

Pesticide Use, Disposal, and Storage Guidelines

In California, pesticide use, disposal, and storage are governed by laws in the California Food and Agriculture Code (FAC) and regulations in Title 3 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR). The laws and regulations concerning pesticide use have become increasingly complicated over the past few years. Outlined in this fact sheet are important regulations that affect pesticide use in California schools. The applicable sections from the FAC and the CCR have been cited.

Guidelines and Regulations for Pesticide use in California Schools

The following guidelines will help you handle pesticides safely. For more detailed information, see the Pesticide Safety Information Series N, available from the Marin County Department of Agriculture at (415) 499-6700.

- **Follow general safety standards.** When performing pest control using a pesticide, use only equipment in good repair that is safe to operate. Be careful, plan your treatment activities, and use suitable methods to apply the chemicals. Avoid contamination of the environment. (CCR 6600)
- **Make sure the pesticide you are using is registered for use in California.** It is unlawful for any person to possess or use any pesticide that is not registered. (FAC 12995)

- **Read the pesticide label.** Pesticide labels contain information to protect your health. A copy of the registered label that specifies the manner in which the pesticide is to be used shall be available at the use site.
 - Every label displays a “signal word” that gives an indication of the relative acute health hazard. The signal words are as follows:
 - DANGER — highest potential hazard to people and the environment
 - WARNING — moderate potential hazard to people and the environment
 - CAUTION — Lower potential hazard to people and the environment
 - The pesticide label also specifies safety precautions to follow. Eye protection is required for most activities involving mixing/loading, application, and equipment maintenance. Regular eye glasses and sunglasses DO NOT provide adequate protection. Chemical-resistant gloves are always required and must be made of rubber or other chemical-resistant material. The label may require using a respirator, chemical-resistant hat, apron, and boots. Employees shall wear a coverall when they handle any pesticide with the signal word “Danger” or “Warning.” Read the label carefully to determine what specific protective clothing is required. (CCR 6602, 6736, 6738)
- **All applicators must be adequately trained before handling pesticides.** Employees who use pesticides must be trained for each pesticide handled. The training must include the following:
 - The meaning of precautionary statements on the pesticide label.
 - Routes through which pesticides can enter the body, and the signs and symptoms of pesticide over-exposure.
 - Emergency first aid and how to obtain emergency medical care.
 - Safety requirements and procedures.
 - Environmental concerns such as drift, runoff, and wildlife hazards.

Guidelines and Regulations for Pesticide use in California Schools, cont.

- Applicable regulations and the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS).
 - The location of the completed Hazard Communication for Employees Handling Pesticides in Noncrop Settings (Pesticide Safety Information Series N-8 from the Department of Pesticide Regulation, available also from the Marin County Department of Agriculture).
- The school must keep a written training record that shows applicators have received the necessary training.
- To apply restricted materials, the applicator must be licensed or certified to apply the chosen material or be under the direct supervision of someone who is. (CCR 6724, AB 2260)
- **Inspect equipment before each day of use.** Make sure that equipment used for mixing, loading, transferring, or applying pesticides is inspected before each day of use, is properly calibrated, and is determined safe to use. (CCR 6742)
 - **Evaluate the site for likelihood of harm or damage.** Prior to and while applying a pesticide, an applicator must evaluate the site to be treated, as well as surrounding properties and weather conditions, to determine the likelihood of harm or damage. No pesticide application shall be made when there is a reasonable possibility of contaminating persons or non-target sites or animals. (CCR 6614)
 - **Be prepared for all emergencies.** Compile a list of phone numbers to call for help and a list of first aid procedures to be administered before help arrives. Keep this list in service vehicles and/or an accessible area near a phone. (CCR 6726)
 - **Plan for emergency medical care in advance.** Employees must know the name, address, and phone number of the facility at which emergency medical care is available. This information must be posted in a prominent place at the worksite or in a work vehicle. If there are reasonable grounds to suspect that someone has a pesticide related illness, they must be taken to a physician immediately. (CCR 6726)
- **Keep records of pesticide use.** The minimum requirements for recorded information are the date and place of application, amount used, product name, active ingredient(s), manufacturer's name, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's product registration number. This information is needed to comply with the Healthy Schools Act and must be kept for four years in a place accessible to the public. (CCR 6624 and AB 2260)
 - **Dispose of pesticides properly.** DO NOT dispose of pesticides down the drain, in the toilet, the gutter, or storm drains! Even though labels may direct you to wrap partially full pesticide containers in newspaper and throw them into the trash, this is NOT ALLOWED in California. Pesticides must be disposed of at a Class 1 hazardous waste facility. Empty containers must be triple rinsed at the application site at the time of use. Rinsate should be poured into the spray tank. Properly rinsed, empty containers can be disposed of in a Class 2 sanitary landfill. Call your local Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program or the Marin County Department of Agriculture for more information. (CCR 6670)
 - **Store pesticides properly.** Pesticides with the signal words "Danger" or "Warning" must be stored in a locked area that is dry, separate from food and feed, and away from children and pets. Signs visible from any direction of possible approach and readable at 25 ft. must be posted on the storage area. The sign should read "Danger: Poison Storage Area. All unauthorized persons keep out." (CCR 6674)
 - **Storage for pesticides marked "Caution."** Although the law does not specify storage for pesticides with the signal word "Caution," it is prudent to keep these pesticides under lock and key, in a dry location, separate from food and feed, and away from children and pets.

For more information on pest management, call the Marin Dept. of Agriculture at 415-499-6700.