

WORKER PROTECTION STANDARDS

- ◆ Employers are **RESPONSIBLE** for making sure that handlers receive the protection required by the pesticide labeling and the WPS.
- ◆ Handlers have a **RIGHT TO KNOW** about the pesticides used at the work area.
- ◆ The employer must provide pesticide information (MSDS or fact sheet) if any worker or handler requests it.
- ◆ Employers must provide basic pesticide safety information before any workers, enter a treated field. Workers must complete WPS training no later than the 6th Day of work in a treated field.
- ◆ Although workers must be trained at least once every five years, the employer may train them more often.
- ◆ Employers must provide water, soap and disposable towels at the work site.
- ◆ If a worker or handler gets ill from pesticides while working, the employer must get them to a doctor.
- ◆ Employers **CANNOT FIRE** a worker or handler for asking for information about WPS or for filing a complaint.

QUICK REFERENCE HOW TO COMPLY WITH THE WORKER PROTECTION STANDARDS



DECONTAMINATION SUPPLIES

WPS FACT SHEET FOR GROWERS

Florida Department of Agriculture
and Consumer Services
CHARLES H. BRONSON,
COMMISSIONER

EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Worker Protection Standards (WPS) requires that decontamination sites be provided regardless of the number of employees with only a few employees.

Employers must make sure that decontamination supplies for washing off pesticide residues is provided to **workers** who are working in a pesticide-treated area and are doing tasks that involve contact with anything that has been treated with pesticides, including soil, water or plants.

Decontamination supplies must be provided to **handlers** when they are mixing or applying pesticides and to **early-entry workers** whenever they are doing permitted tasks in treated areas during a restricted entry interval (REI).

WHEN MUST THE DECONTAMINATION SITE BE PROVIDED?

A Decontamination Site must be provided to **handlers and early workers**, for the duration of the handling task.

A Decontamination Site must be provided to **workers**, until 30 days after the end of any restricted-entry interval for that area. If there is no restricted-entry interval, until 30 days after the end of any application in that area.

DEFINITIONS

Worker: Anyone who is employed for any type of compensation and is doing tasks such as harvesting, weeding, or watering related to the production of plants on a farm, forest, nursery, or greenhouse.

Early Entry Workers: Any worker who is doing permitted tasks in treated areas during and REI.

Handler: Anyone who is employed for any type of compensation and who applies or handles pesticides in the production of agricultural plants on a farm, forest, nursery, or greenhouse.

PPE: Personal Protective Equipment

REI: Restricted-Entry Interval

DECONTAMINATION SUPPLIES:

Whenever they are available to workers or handlers, decontamination supplies and emergency eyeflush water must, at all times, be of a quality and temperature that will not cause illness or injury when contacting the skin or eyes or if swallowed.

DECONTAMINATION SUPPLIES PROVIDED INCLUDE:

1. **Water**— enough for routine washing and emergency eyeflushing. If the water is stored in a tank, the water must not be used for mixing pesticides, unless the tank is equipped with correctively functioning anti-backsiphoning or check valves or other mechanisms (such as air gaps) that prevent pesticides from moving into the tank.
2. **Soap and single use towels**— enough for workers' or handlers' needs.

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS



- ☑ Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services- **1-800-435-7352**
- ☑ Poison Control Center- **1-800-282-3171**
- ☑ Florida Farmworker Helpline- **1-800-633-3572**

3. **HANDLER DECONTAMINATION SUPPLIES-** ALSO have enough water for washing the entire body in case of emergency and a clean change of clothes in case the handler's PPE is contaminated and needs to be removed right away.
4. **FOR EARLY-ENTRY WORKERS,** who will contact anything that has been treated with the pesticide, the decontamination supplies requirements are all those described above, in addition to having enough water to allow early-entry workers to wash thoroughly after removing their PPE.

HOW MUCH WATER IS ENOUGH?

If running water is not available, employers can use the following guidelines:

- ◆ **Workers:** at least 1 gallon of water is recommended for each worker using the site. If you find that one gallon per worker is inadequate to last for the entire work period, provide more water or replenish the water at some point during the work period.
- ◆ **Handlers:** at least 3 gallons of water is recommended for each handler using the site. If you find that 3 gallons per handler is inadequate to last for the entire work period, provide more water or replenish the water at some point during the work period.

WHERE SHOULD THE DECONTAMINATION SITE BE LOCATED?

1. **Worker and Handler** decontamination supplies must be reasonably accessible to workers and handlers and not more than 1/4 mile from where they are working.

Handlers mixing pesticides must have decontamination supplies at the mixing area.

Exceptions:

- ◆ For a pilot who is applying pesticides aerially, the decontamination supplies must be at the aircraft's loading site or in the aircraft.
 - ◆ For tasks performed more than 1/4 mile from the nearest point reachable by vehicle (cars, truck, or tractors), the decontamination supplies may be at the access point. In this circumstance, clean water from springs, stream, lakes, or other sources may be used for decontamination if such water is more readily available than the water at the decontamination site.
2. Worker decontamination sites must NOT be in an area being treated with pesticides or in an area under a REI.
 3. Handler decontamination supplies may be located in an area being treated with pesticides (or an area that has a restricted-entry interval effect), only if:
 - ◆ It is in the area where the handler is doing handling tasks, AND
 - ◆ The soap, single-use towels, and clean change of clothing are in closed containers, AND
 - ◆ The water is running tap water or is in a closed container.

EMERGENCY EYEFLUSHING

Provide each handler with at least 1 pint of emergency eyeflush water when the pesticide labeling requires protective eyewear for the handling task being performed. The emergency eyeflush water must be immediately accessible. For example, it could be carried by the handler or be on a vehicle the handler is using. The emergency eyeflush may be the water in the decontamination supplies if the supplies are immediately accessible.

DECONTAMINATION AFTER HANDLING TASK:

At the site where handlers remove their personal protective equipment (PPE), employers must also provide:

1. Soap
2. Clean towels, and
3. Enough water to allow handlers to wash thoroughly after removing PPE.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF PESTICIDE POISONING

Pesticides are chemicals which may be harmful to human health. One or more of the following symptoms may mean that the worker or a handler has been exposed to pesticides:

- ◆ Burning eyes, nose or skin,
- ◆ Itching skin, rash or blisters,
- ◆ Headache,
- ◆ Dizziness,
- ◆ Weakness,
- ◆ Excessive sweating,
- ◆ Nausea or vomiting,
- ◆ Stomach ache or cramps,
- ◆ Chest pain

Employers must give the doctor the name, EPA registration number, and active ingredient of the pesticides that might have made a worker or handler sick. Also, employers shall provide to the employee or to the doctor, upon request, antidote, first aid, and other medical information from the product labeling, and the application method, and information on how exposure occurred.

Source: The EPA approved WPS materials including The Worker Protection Standard for Agricultural Pesticides. How to Comply-What Employers Need to Know. US Environmental Protection Agency, 1993. EPA 735-B-93-001.

This series of pamphlets is supported by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.