



Working in Areas Sprayed with Crop Chemicals

CAGC INFORMATION ALERT

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Canadian Association of Geophysical Contractors

1045, 1015 - 4th Street SW

Calgary, Alberta

T2R 1J4

Phone: 403 265 0045

Fax: 403 265 0025

E-mail: info@cagc.ca

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The following information is not a definitive guide to government legislation and does not release users of this document from their responsibilities under applicable legislation.

There are four main categories of chemicals used in the agriculture industry, herbicides, insecticides, fungicides and rodenticides. For each category there are several different variations of strengths and toxicity levels depending on the nature of the application.

The general rule to follow is not to work in areas or handle equipment for 24 hours after any of these chemicals have been applied but due to the nature of our business sometimes these guidelines are difficult to follow as we may not know the exact time of application. In all cases there are a few general safe handling procedures that must be followed to ensure the well being of all workers.

Note – Always reference the MSDS for safe handling procedures of any chemicals that may be encountered. If the chemical encountered is unknown, contact the landowner or county to determine its nature and obtain a copy of the MSDS sheet.

Absorption is the main source of body entry for these types of chemicals. Required PPE is rubber gloves, long pants and long sleeve shirts. Gloves must be disposed of and clothing must be laundered as soon as possible after exposure.

The second form of entry for these types of chemicals into the body is ingestion. Hands must be washed prior to eating to ensure no chemical transfer and subsequent ingestion through food. There are other forms of entry to the system such as inhalation and injection but you would have to be exposed directly to high concentration of chemicals to be at risk.

Any further questions on this hazard can be directed to the Safety Department for review and follow up.

Safety Information for Landscapers from:

http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/safety_haz/landscaping/pesticides.html

What Are Some General Guidelines Concerning PPE and Pesticides?

Use personal protective equipment appropriate for the pesticide in use. Pesticides, herbicides, and other pest control products vary widely in their toxicity. They can be severely irritating or corrosive to the skin or even cause death. Some are also readily absorbed through intact skin and can represent the major route of exposure.

Many pesticides are handled as powders that can form airborne dust and may be inhaled. Other pest control products may be sprayed and form mists in the air. Some formulations contain volatile solvents that can evaporate forming a vapour that may be hazardous above certain airborne concentrations.

Therefore, it is very important to follow the manufacturer's guidelines regarding the personal protective equipment and clothing made of suitable material for use with the specific pesticide. Refer to the OSH

Answers document *Designing an Effective Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Program* for further information.

What Should I Know About PPE Clothing For Use With Pesticides?

- Depending on the specific pesticide and how the pesticide is being used, use chemical protective clothing when there is:
 - Chance of spilling or splashing liquids or
 - Contact with spray.
- Start each day in clean protective clothes that are free of holes or other defects;
- Wear loose-fitting protective clothing - a size slightly larger than needed in order to reduce stretching at seams;
- Secure protective pants outside of boots;
- Wear an apron that extends below boot tops when mixing and loading liquid pesticides;
- Wear boots made of appropriate chemical-protective material, not leather.

What Are Some Tips For Using Other PPE?

Respiratory Protection

- Choose an approved respirator according to fit, chemical and amount of likely exposure;
- Refer to the OSH Answers documents *Respirator Care* and *Respirator Selection* for further information.

Headwear

- Wear waterproof, washable material. Do not use leather or cloth sweatbands;
- Choose helmets, hoods or hats that protect the head, neck and upper shoulders. Select CSA approved safety hats with rain trough brim.

Eye Wear

- Wear chemical goggles and a face shield when mixing or spraying pesticides.

Gloves

- Wear durable, chemical protective gauntlet gloves which extend up the forearm. Follow the manufacturer's guidelines re: guarding suitable glove material;
- Do not wear leather, paper or fabric gloves. These materials absorb and hold liquids and dusts and can become a serious source of exposure.

How Can I Reduce The Chances Of Contamination?

- Stand upwind of all spraying operations;
- Follow manufacturer's instructions to prevent getting pesticides on your hands when removing contaminated gloves;
- Wear a light pair of disposable protective gloves under the outer gloves. Discard the disposables after each use;
- Wear relatively loose-fitting outer gloves for easy removal;
- Store contaminated clothing separately from the family clothing;
- Launder professionally or according to manufacturer's recommendations.

What, In General, Should I Do If My Skin Or Clothing Becomes Contaminated?

- Remove all contaminated clothing immediately;
- Follow MSDS or label first-aid advice for skin/eye contact;
- Scrub the contaminated area vigorously with soap and water;
- Wash entire body, including hair, with soap and water;
- Rinse with clean water for at least 15 minutes;
- Rinse eyes if pesticide gets in them, at eye -wash station or with clean water and obtain medical attention;
- Any co-workers who help you should wear gloves and rubber boots and take precautions to prevent contaminating themselves;
- Contaminated clothing should be bagged and tagged, indicating which pesticide product was used.

- Clean contaminated clothing, or discard if contaminated with a very toxic pesticide, as recommended by the pesticide manufacturer;
 - When laundering contaminated clothing, wear chemical-resistant gloves when handling the contaminated clothing (and decontaminate them after handling the clothing and before removing the gloves);
 - Launder contaminated clothing separately from the regular family laundry; rinse or pre-treat the contaminated clothing before washing it in hot water; re-wash two or three times, as recommended; rinse the washing machine after washing the contaminated clothing;
 - Leather products (e.g., shoes, boots, belts) cannot be decontaminated and should be discarded in an approved manner as hazardous waste;
 - Read the label information and MSDS before using the pesticide product to find out if it can be absorbed through intact skin and be able to recognize toxic effects you may experience if you are exposed. Some acute or short-term effects can start right after exposure; other effects can be delayed from several hours to several days;
 - Obtain medical attention if you feel unwell, or if recommended in the MSDS or in other manufacturer information. Take the MSDS or other manufacturer information with you. Medical staff will need the information to treat you correctly.
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Additional Information as of June 30, 2004

For further information from the Pest Management Regulatory Agency of Health Canada in Calgary about the herbicides and pesticides. The phone number in Calgary if you want to contact them is 292-4106 or 292-4411.

Of particular interest is a pesticide, which is used to kill wheat midge. This particular pesticide is still used occasionally and is usually applied in the summer months. If this particular pesticide is applied you may have to wait longer than 48 hours before going into the field.

If you want to access the Internet and get more information on these various pesticides go to www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pmra-arla. When you access this site go to tool bar click search, bring up the page, and select option 2, which is ELSE, once you bring this up search for the PCP registration number which is referred to as the pest control product. By having the PCP registration number you can identify the herbicide or pesticide and this information will tell you the toxicity levels and how long to wait before you can enter a field that has been sprayed.