The Dangers of Pesticide Drift

Pesticides are chemicals that kill weeds, insects, and other pests.

Pesticides are designed to kill. Exposure to pesticides can make you sick right away and/or can be harmful to your long-term health. Pesticides are especially harmful to children.

Pesticide drift may be visible as a cloud of spray or dust, or you may notice an unpleasant smell or taste. You may even feel droplets. Pesticides can harm your health even if you don’t see, feel, taste or smell them.
Maybe it’s not the flu?
Symptoms of pesticide exposure are often dismissed as colds, flu, diabetes, pregnancy, allergies, or hangovers. If you feel any of the above symptoms, especially if they appear quickly, think about where and when you may have been exposed to pesticides and see a doctor.
Some effects take months or years to show up, such as:

- birth defects
- nervous system problems
- reproductive harm
- cancer
You cannot be fired for reporting drift or seeking medical attention.

Your employer must provide transportation to the doctor or hospital.

Your employer must provide the pesticide Safety Data Sheet (SDS).

By law, state agencies will investigate if reported.

Report all pesticide drift, whether you are sick or not. See p.8

Farmworkers have these rights when they are exposed to pesticides at work:
How Are Pesticides Applied?

- **Ground Boom Sprayer**: Sprays down toward the ground
- **Soil Fumigation**: Sprays up and out
- **Aerial Application**: Sprays up and out
- **Ground Air-blast Applicator**: Sprays up and out
What to Do If You Are Exposed to Pesticides

At home: Turn off your swamp cooler. Close the windows. If possible, carefully leave the area immediately. Call 911 if you are too sick to drive.

At work:
— Tell your supervisor immediately!
— Ask your supervisor what pesticide you were exposed to, and ask to be taken to a doctor.
— Tell your doctor the name of the pesticide, and ask them to report it.

Wherever you are exposed:
— Record everything and report it! See p. 8
— Change your clothes and shower with soap and warm water.
— If your clothes were hit, put them in a paper bag inside a plastic bag for possible testing.
See a Doctor Immediately If You Feel Any Symptoms of Pesticide Poisoning!

Tell the doctor what happened and what pesticides were involved.

Who will pay your medical bill?
If you were exposed at work, workers' compensation insurance is required to pay.

If you live in Oregon or Washington, make sure your doctor reports the illness, as required by law.* Follow up with your State Department of Health.

*For more information visit: http://pesticideresources.org/med/reporting.html
Always Report Pesticide Drift!
How to Report:

Call your State Department of Agriculture (see p. 12 for contact numbers).

Write everything down! See p. 9-10

Gather necessary pesticide application information from your employer. If you are unable or unwilling, you may appoint a designated representative. For help with a designated representative, call NCAP (541) 344-5044 x 35.

If you are seriously ill, call 911.
Record Everything!

Don't worry if you don't know all the answers, just record as much as you can. Keep any photos or videos, and make copies of the form for others to fill out, if needed.

Recording Form for Pesticide Exposure

1. Your name: ________________________________________________________________

2. Date of pesticide exposure: ____________ (month/day/year) Time: ____________am/pm

3. The exposure happened while:  □ Working  □ Driving  □ At Home
 □ At School  □ Other _______________________________________________________

4. Location of exposure: (Be specific! Address, intersection, part of highway, school name, field block, residence, name of farm labor contractor or grower if known, etc.)
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

5. Weather conditions at time of exposure:  □ No Wind
 □ Wind: From what direction? _________ How Strong?  Light / Medium / Strong
 □ Fog  □ Other _____________________________________________________________

6. Did you feel, smell or taste anything at the time of exposure?  □ No  □ Yes
If yes, what did it feel, smell or taste like? _______________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

7. What pesticide(s)? (if known)_______________________________________________

8. Describe the exposure: (What were you doing? Was it a gas, a spray, from a helicopter, etc.?)______________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

9. Did you see the pesticide being applied? If so, describe how (helicopter, tractor, sprayer, etc.) and estimate how far away it was. ________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
10. Who was exposed? Write the names and contact information of all people you know were exposed. Continue on the back or on another page if you need more space.

Name __________________________________________ Contact Info _____________________________
Name __________________________________________ Contact Info _____________________________
Name __________________________________________ Contact Info _____________________________

11. What symptoms did you and others experience?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Me</th>
<th>Others (who?)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dizziness</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headache</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burning eyes</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stomach ache/ nausea</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diarrhea</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vomiting</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fainting</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rash/Irritation</td>
<td>□</td>
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Follow up!

If you were exposed at work, did you tell your supervisor? □ Yes □ No
Did you save clothes that might have been contaminated in a bag? □ Yes □ No

Remember to report drift and exposure to the State Department of Agriculture immediately. Call community support groups if you need help! (see pages 13-14.)

Who I called ____________________________________________ Date & time of call ____________________________ What did they say?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
Filing a Report with the State

Report pesticide drift to your State Department of Agriculture.

Reports may be given anonymously but will have more weight if you are able to provide your general contact information.

Only general contact information is requested. You will not be asked to provide personal information such as a state ID or social security number.

During the course of the investigation, you may be referred to another state department. Be sure to follow-up.

Try to provide as much information about the incident as possible so that a successful investigation can be performed.

You will be notified when the investigation is complete.
Important Contacts

In case of emergency, dial 9-1-1

Poison Control Center ........................................ 1-800-222-1222
National Pesticide Information Center ........... 1-800-858-7378

Washington:

Washington State Department of Agriculture .. 877-301-4555
Washington Department of Labor ............... 800-423-7233

Oregon:

Dial 2-1-1 for non-emergency pesticide reporting
Oregon State Department of Agriculture .......... 503-986-4635
Pesticide Analytical and Response Center ...... 503-986-6470

Idaho:

Idaho State Department of Agriculture ............ 208-332-8608
Idaho Department of Labor ....................... 208-332-3570 ext. 3135
You Are Not Alone
For help reporting drift, to get involved, or if you have questions, these organizations are here for you.

Community Health Worker Coalition for Migrants and Refugees
(Washington)
(425) 678-8011

Northwest Justice Project
(Washington)
(509) 225-0026

PCUN
(Oregon)
(503) 902-0367

Oregon Law Center
(Oregon)
(503) 726-4381

Visión 2C
(Idaho)
(208) 991-4451

Idaho Immigrant Resource Alliance
(Idaho)
About CPR and NCAP

Californians for Pesticide Reform (CPR) is a statewide coalition of more than 190 organizations, founded in 1996 to fundamentally shift the way pesticides are used in California. CPR’s mission is to protect public health, improve environmental quality and expand a sustainable and just agriculture system by building a diverse movement across California to change statewide and local pesticide policies and practices.

The Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides (NCAP) works to protect community and environmental health and inspire the use of ecologically sound solutions to reduce the use of pesticides. NCAP works in the Northwest region with programs spanning Washington, Oregon, and Idaho.

Thank you to CPR for your hard work on this guide and for granting permission for it to be adapted to the Pacific Northwest region.