

**ACTION ALERT!**

# We Must Grab This Moment

October 2019

## Confusion, and Opportunity!

**No, M-44 “cyanide bombs” haven’t been banned. But the EPA acknowledging public outrage about them presents a golden opportunity.**

Dear Friend of Predator Defense,

In recent months you may have noticed some misleading headlines in *The New York Times*, *HuffPost*, and other media outlets about the EPA reversing course on using M-44 “cyanide bombs” to kill wildlife. These headlines—which resulted from the media’s lack of understanding of arcane regulatory processes

**Contrary to misleading media reports, M-44 use continues in 14 states. A nationwide ban remains imperative.**

and jargon—created both public jubilation and confusion, as people thought the Trump administration had miraculously decided to do the right thing and ban these indiscriminate killers. That didn’t happen...at least not yet.

As of this moment M-44s are still being used for predator control in 14 states. This remains unacceptable, but there is good news regardless,

which brings a moment of great possibility.

What happened for sure is the EPA decided to restore the status quo. Specifically, they decided:

- Not to renew the registration for the sodium cyanide poison used in M-44s
- Not to tighten the M-44 use restrictions geared toward public safety
- To further discuss the issues

These decisions deceived many, but take note—they do not ban M-44s, stockpiles remain available to states that use them, and the EPA can still decide to renew the sodium cyanide registration over the next year. What needs to happen is simple: the EPA needs to CANCEL the registration, which would effectively ban M-44s.

The bright spot in the EPA’s decision is they appeared to recognize the deluge of public complaints over their use of poison land mines in our great outdoors that have killed countless wild animals, dogs and potentially a child. And if they start fully listening, they will finally realize the truth of what we’ve been saying all along: M-44 ‘cyanide bombs’ can’t be used safely. Ever.

It is imperative that we take further action together now, to leverage our progress and get the EPA’s attention to ban M-44s nationwide.

**If the EPA was fully listening, they would ban M-44s immediately, as they would realize “cyanide bombs” can never be used safely.**

## Let’s Finish Bending EPA to Public Pressure

We must act in this prime moment. The unprecedented level of press coverage and our work building public outrage against M-44s appears to have gotten to the EPA. As evidence, we found selected words in the August 2019 statement

— cont. on page 2

## LETHAL CONTROL

A FILM  
CONFRONTING THE LEGACY OF FEDERAL POISONING CAMPAIGNS

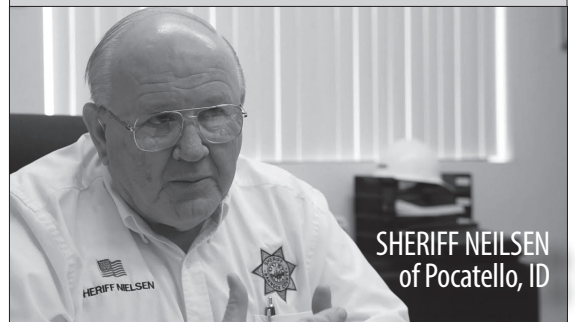


Meet some of the brave souls on the front lines of our fight to ban “cyanide bombs.”



CANYON MANSFIELD of Pocatello, ID

Watch extensive, heartfelt interview with Pocatello teen who took a walk on a hill behind his house and accidentally set off an M-44 device that killed his dog in front of him. He narrowly missed death himself, due to wind direction. He is now an activist.



SHERIFF NEILSEN of Pocatello, ID

Watch illuminating interview with Pocatello sheriff, who shares his shock and horror about the incident. He had no idea such a device existed and was being used in his community—let alone how to handle it if it discharged.

*...and more*

The poignant film “Lethal Control” is now available online. It features many M-44 victims we’ve helped over the years and makes the case for a nationwide ban crystal clear. We encourage you to watch and share it far and wide at

**predatordefense.org/lethalcontrol**

## Help Us Make the EPA Listen & Act

We need your help to take advantage of both the momentum we have built and the inroads we've made in the EPA's thinking. Together we can get the EPA to actually listen to the truth about M-44s and ban them across the country for good. Here's how you can help:

### Rain Fire on Key EPA Officials Today

We must rain fire on EPA Head Andrew Wheeler and program-level lead on sodium cyanide, Leigh Rimmer. Please write, email or call as detailed below. You can use your own words, or borrow from ours:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

*If you've noticed all the news about M-44 dog deaths and close calls for humans in recent years, you must realize that using sodium cyanide for "wildlife control" presents an unacceptable safety menace to animals and humans.*

*M-44s are indiscriminate killers. Tightening M-44 use restrictions is pointless. Additional signage and community alerts won't protect wild animals, dogs, or a small child. They will only protect an adult who can read a warning sign. And because agents often don't follow use restrictions, even adults remain at risk.*

*The only acceptable action is to ELIMINATE "off target" deaths by M-44s, not minimize them.*

*"Please CANCEL the registration on sodium cyanide used in M-44 devices for predator control. M-44s can never be used safely. They must be banned."*

Send your message today to:

#### Leigh Rimmer

**Email:** [rimmer.leigh@epa.gov](mailto:rimmer.leigh@epa.gov)

**Phone:** 919-541-5587

**Mail:** Office of Pesticide Programs  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
109 T.W. Alexander Drive, Mail Code: C504-06  
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

#### Andrew Wheeler

**Email:** [wheeler.andrew@epa.gov](mailto:wheeler.andrew@epa.gov)

**Phone:** 202-564-4700

**Mail:** Office of the Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Mail Code: 1101A  
Washington, DC 20460-0001

**Please donate today to end this reign of cyanide terror. We need to know wildlife, dogs and people can enjoy the great outdoors without the risk of triggering a land mine.**

[www.predatordefense.org](http://www.predatordefense.org)

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR, *cont. from page 1*

by EPA chief Andrew Wheeler quite revealing. He said:

*"I look forward to continuing this dialogue to ensure U.S. livestock remain well protected from dangerous predators while simultaneously minimizing off-target impacts on both humans and nonpredatory animals."*

So the EPA is publicly recognizing that M-44s can kill or injure unintentional targets, human and animal. This means they realize deep down that they cannot be used safely, regardless of warning signs and other use restrictions.\* But they are ignoring this pesky reality and reaffirming their focus on minimizing the risk to humans and nontarget animals. In other words, they are OK with a certain number of wild animals and dogs (and potentially people) being killed by M-44s. This remains unacceptable.

**The EPA is OK with a certain number of wild animals and dogs (and potentially a child) being killed by M-44s. This remains unacceptable.**

**\* NOTE: Regarding EPA's "red herring" focus on tightening M-44 use restrictions**

*Tightening M-44 use restrictions is pointless, as additional signage and community alerts won't protect wild animals, dogs, or a small child. They will only protect an adult who can read a warning sign. But then, as we know from decades of work with whistle-blowers, agents often don't follow use restrictions, so even adults remain at risk. It appears EPA is recognizing the public will no longer tolerate the large number of "off target" deaths by M-44s. We insist they need to ELIMINATE these deaths, not just minimize them.*

## Help Us Celebrate & Help Us Triumph!

In addition to demanding a nationwide ban, we should also celebrate the growing certainty that the majority of Americans oppose M-44s and that bans are being implemented—e.g., this year's permanent statewide ban in Oregon, the temporary moratorium in Idaho since 2017, and the bans on public lands in Colorado and Wyoming. We should also celebrate that between 2017-2018 the number of animals killed by M-44s decreased by 50 percent. This is great progress.

We are continuing to come at this issue from multiple angles—state and county bans, federal bills in both the House and the Senate, and past and ongoing lawsuits in states like Idaho, Wyoming and Colorado. And now, more than ever, we need to leverage our momentum. Here's how you can help:

- Contact the two key EPA officials involved (see details at left)
- Watch and share the heart-grabbing film "Lethal Control," now available on YouTube at [www.predatordefense.org/lethalcontrol](http://www.predatordefense.org/lethalcontrol). It features M-44 victims we've helped over the years and we encourage you to blast it out on social media and send it to your county wildlife commissioners.
- Learn more about our decades-long work to ban M-44s on both the local and national level at [www.predatordefense.org/m44s.htm](http://www.predatordefense.org/m44s.htm).
- Watch federal whistleblowers go on the record about why M-44s can never be used safely in our award-winning film, "EXPOSED: USDA's Secret War on Wildlife," at [www.predatordefense.org/exposed](http://www.predatordefense.org/exposed).
- Donate to support our ongoing efforts to end this reign of cyanide terror and allow wildlife, dogs and people to walk in the great outdoors without the potential of stepping in a cyanide land mine.

We thank you for all you do, and for being with us as we fight for a better world.

For all that is wild and free,



Brooks Fahy  
Executive Director

*P.S. If you donated by check in 2019, thank you so very much! Your official thank you letter is coming!*

### PREDATOR DEFENSE

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[predatordefense.org](http://predatordefense.org)



*Predator Defense is a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are tax-deductible per IRS guidelines.*