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Public Health
Wales

Freedom of Information request to Public Health Wales

FOI Reference:

FOI 279

Date request received

20 November 2019

Date information is due to be sent

N/A

Information Requested:

Torfaen Borough Council via a contractor spray a glyphosate based weedkiller around our estates to eradicate the weeds on paths etc. Glyphosate causes cancer, fatty liver disease, kidney failure, birth defects etc! See the monograph on www.pan.org. Also See www.sustainablepulse. We have asked the council via a petition to stop spraying but they continue even though we have supplied them with detailed peer reviewed information as to why they should apply the precautionary principle. Please could I have your views on this urgent matter? As a Health Board do you agree with the council's decision?

Information provided for the answer:

Public Health Wales does not have a formal remit around pesticide use. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has oversight of pesticides and food safety in England, Northern Ireland and Wales while Defra are responsible for policy on pesticides and the Health and Safety Executive is responsible for approval and enforcement.

Pesticides are regulated to make sure they don't present unacceptable risks to the public, to people who apply them, to the environment or to animals. A European Commission has recently approved the use of glyphosate for a further five years. The European Food Safety Authority, the European Chemicals Agency Committee for Risk Assessment and the Joint WHO/FAO Meeting on Pesticides Residues have stated that glyphosate is not likely to cause harm to people and should not be classified as a carcinogen. UK scientists have assessed this decision and have concluded that this decision it meets UK standards, both for health and the environment. The UK Government therefore supports the continuing approval and use of glyphosate.

The UK Government is advised on the use and approval of pesticides to protect food safety by two expert committees - the Expert Committee on Pesticides (ECP) (see <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/expertcommittee-on-pesticides>) and the Expert Committee on Pesticide Residues in Food (PRiF) (see <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/expert-committee-on-pesticide-residues-in-food-prif>).

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of the decision, you should write to the Corporate Complaints Manager, Public Health Wales NHS Trust, 3, Number 2, Capital Quarter, Tyndall Street, Cardiff, CF10 4BZ.

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint or review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Trust. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner for Wales
2nd Floor
Churchill House
Churchill Way
Cardiff
CF10 2HH

Telephone: 029 2067 8400

Email: wales@ico.org.uk