




To: Apricot Valley Families and Staff
From:  Linda Pinfold, Agricultural Commissioner
Date: March 16, 2026

Notice to Parents and Staff:

Apricot Valley Elementary School – March 13 Herbicide Application Incident

The Stanislaus County Agricultural Commissioner's Office is currently investigating an incident that occurred on the morning of Friday, March 13, 2026, involving the application of weed control products on the Apricot Valley Elementary School campus.

Our office is responsible for regulating pesticide use and investigating pesticide-related illness reports in Stanislaus County. We are working closely with the Patterson Joint Unified School District and Apricot Valley Elementary School as part of this investigation.

What Happened

Based on the information currently available, during the mid-morning hours on March 13, a school employee applied weed control products along fence lines and in areas where weeds were present, including cracks and crevices.

The products reportedly used were:

- **Cornerstone Plus** (active ingredient: glyphosate)
- **Cheetah Pro** (active ingredient: glufosinate-ammonium)

Later that morning, some students and staff reported skin irritation and rashes, and emergency services were contacted to provide medical assistance.

Because the investigation is still ongoing, these details are based on preliminary information.

What Agricultural Commissioner's Office Is Doing

The Agricultural Commissioner's Office has initiated an active investigation to determine: what occurred; when, where and how the products were applied; and whether pesticide use regulations were followed. In addition to investigating the incident, our office also focuses on identifying root causes of pesticide related incidents and providing education and outreach to help prevent similar situations from occurring in the future.

Our office would like to express our appreciation to the Patterson Joint Unified School District, which has been very cooperative and responsive in working with our staff throughout this process.

The Stanislaus County Agricultural Commissioner's Office takes pesticide safety seriously. Our role is to ensure pesticides are used responsibly, safely, and in compliance with California law. Situations like this are investigated thoroughly. When concerns arise, our office works to identify what occurred, evaluate any potential health impacts, and ensure appropriate steps are taken to prevent similar incidents in the future.

If You or Your Child Experienced Symptoms

To assist with our investigation, we ask that parents or staff contact our office if a student or staff member experienced symptoms such as:

- Skin irritation
- Rashes
- Unexplained itching

If symptoms are present, please seek medical attention. When seeking medical care, please inform the healthcare provider that the products Cornerstone Plus and Cheetah Pro were reportedly used at the school. Healthcare providers may contact our office if they need product labels or Safety Data Sheets.

Individuals who receive medical care may be asked to sign a release of information form to allow medical information to be shared with the County Agricultural Commissioner to assist the investigation.

Contact Information

If you have questions or information that may assist with this investigation, please contact:
Stanislaus County Agricultural Commissioner's Office

- **Phone:** 209-525-4730
- **Email:** Melanie Pellegrino – melaniep@stancounty.com

Parents and staff are welcome to contact our office at any time with questions.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the Agricultural Commissioner's Office involved?

The Agricultural Commissioner regulates pesticide use in the county and investigates reports of pesticide-related illness or exposure to ensure pesticides are used safely and in accordance with California law.

What pesticides were used?

The products reportedly applied were **Cornerstone Plus** (glyphosate) and **Cheetah Pro** (glufosinate-ammonium), both herbicides used for weed control.

What symptoms have been reported?


Some students and staff reported **skin irritation and rashes**. Anyone experiencing symptoms should seek medical attention.

What is the County investigating?

The investigation will determine what occurred, how the products were applied, and whether all pesticide regulations were followed. The County will also work with the school to help prevent similar incidents in the future.

How can I report symptoms or information?

Please contact the **Stanislaus County Agricultural Commissioner's Office**:

 **209-525-4730**

 **melaniep@stancounty.com**