

# PESTICIDE SAFETY



Information

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

N No. 8

## Safety Rules for Pesticide Handlers in Non-Agricultural Settings

**The pesticide label, your training, and this leaflet, tell you about pesticide dangers at work.**

Your employer must teach you how to use pesticides safely and how to protect yourself when you use them. Pesticides are chemicals that are used to control unwanted insects, weeds, and plant diseases.

**EMPLOYERS:** This is the hazard communication leaflet for pesticide handlers. Fill in the blank lines in this leaflet and display this handout at the employee's worksite.

### Emergency medical care

Your employer must make plans for emergency medical care before you start working with pesticides. If you think that pesticides made you sick or hurt you at work, tell your employer. They must make sure that you are taken to a doctor right away. **DO NOT TAKE YOURSELF.**

Emergency medical care is available at (address and telephone number):

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**REMEMBER:** You do not have to pay for medical care if you get sick or hurt from pesticides at work.

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**If you think pesticides have made you sick at work, your employer must make sure that you are taken to the doctor IMMEDIATELY.**

## What are my rights?

You have the right to know the following about pesticides that have been used recently where you work:

- When and where the pesticide was applied
- Name of the pesticide and active ingredient(s)
- The EPA registration number

As part of your training, your employer must tell you where all this information is kept and also let you see the records anytime you want without having to ask.

If you get sick or hurt **BECAUSE OF YOUR JOB**, you have the right to file for worker's compensation. Workers' compensation will pay for your medical bills, and sometimes, lost pay.

You have the right to look at Safety Data Sheets (SDS) and records for all pesticides used where you work. The SDS tells you about each specific pesticide and its dangers.

These records are kept at:

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Your employer must explain your rights to you. If you need more help in understanding your rights, call or go to your local county agricultural commissioner's office, local legal aid and worker's rights office, union or the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR).

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## Who do I tell about dangers at work?

Pesticides are only one kind of danger at your work. If you have a complaint about a pesticide safety problem, you should call your County Agricultural Commissioner. You can look up the Commissioner's number in the government pages of your local phone book, or by calling DPR's toll-free complaint information line, **1-87PestLine (1-877-378-5463)**. Other health and safety complaints (bathrooms, heat stress, drinking water, etc.) should be filed with the California Department of Industrial Relations Cal/OSHA office.

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## What training should I get?

Your employer must:

- Train you in a way that you understand **BEFORE** you begin working with pesticides, and anytime you work with new pesticides.
- Give you training each year to remind you how to work with pesticides safely.
- Tell you the ways a pesticide can hurt you and how to safely use each



pesticide you work with (Ask your employer for the N-1 safety leaflet to learn more about training).

- Give you extra training if you have to use a respirator (ask your employer for the N-5 safety leaflet).
- Tell you how to move pesticides from one place to another, or dispose of empty pesticide containers (there are special rules your employer must tell you about. Ask for the N-2 safety leaflet for more information).

Other safety leaflets mentioned in this document should be part of your training. They are free and are available from your employer and your County Agricultural Commissioner's office.

All the information about your training must be written down. You will be given a paper to sign to show you have been trained. Only sign this form after you have finished the training and you understand what you heard.



## What can a pesticide label tell me?

All pesticides are poisonous. If a pesticide gets in or on you, it can hurt you or make you sick. The pesticide label tells you how to safely mix and apply the pesticide. **The label must be at the place where you mix or apply the pesticide.** You must read and follow ALL directions on the label. There may be additional product bulletins or label information that you must read and follow.

Some of the most important things listed on the label are:

1. Chemicals in the pesticide.
2. First aid and health warnings.
3. Protective equipment needed.
4. Directions for applying the pesticide.

## How can I tell which pesticides are more dangerous?

Most pesticide labels have a signal word in large print on the front of the label. This word tells you about the acute health effect of the pesticide. If a pesticide can hurt you or make you sick right away, that's called an acute effect. If it takes months or years of exposure to a pesticide before you get sick, that's called a chronic effect.

These are the words that tell about acute effects:

- "DANGER"—this pesticide is extremely harmful.
- "WARNING"—this pesticide is moderately harmful.
- "CAUTION"—this pesticide is slightly harmful.

If the label doesn't have one of these words, it means that the pesticide is less likely to harm you. **However, you should handle every pesticide carefully.**

<b>Pesticide Name</b> EPA Registration No.	
Active Ingredients	xx%
Inert Ingredients	x%
<b>DANGER</b>	
First Aid Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur.	
Precautionary Statements Hazards to Humans Personal Protective Equipment Environment Hazards	
Agricultural Use Requirements Em ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fu	
Directions for Use Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum.	

## What else does the label tell me?

- If the pesticide can severely hurt your eyes or skin, the label will say something like “Corrosive, causes eye and skin damage.”
- If the pesticide can make you very sick, the label will have a skull-and-crossbones symbol and the word “POISON.”
- Words like “FATAL” or “may be fatal if swallowed, inhaled, or absorbed through the skin,” mean the pesticide can make you very sick or even kill you.
- Some pesticide labels tell you about other health problems that might not show up until long after use (may take years), such as cancer or dangers to unborn babies.

## Are there any extra rules for very dangerous pesticides?

Yes, there is a group of pesticides, called Minimal Exposure Pesticides (MEPs) that California has extra rules for because they could be especially dangerous to you.

These are the pesticides on this list:

1. Buctril
2. Metasystox-R

See the N-6 safety leaflet for more information about safety rules if you have to work with these pesticides.



## SUMMARY OF RECORDS YOUR EMPLOYER MUST KEEP

Information	Location
Training papers	Employer's office site
Written training program	Employer's office site
Respirator program procedures	Employer's office site
Accident response plan (fumigants)	Work site
Pesticide label	Work site
Pesticide Safety Information Series	Employer's office site
Safety Data Sheet	Employer's office site
Storage area posting <sup>1</sup>	Storage area
Emergency medical care notice	Work site
Doctor's report for respirator use	Employer's office site
Pesticide use records	Employer's office site

<sup>1</sup> Required only for pesticides with the Signal word “DANGER” or “WARNING”

## Proposition 65

In 1986, a law called the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (Proposition 65) was passed. Proposition 65 requires California to make a list of chemicals that cause cancer, birth defects, or other reproductive harm. The Proposition 65 list contains many different chemicals, including dyes, solvents, pesticides, drugs, and food additives. Your employer may also choose to warn you if a pesticide on the Proposition 65 list has been sprayed, even if health problems are not likely. Your employer is required to keep information on each pesticide application and allow you to look at it. If you are not sure of the record location, ask your foreman.

**The list of pesticides that are on the Proposition 65 list and that might be used in California, can be found at <http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/dept/factshts/prop65.htm>.**

**DOWNLOAD** current Proposition 65 list of chemicals known to the State to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity:

**[http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/prop65\\_list/Newlist.html](http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/prop65_list/Newlist.html)**

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*If you don't get all the information you need in your training, you should call your County Agricultural Commissioner, or the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) for more information. You can find the Commissioner's number in your local white pages phone directory, by calling 1-87PestLine, or at:*

**<http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/exec/county/countymap/>**

**DPR's Regional Offices are:**

- Northern (West Sacramento) 916/376-8960
- Central (Clovis) 559/297-3511
- Southern (Anaheim) 714/279-7690

**Pesticide Complaint ?**

**1-87PestLine**

INFORMATION LINE

1-877-378-5463

