

# Pesticide Safety Information

CALIFORNIA  
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CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

## Safety Rules for Minimal Exposure Pesticides (MEPs) on Farms

# A

## No. 10

Pesticides can get into your body many different ways.

They can make you sick by moving into your body through your skin or eyes, or through your lungs as you breathe.



### WHAT ARE THE "MINIMAL EXPOSURE PESTICIDES"?

Some pesticides are called "Minimal Exposure Pesticides," or MEPs, because it's important to make sure that your body is exposed as little as possible. The pesticides are on this list because they can hurt you in ways you might not notice right away. If you are exposed to them, they could be doing damage in your body, causing problems you might not notice until much later. If you work with pesticides on a farm, these are the three MEPs you might use:

#### 1. Buctril

**USE:** Kills broadleaf weeds in grain crops, corn, sorghum, flax, rangeland, garlic and onions.



**DANGER:** If you are a pregnant woman and are exposed to even a little of this pesticide, it can harm both you and your unborn child.

#### 2. Metasystox-R (MSR) and Inject-A-Cide

**USE:** Kills insects and mites on nut, fruit and vegetable crops.



**DANGER:** These pesticides can affect your nervous system. If you are exposed to too much of them, you may start vomiting right away, get a headache, feel sick to your stomach, or your vision may be blurred. If you are a man and are exposed to even a little of these pesticides, it might hurt your ability to have children.

**It's important to make sure that your body is exposed as little as possible to MEPs.**

### 3. Omite, Comite

**USE:** Kills mites on cotton, corn, garlic, grapes, strawberries, onions, stone fruit and other crops.

**DANGER:** If you are exposed to too much of this pesticide, your skin and eyes may start hurting right away. You might start coughing, or your throat will feel sore. This pesticide can cause problems for pregnant women if they are exposed to even low levels. It might cause cancer in men or women if they are exposed to low levels for a long time.

#### WHAT MUST MY EMPLOYER DO TO PROTECT ME WHEN I USE A MEP?

If you handle MEPs, your employer must make sure you have

- Clean coveralls (this is one or two pieces of clothing that covers your body, except your head, hands and feet). Your employer must make sure that you start each work day with clean coveralls.
- Clean, chemical resistant clothes that cover your body, including your hands and feet.
- A clean, pesticide-free place to store your own clothes while you work with these pesticides.

- Clean towels, soap and clean water at the place where you mix and load the pesticides. This is both for washing everyday, and in an emergency.
- A closed system for mixing and loading, so that you are never exposed to the pesticide.
- The right kind of respirator. (Ask your foreman for the A-5 safety leaflet, for more information on respirators.)
- A place with clean towels, soap and water where you can change clothes and wash at the end of your work day.

#### ARE THERE ANY SPECIAL RULES I SHOULD KNOW?

You cannot use any of these pesticides in a greenhouse.

If you use certain kinds of equipment to protect yourself at work, you may not have to wear full body personal protective equipment (PPE). Ask your foreman for a copy of the A-3 safety leaflet for more information about the equipment. The information in the table below explains the substitutions.



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

#### PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT YOU NEED WHEN USING CLOSED SYSTEMS, ENCLOSED CABS, OR WATER-SOLUBLE PACKAGING

If you use	You may use <sup>1</sup>	Instead of this
Closed system for pesticides with "Danger" or "Warning" <sup>2,3</sup>	Coveralls, chemical-resistant gloves, chemical-resistant apron eye protection	PPE required on the pesticide labeling
Closed system for pesticides with "Caution" <sup>2,3</sup>	Work clothing (shirt, pants, shoes) eye protection	PPE required on the pesticide labeling
Enclosed cab	Work clothing and respiratory protection required on the label	PPE required on the pesticide labeling
Enclosed cab acceptable for respiratory protection	Work clothing	PPE required on the pesticide labeling

1 For any substitution, all PPE required by the label must be available on site in case of an emergency.

2 If the closed system is not under pressure, you do not need to wear eye protection.

3 Using pesticides in water-soluble packages is considered the same as mixing with a closed system. However, transfer from mix tank to application tank must be made with a closed system.