

Pesticide Safety Information

CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
PESTICIDE REGULATION
1001 I Street,
Sacramento,
California 95814

First Aid

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

A

No. 4

HOW DO I GET READY FOR AN EMERGENCY?

If you have a pesticide label, know what the label says about first aid.

Your employer must arrange ahead of time for workers to have medical care in emergencies. You should know the name of this clinic or hospital and where it is. If you don't know, ask your employer before an emergency happens. Never let sick or hurt people drive themselves to a doctor. They could have an accident on the road.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF SOMEONE COLLAPSES WHILE THEY ARE USING PESTICIDES, OR WORKING IN A FIELD?

- First, get the person away from the pesticides, if you can do this without hurting yourself. Remember the sick person might have pesticides on them that could get on you.
- Then get help **RIGHT AWAY**. If you have a phone, call **911**.
- Try to stop pesticides from getting in the person's body. You can find out how later in this handout.
- If the person is not breathing and you know how, give CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation). The 911-rescue team will take the CPR over when they arrive.

REMEMBER: Tell the rescue workers about the pesticides. Also, remember that pesticides may not be the problem. It could, for instance, be a heart attack.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF SOMEONE SWALLOWS A PESTICIDE?

- Get help **RIGHT AWAY**. If you have a phone, call **911**, or the free phone number for the Poison Control Center, 1-800-876-4766.
- If people are sleepy or unconscious from poisoning and you don't have a phone, **TAKE THEM TO A DOCTOR OR HOSPITAL RIGHT AWAY. DO NOT** give them anything to eat or drink. **DO NOT** try to make them throw up.
- If the person is awake and alert, follow the first aid instructions on the label. These directions will tell you what will be helpful or dangerous. For instance, making the person throw up, or giving them milk or water to drink could be helpful or it



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might be dangerous, depending on the pesticide. Never use salt water or mustard to make people throw up. Some old labels may still recommend those things, but they are not safe.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I GET SICK FROM PESTICIDES?

- **Stop work RIGHT AWAY.** You must stop working with the pesticide. You must also stop any more pesticide from getting in your body. Read below to find out how to do this.
- **GET HELP.** Tell someone at your workplace what happened.
- Ask to be taken to a doctor or hospital.

HOW CAN PESTICIDES GET INTO MY BODY?

There are four ways

- breathing dust, mist or vapor,
- getting on your skin
- getting in your eyes, *or*
- swallowing the pesticide.

To stop a person from breathing in pesticides

Take sick people where the air is clean. In open areas, go at least 100 feet away. If there is a wind, make sure it is blowing the pesticide away from you.

Pesticides on your skin

Most often, pesticides get in your body through your skin. Some pesticides move very fast through your skin. Others move slowly. Many pesticides can move through your clothes, even if they are waterproof. That is why it is important to get rid of any pesticide that gets on your skin or clothing right away.

To get pesticides off of your skin

- Take off all clothes that have pesticides on them.
- Shower with soap and clean under your nails.

- Wash your hair.
- If you don't have a shower or soap, use any clean water.
- Get dressed only in clean clothes. Do not put the clothes with pesticides on them back on. If you do, more pesticides can get into you body. (Be sure to wash any clothes that have pesticides on them separately and completely before wearing them again. See the the A-7 safety leaflet for information on how to do this safely.)

To get pesticides out of your eyes

- Rinse with plenty of water. Keep rinsing for at least 15 minutes. Rinsing in a shower is okay, but **DO NOT** use a hard spray.
- Otherwise, pour water over your eyes or use a gentle flow from a faucet or hose.
- Blink while you are rinsing.
- **DO NOT** force anybody's eyes open.



WHAT DO I NEED TO TELL THE DOCTOR?

Be ready to tell the doctor or nurse exactly what happened. Warn the doctor or nurse that the person might be sick from pesticides. That way they can protect themselves. Tell the doctor what you know about what happened with the pesticide to make people sick. If you know, tell him the age of the sick people, and what pesticide was involved. Bring information about the pesticide to show the doctor. Copy the exact name of the pesticide from the label, and the active ingredient(s) and EPA registration number. If you can't do this and have no other choice, bring the clean empty pesticide container (with the label still on it) or an unused, sealed container.

REMEMBER: People in the hospital can also get sick or hurt if a container with pesticides is dropped and broken.



If you don't get all the information you need in your training, or from your foreman, 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. DPR numbers are:

- Anaheim (714) 279-7690
- Fresno (559) 445-5401
- Sacramento (916) 324-4100

Always tell the farmer or your foreman if someone gets sick or hurt at work.