

Pesticide Safety Information

CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
PESTICIDE REGULATION
1001 I Street,
Sacramento,
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Washing Pesticide Work Clothing

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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No. 7

If you work with pesticides, your work clothes can get pesticides on them. This can happen even if you wear coveralls or other personal protective equipment (PPE) over your own clothes.



It is your supervisor's job to clean your PPE. This sheet tells you how to clean your own work clothes. If you don't wash your clothes, the pesticides on them can make you sick. And if your dirty clothes are mixed with your family's clothes at home, your family could get sick, too. Follow these directions to protect yourself and your family from pesticides.

WEAR CLEAN WORK CLOTHES EVERY DAY

Wash clothes that have pesticides on them as soon as you can. The longer you wait, the harder it is to wash the pesticide off. And, if you keep wearing the clothes and get more pesticide on them, you could get sick because pesticides can get into your body through your skin.

WASHING PESTICIDE WORK CLOTHING

- Wear rubber gloves.
- Wash a full cycle, in very hot water.
- Keep separate from other clothes.
- Use strong detergent.
- Use a pre-soak cycle or run through the wash cycle twice.
- If possible, dry the clothes outside on a line.
- Use the highest water level.
- Clean the washing machine by running a cycle with no clothes.

When you come home from work, do not hug or touch your family until you have changed out of your work clothes. Shower and wash your hair. This is to protect your family from pesticides.

BEFORE YOU WASH YOUR CLOTHES

- You cannot get all the pesticide off of leather items such as watchbands, belts and boots. You must throw them away if they have pesticides on them. If you wear them again and sweat, the pesticide can get in your body through your skin.
- If you have pesticide powder or granules on your clothes, shake them off before you leave work. Pay special attention to your cuffs and pockets.
- Keep all clothes with pesticides on them (including underwear) in closed plastic bags. Until you are ready to wash the clothes, keep the bags outside the house. Make sure children and pets cannot get to the bags.
- Tell the person that does the laundry at home that your clothes have pesticides on them. Explain how to wash them.

WHEN YOU WASH YOUR CLOTHES

- Do not mix clothes with pesticides on them with your family's laundry. They must not be washed together, or pesticide can get on your family's clothes and make them sick.
- Try to dump the clothes straight from the plastic bag into the washer, without touching the laundry.
- If you have to touch the pesticide work clothes, wear rubber gloves. Then wash the gloves, take them off, and throw them away. Then wash your hands and arms.
- Put only a few things in the washer at one time. This helps get them clean.
- Use the longest cycle, and **LOTS** of **HOT** water. Cold water will not do a good job taking out pesticides.

- Use a strong detergent. You can use bleach if you want, but it does not help take out pesticides.

AFTER YOU WASH YOUR CLOTHES

- Before you use the washing machine again, clean it by running it with no clothes - only hot water and detergent.
- Dry your clothes on a line, outside if you can. The sun will help get rid of any pesticides that are left.
- If you dry the clothes in a dryer, run it until the clothes are completely dry. Then run the empty dryer for 10 minutes.

WHAT IF I SPILL PESTICIDE ON MY CLOTHES?

If the spilled pesticide is full strength, not diluted with water, take the clothes off right away. Do not try to clean them. Instead, you must throw them away. Follow the state and local rules for doing this. (Ask your supervisor about how to do this.)

WHAT ABOUT CLEANING PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)?

It is your employer's job to clean coveralls and other PPE. Your supervisor may train you how to clean your PPE at work. Never take PPE home to clean it.

Your supervisor must make sure that you change out of coveralls and wash at the end of the workday. You should not take the coveralls home.

If you do not go to your employer's headquarters at the end of your workday, you must

- take off your coveralls at work;
- put them in a container (a plastic bag is good) and put it outside your home; return them to your employer for washing.



If you don't get all the information you need in your training, or from your supervisor, you should call your County Agricultural Commissioner, or the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) for more information. You can find the Commissioner's number in your local white pages phone directory. DPR numbers are:

- Anaheim (714) 279-7690
- Fresno (559) 445-5401
- Sacramento (916) 324-4100

