



Department of Pesticide Regulation



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October 15, 2001

WHS 01-05

TO: COUNTY AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: POLICY FOR INVESTIGATING PESTICIDE ILLNESS REPORTS
RECEIVED FROM THE CALIFORNIA POISON CONTROL SYSTEM

In an effort to improve physician reporting of pesticide-related illnesses and injuries, the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) has entered into a contract with the California Poison Control System (CPCS). Under this contract, CPCS offers to report a pesticide-related episode for any consulting physician. DPR is receiving an increase in the number of certain cases submitted under this reporting mechanism in comparison to the cases received through the normal reporting systems (Doctor's First Reports of Occupational Illness and Injury, Pesticide Illness Reports). We are receiving an increased number of suicides, attempted suicides, and child exposures to household bleach.

In order to address the potential increased workload on County Agricultural Commissioners' staff, we developed the attached policy for investigating certain cases. If you have any questions about this policy or a particular case, please contact your Senior Pesticide Use Specialist.

Sincerely,

[Original signed by C. Andrews]

Charles M. Andrews, Chief
Worker Health and Safety Branch
(916) 445-4222

Attachment

cc: Scott Paulsen, Enforcement Branch
Dan Merkley, County Agricultural Commissioner Liaison

FLEX YOUR POWER! *The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our Web site at <www.cdpr.ca.gov>.*



POLICY FOR HANDLING PESTICIDE ILLNESS REPORTS FROM CPCS

- A. **OCCUPATIONAL:** Investigate these cases the same as cases received from local health officers or Doctor's First Report of Occupational Injury or Illness (DFROII).
1. **Antimicrobial:** Follow the Pesticide Episode Investigation Procedures manual for investigating cases involving antimicrobial pesticides.
 2. **Non-antimicrobial:** Perform a complete investigation following the Pesticide Episode Investigation Procedures manual.
- B. **NON-OCCUPATIONAL:** Investigate these cases the same as cases reported through the local health officer or DFROII, with the following exceptions:
1. **Suicide/Suicide Attempts (excluding cases involving household bleach):** Follow the Pesticide Episode Investigation Procedures manual. Do not contact the individual or any immediate family members. Attempt to obtain the following information: a) pesticide name and registration number, b) length of hospitalization, and c) whether the case resulted in a fatality. This information should be obtained from other sources, such as medical professionals, law enforcement and coroners. Contact your Senior Pesticide Use Specialist about enforcement-related information needed by the Enforcement Branch.
 2. **Anticoagulant Rodenticides:**
 - a. Symptoms reported: Perform a complete investigation following the Pesticide Episode Investigation Procedures manual. For suicides and suicide attempts, follow the instructions listed in B.1 above for handling these types of cases.
 - b. No symptoms reported: Investigate these cases by collecting the following information: 1) exposure circumstances; 2) confirmation of no symptoms experienced; and 3) the product name and EPA Registration number. These investigations may be conducted by telephone interview. The investigation report can be submitted on form PR-ENF 182. If the investigation determines symptoms occurred at a later date, perform a complete investigation following the Pesticide Episode Investigation Procedures manual.
 3. **Antimicrobials:**
 - a. Registered pesticide or pesticidal use indicated: Follow the Pesticide Episode Investigation Procedures manual for investigating cases involving antimicrobial pesticides.
 - b. Household Bleach: Under the following circumstances, WH&S Branch will not assign a case number and an investigation is not required:
 - Non-use situations such as small children exposed while handling the container.
 - Non-pesticidal use situations, such as laundry.
 - Suicides/suicide attempts.
- C. **CONTACT POINTS:** The CPCS personnel are only required to provide a contact point, typically a telephone number or address. If you are unable to make contact, document your attempts in the investigative report. No further investigation is necessary.
- D. **QUESTIONS:** If you have questions concerning a particular case or about this policy, please contact your Senior Pesticide Use Specialist.