Worker Protection Standard (WPS)

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Agricultural Worker Protection Standard (WPS) is aimed at reducing the risk of pesticide poisoning and injury among agricultural workers and pesticide handlers. Pesticide applicators must comply with this OSHA regulation when using agricultural use pesticide products that reference the Worker Protection Standard, 40 CFR 170. In 2015, the EPA made major revisions to the Worker Protection Standard (WPS).

The LSU AgCenter has since worked to provide an updated WPS Train-the-Trainer program that is approved by the EPA. In Louisiana, those employers who wish to train their own workers and handlers (or other workers and handlers on nearby agricultural establishments) must be certified pesticide applicators and have been trained in the new WPS Train-the-Trainer program provided through the LSU AgCenter. Note: all agricultural workers and handlers (who work with or around applied pesticides and who work for one of these four establishments: farm, forest, plant nursery or greenhouse operation) must be trained on a yearly basis with approved training materials.

If a pesticide applicator who has had "WPS Trainer status" has attended a WPS Train-the-Trainer program prior to November 2016, then he or she must attend an updated WPS Train-the-Trainer program. Once this training has been completed, the "WPS Trainer" category will be added to the back of their pesticide certification card. This WPS Trainer certification will be renewed when they attend their normal pesticide applicator recertification meeting, on their three-year recertification cycle. Training dates and locations can be found at www.lsuagcenter.com/pesticide. (Select the WPS tab.)

If you would like to receive WPS Train-the-Trainer training so that you will be certified to administer WPS worker/handler training to workers who perform work around or with agricultural pesticide products, please email LSUAGPSEP@agcenter.lsu.edu and someone at the LSU AgCenter's Pesticide Safety Education Program will assist you.

As part of the revised rule there are a few things that need to be pointed out:

- Workers and handlers must be trained every 12 months.
- WPS trainers must participate in the new EPA-approved Train-the-Trainer Program (See information above).
- Workers and handlers must be trained by using EPA-approved training materials
- No longer using the card system for records of training. You must maintain the following worker/handler annual training information:
    - Trained worker's printed name and signature.
    - Date of the training.
    - Information identifying which EPA-approved training materials were used.
    - The trainer's name (and certification number) and qualification to train.
    - The worker or handler employer's name.
- The LSU AgCenter has created a record-keeping form that you are welcome to use. If you would like to download a training verification form for WPS, please do so by going to the LSU AgCenter's PSEP website (within the WPS tab).
- Must retain records of training of workers and handlers for at least two years.
- Maintain the following information at a central location:
    - New safety poster https://npsecstore.com/collections/posters.
    - Application records.
    - Emergency medical contact information.
    - SDS (safety information).
- When using a pesticide that requires a respirator, employers must:
    - Have an employee medically evaluated by a physician or other licensed healthcare professional.
    - Have employees go through an annual fit test for each type of respirator required by the pesticide product label.
    - Have the employee participate in annual training on how to properly use the respirator(s).
    - Maintain records for two years of the completion of the above, respirator requirements.

The ***How to Comply Manual*** is a great reference guide and can be ordered at www.npsecstore.com.

To get more information about the WPS revised rule you will need to refer to the final rule at https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-worker-safety/agricultural-worker-protection-standard-wps.

Where to get updated information:

- www.lsuagcenter.com/pesticide
- https://npsecstore.com/ (for the new poster and other important WPS materials)
- https://www.pesticideresources.org/ (to get EPA approved worker/handler training materials)

This section was revised by Bryan Gueltig.