



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

TOM HUCKER
COUNCILMEMBER

Mike Riley
Director of Parks
M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks
9500 Brunett Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20901

November 21, 2018

Dear Director Riley,

I wish to follow up on our conversation at the Council's joint T&E/PHED Committee work session on September 17th on the use of pesticides in County Parks. As I expressed then, I remain concerned that our Parks Department is using Roundup and other pesticides that contain the harmful chemical glyphosate. Scientific evidence, including the International Agency for Research on Cancer ("IARC") has linked glyphosate to cancer in humans.¹

As you acknowledged at the work session, a California state court jury recently awarded \$289 million to a school groundskeeper who spent years applying Roundup to fields based on their determination that it had caused his incurable non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.² Thousands more lawsuits are expected, and over 4,000 individuals have already filed suit.³ Plaintiffs' attorneys are running television and internet ads to identify additional individuals who have been exposed to glyphosate.⁴ The County should not take comfort in the fact that Roundup and similar

¹ International Agency for Research on Cancer, World Health Organization: "*IARC Monographs Volume 112: evaluation of five organophosphate insecticides and herbicides.*" March 20, 2015, available at: <http://www.iarc.fr/en/media-centre/iarcnews/pdf/MonographVolume112.pdf>

² "California jury awards \$289 million to man who claimed Monsanto's Roundup pesticide gave him cancer." LA Times, August 10, 2018, available at: <http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-roundup-verdict-20180810-story.html>

³ "Plaintiffs Lawyers Eye More Roundup Lawsuits After \$289M Verdict Against Monsanto," The Recorder, August 13, 2018, available at: <https://www.law.com/therecorder/2018/08/13/plaintiffs-lawyers-eye-more-roundup-lawsuits-after-289m-verdict-against-monsanto/?sreturn=20180913033810>

⁴ See generally, websites for plaintiffs attorneys: <http://www.knightlinelegal.com/roundup/>; <https://www.millerandzois.com/roundup-cancer-attorneys.htm>;

pesticides with glyphosate remain registered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The EPA has consistently relied on very outdated research on glyphosate and has failed to meaningfully reconsider potential health risks to humans in recent years.

It is only a matter of time before Montgomery County and other jurisdictions around the country face similar lawsuits for this ever-expanding liability. I urge Montgomery Parks to immediately discontinue the use of Roundup and all other pesticides with glyphosate. I appreciate that Parks has taken a step towards this with its “pesticide-free” 11-park program, however, we cannot afford to wait to implement a complete ban of the use of Roundup and other products containing glyphosate at all Montgomery Parks. Safer substitutes are available. The fiscally and environmentally responsible thing to do is to limit liability by implementing this ban.

To that end, I am aware that there may be a cost to implementing this change. Please provide cost estimates for Parks’ current annual spending on Roundup and other pesticides containing glyphosate. Please also provide any cost estimates for weed management products that do not contain glyphosate as well as for alternative weed management practices that could be employed locally without the use of any pesticides.

I look forward to your reply.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Hucker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Tom Hucker