

(BOOK 2 OF 7)

Pesticide Safety Training for
**Fieldworker-Employees
Working in
Treated Fields**

EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES



COMPLIANCE ASSISTANCE
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1 Pesticide Safety Training for Employees Handling Pesticides

2 Pesticide Safety Training for Fieldworker-Employees Working in Treated Fields

3 Pesticide Emergency Medical Care

4 Pesticide Decontamination Facilities

5 Pesticide Personal Protective Equipment

6 Display of Required Information

7 Pesticide Worker Safety Regulations



Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR)

*California's worker safety regulations specify safe work practices for employees who work in **treated fields (fieldworkers, early-entry fieldworkers)**. This booklet summarizes your responsibilities as an employer to assure that you provide the required pesticide safety training to your employees.*

This booklet does not replace product label information, the Pesticide Safety Information Series (PSIS) leaflets, or the California Code of Regulations. It is a reference tool that summarizes specific regulatory requirements and responsibilities that you – the employer – must follow. You are encouraged to contact the agricultural commissioner's office in the county or counties where you operate for any additional requirements specific to your area.

See "**Definitions You Need to Know**" at the back of this booklet for explanations of highlighted words.

What You Need to Do

ASSURE that each employee assigned to work in a treated field has been trained within the last **12 months**. The training must be given **BEFORE** beginning work in the treated field.

COVER the following subject areas in a manner the employees can understand orally, from written materials or audio-visually, using non-technical terms:

- **Where pesticides are encountered**, including treated surfaces in the field, residues on clothing, PPE, application equipment, and drift.
- **Hazards of pesticides**, including acute, chronic, delayed, and sensitization effects identified in pesticide product labeling, Safety Data Sheets (SDS), or PSIS leaflets.



- **Routes** by which **pesticides can enter the body.**
- **Signs and symptoms** of overexposure.
- Employer's responsibility to provide **decontamination supplies.**
- **Routine decontamination procedures** when handling pesticides, including:
 - ✓ Washing hands before eating, drinking, using the toilet, chewing gum, or smoking.
 - ✓ Washing or showering thoroughly using soap and water.
 - ✓ Changing into clean clothes as soon as possible.
 - ✓ Washing work clothes separately from other clothes and before wearing them again.
- When working in treated fields, **wear work clothing that protects the body from pesticide residues**, and wash work clothing separately from other clothes.
- **Safety Data Sheets** provide hazard, emergency medical treatment, and other information about pesticides.
- **Hazard communication program requirements.**
- **First aid** and emergency decontamination procedures.



- **How and when to get emergency medical care.**
- Prevention, recognition, and first aid for **heat-related illness.**
- **Restricted entry intervals (REI)** and what posting means, including the California and federal formats for field posting signs.
- Responsibility of the employer to keep fieldworkers out of **application exclusion zones.**
- Employees must be **at least 18 years of age** to perform early-entry activities.
- Before handling pesticides, employers must **train employees as pesticide handlers.**
- **Potential hazards to children and pregnant women** from pesticide exposure including:
 - ✓ Keeping children and other family members away from treated areas.
 - ✓ After working in a treated field, employees should remove boots or shoes before entering their home, wash or shower before physical contact with children or family members, and change into clean clothes.
- **Warnings about taking pesticides or pesticide containers home.**

→ How to **report suspected pesticide use violations**.

→ **Employee rights:**

- ✓ To personally receive information about pesticides to which he or she may be exposed.
- ✓ For his or her physician or employee representative designated in writing to receive information about pesticides to which he or she may be exposed.
- ✓ To be protected against retaliatory action due to the exercise of any of these rights.
- ✓ To report suspected use violations to DPR or county agricultural commissioner.

ASSURE that **early-entry fieldworkers** receive the following **additional training** indicated below:

- Use and care of any **personal protective equipment**.
- Prevention, recognition, and first aid for **heat-related illness**.
- **Pesticide product labeling format and meaning of information, such as precautionary statements about human health hazards.**

USE A QUALIFIED TRAINER to conduct the training for the fieldworker-employees. The person conducting the training must be qualified as one of the following:

- A California certified commercial applicator.
- A California certified private applicator.
- A person holding a valid County Biologist License in Pesticide Regulation or Investigation and Environmental Monitoring issued by the Department of Food and Agriculture.
- A University of California Extension Advisor.
- A person who has completed an “instructor training” program given by one of the following:
 - ✓ University of California, Integrated Pest Management Program.
 - ✓ Other instructor-training program approved by the Director of the Department of Pesticide Regulation.
- A California licensed Agricultural Pest Control Adviser.
- A California Registered Professional Forester.
- Other trainer qualification approved by the Director.

TRAINING shall be presented in a location reasonably free from distraction. Trainers must be present for the entire presentation and respond to employee questions.

RECORD of initial and annually required training to employee must include date, employee's printed name and signature, title(s) and source(s) of training materials used, employer's name, and trainer's name and qualifications. **Retain** this record for two years at a central location at the workplace accessible to employees, and provide it to the employee upon request.



What If You Don't Comply?

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) and the County Agricultural Commissioners enforce California pesticide laws and regulations. It is your responsibility to assure that employees handle and use pesticides in accordance with the requirements of law, regulations, and pesticide product labeling requirements.

If you follow the worker safety requirements, you protect your employees' health, the environment, and yourself. If you do not comply, you violate federal and state law. DPR and the County Agricultural Commissioners have the authority to levy substantial penalties on persons who violate pesticide laws. Penalties range from \$50 for minor violations to \$5,000, and/or imprisonment for certain violations that have "created or reasonably could have created a hazard to human health or the environment."

Also, persons who hold a license or certificate

issued by DPR and who are found in violation can have their license or certificate suspended or revoked.



Definitions You Need to Know

Treated Field means a field that has been treated with a pesticide or had a restricted entry interval in effect within the last 30 days. It includes associated roads, paths, ditches, borders and headlands, if the pesticide was also directed to those areas (it does not include areas inadvertently contaminated by drift or overspray).

Fieldworker means any person who, for any kind of compensation, performs cultural activities in a field. It does not include performing tasks as a crop adviser, including field checking or scouting, making observations of the well being of the plants, or taking samples, nor does it include local, state, or federal officials performing inspection, sampling, or other similar duties.

Early Entry Fieldworker means any person who enters into a treated field or other area after the pesticide application is complete, but before the restricted entry interval or other restrictions on entry for that pesticide have expired.

If you have questions or need more information, please contact your local County Agricultural Commissioner's office or call toll free 1 877 378 5463 (1 87PestLine).

A complete set of these booklets is available online from the California Department of Pesticide Regulation's website at: **www.cdpr.ca.gov**

Dept. of Industrial Relations Heat Illness Prevention: **www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/heatillnessinfo.html**



Food and Agricultural Code Div. 7 Agricultural Chemicals, Livestock Remedies, and Commercial Feed. 12996; Title 3. California Code of Regulations 6000, 6128, 6130, 6724, 6760, 6761, 6761.1, 6762, 6764, 6766, 6768, 6771.



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