

Applying Pesticides by Spraying, Fogging and Dusting

Scope

This control sheet is part of the ILO Chemical Control Toolkit. You should use it when the toolkit recommends control approach 2 - personal protective equipment for using pesticide. The sheet gives good practice advice on exposure control. It can be applied to all tasks in applying pesticides. It describes the key points you need to follow to help reduce exposure to an adequate level. For certain pesticides, your local authority or environmental agency may impose waste handling rules. This sheet identifies the minimum standards to protect your health. It should not be used to justify a lower standard of control than that which may be required by the pesticide label. That label often has detailed information, which you should always follow.

Access

- Make sure someone else knows what you are doing. Keep unnecessary people away from the work area.
- It is important that people should not come into contact with sprayed foliage for several days. Put warning notices on pathways and roadways.

Design - environment

- Add pesticides to the spray reservoir in a place that can collect spills.
- Do not allow concentrate to enter the soil or drains.
- Work out how much pesticide you will need and make up only that amount.

Pesticide application

Tractor-trailed sprayer

- Read the product label to see what protective equipment you need to wear while spraying.
- If the product label says nothing, wear clean cotton coveralls, head protection such as a cloth cap, protective gloves and footwear. Disposable gloves are acceptable.
- Only wear a respirator if the label tells you to do so. Respirators make it more difficult to see where you are going.
- Using a tractor with a cab, even an open cab, gives at least 10-fold protection.
- Do not dump unused spray fluid. Spray the crop again until the reservoir is empty. Then wash the reservoir inside with clean water, and spray this also.
- Take great care when handling spray nozzles, spray booms and the trailer. Use protective gloves. Dried pesticide can be as dangerous as the concentrate.

- Collect water from washing the spray nozzles and spray boom and dispose of it safely.
- Park tractors and sprayers where rainwater run-off and tractor washings will not enter watercourses.

Portable equipment (e.g. knapsack or compression sprayer, fogger)

- Ensure the applicator is working without leaks before you start handling pesticide.
- Check carefully your calculations on the quantities to mix. Make up only as much pesticide as you are likely to need.
- If the applicator starts to leak in use, you can spray the remainder of the spray fluid so long as the leak is not onto your skin. Then wash out the applicator and mend it before using it again.
- Read the product label to see what protective equipment you need to wear while spraying.
- If the product label says nothing, wear clean cotton coveralls, protective gloves and footwear. Wear a respirator if you are fogging. If you are spraying above waist height, wear head and face protection – you may also need a respirator.
- Do not dump unused spray fluid. Spray until the reservoir is empty. Then wash the reservoir inside with clean water, and spray this also.
- Wettable powders often block spray nozzles. Take great care when unblocking spray nozzles. Use protective gloves. Do not blow the nozzle clear by mouth.

Protective equipment

- Check the product label or material safety data sheet or ask your supplier to tell you what personal protective equipment you need.
- Wash your coveralls at the end of the day's spraying.
- Throw disposable gloves away every time you take them off.
- If you use non-disposable gloves, wash them well in soapy water before taking them off, then wash them inside and outside, and hang them up to dry. Throw these gloves away after using them for a week, even if they are not worn out.
- Look after your protective equipment. When not in use, keep it clean and store it in a clean, safe place, separate from normal clothing. Change your protective equipment when it is damaged.

Cleaning and housekeeping

- Clean up all spills – use sand or absorbent material, and shovel the waste into a sealed and marked container.
- Don't clean up dusts with a brush or compressed air.
- Look after your application equipment. After use, wash it out with water, ensure that spray nozzles are clean, and store the applicator in a clean, safe place.
- The washings must not enter the soil or drains.
- Never re-use a pesticide concentrate container. **(See P104 for disposal).**

Training and supervision

- Tell your workers about any harmful properties of the substances they are working with and if they need to use personal protective equipment, why this is so.
- Tell your workers what symptoms to watch out for, and who to tell if they experience these.
- Teach your workers what to do if something goes wrong.