



**State of California**  
**California Environmental Protection Agency**  
**Department of Pesticide Regulation**

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## **Using Pesticides in Your Pet Grooming Business**

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**Bulletin number** ENF-002 (Rev. 7/07)

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**About this document** The Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) developed this document for pet grooming businesses and their employees. It provides information on pesticides and their effects, regulatory requirements, and labeling. It also provides information on the selection and use of safety equipment to reduce possible pesticide exposure.

This bulletin is also available on the DPR Web site at [http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/enfcmpli/emp\\_user.htm](http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/enfcmpli/emp_user.htm)

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**Introduction** Pet groomers, their employees, and the public run the risk of pesticide overexposure and related illness from the frequent contact with pesticides found in pet products to kill fleas. On a daily basis, pet grooming businesses use pet shampoos, dips, sprays, and powders that contain pesticides. If the products are used incorrectly, people and pets can sometimes get sick.

As a regulatory agency concerned about the proper use, storage, and disposal of pesticides, DPR requests owners of pet grooming businesses review this information and share it with employees and customers.

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**What is a pesticide?** A “pesticide” is a term that includes many kinds of chemicals, natural and synthetic, intended to control, destroy, repel, or attract a pest, including fleas. Some common pesticides include insecticides, miticides, disinfectants, sterilants, antibacterials, sanitizers, repellents, fungicides, and herbicides.

Pesticides are also used to disinfect grooming table surfaces, as well as tools and equipment. For example, chlorine bleach is considered a disinfectant to clean tools and equipment.

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**Are there any shortcuts to tell if a product is a pesticide?**

Yes. If it is a pesticide, there will be a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) registration number on the product label. It is often abbreviated on the label as “EPA Reg. No.”

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**Pesticide evaluation and registration**

Before a pesticide can be sold or used in California, it must be registered (licensed for sale and use) by U.S. EPA, then reviewed and registered by DPR.

DPR reviews each product to ensure that all human and environmental problems that can result from the use of the product can be prevented. DPR will determine whether sufficient measures can be taken to address the outcome of human or environmental exposure to a product. If all questions cannot be answered, DPR will not register the product for use in California.

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**Read the label!**



U.S. EPA prescribes what information must be included on the pesticide label. DPR enforces federal labeling requirements in California.

All pesticide labels must include the active ingredient(s) contained in the product, use directions, and safety precautions. All pesticide products you use should have an “EPA Registration Number” on the product label. That is your guarantee the product is legally registered for use in your work and that it has been tested for safety.

Federal and state laws require that pesticides be used in accordance with the product label. This means that all instructions on the label must be read and followed by users of the product. Remember that the label is the law.

Manufacturers must provide certain “signal words” on the label. These include: DANGER (the most hazardous and means the pesticide is extremely harmful), WARNING (means moderately harmful), or CAUTION (means slightly harmful, but still can make you sick).

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### **Safety equipment**

The label is the law to follow in determining the appropriate protective equipment for the work situation. To determine what safety equipment must be worn while using a pesticide product, the user needs to read and follow the precautions and safety directions on the label. In addition, the user needs to know the laws and regulations that pertain to worker safety.

For help interpreting labels, contact your County Agricultural Commissioner's office. You can find the telephone number in the government section of your local telephone directory, or by calling DPR's toll-free information number, 187PestLine (1-877-378-5463).

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### **Employer's responsibilities**

The employer is responsible for workplace and employee safety. The employer must provide a safe workplace for employees that handle pesticide products and require all employees to follow safe work practices. The employer must provide a wash area with towels for employees who mix and handle pesticides.

The employer is responsible for development of an appropriate safety training program for employees as required by both Cal/OSHA and DPR. Additional training must be provided to employees based upon events including hiring a new employee, a new work assignment, a new work hazard, or using a new pesticide. Training records must be retained by the employer for two years.

For additional information, contact your County Agricultural Commissioner's office and request a copy of the Pesticide Safety Information Series leaflet, PSIS N-8, or go to DPR's PSIS Web page at <http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/whs/psisenglish.htm>

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**What kind of hazards could occur when using a pesticide?**

The greatest hazard during any pesticide application is during pouring and mixing undiluted products, where splashing and spilling may occur on either the skin, the clothing, or in the eyes. In California, eye protection is required when handling pesticides. Protective eyewear can be safety glasses (with brow and temple protection), a face shield, or goggles to protect the eyes when mixing, pouring, and using liquid pesticides. This includes washing pets with flea shampoos. Regular eyeglasses, including sunglasses, are generally not considered safety glasses, as they do not provide enough protection.

Exposure to the hands contributes significantly to the overall hazard of handling pesticides. California law requires that employees involved in the mixing of pesticides, the application of pesticides, and cleaning pesticide equipment be provided with and use chemical resistant gloves. However, if the label specifies that the handler should not use gloves, then gloves must not be worn.

**Symptoms of pesticide poisoning**

It is important to know the symptoms of pesticide poisoning. Early symptoms may include a headache, rash, itching, red skin, and watering of the eyes. Mild stages of pesticide poisoning include pinpoint pupils, excessive sweating, tightness in the chest, and labored breathing. Severe symptoms of pesticide poisoning are drooling, muscle spasms, and coma.

Symptoms of overexposure to specific pesticides are shown below<sup>1</sup>:

Insecticide	Symptoms of overexposure
Allethrin Permethrin Pyrethrins Resmethrin	Itching skin, tingling skin, lung congestion
Carbaryl Chlorpyrifos Dichlorvos (DDVP), Malathion	Fatigue, headache, blurred vision, dizziness, nausea, stomach cramps, diarrhea
Rotenone	Skin irritation, eye irritation
Limonene	Irritated skin, allergic skin reaction

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<sup>1</sup> From *Things to Know About Pet Grooming and Pesticides*, DPR document HS-1726, <http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/whs/pdf/hs1726.pdf>

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### **Safety information**

The employer must arrange in advance for access to emergency medical care for employees injured in the workplace. The name of the medical facility must be posted in the work area.

All symptoms of pesticide poisoning must be reported to the employer. If a person becomes ill while working with pesticides, have the person stop work immediately. Transport the person to an emergency medical facility and provide the physician with as much information as possible.

A clean copy of the label, a clean container, or a sealed container can be transported with the person. If a label cannot be transported with the person, write down the exact name of the product, U.S. EPA registration number, and the active ingredient(s) to give to the physician.

Under the law, the doctor must report a pesticide-related illness to the county health officer.

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### **Storing pesticides**

All pesticide products must be stored properly, which means that pesticide products must be in a locked and posted storage area. Do not store pesticide products near food, utensils, or products that will come in contact with food. Keep all pesticide products in a dry area and remember to keep products out of the reach of children.

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### **Disposing containers and pesticide products**

Mix only the amount of solution needed for the work; this will result in less of a disposal problem. Use up the spray, dip, or shampoo in accordance with the directions on the label. After a spray, dip, or shampoo has been mixed and used, the remaining solution must be disposed of properly. This is also explained on the product label.

All containers used for pesticide products must be disposed of properly. Dispose of the empty container in accordance with the use directions on the product label. If the label does not contain disposal directions, then all emptied containers must be triple rinsed. Usually, this can be done when mixing a dip or spray solution. Rinse and pour the remaining contents into the shampoo, spray, or dip solution until the rinsate becomes clear.

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**Disposing  
containers and  
pesticide  
products**  
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For additional information, contact your local County Agricultural Commissioner's office or your local solid waste management facilities for information.

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**Consumer fact  
sheet available**

The consumer fact sheet entitled, *Things to Know About Pet Grooming and Pesticides*, furnishes the customer with information on pet grooming and pesticides, and informs the customer about how pesticide exposure occurs, how to reduce exposure, and symptoms of pesticide poisoning.

This fact sheet, number HS-1726, is available on the DPR Web site at <http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/whs/pdf/hs1726.pdf>

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**U.S. EPA Web  
site on pets**

The U.S. EPA has a Web site, *Protecting Pets*, at <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/health/pets.htm>

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**Additional  
information**

For additional information, contact your County Agricultural Commissioner's office.

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