most lymphoma cases have no known cause, according to the [American Cancer Society](#).

There have also been concerns about whether Monsanto has had undue influence over regulators, with internal company documents playing a key role in Monday's verdict, according to the plaintiffs' lawyers.

In the statement, Michael Miller, another of the Pilliods' lawyers, said their case is different from two previous Monsanto trials "where the judges severely limited the amount of plaintiffs' evidence." He said the jury was shown a "mountain of evidence showing Monsanto's manipulation of science, the media and regulatory agencies to forward their own agenda."

Wisner said Monday that this evidence included emails and text messages between Monsanto and EPA officials.

A Monsanto spokeswoman [previously denied that](#) the company had ever paid, given gifts to or done anything else to curry favor with anyone from the EPA.

"This is going to continue until Monsanto and now Bayer takes responsibility for its product," Wisner said.

"This is not the end of this litigation," he said. "This is the beginning."