



California Department of
Pesticide Regulation



Pesticide Information for Farmworkers and Agricultural Communities

**Protection Against Pesticide Exposure
Report Pesticide Incidents
How Pesticides are Regulated and Monitored**



California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR)
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
January 2025



Pesticide Information for Farmworkers and Agricultural Communities

How the Department of Pesticide Regulation Supports Sustainable Pest Management And Regulates Pesticides

Controlling pests is important for protecting public health and the environment. It is also important to support the production of a healthy and stable food supply for all Californians and the nation.

However, the way pests are managed, including pesticide use, may impact people and the environment.

In California, the Department of Pesticide Regulation is responsible for regulating pesticides to protect people and the environment.

DPR's work includes:

- **Studying pesticides** for potential impacts and mitigating those impacts.
- **Registering pesticides** before they can be sold or used in the state, which includes studying the risks to people or to the environment.
- **Continuously evaluating pesticides.** This process includes monitoring pesticides in the air and water, and tracking reported pesticide illnesses and incidents. This work informs future decisions about registration and regulations when warranted.
- **Working with California's County Agricultural Commissioners** to enforce pesticide laws and regulations, including worker safety rules.

DPR also works to promote safe, effective and sustainable ways to manage pests in agricultural as well as non-agricultural settings, like buildings, schools, parks or forests. This work is supported by outreach programs, grant funding and state leadership to accelerate a transition to sustainable pest management.

More information on DPR can be found at www.cdpr.ca.gov

Contents

Introduction and Overview

What is a pesticide?	1
What are restricted material pesticides?	1

What Should I Know About Pesticide Use?

Product labels	2
Sidebar: What information is on the pesticide label?.....	2
Sidebar: Signal words	3
State requirements	3
Enforcement.....	3
What is illegal pesticide use?.....	4
What is pesticide drift?	4
Sidebar: Contacting your Agricultural Commissioner with the PestLine	4
What are the symptoms of pesticide exposure?	5
Exposure pathways	5
What are the types of exposure?	6
What should I do to protect myself?	7
Other Ways to Protect Myself and Others.....	7

How do I Report a Pesticide Incident, Illness, or Concern?

What type of incident should I report?	8
Who do I call if I believe pesticides are making me sick?	8
What happens when I make a report?.....	9
What if I am retaliated against?	9
County Agricultural Commissioner contacts.....	10
What information should I have?.....	11

Worker Rights: What Are My Rights as a Pesticide Handler or Fieldworker?

What are my rights as a pesticide handler or fieldworker?	12
Your employer must explain your rights to you	12
Training requirements	13
Free medical care if hurt at work.....	13
Right to worker's compensation	14
Right to access and review training records	14
Right to obtain information	14
Right to report unsafe conditions.....	14
Right to be protected from retaliation	14
How to report violations of your rights	14

How California regulates pesticides to protect you and the environment

Registration.....	15
Continuous evaluation	15
Regulations.....	16
How to participate.....	16

Introduction/Overview

What is a pesticide?

A pesticide is any substance or chemical intended to kill, destroy, repel, or attract a pest. Pests include diseases, insects, microorganisms, rodents or weeds that may harm people, damage crops or property. Some types of pesticides include:

- Disinfectants and sanitizers, which control bacteria and other microorganisms
- Fungicides, which control mildew, molds and other fungi
- Herbicides, which control weeds and other unwanted plants
- Insecticides, which control insects
- Molluscicides, which control snails and slugs
- Repellents, which repel mosquitoes, ticks and other insects
- Rodenticides, which control mice, rats and other rodents

What are restricted material pesticides?

Pesticides with a higher potential to harm people, property, wildlife, or the environment are generally classified by U.S. EPA as “restricted use pesticides” and by DPR as “restricted materials.”

In California, restricted materials can only be purchased by licensed or certified pesticide applicators and can be sold only by licensed dealers. To use restricted materials, you must also be a licensed or certified pesticide applicator or supervised by one.

With some exceptions, California also requires an annual permit to use a restricted material pesticide. As part of using that permit, a pesticide applicator must also submit a “Notice of Intent” to the County Agricultural Commissioner for approval 1-2 days prior to the exact date and time the application is intended to occur. County Agricultural Commissioners review the restricted material permit on an annual or biannual basis and reviews the Notice of Intent in real time for potential risks to people and the environment. Permits and NOIs may be approved, denied, or approved with conditions by the County Agricultural Commissioner.

DPR’s web [database](https://bit.ly/3W2Pwmh) (<https://bit.ly/3W2Pwmh>) lists all federal and state restricted pesticides.



To find out about restricted-material pesticide applications planned near you, you can visit SprayDays California, which is an online tool to find information or sign up for a notification by email or text message before a restricted material is planned for use in an agricultural setting. <https://spraydays.cdpr.ca.gov/>



What Should I Know About Pesticide Use

Product Labels

A pesticide label – found on, or attached to, the product container – includes directions for safe and effective use of the pesticide. These instructions and safety information are very specific to people using or applying the pesticides.

Labels include information such as what crops can be treated with that specific pesticide, how much pesticide can be used, how much time must pass before workers enter a field that has been treated with a pesticide, protective equipment requirements for anyone applying or handling the pesticide, and other important information.

The label is the law. This means that if a pesticide user does not follow the directions printed on the label, they are breaking the law. Pesticide laws, including the pesticide labels, protect people and the environment.

If you are using a pesticide at home (for example, chlorine bleach, insecticides or weed killers) or at work, it is critical that you read and follow the pesticide label. If you're unable to read or understand the label, have someone assist you.

A pesticide or household cleaner can be dangerous if it is not used correctly.



For example, storing pesticides in unmarked containers (especially food or drink containers) is highly dangerous since they can be mistaken for food and consumed.

Also, overusing chemicals or mixing them incorrectly can lead to injuries. For example, many people get hurt overusing chemicals in swimming pools and spas, or by mixing bleach with other types of cleaning products like ammonia or toilet bowl cleaner, which can release toxic gases.

What information is on the pesticide label?

- The pesticide's active ingredients (list of chemicals that make the pesticide work)
- Where and how the pesticide can be used
- The target pests (the pest the product is designed to control)
- Information about possible harmful effects from short-term exposure (called "acute toxicity")
- What you should do to protect yourself, other people, and the environment from exposure to the pesticide. For example, wearing a mask, gloves or other protective equipment.



Signal words

Pesticide labels use three signal words: Danger, Warning, or Caution to show how dangerous a pesticide can be to people who are exposed on a short-term basis (called “acute”).

- The signal word is based on laboratory tests that indicate the potential effects if one is exposed to the pesticide, for example by eating, swallowing, or inhaling it, or through contact on skin or in eyes. Pesticides with the signal word Danger are the most toxic or dangerous. They often have the word “Poison” and the skull-and-crossbones on the label.
- The signal word Warning is applied to less-toxic pesticides that pose a specific hazard to people, such as severe skin or eye injury, or a particular danger to the environment.
- Pesticides with the signal word Caution are the least toxic to people. But still handle them carefully, and always follow the label instructions.

State requirements

In addition to the federally approved label, DPR may create rules that further limit, restrict or control use of a pesticide. These rules protect people – including workers, pesticide applicators and communities – from pesticide risks or impacts.

U.S. EPA can deny registration of a product – meaning it cannot be legally sold or used in the United States. DPR also can deny state registration in certain instances, For example, where the pesticide has a significant adverse risk to people or the environment.

Enforcement

DPR and County Agricultural Commissioners partner in enforcing pesticide use laws – and label requirements – everywhere in the state, including both agricultural and urban areas.

DPR’s role is to provide statewide oversight and guidance to County Agricultural Commissioners on investigations, inspections and compliance with pesticide use laws and regulations.

County Agricultural Commissioners are responsible for local pesticide use enforcement. They conduct both planned and unannounced inspections, investigate all reported pesticide incidents, conduct outreach to make sure people that use pesticides understand and follow all pesticide laws and regulations, issue notices of violation when laws and regulations are not followed, and levy fines for pesticide use violations.

DPR also has authority to take enforcement actions when pesticide use laws and regulations are violated, which most typically focus on financial penalties or taking “licensing actions” which means placing a pesticide applicator’s license on probation or revoking a license as appropriate.

What is an illegal pesticide use?

Failing to follow the directions on the product label is illegal.

It is also illegal to not follow California-specific rules and laws.

Illegal use can lead to fines or other penalties.

Growers or professional pesticide applicators who violate pesticide laws and regulations can lose their licenses or permits to apply pesticides.

California's 55 County Agricultural Commissioners investigate all pesticide illnesses and incidents – including “drift” of a pesticide away from its intended target. It is important to report any pesticide incident or concern to them as soon as possible. These reports help the commissioners enforce the pesticide use laws and regulations that keep people and our environment safe.

What is pesticide drift?

Drift is the movement of a pesticide away from its intended target during or after the time of application. Drift can be in the form of a spray or a gas in the air.

If a liquid spray drifts onto skin, wash with soap and running water for at least 15 minutes. Call the doctor or the Poison Control Center, 1-800-222-1222, for advice on what to do next.

If you are indoors and you smell a pesticide being applied outside – or if you think that a pesticide gas is drifting into your neighborhood – stay inside and close all windows, doors, and any other openings. Turn off swamp coolers, air conditioners, and other fans that bring in outside air. If you are outdoors, move to where you can't smell the pesticide. You may need to move some distance away.

Do not touch any spray residue on a vehicle, building surface, or other object, and don't wash it off. Call the County Agricultural Commissioner's office. They may want to take samples for their investigation. You can find the phone number for your commissioner on Page 10 of this booklet, or by calling toll-free 1-877-378-5463 (1-87PestLine).

Certain pesticides are more prone to drift, such as fumigants. Fumigant pesticides are gaseous and are subject to numerous use restrictions including restricted material designations, mandatory setbacks from certain types of buildings, the required use of tarps or tents to cover the area treated, and time of day and weather restrictions. County Agricultural Commissioners investigate all drift incidents. It is important to report any pesticide incident or illness as soon as possible to your County Agricultural Commissioner so they can promptly investigate.



See or smell pesticide drift?

Remove yourself from the area and report it so that the County Agricultural Commissioner can immediately investigate. Contact your County Agricultural Commissioner at 1-877-378-5463.

What are the symptoms of pesticide exposure?

Symptoms of pesticide exposure include:

- Tiredness
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Stuffy nose, sore throat, or coughing
- Eye, nose, or skin irritation
- Excessive sweating



Feel weak or
unable to walk



Blurred
Vision



Feel Discomfort
in Your Chest



Have Pinpoint
Pupils



Foam at the
Mouth or Nose



Have Problems
Breathing



Lose
Consciousness

If you have symptoms while working in the field, ask your employer immediately to take you to the doctor. Your employer is required by law to make sure you are taken to a doctor immediately if you are feeling sick due to a pesticide exposure.

You should consult your doctor immediately if you have any symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhea, or stomach cramps or nervousness, confusion, loss of coordination.

Exposure pathways

- **Oral:** when you swallow a pesticide.
- **Inhalation:** when you breathe in a pesticide.
- **Ocular:** when you get a pesticide in your eyes.
- **Dermal:** when you get a pesticide on your skin.

Be aware: Symptoms of pesticide poisoning can be similar to being stressed or ill from heat, having the flu, or other common illnesses.

Heat Exhaustion Some Symptoms Include:	Pesticide Poisoning Some Symptoms Include:
Sweating	Sweating
Headache	Headache
Fatigue	Fatigue
Nausea	Nausea and Diarrhea
Dry Membranes	Moist Membranes
Dry Mouth-No Tears-No Spit Present	Salivation, Tears, Spit Present in Mouth
Fast Pulse	Slow Pulse
Dilated Pupils	Small Pinpoint Pupils
CNS Depression	CNS Depression
Loss of Coordination, Confusion, Fainting	Loss of Coordination, Confusion, Coma

If rest, water, and shade don't alleviate your symptoms after 10-15 minutes, you could be experiencing a pesticide-related illness. If so, seek medical help right away.

What are the types of exposure?

Pesticide exposure is broadly described as either acute or chronic, referring to the length of time a person is exposed.

ACUTE EXPOSURE	CHRONIC EXPOSURE
Acute: injury from a single exposure, generally of short duration. For example, a person is exposed to a pesticide and feels dizzy or sick.	Chronic: the effect of small doses of a pesticide over a longer period of time. With some types of chemicals, this could result in long-term damage – such as reproductive harm or nervous system damage.

What should I do to protect myself?

Whether you work with pesticides at your job, or just at home, you should always read a pesticide label. If you work around pesticides, your employer should provide this information and you have a right to ask for it in advance of working near or handling pesticides.



If you work around pesticides on your job, take a shower or bath as soon as you get home from work and before any contact with children or family.



It also is a good practice to wear clothes with long sleeves and long pants, shoes or boots, socks, a hat and/or scarf, and gloves while at work.



When you get to your car or home, remove your work shoes or boots before you enter. When you get home, change out of your work clothes. Keep your work clothes (including socks and undergarments) separate from other laundry. You can do this by putting the clothes into a closed plastic bag outside your home to prevent family and pets from touching them. Wash your work clothes that may have pesticide residues on them as soon as you can. Washing your work clothes every day is best.

Other ways to protect myself and others:

- After you have worked with/near pesticides, always wash your hands before eating, drinking, smoking, chewing gum, using your phone, or going to the bathroom.
- Do not mix clothes that have pesticide residues with other clothes. You must wash them separately.
- Never put pesticides in food or drink containers and never take pesticides or their containers home from work.



How Do I Report a Pesticide Incident, Illness, or Concern?

What type of incidents should I report?

If you believe you have observed or experienced a pesticide illness, incident, or concern, please report this as soon as possible. This information should be reported to your County Agricultural Commissioner. Commissioners investigate all reported incidents.

Reporting any suspected pesticide incident helps counties and DPR take action against violators and helps protect people and the environment.

Incidents could include worker or public exposure to pesticides, contamination of another agricultural field, drift onto vehicles in the area, a fish kill over a stream or body of water, drift on beehives, etc.

Incidents could also include workers not receiving the proper training or safety equipment before they handle or apply pesticides.

Who do I call if I believe pesticides are making me sick?

If you are experiencing an emergency related to pesticide exposure, such as difficulty breathing, remove yourself from the area and call 9-1-1 immediately.

If you are experiencing non-emergency symptoms, such as a stuffy nose, or need free, first-aid advice, call California Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222.

You can use the following methods to report pesticide incidents:

1. Call 1-87PestLine (1-877-378-5463) to be connected with your County Agricultural Commissioner.

2. Find the direct phone number of your County Agricultural Commissioner in the list on page 10, or by scanning the QR code here.
3. Contact the Department of Pesticide Regulation by calling (916) 324-4100 or sending an e-mail to CDPRWeb@cdpr.ca.gov.
4. File a complaint online with the California Environmental Protection Agency's [Environmental Complaint System](https://bit.ly/41UnkG0). (<https://bit.ly/41UnkG0>)



For general, expert pesticide information, contact the National Pesticide Information Center: (800) 858-7378 or at npic@ace.orst.edu.

[Video: See a pesticide incident? Report it!](#)

What happens when I make a report?

The agricultural commissioner's staff will gather evidence to find out if pesticide laws were broken. They typically:

- Interview the people involved. This may include you, the applicator, the property operator, workers, neighbors, and others affected by or near the incident.
- Collect evidence for laboratory analysis.
- Check pesticide use records and laboratory results to find out if a pesticide was used, what it was, and if it drifted.
- Write a report on the investigation.
- If the evidence shows that laws were broken, the agricultural commissioner can penalize the violator.
- Let you know in writing the result of the investigation into your complaint, if you request it.

Completing these steps may take weeks or months, depending on the complexity of the investigation.

If you ask, the Commissioner's office will let you know in writing the results of the investigation.

What if I am retaliated against?

If you need help understanding your rights or to report if you have not received training or any of your rights were violated, call or go to your local County Agricultural Commissioner's office, local legal aid and worker's rights organization, union, or DPR.

**CALL 911 IN AN
EMERGENCY
OR IF ANYONE
IS INJURED**

If you have questions or concerns about a pesticide application, call your County Agricultural Commissioner as soon as possible.

Direct phone numbers are listed on the table to the right.

You can also call DPR's toll-free PestLine:

1-877PestLine
(1-877-378-5463)



County	Telephone	Website
Alameda	(510) 670-5232	www.acgov.org/cda/awm
Amador	(209) 223-6487	www.co.amador.ca.us/departments/agriculture
Butte	(530) 538-7381	www.buttecounty.net/216/Agricultural-Commissioner
Calaveras	(209) 754-6504	ema.calaverasgov.us/Agriculture
Colusa	(530) 458-0580	www.countyofcolusa.org/80/Agricultural-Commissioner
Contra Costa	(925) 608-6600	www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/1542/Agriculture-Weights-Measures
Del Norte	(707) 464-0878	www.co.del-norte.ca.us/departments/agricultural-department
El Dorado/ Alpine	(530) 621-5520	www.edcgov.us/Government/Ag
Fresno	(559) 600-7510	www.co.fresno.ca.us/departments/agricultural-commissioner
Glenn	(530) 934-6501	www.countyofglenn.net/dept/agriculture/welcome
Humboldt	(707) 441-5260	www.humboldt.gov/623/Agricultural-Commissioner
Imperial	(442) 265-1500	www.agcom.imperialcounty.org
Inyo/Mono	(760) 873-7860	www.inyocounty.us/services/agriculture-inyo-and-mono-counties/agricultural-commissioner
Kern	(661) 868-6300	www.kernag.com
Kings	(559) 852-2830	www.countyofkings.com/departments/agricultural-commissioner
Lake	(707) 263-0217	www.lakecountyca.gov/171/Agriculture
Lassen	(530) 251-8110	www.lassencounty.org/dept/agricultural-commissioner/agricultural-commissioner
Los Angeles	(626) 575-5454	www.acwm.lacounty.gov
Madera	(559) 675-7876	www.maderacounty.com/government/agricultural-commissioner-weights-and-measures
Marin	(415) 473-6700	www.marincounty.org/depts/ag
Mariposa	(209) 966-2075	www.mariposacounty.org/63/Agricultural-Commissioner
Mendocino	(707) 234-6830	www.mendocinocounty.org/government/agriculture
Merced	(209) 385-7431	www.countyofmerced.com/944/Department-of-Agriculture
Modoc	(530) 233-6401	www.co.modoc.ca.us/departments/agricultural
Monterey	(831) 759-7325	ag.co.monterey.ca.us
Napa	(707) 253-4357	www.countyofnapa.org/AgCom
Nevada	(530) 470-2690	www.nevadacountyca.gov/982/Agricultural-Commissioner
Orange	(714) 955-0100	www.ocagcomm.com/services
Placer	(530) 889-7372	www.placer.ca.gov/1505/Agricultural-Commissioner
Plumas/Sierra	(530) 283-6365	www.plumascounty.us/73/AgricultureWeights-Measures
Riverside	(951) 955-3045	www.rivcoawm.org
Sacramento	(916) 875-6603	www.agcomm.saccounty.net/Pages/default.aspx
San Benito	(831) 637-5344	www.cosb.us/departments/agriculture
San Bernardino	(909) 387-2105	awm.sbcounty.gov
San Diego	(858) 694-2739	www.sdcounty.ca.gov/awm
San Francisco	(415) 252-3830	www.sfdph.org/dph/EH/Agriculture
San Joaquin	(209) 953-6000	www.sjgov.org/department/agcomm/home
San Luis Obispo	(805) 781-5910	www.slocounty.ca.gov/agcomm
San Mateo	(650) 363-4700	agwm.smcgov.org
Santa Barbara	(805) 681-5600	www.countyofsb.org/agcomm
Santa Clara	(408) 918-4600	www.ag.sccgov.org/home
Santa Cruz	(831) 763-8080	www.agdept.com
Shasta	(530) 224-4949	www.shastacounty.gov/agriculture
Siskiyou	(530) 841-4025	www.co.siskiyou.ca.us/agriculture
Solano	(707) 784-1310	www.solanocounty.com/depts/agriculture
Sonoma	(707) 565-2371	sonomacounty.ca.gov/natural-resources/agricultural-weights-and-measures
Stanislaus	(209) 525-4730	www.stanag.org
Sutter	(530) 822-7500	www.suttercounty.org/government/county-departments/agricultural-department
Tehama	(530) 527-4504	www.co.tehama.ca.us/government/departments/agriculture/
Trinity	(530) 623-1356	www.trinitycounty.org/Agriculture-Division-Weights-Measures
Tulare	(559) 684-3350	www.agcomm.co.tulare.ca.us
Tuolumne	(209) 533-5691	www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/362/Agricultural-Commissioner
Ventura	(805) 388-4222	www.ventura.org/agricultural-commissioner
Yolo	(530) 666-8140	www.yolocounty.org/government/general-government-departments/agriculture-cooperative-extension/agriculture-and-weights-measures
Yuba	(530) 749-5400	www.yuba.org/departments/agricultural-commissioner-and-sealer-of-weights-and-measures/index.php

The following questions will likely be asked by your County Agricultural Commissioner when you report a pesticide incident. The more information you can provide, the better.

GENERAL INFORMATION

You can report a pesticide incident without giving your name or contact information, although it is helpful for investigators to be able to contact you for follow-up. You also can give your name but ask that it be kept confidential

Your name: _____

Your contact information: _____

Names of other witnesses (if you know them): _____

DESCRIBE WHAT HAPPENED

The date and time of the incident: _____

Street address or general location: _____

If it was indoors, was it: At home At a school At work Other (please specify): _____

If it was outdoors, was it: In your yard In a park Along a road In an agricultural field Other _____

What happened: _____

Was the pesticide being sprayed? Being mixed? Transported? _____

Describe the equipment used (for example, a tractor, backpack sprayer, plane, or helicopter): _____

Did you see anything in the air? Yes No

Describe the weather: _____

If you know, what were the names of the pesticides? _____

If you know, what was the name of the company doing the pesticide application? _____

WHAT WERE THE EFFECTS?

Did you smell or taste anything unusual? If so, describe it as best you can. Try to associate the odor with something familiar, like rotten eggs, sweet or sour chemicals, garlic, or chlorine. Some other descriptions are oily, metallic, sharp, burning, light or heavy:

Did you feel anything on your skin, eyes, or clothing? Yes No

Did you inhale fumes? Yes No

Did you eat contaminated food? Yes No. If yes, what was it? _____

Was anyone injured? Yes No. If yes, when did they start feeling sick? _____

Name of the injured people (optional), or the type of animal or plant injured: _____

Contact information for injured people (optional) _____

Can you describe their symptoms and how long they lasted? _____

Did the injured people go to the doctor or to the hospital? Do you know the name of the doctor or hospital? _____

This information may be used by County Agricultural Commissioners to thoroughly investigate all reported pesticide illnesses or incidents. Additional questions may be asked by commissioners depending on the nature of the incident.



Worker rights

People who work with or around pesticides have many rights – including access to training prior to any pesticide application.

DPR employees regularly meet with agricultural workers, promotores (community health care advocates), farmers, applicators and others to provide health and safety information related to pesticide use, information on reducing pesticide exposure risk, and new regulatory requirements around pesticide use. DPR also conducts outreach on worker safety and rights, and how to file confidential complaints of potential exposure.

DPR has many resources, including [printed materials](https://bit.ly/49i4mtL) (<https://bit.ly/49i4mtL>) and videos on the [department's YouTube page](https://bit.ly/3T05hcJ). (<https://bit.ly/3T05hcJ>)

Hotel workers, janitors, and packing shed workers who work with pesticides, including sanitizers, also have legal protections. See [DPR's Pesticide Safety Information Series](https://bit.ly/3JXqOYX) (<https://bit.ly/3JXqOYX>) for details on agricultural and non-agricultural worker rights.

Also, see DPR's worker [Health and Safety webpage](https://bit.ly/3uroJ8R) (<https://bit.ly/3uroJ8R>) for more information about worker rights.

If you work on a farm —or in a forest, greenhouse, or nursery or any place where pesticides are used — your employer has a legal responsibility to make sure you are trained and protected.

Your employer must explain your rights to you

Your employer is legally required to provide you information about pesticides that are, will be or have been used recently where you work, in a language and manner you can understand. That information includes:

- Name of the pesticide, active ingredient(s), and U.S. EPA or California registration number.
- The Safety Data Sheet for the applied pesticide

- When the application started and ended
- The restricted entry interval (REI). This is the time following a pesticide application when entry into the treated area is restricted.
- The crop or site treated
- Where the pesticide was applied

If you need help understanding your rights or to report if you have not received training or any of your rights were violated, call or go to your local County Agricultural Commissioner's office, local legal aid and worker's rights organization, union, or DPR.

You have the right to get trained

Your employer must give you training in a way that you understand before you begin working with or around pesticides (this includes fieldworkers as well as those who are directly handling pesticides, or machines or tarps used with pesticide applications). Training is also required anytime you work with new pesticides. Your employer is legally required to train you each year on how to work with or around pesticides safely.

You have the right to get free medical care if you were hurt at work

Your employer must plan for medical care before you start working where pesticides are used. You or your supervisor must be informed of the location of the doctor. If you think that pesticides made you sick or hurt you at work, immediately tell your employer. Your employer must make sure that you are taken to the doctor immediately; you should not drive yourself to the doctor if you get sick at work.

Remember: You DO NOT have to pay for medical care if you get sick or hurt from pesticides at work.

Your other rights include

- **Right to Worker's Compensation.** If you get sick or hurt because of your job, you have the right to file for worker's compensation. Worker's compensation will pay for your medical bills, and sometimes, lost pay.
- **Right to Access and Review Training Records.** You have the right to look at your safety training records from your employer.
- **Right to Obtain Information.** You, your doctor, or your representative designated in writing can receive certain information from your employer or the person who hired your employer (such as a grower). This includes which pesticides the fields were treated with, or any other pesticide record the grower or your employer has to keep.
- **Right to Report Unsafe Conditions.** Pesticide safety for workers is a top priority for County Agricultural Commissioners and DPR. You have the right to report unsafe pesticide work conditions to your commissioner or DPR and any suspected pesticide use violations without being punished or fired. Your employer will not be told who made the complaint. Any reports of safety concerns will be checked out right away by County Agricultural Commissioners.
- **Right to be Protected from Retaliation.** You are protected from being fired, from discrimination, and from punishment and any other retaliatory action due to the exercise of any of your rights.

How to report violations of your rights

To contact your local agricultural commissioner, call 1-87-PestLine (1-877-378- 5463).

To contact DPR, call (916) 445-4300



How California Regulates Pesticides To Protect You And The Environment

Registration

Pesticides are regulated by both the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and the State of California.

U.S. EPA has a process of registration that must happen before a product can be sold or used anywhere in the United States.

In California, products registered by U.S. EPA must also be evaluated and registered by DPR before they can be sold or used in the state.

DPR also evaluates pesticides prior to registering them. DPR looks at California-specific data to assess potential impacts to people or the environment.

U.S. EPA has the authority to deny registration. DPR also can deny registration in certain instances, for example, where the pesticide has a significant adverse risk to people or the environment.

DPR may adopt regulations that further limit, restrict or control use of a pesticide.

For more on registration, see our YouTube video:

Video: [How do you know the pesticides used around you are safe and effective?](https://bit.ly/3Dn1Six) (<https://bit.ly/3Dn1Six>)

Continuous evaluation

Even after a pesticide has been approved for use in California, DPR continually evaluates products to look at new science and data, collect and study reports of health impacts or concerns from pesticide use, and collect information on pesticides in food, air, and both surface water and groundwater to determine if additional rules are needed to address potential risks.

Regulations

DPR's evaluation processes look at both short- and long-term risks to people and the environment if exposed to pesticides.

This evaluation informs mitigation and regulatory actions, which are the steps the department takes to further restrict the use of a pesticide that can harm human health or the environment. DPR also can deny registration in certain instances, for example, where the pesticide has a significant adverse risk.

Examples of the types of regulations (legal rules) that DPR has created to provide for pesticide use that is safe for people and the environment include:

- Requiring protections for workers and others who handle pesticides or may enter treated areas, such as personal protective equipment requirements and field-reentry restrictions.
- Requiring licensing and training for all professional pesticide applicators.
- Designating some pesticides as “restricted materials,” These are pesticides that present a greater risk of harm to people or the environment and so require additional training and oversight before the pesticide can be used.
- Requiring setbacks or areas of space between where pesticides are applied and sensitive sites like homes or schools.

These requirements protect people from pesticides used in their communities.

More information about the state's pesticide laws and regulations can be found at www.cdpr.ca.gov.

How to participate

DPR's process of making regulations is transparent and encourages public participation.

For each proposed regulation, DPR first publishes a “Notice of Proposed Action” on its website. The notice contains information on how to send comments on the draft regulation.

People who want to be notified of proposed regulations can sign up for email notifications on [DPR's electronic mailing list subscription page \(https://bit.ly/49wzPtb\)](https://bit.ly/49wzPtb). Scroll to “Notices of Proposed Regulatory Action,” click in the “Subscribe” column and follow the instructions.)

DPR can also mail notification to your address. To be added to this mail list, call (916) 445-4300 or mail a request to: Regulations Coordinator, California Department of Pesticide Regulation, P.O. Box 4015, Sacramento, CA 95812.

Before DPR adopts a regulation, the department offers time (usually 45 days) to submit written comments to the department.

This can be done by mail, email, FAX, or in the department’s online public-comment portal, [SmartComment](https://bit.ly/4iR3eCJ) (<https://bit.ly/4iR3eCJ>). Specific directions can be found in the “Notice of Proposed Action.”

The department may also hold public hearings, where verbal or written comments can be submitted. These are listed on the “Notice of Proposed Action.”

For more information on rulemaking and how it works, see DPR’s website: [DPR Laws & Regulations](https://bit.ly/49zAfyR) (<https://bit.ly/49zAfyR>)



California Department of
Pesticide Regulation

www.cdpr.ca.gov