

20th April 2026

Dear Cllr Frost/Cornwall Council,

We, the undersigned health professionals of Cornwall, write to express our collective concern regarding the planned reintroduction of glyphosate for weed control on urban highways. As advocates for the health and well-being of our residents, we urge you to reconsider this decision considering growing scientific evidence highlighting the health risks associated with glyphosate and the adjuvants combined with it.

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), part of the World Health Organization (WHO), classified glyphosate as "probably carcinogenic to humans" (Group 2A) in 2015. This classification was based on sufficient evidence of carcinogenicity in animals and limited evidence in humans, particularly concerning non-Hodgkin lymphoma (IARC, 2015).

Studies have shown an association between glyphosate exposure and various health issues, including but not limited to:

- **Carcinogenicity:** Increased risk of cancers, particularly lymphomas. (Panzacchi et al., 2025; Weisenberger, 2026),
- **Liver disease:** Glyphosate based herbicides have been shown to cause liver disease (Mesnage, R. *et al.*, 2017).
- **Birth defects:** Glyphosate based herbicides have been shown to cause multiple foetal malformations (Antoniou et al., 2012).
- **Neurological Effects:** Studies suggest an association between glyphosate exposure and neurological disorders, including Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease (Costas-Ferreira et al., 2022).

Adjuvants in glyphosate weedkiller formulations have not been regulated sufficiently, and there are inadequate long term safety data, however studies have shown many of them are toxic to human cells. (Mesnage et al., 2013).

We are especially concerned as the planned application of weedkiller is on the urban highway network, including close to schools and healthcare settings. In addition, as it will be applied to plants on hard surfaces including close to drains and waterways, despite the use of Controlled Droplet Application, there will inevitably be runoff into drains, rivers and the sea, bypassing any breakdown by soil microorganisms and risking contaminating bathing waters.

Finally, the reintroduction of glyphosate poses significant risks to our local environment. Glyphosate is known to harm beneficial insects, aquatic life, and soil health. These are vital for human health, contributing to clean air and water, pollination of crops, and natural pest control, all of which are essential for food security and overall well-being. Protecting biodiversity is not just an environmental concern; it is a matter of public health that affects us all directly.

Given the substantial scientific evidence regarding the health risks associated with glyphosate, we implore Cornwall Council to prioritize the safety of our community by refraining from its use on urban highways. The health of our residents and the integrity of our environment must be at the forefront of our decision-making processes.

We appreciate your attention to this critical matter and look forward to your commitment to a healthier Cornwall.

References

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4. Mesnage, R., Renney, G., Séralini, GE. *et al.* (2017). "Multiomics reveal non-alcoholic fatty liver disease in rats following chronic exposure to an ultra-low dose of Roundup herbicide." *Scientific Reports*
5. Antoniou, M *et al.*, (2012) "Teratogenic Effects of Glyphosate-Based Herbicides: Divergence of Regulatory Decisions from Scientific Evidence". *Journal of Environmental & Analytical Toxicology*
6. Costas-Ferreira C, Durán R, Faro LRF. (2022). "Toxic Effects of Glyphosate on the Nervous System: A Systematic Review." *Int J Mol Sci*.
7. Mesnage R, Bernay B, Séralini GE. (2013) "Ethoxylated adjuvants of glyphosate-based herbicides are active principles of human cell toxicity." *Journal of Toxicology*.

Yours sincerely,