



COLORADO ENVIRONMENTAL PESTICIDE EDUCATION PROGRAM

Pesticide Fact Sheet #106
CEPEP 5/00
Updated 6/06

SAFETY WITH PESTICIDES

L.G. Skoglund
S.K. McDonald

This fact sheet covers guidelines which can reduce the likelihood of pesticide mishaps.

<http://www.cepep.colostate.edu>

Safety With Pesticides

The safe use of pesticides is important for everyone. Safety begins the moment you choose a chemical for use, along with transportation, application and storage of the chemical. Deaths from pesticides are uncommon, but precautions are very important. Hazards due to pesticides depend on length of exposure and the toxicity of the chemical applied. There are several guidelines that can reduce the likelihood of a pesticide mishap.

Is a pesticide really needed? Can the pest (insect, disease, weed, or rodent) problem be solved without chemical intervention? (see Pesticide Fact Sheet [Pesticide Alternatives](#))

Choose the appropriate type and amount of pesticide needed. This reduces storage problems.

READ THE LABEL. This will give you proper application, clothing, and emergency instructions (see Pesticide Fact Sheet [The Pesticide Label](#)).

Never eat, drink, or smoke when applying pesticides. Always wash hands after applying pesticides.

Wear proper protective equipment (PPE). Protective clothing can be coveralls, chemical-resistant gloves, hat/hood, socks, or shoes. Eye protection and respirators may be needed (see Pesticide Fact Sheet [Making Your Protective Clothing Effective](#)). See label for minimum clothing requirements.



Prepare area for application. Remove people, animals, toys, and food until the restricted-entry interval (REI) found on the label has passed.

Take weather situation into account. Wind or rain can disseminate pesticides into a neighboring yard or public way.

Wash protective clothing separately from other clothing, discarding saturated clothing. Wash yourself promptly and thoroughly when application and storage is complete (see Pesticide Fact Sheet [Handling Pesticide Tainted Clothing](#)).

Choose the storage area carefully. Keep the storage area locked and away from children and pets (see Pesticide Fact Sheet [Proper Pesticide Storage](#)).

Dispose of unwanted pesticides in a safe, environmentally friendly manner. See label for proper disposal (see Pesticide Fact Sheet [Safe Disposal of Pesticides and Containers in Colorado](#)).

Never put chemicals in different containers.

Alert others in the household to the dangers of pesticides. This includes children and the elderly.

Keep emergency clean-up materials near the storage area (see Pesticide Fact Sheet [What to do with Pesticide Spills](#)).

Always keep emergency phone numbers available. Post the numbers for your physician and the [Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center](#) near the phone: 1-800-222-1222

References and Resources

Baker, D. 1993. *Homeowner Chemical Safety*. No. GO 1918. University of Missouri Extension. Columbia, MO.

Becker, W. and Johnson, F. 1992. *Agriculture Pesticide Safety*, cir. 779. University of Florida Cooperative Extension, Gainesville, FL.

Nixon, P. and Wolf, R. *Pesticide Safety*. University of Illinois Extension. Urbana-Champaign, IL.

Pesticide Safety Tips. 1997. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Office of Pesticide Programs. Washington, D.C.

[CEPEP Home Page](#)