

Pesticide Use and Protective Clothing

Personal protective clothing is designed to help keep toxic substances such as pesticides from getting on or in your body. The law requires you to wear protective clothing if it is specified on the label of the pesticide you are using. Protective clothing helps protect different parts of your body within the established limits when worn correctly. Some examples of protective clothing are: coveralls, chemical-resistant aprons, chemical-resistant gloves, chemical-resistant boots, and hoods. Other protective equipment may include respirators, safety glasses, or goggles. Always check the label of the pesticide you are using to find out what protective clothing you should wear. The supervisor is responsible for providing appropriate personal protective clothing and replacements for all employees involved in pesticide application.

Wearing Protective Clothing

It is important to take good care of your protective clothing because it is a barrier to keeping pesticide out. This includes carefully checking your coveralls, gloves, and other clothing for holes, tears, changes in color, cracks or other damage each time you prepare to put them on. Be sure to wear clean protective clothing each day.

WARNING: *Immediately stop working if you spot a tear, hole or other damage to your protective clothing. Ask your supervisor for replacement clothing. If you notice a leak, wash or shower immediately.*

When You Take a Break

Always wash the outside of your gloves with soap and water before you take them off. Always rinse your shoes or boots with soap and water. Thoroughly wash your hands and face with soap and plenty of clean water before you eat, drink, smoke or use the toilet. Do not touch the outside of your protective clothing with your bare hands. You should be careful where you walk or sit, since pesticide residues on your shoes or clothing can rub off.

When You Finish Work

- Wash the outside of your gloves and shoes or boots with soap and water.
- Starting at the shoulders, roll your protective coverall down your body. Be sure not to touch the outside. Only the inside should be showing by the time it is rolled down to your ankles.
- Put your coverall in a plastic bag or container, separate from your personal clothing. Put disposable protective clothing in a different container.
- Remove your shoes or boots and put them in the appropriate container.

- Rewash your gloves. Then take them off and put them in the appropriate container. Follow your supervisor's instructions on what to do with the containers.
- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Take a shower as soon as possible. Use a lot of soap, and be sure to thoroughly wash your whole body—including your hair. Then put on clean clothes.

Laundering Pesticide Contaminated Clothing

The best management practice for clothing during pesticide application is daily laundering. It is a simple way to make sure pesticide exposure is kept to a minimum. If you do not do your own laundry, make sure the person who does this task has rubber gloves to handle pesticide-soiled clothes. Then follow these tips for laundering pesticide-soiled clothes:

- Do not try to wash items saturated with full-strength pesticide concentrate—discard them.
- Keep pesticide-soiled clothes separate from family clothes, before and during laundering.
- Wash as soon as possible after soiling.
- Pre-rinse or pre-soak in a tub, on a line with a garden hose, or in your washer before the regular wash cycle.
- Refill the washer with hot water for washing.
- Use a heavy-duty detergent.
- Do not overload the washer—leave room for clothes to circulate.
- Use the highest water level setting.
- Use the regular wash cycle, not a shorter one.
- Never use your suds-saver feature for pesticide-soiled clothes.
- Hang clothes outside in the sun to dry.
- Flush out your washer by running it through a complete cycle with hot water and detergent, but no clothes, before washing another load of family clothes.