

North Dakota State University

Agricultural

Pesticide Handling and Application

I. Introduction

On April 15, 1994, the EPA Worker Protection Standard (WPS) for agricultural pesticides became effective for products with directions for use in the production of agricultural plants on farms, forests, nurseries, and greenhouses.

If you are an agricultural pesticide user and/or employer of agricultural workers or handlers, the WPS requires you to provide to your employees, and sometimes to yourself and others, information about exposure to pesticides, protection against exposures to pesticides, and ways to mitigate exposures to pesticides.

The following information has been provided as a service to the pesticide applicators and dealers of North Dakota through a cooperative project of the NDSU Pesticide Programs Office of the NDSU Extension Service, the North Dakota Agricultural Association, representatives of several pesticide distributing companies and the NDSU University Police & Safety Office (UP&SO).

II. Purpose

To ensure all employees know the correct and safe procedures for handling and storing pesticides.

III. Goals

To reduce the risk of potential work related injuries associated with pesticide handling and storage.

IV. Procedure

The downloadable manual, "[The Worker Protection Standard For Agricultural Pesticides - How To Comply. What Employers Need To Know](#)" published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, contains more detailed information on the WPS requirements, and explains the exemptions that may apply to you or your operation. The final source of Worker Protection Standard information is the pesticide label and the information provided is the maximum WPS requirements.

The WPS affects only products that bear revised WPS labeling. All products covered by the WPS must bear WPS labeling when sold or distributed by anyone. Check the pesticide label to determine if the pesticide is covered by the WPS Standard.

Products covered by the WPS will contain a section in the Directions for Use portion of the label that has the heading “Agricultural Use Requirements”. Under the Agricultural Use Requirements heading will be directions to comply with WPS, and its requirements for training, decontamination, notification, emergency assistance to employees, restricted entry intervals, and personal protective equipment instructions.

It is a violation of Federal law to use this type of product in a manner inconsistent with its labeling.

For assistance regarding pesticide use or interpretation of the Workers Protection Standard, questions should be referred to Andrew Thostenson, NDSU Pesticide Program Specialist.

The NDSU Extension Service County Offices and the ND Department of Agriculture Office may be a source for copies of the Standard. Your retail pesticide dealer may also have copies of the Standard available for reference or sale.

The University Police and Safety Office will be the reference for NDSU’s Safe Operating Procedure regarding Pesticide Handling and Application.