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 rule 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 worked to provide an updated WPS Train-the-Trainer program that has been approved by the EPA. In Louisiana those employers that want to train their own workers and handlers must be certified applicators and go through the new WPS Train-the-Trainer program with the LSU AgCenter. All workers and handlers must now be trained on an annual basis. If you went through a WPS Train-the-Trainer program prior to November of 2016, then you will have to attend a new WPS Train-the-Trainer program. Once you have completed that program, WPS Trainer will be added to the back of your pesticide certification card and you will then be able to go to your normal recertification meeting to have that category recertified.

Training dates and locations can be found at www.lsuagcenter.com/pesticide. If you would like to participate in a WPS Train-the-Trainer Program, please email kbrown@agcenter.lsu.edu.

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 go through 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 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 qualification to train.
  - The worker or handler employer’s name.
- The LSU AgCenter has created a form that you are welcome to use. If you would like to download training verification form for WPS.
- Must retain records of training of workers and handlers for two years.
- Maintain the following information at a central location:
  - 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 health care professional.
  - Have employee 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 requirements.

The How to Comply Manual is a great reference guide and can be ordered at 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/ (where to get the new poster)
- http://pesticideresources.org/stage/index.html (where to get EPA approved training materials)

This section was revised September 2020 by Kim Brown.