



Lessons in Risk Management

Protecting Nursery Investments by Planning Now for Protection Later, Today and Always...



Protective Clothing: Worker Protection Standards

The Worker Protection Standard (WPS) for agricultural pesticides includes requirements for use of protective clothing for pesticide handlers and for workers who enter a treated area during a restricted entry interval (REI). Pesticide product labels specify the protective clothing for handlers and for early entry workers.

Work Attire for Agricultural Workers

- The WPS has no protective clothing requirements for agricultural workers who enter a treated area after an REI expires.
- WPS safety training encourages workers to wear appropriate work attire – long sleeved shirt/long pants, shoes, and socks -- but no protective clothing is required by the WPS or specified on the product label.

Protective Clothing For Pesticide Handlers

- The protective clothing for pesticide handlers is determined by product toxicity.
- Long-sleeved shirt/long pants plus shoes and socks is the required protective clothing for products with the lowest toxicity.
- For the most toxic products, the WPS requires coveralls over long-sleeved shirt and long pants plus chemical-resistant footwear and gloves for products with high dermal toxicity or skin irritation potential.
- Respirators, usually dust/mist cup-style respirators, are required for products with high inhalation toxicity.
- Protective eyewear is needed for products with high eye irritation potential.
- There may be additional protective clothing requirements for particular activities.

Examples are

- Chemical-resistant aprons for some mixing/loading or equipment cleaning;
- Headgear for airblast spraying.

Protective Clothing For Early Entry Workers

Early entry workers must use protective clothing specified for them on the product label. Protective clothing for early entry workers is the same as that required for the pesticide handlers with these exceptions:

- A handler long-sleeved shirt/long pants requirement is replaced by a requirement for coveralls.
- Requiring coveralls for early entry workers ensures that the coverall is provided, cleaned, and maintained by the employer.
Under the WPS, employers must provide, clean, and maintain required protective clothing (including coveralls).
- Any handler respirator requirement is removed. The respirator is not necessary because early entry work is not performed until four hours after application (and after any inhalation exposure limits or ventilation criteria are met).
- Protective gloves are required for all early entry work, to protect against the dermal exposure associated with early entry tasks.