



# COLORADO ENVIRONMENTAL PESTICIDE EDUCATION PROGRAM

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## PESTICIDE SAFETY CHECKLIST

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This fact sheet includes a checklist of things to do to ensure pesticide safety.

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## Pesticide Safety Checklist

It is sometimes easy to overlook important safety precautions when using pesticides. The following checklist is a reminder that we can never be too busy for safety:

### **Read the label carefully and take notice of personal safety and environmental precautions.**

The label information is not advertising - it is solid science. The label includes the proper rate of pesticide use for various conditions, the relative toxicity of the product, directions for safe mixing and application, and any environmental precautions. It lists the product manufacturer's name and address, required protective clothing, and warnings about groundwater contamination and hazards to wildlife (see Pesticide Fact Sheet [The Pesticide Label](#)).

### **Wear appropriate personal safety equipment**

**when handling pesticides.** Start by wearing a wide-brim hat, long-sleeved shirt, long pants, rubber boots, and chemical-resistant gloves. Depending on the product you are using, you may be required to wear goggles, a face shield, or a respirator. Read the product label to determine what proper protective equipment (PPE) is required (see Pesticide Fact Sheet [Making Your Protective Clothing Effective](#)).



### **When mixing and loading chemicals, prevent spills that might contaminate water supplies.**

Prevent tank overflow by never leaving a sprayer unattended during filling. Mixing and loading operations should always take place as far away from your well head or other water sources as possible to reduce the risk of contamination (see Pesticide Fact Sheet [Mixing Pesticides](#)).

### **While filling sprayers, avoid backsiphoning by keeping the discharge end of the fill hose above the tank's water level.**

If you put the end of the hose down into the pesticide liquid in the tank, you run the risk that the hose will suck water and chemicals back into the water source when you turn off the water.

**Never exceed label rates.** Read the label to determine the application rate for both the target site and the target pest.

**Calibrate your sprayer before application.** It is important to make sure that your sprayer is delivering the right amount of product per acre or square foot. Calibration makes more than economic sense, it also helps protect the environment.

**Prevent leftover pesticide by mixing only as much as you need.** If you follow label instructions for application rates and mix carefully, your tank should be empty as you complete each application.

**Never rinse equipment near wellheads, ditches, streams, or other water sources.** If needed, install a longer rinse water hose to move the cleaning operations a safe distance from a well or other water source. Spray the rinse water in the spray tank out over the target site, following label instructions.

**Always triple rinse chemical containers before disposal or recycling.** A pesticide container can be disposed of properly once it has been properly rinsed. Puncture empty plastic containers to prevent reuse and recap plastic and glass containers (see Pesticide Fact Sheet [Safe Disposal of Pesticides and Containers in Colorado](#)).

### **References and Resources**

*Pesticide Safety Checklist.* Alliance for a Clean Rural Environment (ACRE), Kansas City, MO.

[CEPEP Home Page](#)