Personal Pesticide Protection

Summary

The Personal Pesticide Protection program is based on extensive faculty research that includes a broad spectrum of topics including surface modification of fibers, compliance with the worker protection standard, decontamination of pesticide-soiled clothing, and children's exposure to pesticides. It is also part of a USDA-funded regional research project, “Mediating Exposure to Environmental Hazards through Textile Systems.”

Response

Personal Pesticide Protection (PPE) is an extension program in the Department of Fiber Science and Apparel Design. It identifies ways to use personal protective equipment to reduce human exposure to pesticides and provides this information to appropriate audiences.

Training is offered to pesticide applicators through the Health Environmental and Pesticide Safety Education Program, Pesticide Management and Education Program (PMEP) at Cornell University. Consumers also need to be aware of gardening and lawn care hazards and protection; they can learn a great deal directly from materials on the web.

Always Wear the Right Stuff slides, available in both Spanish and English, can be downloaded in pdf format and:

- explain the risk of handling pesticides;
- describe proper selection, use, and storage of PPE; and
- outline laundry procedures for clothing soiled with pesticides

Personal Protective Equipment Guides help pesticide handlers/workers comply with the EPA Worker Protection Standard. They cover topics that include heat stress; coveralls, gloves, and other skin protection, chemical-resistant PPE, and protective eyewear.

While the primary focus is on pesticide applicators, the same criteria apply for gardeners and others using...
pesticides around their homes. "Tips for Laundering Pesticide-Contaminated Clothing" is valuable to the general public and is online. All of these educational materials are being used throughout the U.S.

Impact

• In 2007 at least 500 persons were informed of Environmental Protection Agency regulations regarding the Worker Protection Standard, PPE issues related to the use of engineering controls, and research on fabrics and fabric finishes.

• Delivery of pesticide applicator training for Amish farmers in western New York has been built on training in the Finger Lakes area to address the increasing presence of people who are Amish in the state.

• Evaluations from 25 Amish farmers in Cattaraugus County indicated an increased understanding of pesticide decontamination methods, PPE label statements, and different barrier fabrics.

Contact

Web site: www.human.cornell.edu/che/fsad/outreach/programs/personal-pesticide-protection/educational-resources/

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View additional extension and outreach programs in the Department of Fiber Science and Apparel Design.

1 In October 2007 the project was renewed under the title “Personal Protective Technologies for Current and Emerging Occupational Hazards.” The NC-170 project Web site www.umes.edu/nc170 includes research information covering a number of years and items for consumers.