

Monsanto Cancer Lawsuits Focus On EPA Official's "Suspicious" Role



A retired EPA official is at the center of more than 20 lawsuits that allege Monsanto failed to warn of cancer risks from glyphosate, the key ingredient in its Roundup weed killer. Jess Rowland, a former EPA deputy division director, is accused of helping Monsanto by publishing a report advising that there was not enough evidence to link glyphosate to cancer, which preempted further research. The EPA is trying to stop his deposition in March. -GEG

A former Environmental Protection Agency official may not be able to escape testifying about his alleged role in helping Monsanto Co. suppress inquiries into whether its Roundup weed killer causes cancer.

A manager who left the agency's pesticide division last year has become a central figure in more than 20 lawsuits in the U.S. accusing the company of failing to warn consumers and regulators of the risk that its glyphosate-based herbicide can cause non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

A federal judge said Monday that he's inclined to order the retired official, Jess Rowland, to submit to questioning by lawyers for the plaintiffs, who contend he had a "highly suspicious" relationship with Monsanto. Rowland chaired a committee that found insufficient evidence to conclude

glyphosate is carcinogenic and left his job just days after his report was leaked to the press in May.

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