

What you need to know!

Pesticides and your health in Louisiana

What Is a Pesticide?

Pesticides are chemicals developed to repel, control or kill pests. Pests can be insects, weeds, fungi or rodents. There are more than 17,000 pesticide products used in the United States. Pesticides are widely used on agricultural crops and in homes, yards and public places. The types of pesticides commonly used also are called insecticides, herbicides, fungicides and rodenticides.

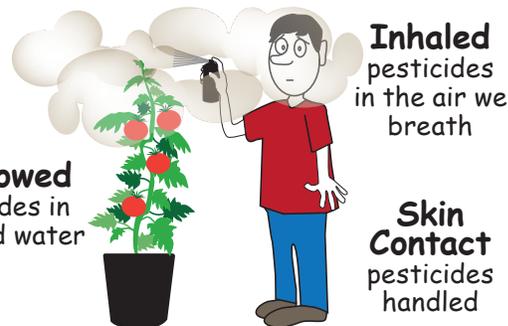


Pesticides Can Be Harmful to People

In addition to harming pests, many pesticides also can harm people. The harmful effects of a pesticide depend on the strength or toxicity of the chemical ingredients, the amount and the length of time of the pesticide exposure and the way it enters the body. Reading the pesticide label and following directions on it can prevent many pesticide-related illnesses

Some People Are at Greater Risk of the Effects of Pesticides

People have different responses when exposed to pesticides. Depending on their basic health, age and individual characteristics, the responses of various people can be very different. Small children, the elderly and people with health conditions may be affected more. How often and how long people come into contact with pesticides also affect their risk of developing problems from exposure.



How You Can Be Exposed to Pesticides

Exposure occurs when you come into contact with a pesticide and it enters your body. A risk of exposure may be possible if pesticides are nearby, but they must contact your body to harm you. There are three major ways for pesticides to enter the body. If a pesticide is in the air, it can be inhaled and may pass into the bloodstream. If it is in food or water or if it is accidentally swallowed, it can enter through the stomach. Certain pesticides may pass through the skin. Some pesticides also may irritate the skin, eyes, nose and throat if you come into direct contact with them.

Examples of Pesticide Exposure

Drift or Overspray: Pesticide spray from an airplane, tractor or a home sprayer may drift or blow onto people living, working or going to school near agricultural fields or other application sites.

Occupational: Farmworkers and pesticide applicators may be exposed to pesticides while on the job. Workers also may unknowingly expose their families by carrying pesticides into their homes on their bodies, clothes and shoes or by not washing their work clothes separately from the family laundry.

Household: Improper use, storage and application of household pesticides such as insect repellents, foggers, rodent baits, weed killers, disinfectants (such as bleach) and flea, tick and bed bug control products can lead to poisonings.

What You Should Do If Exposed to a Pesticide

1

Initiate First-aid Treatment.

Pesticide on Skin

Remove clothes immediately and wash skin with running water for 15 minutes.

Pesticide in Eyes

Rinse eyes with water for 15 minutes.

Inhaled Pesticide

Leave the area and seek fresh air.

Swallowed Pesticide

Read label to determine if there is something you should do right away.

2

Call the Louisiana Poison Center: 800-222-1222.

The center is staffed by trained professionals 24 hours a day.

Staff members provide poison information and treatment recommendations related to pesticide exposure.

3

Seek Medical Help From Your Physician or Hospital Emergency Department.

When seeking medical help, bring these with you:

- Labels of all pesticides to which you may have been exposed.
- Records indicating what was sprayed from the person or company that sprayed.

Laws That Regulate How Pesticides Are Used

The Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act, also known as FIFRA, regulates the production, sale and application of pesticides. The act requires registration and labeling of all pesticides for either general or restricted use. Restricted use pesticides can cause adverse effects to the environment, humans and/or animals if they are not used according to label instructions. Therefore, restricted use pesticides are allowed to be used only by certified pesticide applicators or applicators under the direct supervision of a certified pesticide applicator.

The Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act establishes minimum standards for pesticide regulation nationwide. In Louisiana, the state Department of Agriculture and Forestry regulates pesticides through the federal act and the Louisiana Pesticide Law. Louisiana can pass laws that are more stringent than FIFRA, but may not weaken the federal act's provisions. For example, Louisiana schools are required to develop an integrated pest management plan and maintain records of pesticides used on school property. Schools are encouraged to use the least toxic method of pest control by state laws.

Improper labeling, use or application of pesticides violates the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act and can result in civil and/or criminal penalties. State agencies have been delegated the authority to prosecute violations of the federal act.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Worker Protection Standard for Agricultural Pesticides protects the health of workers and pesticide handlers (mixers, loaders and applicators) involved in the production of agricultural and forestry products. These worker protection standards require agricultural employers to exclude workers from areas being treated with a pesticide and areas under a restricted entry interval. Lists of pesticide treatments made on a field and applicable restricted entry intervals must be posted in a central location. The restricted entry intervals are found on the pesticide label.

EPA standards require agricultural employers provide:

- Pesticide safety training for all workers and pesticide handlers.
- Personal protective equipment for pesticide handlers and early entry workers.
- An adequate supply of water, soap and towels for decontamination.
- Transportation to a medical facility when a worker or handler is injured. Laws Governing Aerial Application of Pesticides

Laws Governing Aerial Application of Pesticides

The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry regulates the spraying of pesticides from aircraft. The Federal Aviation Administration regulates the operation of aircraft during aerial applications. Complaints regarding the operation of aircraft may be directed to the FAA District Office at 225-932-5900.

Who To Contact About Pesticide Problems

If you have been affected by a pesticide, believe a pesticide is being applied incorrectly or wish to report violations of the EPA Worker Protection Standard for Agricultural Pesticides, call the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry's emergency hotline at 855-452-5323, or during business hours you can call the department's Pesticide and Environmental Programs office at 225-925-3763. Español: LDAF 24 Horas Hotline 855-452- 5323 (Un Intérprete será disponible si es necesario).

Health-related pesticide complaints in Louisiana are investigated by the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry and the state Department of Health and Hospitals. The Department of Agriculture and Forestry determines if a misapplication or violation has occurred, and the Department of Health and Hospitals evaluates the health effects resulting from pesticide exposure. A final report is provided to the person filing the complaint.

Steps You Can Take After Filing a Pesticide-related Health Complaint

- 1.** Contact the applicator and/or property owner to inquire about the pesticides used and to inform them of the incident.
- 2.** Save contaminated clothing in a plastic bag for sampling. Close the bag securely.
- 3.** Take photographs and/or a video of the area that was sprayed.
- 4.** Record contact information of any witnesses.
- 5.** Keep a written record of the incident and subsequent events, including agency contact, onset and duration of symptoms, physician visits and medical tests.
- 6.** Keep copies of all letters and records.

Contact Information

Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry

Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences | Pesticide and Environmental Programs

24-hour Hotline: 855-452-5323

Website: www.ldaf.state.la.us

Español: LDAF 24 Horas Hotline 855-452- 5323 (Un Intérprete será disponible si es necesario)

Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals

Office of Public Health

Section of Environmental Epidemiology and Toxicology

Pesticide Surveillance Program

Toll-free Phone Number: 888-293-7020

Website: www.seet.dhh.louisiana.gov

LSU AgCenter

The LSU AgCenter has research and extension professionals in your area who can provide pesticide information to the public.

Phone: 225-578-4161

Website: www.lsuagcenter.com

Louisiana Poison Center

Toll-free Phone Number: 1-800-222-1222

Louisiana Environmental Action Network

The Louisiana Environmental Action Network is an environmental advocacy organization dedicated to making Louisiana's communities safer, healthier places to live.

Phone: 225-928-1315

Website: www.leanweb.org

National Pesticide Telecommunications Network

The National Pesticide Telecommunications Network provides pesticide information to the public.

Toll-free Phone Number: 800-858-7378

Website: npic.orst.edu



Visit our website

www.LSUAgCenter.com

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