

# PESTICIDE SAFETY



Information

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

N No. 6

## Safety Rules for Minimal Exposure Pesticides (MEPs) in Non-Agricultural Settings

**Pesticides can get into your body many different ways and make you sick.** They can get in through your skin, eyes, or lungs as you breathe.

### What are the “minimal exposure pesticides”?

Some pesticides are called “Minimal Exposure Pesticides,” or MEPs, because it is important to make sure you are exposed to them as little as possible. MEPs can hurt you in ways you might not notice right away. If you are exposed to them, they could be doing damage in your body and causing problems you might not notice until much later.

#### These are the two MEPs you might use:

##### 1. Buctril

- **USE:** Kills broadleaf weeds in ornamental turf. Also used in landscape maintenance and rights-of-way.
- **DANGER:** If you are a pregnant woman and exposed to even a little of this pesticide, it might hurt you and/or your unborn child.

##### 2. Metasystox-R (MSR) and Inject-A-Cide

- **USE:** Kills insects and mites in landscape maintenance and rights-of-way.
- **DANGER:** These pesticides can affect your nervous system. If you are exposed to too much of them you might start vomiting, get a headache, feel sick to your stomach, or your vision might blur. If you are a man and are exposed to even a little of these pesticides, it might hurt your ability to have children.



SAFETY TIP

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**IT IS IMPORTANT**  
to make sure that  
your body is exposed  
as little as possible  
to MEPs.

## What must my employer do to protect me when I use a MEP?

If you handle MEPs, your employer must make sure you have:

- One or two pieces of clothing, such as coveralls, which cover your entire body except your head, hands, and feet. Your employer must make sure that you start each work day with clean coveralls.
- Clean, chemical resistant clothes that cover your body, hands, and feet.
- The right kind of respirator (Ask your employer for the N-5 safety leaflet for more information on respirators).
- A closed system for mixing and loading, so you are not directly exposed to the pesticide (Ask your employer for the N-3 safety leaflet for more information on closed systems).
- Enough water, soap, and single use towels for normal washing and in case of an emergency where you mix and load the pesticides.
- A place with enough water, soap, and clean towels where you can change your clothes and wash at the end of your work day.
- A clean, pesticide-free place to store your own clothes while you work with these pesticides.



## Are there any special rules I should know?

If you use certain kinds of equipment to protect yourself at work, you may not have to wear full body personal protective equipment (PPE). Ask your employer for a copy of the N-3 safety leaflet for more information about the equipment. The information in the table below explains the substitutions.

### WHEN USING CLOSED SYSTEMS, ENCLOSED CABS, OR WATER-SOLUBLE PACKAGING ENCLOSED CABS, OR WATER-SOLUBLE PACKAGING

If you use	You use may <sup>1</sup>	Instead of this
Closed system for pesticides with "Danger" or "Warning" <sup>2</sup>	Coveralls, chemical-resistant gloves, chemical-resistant apron eye protection	PPE required on the pesticide labeling
Closed system for pesticides with "Caution" <sup>2</sup>	Work clothing (shirt, pants, shoes) eye protection	PPE required on the pesticide labeling
Enclosed cab	Work clothing and respiratory protection required on the label	PPE required on the pesticide labeling
Enclosed cab acceptable for respiratory protection	Work clothing	PPE required on the pesticide labeling

<sup>1</sup> For any substitution, all PPE required by the label must be available on site in case of an emergency.  
<sup>2</sup> Using pesticides in water-soluble packages is considered the same as mixing with a closed system. However, transfer from mix tank to application tank must be made with a closed system.



If you don't get all the information you need in your training, 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, by calling 1-877-Pestline, or at:

<http://www.cdpa.ca.gov/exec/county/countymap/>

DPR's Regional Offices are:

- Northern (West Sacramento) 916/376-8960
- Central (Fresno) 559/243-8111
- Southern (Anaheim) 714/279-7690

### Pesticide Complaint?

**1-87PestLine**  
INFORMATION LINE

1-877-378-5463

