

Assembly Bill No. 947

CHAPTER 457

An act to add Section 35294.4 to the Education Code, and to amend Section 12999.5 of, and to add Section 11503.5 to, the Food and Agricultural Code, relating to pesticides.

[Approved by Governor September 11, 2002. Filed with Secretary of State September 11, 2002.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 947, Jackson. Pesticides: schoolsites.

(1) Existing law authorizes the levy of civil penalties of not more than \$1,000 for each violation of any provision of a specified body of law relating to pesticides.

This bill would increase this penalty to not more than \$5,000 for each violation determined to be a serious violation. This bill would also authorize a county agricultural commissioner to charge a fee for monitoring subsequent pesticide applications made within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of a school by a person who has received a civil penalty for a specified violation of law relating to pesticides.

(2) Under existing law, the agricultural commissioner of any county may adopt regulations applicable in his or her county that are supplemental to those of the Secretary of Food and Agriculture that govern the conduct of pest control operations and records and reports of those operations.

This bill would authorize the commissioner of any county to apply these regulations to the agricultural use of any pesticide within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of a school, as specified, and would allow the Director of Pesticide Regulation to disapprove the conditions within 30 days of their submission.

(3) Existing law provides that each school district and county office of education is responsible for the overall development of comprehensive school safety plans for its schools.

This bill would provide that the school safety plan may include, at local discretion of the governing board of the school district, procedures for responding to the release of a pesticide or other toxic substance from properties within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of a school. This bill would provide that no funds received from the state may be used for this purpose.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 35294.4 is added to the Education Code, to read:

35294.4. The comprehensive school safety plan may also include, at local discretion of the governing board of the school district and using local funds, procedures for responding to the release of a pesticide or other toxic substance from properties located within one-quarter mile of a school. No funds received from the state may be used for this purpose.

SEC. 2. Section 11503.5 is added to the Food and Agricultural Code, to read:

11503.5. The county agricultural commissioner may apply Section 11503 to the agricultural use of any pesticide for agricultural production within one-quarter mile of a school with respect to the timing, notification, and method of application. Any regulations adopted pursuant to this section shall become operative unless specifically disapproved in writing by the director within 30 calendar days of their submission by the commissioner.

SEC. 3. Section 12999.5 of the Food and Agricultural Code is amended to read:

12999.5. (a) In lieu of civil prosecution by the director, the commissioner may levy a civil penalty against a person violating Division 6 (commencing with Section 11401), Article 10 (commencing with Section 12971) or Article 10.5 (commencing with Section 12980) of this chapter, Section 12995, Article 1 (commencing with Section 14001) of Chapter 3, Chapter 7.5 (commencing with Section 15300), or a regulation adopted pursuant to any of these provisions, of not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) for each violation. Any violation determined by the commissioner to be a serious violation as defined in Section 6130 of the Code of Regulations is subject to a fine of not more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for each violation. It is unlawful and grounds for denial of a permit under Section 14008 for any person to refuse or neglect to pay a civil penalty levied pursuant to this section once the order is final.

(b) If a person has received a civil penalty for pesticide drift in a school area subject to Section 11503.5 that results in a serious violation as defined in subdivision (a), the commissioner shall charge a fee, not to exceed fifty dollars (\$50), for processing and monitoring each subsequent pesticide application that may pose a risk of pesticide drift made in a school area subject to Section 11503.5. The Agricultural Commissioner shall continue to impose the fee for each subsequent application that may pose a risk of drift, until the person has completed



24 months without another serious violation as defined in subdivision (a).

(c) Before a civil penalty is levied, the person charged with the violation shall be given a written notice of the proposed action including the nature of the violation and the amount of the proposed penalty, and shall have the right to request a hearing within 20 days after receiving notice of the proposed action. A notice of the proposed action that is sent by certified mail to the last known address of the person charged shall be considered received even if delivery is refused or the notice is not accepted at that address. If a hearing is requested, notice of the time and place of the hearing shall be given at least 10 days before the date set for the hearing. At the hearing, the person shall be given an opportunity to review the commissioner's evidence and to present evidence on his or her own behalf. If a hearing is not timely requested, the commissioner may take the action proposed without a hearing.

(d) If the person upon whom the commissioner levied a civil penalty requested and appeared at a hearing, the person may appeal the commissioner's decision to the director within 30 days of the date of receiving a copy of the commissioner's decision. The following procedures apply to the appeal:

(1) The appeal shall be in writing and signed by the appellant or his or her authorized agent, state the grounds for the appeal, and include a copy of the commissioner's decision. The appellant shall file a copy of the appeal with the commissioner at the same time it is filed with the director.

(2) The appellant and the commissioner may, at the time of filing the appeal or within 10 days thereafter or at a later time prescribed by the director, present the record of the hearing including written evidence that was submitted at the hearing and a written argument to the director stating grounds for affirming, modifying, or reversing the commissioner's decision.

(3) The director may grant oral arguments upon application made at the time written arguments are filed.

(4) If an application to present an oral argument is granted, written notice of the time and place for the oral argument shall be given at least 10 days before the date set therefor. The times may be altered by mutual agreement of the appellant, the commissioner, and the director.

(5) The director shall decide the appeal on the record of the hearing, including the written evidence and the written argument described in paragraph (2), that he or she has received. If the director finds substantial evidence in the record to support the commissioner's decision, the director shall affirm the decision.



(6) The director shall render a written decision within 45 days of the date of appeal or within 15 days of the date of oral arguments or as soon thereafter as practical.

(7) On an appeal pursuant to this section, the director may affirm the commissioner's decision, modify the commissioner's decision by reducing or increasing the amount of the penalty levied so that it is within the director's guidelines for imposing civil penalties, or reverse the commissioner's decision. Any civil penalty increased by the director shall not be higher than that proposed in the commissioner's notice of proposed action given pursuant to subdivision (b). A copy of the director's decision shall be delivered or mailed to the appellant and the commissioner.

(8) Any person who does not request a hearing pursuant to subdivision (b) may not file an appeal pursuant to this subdivision.

(9) Review of a decision of the director may be sought by the appellant within 30 days of the date of the decision pursuant to Section 1094.5 of the Code of Civil Procedure.

(e) The commissioner may levy a civil penalty pursuant to subdivisions (a) to (c), inclusive, against a person violating paragraph (1), (2), or (8) of subdivision (a) of Section 1695 of the Labor Code, which pertains to registration with the commissioner, carrying proof of that registration, and filing changes of address with the commissioner.

(f) After the exhaustion of the appeal and review procedures provided in this section, the commissioner or his or her representative, may file a certified copy of a final decision of the commissioner that directs the payment of a civil penalty and, if applicable, a copy of any decision of the director or his or her authorized representative rendered on an appeal from the commissioner's decision and a copy of any order that denies a petition for a writ of administrative mandamus, with the clerk of the superior court of any county. Judgment shall be entered immediately by the clerk in conformity with the decision or order. No fees shall be charged by the clerk of the superior court for the performance of any official service required in connection with the entry of judgment pursuant to this section.

