

# Another Spike of Cancer-Causing Telone Recorded in Shafter

Sept 2021

Three years after record-high levels in Shafter and Parlier, excessive levels of 1,3-dichloropropene (1,3-D or Telone) continue to be measured. So far, the state has taken no steps to prevent them from happening again.

## What is 1,3-D?

1,3-D is listed by the state as a cancer-causing fumigant pesticide and a highly drift-prone Toxic Air Contaminant. It is applied to soil before planting crops including almonds and carrots. It is known to cause lung cancer in lab animals, and is banned in 31 countries.

## What happened?

On October 16, 2020, DPR's air monitor in Shafter measured a level of 37.5 ppb. This follows a spike of 20.8 ppb in January 2020. DPR has determined that the most likely application sites were 3 and 7.5 miles from the air monitoring site, respectively.

Although the Shafter community has worked with DPR for the past two years through participation in AB 617, and has repeatedly asked for measures to reduce 1,3-D and other pesticide emissions, the community was not notified about the October spike. DPR released the data on its website in June 2021.

## 1,3-D use was previously banned for much less

When a 1,3-D level of 30 ppb was measured in Merced County in 1990, use of this pesticide ended for five years.

The state allowed it back in 1995 under pressure from the manufacturer Dow.

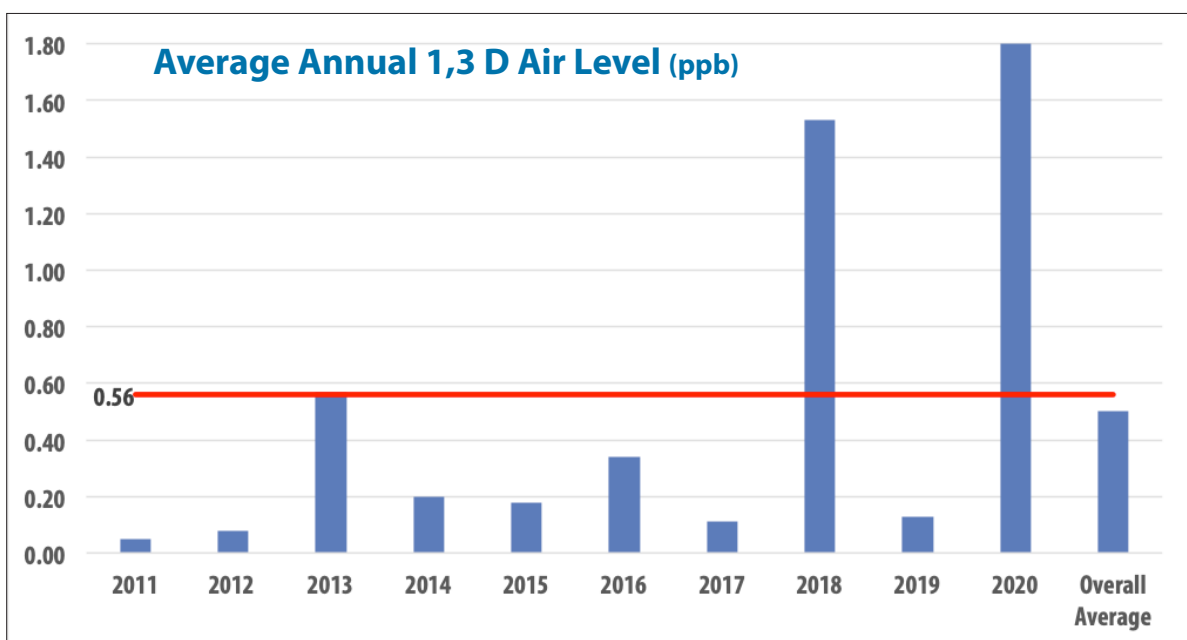
The average air level between for the last three months of 2020 was 4.22 ppb. This is 40% higher than the screening level of 3 ppb set to prevent damage to the lining of the nose.

## What about the cancer risk?

Since DPR began monitoring pesticide air levels in 2011 at Shafter High School, 1,3-D has repeatedly been found at levels of cancer risk concern.

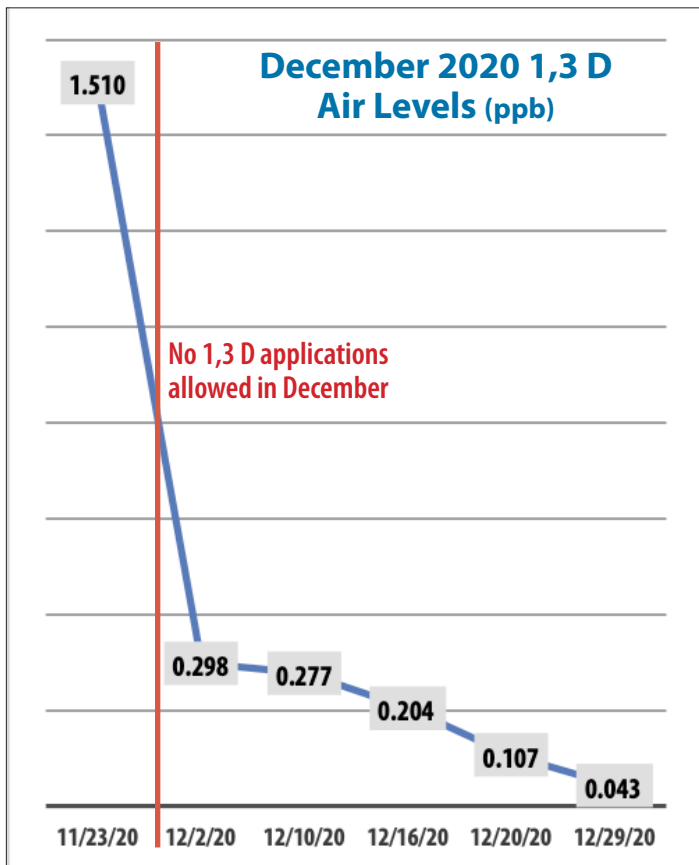
The annual average level in 2020 was 1.8 ppb, which is the highest average in 10 years of monitoring, and more than three times DPR's new Cancer Regulatory Target (0.56 ppb).

In 2016, DPR relaxed the cancer risk level for 1,3-D from 0.14 ppb to 0.56 ppb, and allowed growers to start using 50% more of the product. The 10 year average level is 0.50 ppb, which is 89% of the relaxed 0.56 ppb level and more than three times DPR's previous target which is still supported by the health assessment office of the California Environmental Protection Agency (OEHHA).



## 1,3-D measured in December

Another concern is that 1,3-D continues to be measured throughout the month of December, even though 1,3-D applications are not allowed in December. 1,3-D was also found at the Parlier and Delhi monitoring sites during the month of December.



## Has this happened before?

An air level of 50.5 parts per billion (ppb) measured at Shafter High School in January 2018 was the highest level of this pesticide ever recorded in California. That record was shattered the same year in Parlier (Fresno County) when a level of 111 ppb was measured.

## So what has DPR done about it?

- No actions have been taken to prevent a recurrence in Shafter.
- No new mitigations or labelling requirements have been proposed.
- In December 2020, DPR ordered the Kern County Agricultural Commissioner to provide advance notification of applications of 1,3-D

and three other fumigant pesticides. When the ag commissioner refused to do so, DPR backed down.

- In March 2018, a court found that DPR had illegally allowed the manufacturer Dow to make, monitor and enforce the rules for 1,3-D use, and ordered DPR to start legal rulemaking. Instead, DPR joined Dow in appealing the verdict, and still has not started rulemaking more than three years later.

## What can and should be done?

Ending use will greatly reduce the health hazard. The state should:

- Ban this air-contaminating, cancer-causing pesticide completely
- Immediately begin notifying the public in advance of applications
- Immediately ban untarped applications
- Immediately ban applications whenever the air is stagnant and for the entire month of January

### To learn more about what you can do to help end use of this pesticide, contact:

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