



How to Protect Myself While Applying Pesticides

Read Product Label

You should always carefully read the product label before you commence application. The label should provide information on the application procedures (e.g. product mixing, spot spraying or area application and personal protection required). The label is a legal document. It is against the law to apply a pesticide outside label directions. Applicators (both private and professional) are liable for charges and legal action.

Buy pesticides in the easiest-to-use forms you can. Buy only the amount of pesticide you need to take care of your immediate problem or for the current season. Don't stockpile pesticides.

Be sure you have any equipment listed on the product label. This includes sprayers, dusters and lawn spreaders. It also includes the personal protective equipment and clothing found on the pesticide label.

Reduce the Risk of Pesticide Exposures

The number one way that individuals can reduce their exposure to pesticides is to hire a licensed applicator.

If you do choose to apply these potentially harmful pesticides yourself, the following is a list of things you can do while applying pesticides to reduce the risk of pesticide exposure:

- Don't spray when it is windy.
- Don't stand under anything you are treating, such as a tree branch, eave or ceiling.
- Don't walk over surfaces, such as a lawn, as you treat them, or over surfaces you have just treated.
- Don't smoke or use tobacco products while applying pesticides.
- Don't eat or drink while you are applying pesticides.
- Only apply pesticides when necessary.
- For best control, time your treatment to the right stage of the pest's life cycle. This helps prevent or reduce the need for reapplication.

Professional Applicators

Professional Applicators are trained and licensed in the application of pesticides. They are educated as to the risks associated with pesticide applications and are bound by operational guidelines in applying these pesticides so as that they pose as little risk as possible to themselves and the public.

Licensed Operators/Applicators are required as per the Pesticide Act to have proper Chemical Application and Storage of pesticide products.

Personal Protective Equipment

You must wear any personal protective equipment stated on the label; it is not just a suggestion! This personal protective equipment may include the following items:

- Waterproof gloves or chemical-resistant, neoprene gloves
- Safety goggles
- Approved respirator
- Hat
- Coveralls
- Waterproof foot coverings

Don't Cross-use Sprayers

If you use or plan to use outdoor pesticides regularly and plan to use insecticides and herbicides, get a separate sprayer for the herbicides and a separate sprayer for insecticides. Even after careful rinsing a sprayer may contain herbicide residues that can injure or kill sensitive plants.

Remove Objects that can be Contaminated with Pesticide Residues

Remove toys, pet feeding dishes and any other items that might be contaminated by the pesticide from the treatment area. Don't replace them until the waiting time on the label is up. Cover aquariums indoors and ornamental fishponds outdoors. Keep people, especially children, and pets out of the area you are treating. Don't let them back into the treated area until the time stated on the label has passed.

Clean and Properly Store your Equipment After Use

Clean up your application equipment and yourself immediately after you have finished applying the pesticide. Store pesticides away from children. Do not store them where they could contaminate food, feeds and seeds, or water.

Have on hand any materials, such as cat litter, and tools, such as a disposable broom, needed to clean up spilled pesticide and clean up spills immediately. Know what to do in case of an emergency before you use a pesticide.

Measure and Mix Pesticides Accordingly

- Measure pesticides accurately.
- Keep a separate set of tools used only for mixing and applying pesticides. This includes measuring spoons and cups and stirring paddles.
- Use plastic or metal items, not glass or wood.
- Open and mix pesticides outdoors.
- Mix only the amount of pesticide you will use and use all that you mix.
- You should wear the personal protective equipment and clothing when opening and mixing the pesticide.
- Don't wear leather gloves as they are not impermeable and may absorb some pesticides thereby putting the pesticide in direct contact with your skin. Wear rubber gloves made to resist pesticides.