

[Biden Administration May Change Course on EPA Atrazine Actions \(dtnpf.com\)](https://dtnpf.com)

Biden Reviewing EPA Atrazine Actions

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A lawsuit challenging EPA's actions on atrazine has been stayed by a federal court. (DTN file photo by Greg Horstmeier)

OMAHA (DTN) -- A federal lawsuit challenging EPA's approval of atrazine and two related herbicides, propazine and simazine, has been stayed as part of the Biden administration's review of Trump administration actions.

That lawsuit was filed in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in San Francisco in November 2020, by the Rural Coalition, Pesticide Action Network North America, Beyond Pesticides, Center for Biological Diversity and the Center for Food Safety. The groups allege EPA violated its duties under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act, or FIFRA, when the agency released its interim registrations of the three pesticides in September 2020.

Environmental groups have lobbied for atrazine to be banned entirely, based on concerns about human health risks and environmental problems, particularly concerning water quality.

Syngenta, the registrant and primary manufacturer of atrazine, has intervened in the case.

"It is possible that, in response to this review, EPA may undertake actions that could resolve some or all of the issues in this case," EPA said in its motion to stay. All parties agreed to the stay, and the judges approved the motion.

Atrazine is a herbicide widely used in agriculture across a range of crops, primarily corn but also sugarcane and sorghum, as well as a smaller amount in landscape care. The herbicide is under re-registration review by EPA.

In September, EPA released an interim registration decision approving its continued use and announced some new requirements for atrazine.

The agency now requires a reduction of the maximum application rate for atrazine and simazine when used on residential turf in order to protect children who crawl or play on treated grass.

EPA added a requirement for irrigation immediately after simazine application to residential turf and required additional personal protective equipment for workers who apply atrazine and simazine.

The agency is finalizing label requirements for all three triazines to include mandatory spray drift control measures. These aim to minimize pesticide drift into non-target areas, including bodies of water. Label directions are also being updated to slow weed resistance to atrazine.

New label language will prohibit spraying during a temperature inversion, setting a 15-mph wind speed restriction for aerial and ground applications, and add specific boom and nozzle requirements.

The EPA also proposed ending one of two ongoing atrazine water-monitoring programs started in 2004.

EPA's September registration decision for atrazine remains "interim" as the agency awaits one final step -- a biological evaluation of atrazine's potential effects on endangered species and critical habitats, as required by the Endangered Species Act.

Final endangered species determinations for atrazine are expected to be completed in 2021.

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