Landscaping – Pesticides – Personal Protective Equipment – Fact Sheets



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.

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.

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 (with safety goggles) when mixing or spraying pesticides.

Gloves

- Wear durable, chemical protective gauntlet gloves which extend up the forearm. Follow the manufacturer’s guidelines regarding 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 SDS 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 pretreat 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 SDS 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 SDS or in other manufacturer information. Take the SDS or other manufacturer information with you. Medical staff will need the information to treat you correctly.

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