Personal Protective Equipment

What to Do if an Accident Results in Pesticide Exposure

If an accident results in exposure, the label indicates what to do in the First Aid section. The proper first aid varies based on the product that is being handled and the extent of exposure. If PPE and personal clothing have contacted a pesticide, follow the first aid instructions immediately after exposure to the pesticide product, whether or not you have any immediate symptoms.

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What to Do if Your PPE Doesn't Have the PPE Required on the Pesticide Label!

If you don't have the PPE that is required on the pesticide label, don't apply the pesticide.

What to Do if Instructions are Not with the Personal Protective Equipment

If PPE equipment is available without instructions for use, three good options exist:

1) Call the PPE manufacturer's website for downloadable instructions for the particular model.
2) Call the PPE manufacturer to obtain a copy of the instructions, or
3) Purchase new PPE equipment containing the instructions.

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Personal Protective Equipment

What to Do if Personal Protective Equipment is Uncomfortable

Sometimes PPE can be uncomfortable, particularly when working in hot weather. However, hot weather is NEVER a good excuse for not using the required PPE. Attempt to adapt your schedule during the hottest parts of the day. If workload or other label precautions sometimes affect the seal between the respirator and the face. These and other conditions that cause discomfort sometimes affect the effectiveness of the respirator. Know the signs of heat stress and how to treat it.

Prevent this, take all necessary steps to avoid heat stress, and/or possibly reduce protection must be resolved in accordance with manufacturer instructions. Respirator component parts are NOT interchangeable between different manufacturers.

Storage instructions from the PPE manufacturer must be followed for both reusable and disposable PPE. Most PPE must be protected from chemicals, sunlight, extreme temperatures, excessive humidity, and moisture, or the specified shelf life will be reduced. Disposable, reusable or latex gloves must be discarded if not stored properly. Keep PPE in its sealed package until use, and store PPE with personal clothing.

Disposal

Follow the critical last step in handling PPE. Ensure that you remove and discard PPE without causing contamination to yourself, protective clothing, or the environment.

PPE may have an expiration date, while other PPE requires careful inspection – read the PPE manufacturer's directions and be diligent about disposal of PPE that will no longer provide protection.

Clean disposable, washable items with soap and water prior to disposal. To remove pesticide residues. Properly cleaned PPE can be used in regular agricultural tasks. If PPE that is contaminated with a pesticide must be disposed of according to directions on the pesticide product label and all federal, state, and local regulations. In the absence of specific label directions or government regulations, dispose of contaminated PPE as hazardous waste, which can be taken to an appropriate waste collection center or disposal site.

If PPE instructions for cleaning, maintenance, storage, and disposal are not followed carefully, PPE can become ineffective or even increase exposure to a pesticide. If in doubt, dispose of the PPE or PPE component.

What to Do if a Pesticide Product is Too Strong

Less commonly, a pesticide that is too strong for the task, pesticide, formulation, application technique, equipment, and other factors. When questions remain after reading the pesticide label and the PPE instructions, do not use the pesticide.

In the absence of specific label directions or government regulations, dispose of contaminated PPE as hazardous waste, which can be taken to an appropriate waste collection center or disposal site.
What is Personal Protective Equipment?

Personal Protective Equipment is apparel and devices worn to protect the body from contact with pesticides or pesticide residues, including aprons, chemical-resistant suits, gloves, eye protection, protective eyewear and respirators. While the following advice is not defined by any one label, the principles of personal protective equipment (PPE) label, and may be different for different tasks. PPE may be required during pesticide mixing, loading, or application. The correct selection of PPE is the first critical step. Follow all instructions, without causing contamination to yourself. Read the pesticide product label to determine the type of personal protective equipment that is required by law. Never use PPE that has been damaged or missing parts.

Why the Pesticide Product Label Specifies Types of Personal Protective Equipment

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires pesticides to be labeled with directions for use and precautions to ensure the health and safety of its users. Personal protective equipment can be either disposable or reusable. Reusable PPE must be cleaned and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions. Some PPE (for example, respirators and coveralls) cannot be cleaned and must be used only once, according to the directions on the label.

Cleaning, Maintenance, Storage, and Disposal of Personal Protective Equipment

Personal protective equipment electronic labels are required to be followed for PPE. Never wear PPE that has been damaged or is missing parts. Before you can be exposed to residues on the equipment, make sure the pesticide does not discolor and if not cleaned and maintained properly. Some PPE can be cleaned and reused. For example, pesticide exposure can occur from residues on clothing, shoes, or other PPE. If you are exposed to a pesticide, discard if not cleaned and maintained properly. PPE is not essentially required and is stored in a clean, dry place. PPE is not essentially required and is stored in a clean, dry place. PPE is not essentially required and is stored in a clean, dry place. PPE is not essentially required and is stored in a clean, dry place.
Why the Pesticide Product Label Specifies the Types of PPE

Carefully read the pesticide label instructions. Be aware that the same product may require different PPE, and a liquid formulation is not necessarily more dangerous than a dry formulation. The required PPE will be listed on the pesticide label, but other factors may impact the required PPE, so it is critical to read and follow the PPE section on the pesticide product label carefully, even if the brand name is the same.

The PPE requirements on the pesticide product label are frequently based on the potential skin, eye, or respiratory contact, and can also be changed at any time by the state or local regulatory requirements. So read the label very carefully when purchasing a pesticide product. The pesticide product label instructions accompany the original product and are available for at least five years. Every time you purchase the pesticide, even if it is the same brand and model before.

When to Use Personal Protective Equipment

The pesticide product label requires personal protective equipment (PPE) because pesticide products can be hazardous to the user, others, and the environment.

Pesticide product labels are requirements to protect those who handle, apply, or work in an agricultural or non-agricultural occupation.

To help protect pesticide handlers and others, PPE must be used to protect workers when other barriers such as safe work practices, proper equipment, and ventilation are not sufficient. The PPE requirements on the pesticide product label are frequently based on the potential skin, eye, or respiratory contact, and can also be changed at any time by the state or local regulatory requirements. So read the label very carefully when purchasing a pesticide product. The pesticide product label instructions accompany the original product and are available for at least five years. Every time you purchase the pesticide, even if it is the same brand and model before.

What is Personal Protective Equipment?

Personal Protective Equipment is apparel and devices worn to protect the body from contact with pesticides or pesticide residues, including caps, chemical-resistant suits, respirators, gloves, headgear, protective eyewear and respiratory masks. While the following list is not defined by law, the PPE can involve pesticide handling, mixing, application, and cleanup.

The required PPE will be listed on the pesticide product label, and may be different for different tasks. PPE may be required during pesticide handling, mixing, application, or cleanup. PPE will protect the user, others, and the environment. The required PPE will be listed on the pesticide product label, because pesticides perform different roles, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors. The PPE will have standard specifications, and the user, other persons, and the environment can result by breathing in fine sprays, mists, dusts, and vapors.
apply a pesticide at home, or work in an agricultural or non-agricultural occupation. And precautions must be followed. Be selected and used correctly, and all other directions and how it can be used without impacting health or the environment. A common area of exposure is the skin, because products differ in their ability to penetrate the skin. Exposure can result by breathing in pesticide dust or mist, or by skin contact. Read the pesticide product label carefully, even if the brand name is the same.

Forearms are where exposure is most common. Inhalation pesticide products, because products differ in their ability to penetrate the skin. Exposure can result by breathing in pesticide dust or mist, or by skin contact. Inhalation is not defined as PPE, the pesticide label may require PPE. The signal word is an indicator of the overall toxicity of the product.2 The PPE used for pesticide handling activities should be shielded safety equipment having at least 103 ft/m of penetration resistance and protection from some solvents, but no US standard currently exists for some solvents. The PPE requirements on the pesticide product label are often very specific when required for pesticide handling tasks. Generally, the label will require either a dust/mist filtering (particulate-removing) respirator, or a respirator with an activated charcoal filter. The PPE requirements are based not only on protecting the user from all conditions, and for the same length of time. 

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The PPE requirements on the pesticide product label will vary based on the type of handling task being performed. For example, labels may instruct an employer to provide protection for eyes or hands. When selecting the right PPE, an employer must consider the conditions under which the pesticides will be used.

When making the decision of when to use PPE, the employer must consider the conditions under which the pesticides will be used. When to Use Personal Protective Equipment

The PPE requirements on the pesticide product label may require the use of a chemical-resistant helmet. The employer must provide acceptable eye protection unless a chemical-resistant apron is worn. The employer must provide a chemical-resistant apron and a chemical-resistant headgear. The employer must provide a chemical-resistant apron and a chemical-resistant headgear. The employer must provide a chemical-resistant apron and a chemical-resistant headgear.

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Wash regular work clothes that have been exposed to pesticides as soon as possible to ensure maximum pesticide residue removal. Wash them separately from other laundry using detergent and hot water. Using an outdoor clothesline rather than a dryer may help break down pesticide residues. If washable PPE is not available or the pesticide label is still in use to wash the PPE components improperly.

Always store replacement parts for both bulk and spray equipment separately from the original manufacturer and repair PPE in accordance with manufacturer instructions. Apparel/protective component parts are NOT interchangeable between different manufacturers.

Storage instructions from the manufacturer must be followed for both new and old PPE. Most PPE must be protected from chemicals, sunlight, extreme temperatures, excessive humidity, and moisture, or the specified shelf life will be reduced. Disposal, reusable or limited-use PPE must NOT be discarded if not stored properly.

Keep PPE in its sealed package until use, and new PPE with personal clothing.

Disposal: The critical last step in handling PPE. Ensure that you remove and discard PPE in accordance with manufacturer’s instructions, or discard store PPE with pesticides or hazardous waste, which can be taken to an appropriate waste collection event or disposal site.

What to Do if PPE Required on the Pesticide Label!

If you don’t have the PPE that is required on the pesticide label, don’t apply the pesticide.

What to Do if Instructions are Not with the Personal Protective Equipment

If PPE equipment is available without instructions for use, three good options exist: 1) Contact the manufacturer’s website (for downloadable instructions for the particular model), 2) Call the PPE manufacturer to obtain a copy of the instructions, or 3) Purchase new PPE equipment containing the instructions.

What to Do if Personal Protective Equipment is Uncomfortable

Sometimes PPE is uncomfortable, particularly when working in hot weather. However, hot weather is NEVER a good excuse for not using the required PPE. Attempt to work in shade where possible, or take breaks or find shade. Consider using pesticide loading systems, closed spray tanks, or a tractor for pesticide application. In the absence of specific label directions or government labeling systems, consider using pesticide loading systems, closed spray tanks, or a tractor for pesticide application. The personal protective equipment specified on the pesticide label is essential when working with pesticides. Follow all label instructions immediately, and dispose of the PPE or PPE can become ineffective or even increase exposure to the pesticide. If in doubt, dispose of the PPE or PPE can become ineffective or even increase exposure to the pesticide. If in doubt, dispose of the PPE or PPE can become ineffective or even increase exposure to the pesticide.

Fitted Respirators

Respirators are PPE designed to protect the respiratory tract. Fitted respirators are most effective when the respirator is sealed tightly against the face. These and other conditions that cause discomfort can be reduced simply by reducing the length of time spent on a task requiring a respirator.

Respirator Fitting

A properly fitted respirator will cause a health hazard.

The Bottom Line

The personal protective equipment (PPE) that is essential when working with pesticides is specified on the pesticide label. If PPE requirements vary widely, depending on the task, pesticide, formulation, application method, equipment, and other factors. When questions remain after reading the pesticide label and the PPE instructions, do not use the pesticide.

Additional Resources

There are many educational resources and organizations that can provide information on PPE. Only a few are listed here.

PPE options, recommendations and changes can be made at any time, so check the pesticide product label, the county’s pesticide safety education program, or your state’s pesticide safety education program.

The Worker Protection Standard for Agricultural Pesticides – epa.gov//agwks/worker.html

OSHA’s Web Page on Occupational Safety and Health – osha.gov/SLTC/personalprotectiveequipment

Center for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health – emsafety.osha.gov

County Extension Offices – nrls.uga.edu/Extension

State and Territory Pesticide Safety Education Program Coordinators – nrls.uga.edu/nea/past/past/pesticides Past/past_pnpoe.html

State and territory Pesticide Regulatory Agencies – nppsa.org

State Departments of Agriculture – nasda.org

We gratefully acknowledge the National Pesticide Training Solutions Committee for its significant work on this brochure.

Outdoor Pests courtesy of USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Pesticide Environmental Stewardship (PES): nanasda.org

Pesticide Environmental Stewardship: syngentaenvironmentalstewardship.com

This publication can be downloaded or ordered at the following websites:

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Disposal: the critical last step in handling PPE. Ensure that you remove and discard PPE in accordance with manufacturer’s instructions, or discard store PPE with pesticides or hazardous waste, which can be taken to an appropriate waste collection event or disposal site.

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PPE options, recommendations and changes can be made at any time, so check the pesticide product label, the county’s pesticide safety education program, or your state’s pesticide safety education program.
You can download or order this publication at the following websites:

- Pesticide Environmental Stewardship (PES): eatp.psu.edu
- National Association of County Agricultural Agents: nacaa.com
- Syngenta Environmental Stewardship: syngentaenvironmental.org/EnvStewardship

We gratefully acknowledge the National Pesticide Training Solutions Committee for its significant work on this brochure.

Dress for Success!

Some Things to Know About Personal Protective Equipment BEFORE You Handle a Pesticide

Always read and follow label directions before buying or using a pesticide.
Follow all applicable federal, state, tribal, and local regulations concerning the use of pesticides and personal protective equipment.