



Walter Wright, Jr.
wwright@mwlaw.com
(501) 688.8839

Human Health Benchmarks for Pesticides: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 2021 Update Released

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The United States Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") updated its Human Health Benchmarks for Pesticides ("HHBPs").

The 2021 update was announced last week.

HHBPs have been published by EPA for a number of years to assist water systems, primacy agencies and other water users in analyzing monitoring data addressing pesticides that could potentially be present in drinking water. The presence of small amounts of pesticides in drinking water (and/or for source water) does not necessarily mean there is a health risk to consumers. The HHBPs are stated to assist in informing:

1. Whether the detection level of a pesticide in drinking water or source waters for drinking water may indicate a potential health risk; and
2. The prioritization of monitoring efforts

EPA states it developed these benchmarks for all pesticides for which it has received toxicity data through:

1. the pesticide registration and review processes; and
2. for which the agency has not issued a drinking water health advisory or set a drinking water standard.

Nevertheless, HHBPs are not legally enforceable federal standards.

The HHBPs had previously been revised in 2013, 2017, and now 2021. EPA states that in the 2021 update it addressed toxicity values for 104 pesticides. It also added 43 pesticides to the HHBPs table.

Links to the Fact Sheet, the HHBPs Updated 2021 Technical Document, and the 2021 EPA Human Benchmarks for Pesticides Table can be found below:

<https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2021-07/hh-benchmarks-factsheet-2021.pdf>

<https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2021-07/hh-benchmarks-technical-document-2021.pdf>

<https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2021-07/hh-benchmarks-table-2021.pdf>