

# Perth Now

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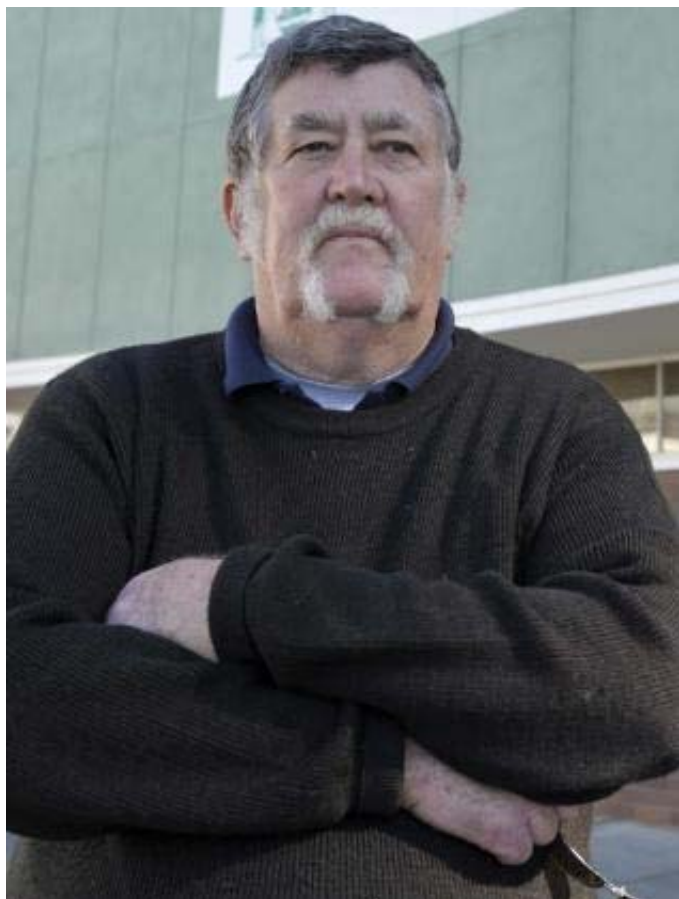
## 'Poisoned' worker Carl Drysdale sues WA Government

- **Narelle Towie**, Environment Reporter
- From: PerthNow
- July 23, 2010 9:59AM
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**POISON CLAIM:** Former WA Agriculture Department weed sprayer Carl Drysdale is suing the government after being exposed to harmful chemicals. Picture: **Theo Fakos**

Source: PerthNow

**A FORMER Agricultural Protection Board weed sprayer is suing the WA Government for poisoning him on the job.**

Carl Drysdale's lawyers, Chapmans Barristers and Solicitors, served the writ, claiming unspecified damages for personal injury because of negligence.

He is suing the APB and the Department of Agriculture's director general Rob Delaney.

Mr Drysdale was one of 94 workers poisoned by the now-banned herbicide 245-T while spraying weeds in the Kimberley, between 1975 and 1985.

Workers exposed to the chemicals, which included an alleged rogue batch of Agent Orange, suffered diarrhoea, headaches and skin complaints. Some have died. Many of the poisoned workers were on the work-for-the-dole scheme at the time.

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'Poisoned' worker Carl Drysdale sues ...

Mr Drysdale, 64, said he experienced a heart-attack at 36 and has been in and out of intensive care, unable to work for the past 25 years.

"Sinus, headaches, eye problems, rashes, vomiting blood, passing blood, the list of problems is too much for me even to recall," Mr Drysdale said today outside the Department's office.

He claims the State Government has treated him worse than a dog.

"If someone poisoned a dog like this, the RSPCA would have prosecuted someone by now," Mr Drysdale said.

After two parliamentary inquiries, the State Government admitted in Parliament in 2003, that fit, healthy people had died prematurely because of the herbicide's use.

The unprotected workers were carrying backpacks full of 245T which leaked into their clothes and soaked into their skin.

Only those former APB workers who developed cancer have been provided with compensation from the Government's insurer RiskCover.

Chapmans' CEO Peter Quinn said a major part of the case would be arguing that the medical problems were delayed, unfairly pushing many of the workers beyond the time limit to sue.

He said the government had purposely stalled on the issue.

Mr Drysdale's teacher wife supports him and their four children.

"It has been an ongoing, unsolved problem and there has been no closure for anybody".

Campaigners in Derby estimate three dozen former APB workers are now dead with many more suffering long-term chemical injuries.

Mr Quinn said his legal team had been contacted by other APB workers and their cases were also being worked on.

"I wouldn't be surprised if more cases are lodged after this one goes public," Mr Quinn said.

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