

# Use and Safe Handling of Pesticides

Some States have restrictions on the use of certain pesticides. Check your State and local regulations. Also, because registrations of pesticides are under constant review by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, consult your county agricultural agent or State extension specialist to be sure the intended use is still registered.

The following rules should be followed when handling pesticides. These rules should be read by all persons involved in pesticide use. Copies of these rules should be posted in several places, particularly in the areas of pesticide storage.

Pesticides are poisonous and always should be used with caution. If used properly, they will not cause injury. The dangers associated with mishandling and misapplication of pesticides, however, include possible injury to the operator and handler, and damage to the seedling crop, to the equipment, and to the environment. Read the Health and Safety codes of your organization pertaining to use of toxic chemicals prior to use of pesticides.

1. Read the label.—Handlers should read, understand, and follow all instructions on the label. Notice warnings and cautions before opening the container. Repeat the procedure every time, no matter how familiar you think you are with the directions. Apply the material only in the amounts and at the times specified.

2. Avoid contact.—Avoid inhaling sprays and dusts. Avoid contact with skin and eyes. When directed by the

label, wear the proper protective clothing and a mask. Do not eat or chew while spraying or dusting. Wash thoroughly before eating.

3. Apply safely.—Use only the specified dosages and mix as directed. Do not use your mouth to siphon liquids from containers or blow out clogged lines or nozzles. Use clean, well-functioning equipment to apply the pesticides. Do not spray with leaking hoses or connections. Do not work or allow others to work in the drift of the spray or dust.

4. Wash immediately.—Stop and wash off any pesticide spilled on the body. Remove contaminated clothing. Wash and change to clean clothing after spraying and dusting. Also, wash clothing each day before re-use.

5. Dispose of containers properly.—Always dispose of empty containers so that they pose no hazard to humans, animals, or plants (either terrestrial or aquatic). When in doubt on proper disposal procedures, contact the nearest agricultural authority.

6. Store safely.—Keep pesticides stored together outside the home or office away from food and usual working areas. Keep them under lock and key. Label and sign the area well and do not store other chemicals among the pesticides. Always keep the pesticides in the original containers, and keep them tightly closed.

7. Report illness.—If symptoms of illness occur during or shortly after dusting or spraying, call a physician or get the patient to a hospital immediately.