

Pesticides: Protect Yourself

5-Minute Talk

Overview of topic

EPA's Worker Protection Standard (WPS) for pesticides covers employees working in or on farms, forests, nurseries, and greenhouses. The WPS covers two types of employees:

Agricultural workers — those who perform tasks related to the cultivation and harvesting of plants on farms or in greenhouses, nurseries, or forests. This includes carrying nursery stock, repotting plants, or watering, related to the production of agricultural plants on an agricultural establishment.

Pesticide handlers — those who mix, load, or apply agricultural pesticides; clean or repair pesticide application equipment; or assist with the application of pesticides in any way.

The WPS contains requirements for pesticide safety training, notification of pesticide applications, use of personal protective equipment (PPE), restricted-entry intervals following pesticide application, decontamination supplies, and emergency medical assistance. Effective implementation of the WPS will substantially lower the risk of pesticide poisonings among agricultural workers and pesticide handlers.

Employee training

After training, both your worker and handler employees should be able to demonstrate an understanding of:

- Pesticide hazards.
- Routes through which pesticides can enter the body.
- Signs and symptoms of common types of pesticide poisoning.
- Emergency first aid for pesticide injuries or poisoning.
- How to obtain emergency medical care.
- Warnings about taking pesticides or pesticide containers home.
- Information contained on pesticide labels.
- Using appropriate PPE.



Training tips

Review 40 CFR Part 170, and the employee handout. Note the types of pesticides used in the workplace, and review the company policy on pesticide use.

Make sure employees know:

- How to read a pesticide container label.
- How pesticides enter the body.
- Symptoms that may indicate pesticide poisoning.
- How employees can protect themselves from the effects of pesticides.
- How to obtain medical care, and emergency first aid for pesticide injuries or poisonings.
- Decontamination procedures.
- How to use, clean, and care for necessary PPE.

Where to go for more information

40 CFR Part 170

The container label

