



WOMEN'S VOICES FOR THE EARTH

OUR HEALTH. OUR FUTURE. TOXIC FREE.

**Biomonitoring California
Scientific Guidance Panel
March 8, 2021**

Women's Voices for the Earth submits the following comments for the agenda item "Increased Human Exposure to QACs during the COVID-19 Pandemic"

Concerns about special vulnerable populations with excessive exposures to Quats during Covid-19 (and beyond):

1) Taxi drivers and drivers in the ride-sharing industry:

Drivers are at considerable risk for exposure to quats due to the repeated need throughout a workday to disinfect their vehicles between passengers. This exposure is worsened by the fact that their workplace (the vehicle) is a very small unventilated space (especially in cold weather). Further compounding the exposure is the fact that drivers lack opportunities to wash their hands with soap and water (as is required by the safety instructions for products containing quats due to residue concerns) and commonly eat in their cars.

Recommended [sanitation guidelines from Lyft](#) include:

- Use all-purpose spray and sanitizing spray on surfaces in the riders space: (seat belts, door handles, buttons, locks, cup holders, etc.)
- Use all-purpose spray in driver's space (seat belt, door handle, steering wheel, gear shift, cup holders, console buttons and knobs etc.)
- Use all-purpose spray on windows, partition and rearview mirrors.
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The products recommended by Lyft (and made available at a discount on the Lyft.com store) are [Spic and Span all-purpose cleaner](#) and [Microban 24 sanitizing spray](#). Both products contain quats. Spic and Span contains ADBAC and Microban 24 contains both ADBAC and DDAC.

If drivers followed the Lyft recommended guidelines to use these products in between every passenger – this would be at least 15 minutes of spraying exposure (plus lingering post-spray exposure), in a very small unventilated area, up to 10 times a day – for a worker with extremely limited opportunities to wash hands with soap and water (which is required in the safety instructions for use of these products.)

2) School exposures

Many schools that are offering in-person instruction have invested in extensive (and largely untested) disinfection protocols, commonly using products containing quats. Exposures are of considerable concern to janitorial/custodial staff, and students as well as teachers/staff in the building.

Janitors/custodial staff have vastly increased the frequency and application of disinfectants in schools during Covid. Some of this is accomplished by the implementation of foggers, misters and electrostatic sprayers which commonly administer quat-containing disinfectants. Safety training and PPE for custodial staff varies widely – leading to the potential for significant inhalation exposure to those applying the disinfectants.

Students also have multiple exposures to quats throughout the day including daily disinfection of school busses, daily disinfection of classrooms and lunchrooms (sometimes multiple times a day) and some schools require students to wipe down their desks at the end of the day with a disinfectant wipe (likely containing quats.). There are some schools requiring students to use quat-based hand sanitizers multiple times daily as well. (Some schools have policies requiring hand sanitizers to be “non-alcohol”, which means they contain quats instead.) Students are constantly in contact with surfaces that have been disinfected. The extent of dermal exposure to quat residue on classroom surfaces, leftover from spraying is underresearched and largely unknown, but could be considerable.