

Safe Practices When Working Around Hazardous Agricultural Chemicals



 DEPARTMENT OF
CONSUMER
& BUSINESS
SERVICES
Oregon Occupational
Safety & Health Division

440-1951 (2/04/COM)



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Important notice

This booklet provides basic information for agricultural employers to use in training employees who perform hand-labor activities. It is intended to meet the minimum training requirements of the hazard communication rules for hand-labor workers. It also meets the requirement to provide basic information to workers under the Worker Protection Standard (WPS) at the time of hire. This booklet does not, however, provide the full training required by the WPS on the fifth day of employment.

Employees who mix, load, or apply pesticides; work in an area before a re-entry time has expired; or who are otherwise exposed to hazardous chemicals must receive all information and training required by OAR 437, Division 4, Subdivision Z, (004.9800), Toxic & Hazardous Substances, Hazard Communication.

This booklet and material safety data sheets (MSDSs) for hazardous chemicals used must be available to all employees. An MSDS includes information on symptoms of overexposure, chemical characteristics, physical and health hazards, protective measures for handling the material,

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How Hazardous Chemicals Enter the Body

To protect yourself from hazardous chemical exposure, you need to understand the three ways chemicals can enter your body:

- Through your nose and mouth by breathing in dust or fumes
- Through your mouth by swallowing
- Through your skin or eyes

Signs & Symptoms of Exposure

Some chemicals can enter your body through your skin or cause rashes or burns. Your skin could become red and itchy, and blisters may form. Eye redness and soreness can be caused from splashing a chemical in your eyes or rubbing your eyes with a hand or clothing that has chemicals on it.

Skin rashes and eye irritation can become serious injuries and need to be treated by a doctor.



You may be exposed to different types of chemicals such as herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, or fumigants. If you have been overexposed to a hazardous chemical, you may have one or more of these symptoms:



Herbicides can cause burning/irritation in eyes, nose, and throat; nosebleeds; coughing; muscle cramps; muscle weakness; blisters; and stomach cramps.

Insecticides can cause sweating, headache, flu-like symptoms, blurred vision, sleepiness, and vomiting.

Fungicides can cause skin and eye irritation and dermatitis.

Fumigants can cause central nervous system depression; irritation in eyes, nose, and throat; weakness; nausea; vomiting; headache; respiratory paralysis; skin blisters; and liver/kidney damage.

Signs of serious exposure that could cause death:

- very small pupils in the eyes
- drooling and a runny nose
- trouble breathing



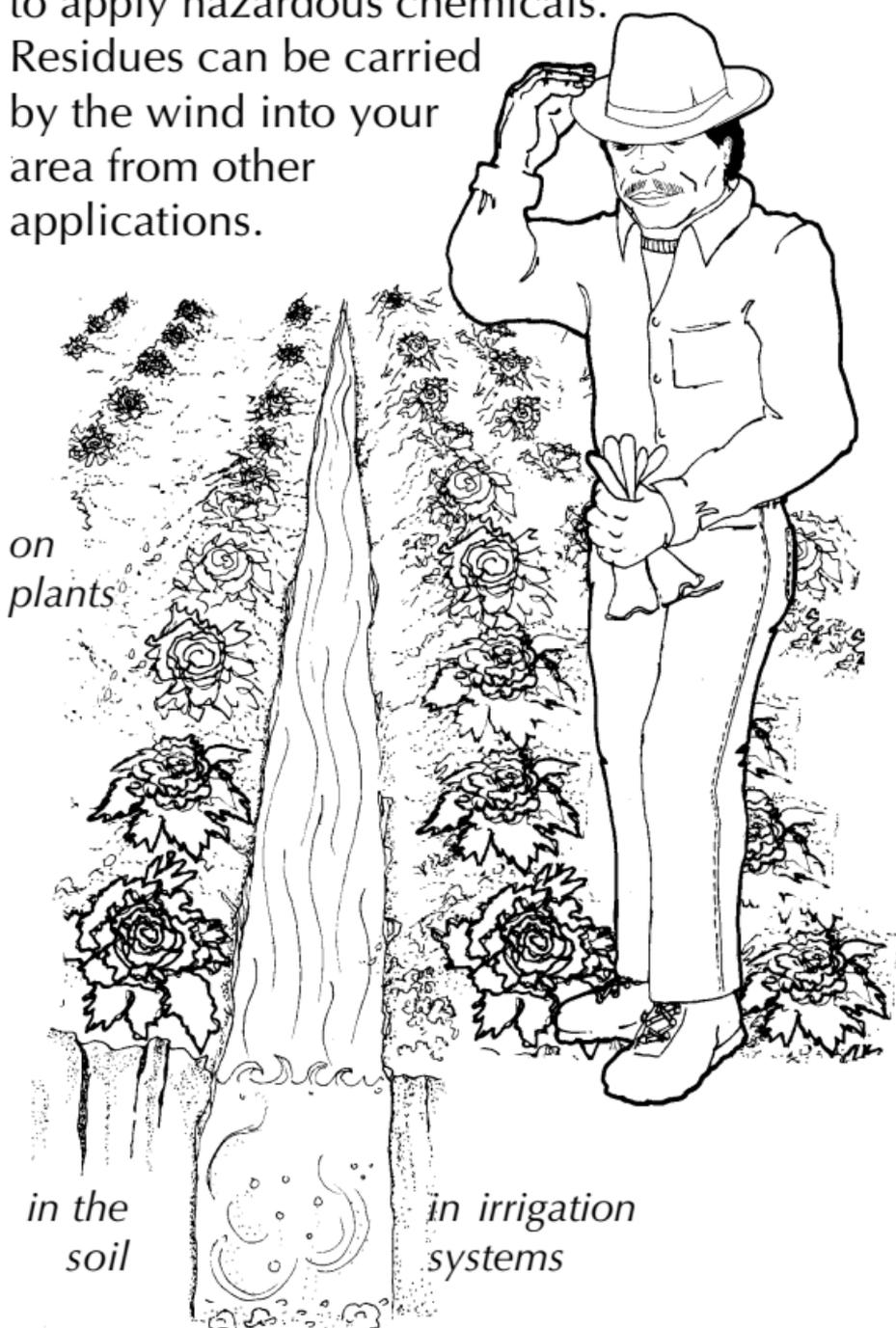
If a person shows these signs, get medical help *immediately!* **Take the label or chemical container with you to the doctor.**

Overexposure to some chemicals may not have effects for a long time. Limiting exposure by following safe work practices will prevent these effects.

Residues

Chemical residues are small amounts of pesticides or fertilizers that can remain after fields have been treated. Hazardous chemical residues can be on plants, in soil, and sometimes in irrigation systems used to apply hazardous chemicals.

Residues can be carried by the wind into your area from other applications.



Chemical residues can't always be seen, so you should cover as much of your skin as possible. This will help prevent skin rashes or overexposure. Wear long-sleeved shirts, long-legged pants, a hat, socks, shoes or boots, and unlined gloves that can be properly cleaned. Do not wear leather boots because they can absorb chemicals.

Re-Entry Period

Some hazardous chemicals are poisonous for a period of time after they are applied. The re-entry period is the amount of time that must pass before it is safe to go back into a treated area.

Do not re-enter an area until the re-entry time has passed.

Laws require different restricted-entry intervals (REIs) for different pesticides and different types of work.





Safe Practices for Handling Hazardous Chemicals

- Wear protective clothing.
- Wash protective clothing, such as gloves and boots, before taking them off.
- Wash your work clothes separately from other laundry, using detergent and hot water, before wearing them again.
- Wash your hands and arms after putting work clothes into the wash.
- Wash with soap and water, and shampoo your hair after work each day.
- Always wash face and hands with soap and water before eating, drinking, smoking, or using the toilet.
- Wash picked food before you eat it.



Unsafe Practices for Handling Hazardous Chemicals

- ⊘ Don't enter a field that has been posted with a re-entry warning.
- ⊘ Don't smoke when working in treated fields.
- ⊘ Don't carry lunch and drinks into a sprayed field.
- ⊘ Don't use water in drainage ditches or irrigation systems for drinking or for washing food — it could contain hazardous chemical residues.
- ⊘ Don't put hazardous chemicals in unmarked containers or food and drink bottles.
- ⊘ Never take hazardous-chemical containers home for use around the house.
- ⊘ Stay away from a field that is being sprayed and from areas to which hazardous chemicals may drift.
- ⊘ Don't burn hazardous chemical bags for fuel – they can give off poisonous fumes.



First Aid

- ✚ If an accident happens when you're using hazardous chemicals, get label information and get immediate help. If medical help isn't available, follow the first-aid directions on the label.
- ✚ If you have signs of chemical poisoning, get medical help. Take the hazardous chemical label or material safety data sheet (MSDS) to the doctor, health clinic, or emergency room.
- ✚ Immediately wash in the nearest clean water if pesticides are spilled or sprayed onto your body. Then shower, shampoo, and change into clean clothing as soon as possible. Get medical attention if any signs of overexposure are present.
- ✚ Swallowing a hazardous chemical can cause poisoning or death. If you swallow a hazardous chemical, get immediate medical treatment.
- ✚ Eye damage can happen in a few minutes from some types of hazardous chemicals. Eyes absorb hazardous chemicals faster than any other part of the body. Rinse your eyes immediately with clean water for 15 minutes.

Worker Rights

Your boss must tell you about pesticide use at work and must do the following:

- Warn you about areas where pesticides are to be applied and areas you may not enter
- Provide you with soap, water, and towels
- Make sure you get to medical help if you think you've been poisoned at work by pesticides

Your boss must post:

- The name of the pesticide
- Exactly where it was applied
- When it was applied
- The restricted-entry interval (REI)
- When workers may return to the work area

This information has to be written and posted in a central location that is easily accessible to all workers, before pesticides are applied.

All employees have the right to request and receive copies of MSDSs regarding hazardous chemicals in the workplace.

When you are concerned about safety and health practices or dangers in the workplace, notify your employer immediately.

Any employee may report concerns about safety and health conditions in the workplace directly to the Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Division (OR-OSHA).

Upon receiving an employee complaint, OR-OSHA will investigate.

Discrimination

Employees are protected from discrimination by an employer should the employee report or complain about a violation of any safety-and-health law.

Reporting Workplace Problems

If you are reporting a pesticide poisoning or contamination, call or write to the Pesticide Analytical Response Center. PARC investigates pesticide poisoning cases.

Address:

PARC

Pesticide Analytical Response Center
c/o Oregon Health Division, Ste. 710
800 NE Oregon St., #21
Portland, OR 97232

(503) 731-4025, (8 a.m.-5 p.m.)

If you have concerns about worker safety-and-health requirements, contact OR-OSHA, which inspects employer workplaces to ensure compliance.

OR-OSHA offices, listed on the next page, can be contacted between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on weekdays.

OR-OSHA OFFICES

(All phone numbers are voice and TTY)

Central Office

350 Winter St. NE, Rm. 430

Salem, OR 97301-3882

(503) 378-3272

Toll free: (800) 922-2689

Fax: (503) 947-7461

En Español: 1 (800) 843-8086

Field Offices

Portland

1750 NW Naito Parkway, Ste. 112

Portland, OR 97209-2533

(503) 229-5910

Salem

1225 Ferry St. SE, U110

Salem, OR 97301-4282

(503) 378-3274

Eugene

1140 Willagillespie, Ste. 42

Eugene, OR 9740-2101

(541) 686-7562

Bend

Red Oaks Square

1230 NE Third St., Ste. A-115

Bend, OR 97701-4374

(541) 388-6066

Medford

1840 Barnett Road, Ste. D

Medford, OR 97504-8250

(541) 776-6030

Pendleton

721 SE Third St., Ste. 306

Pendleton, OR 97801-3056

(541) 276-9175

Web site: www.orosha.org

