

MAFES Dawg Tracks



January 21, 2008

Pesticide Emergencies



Despite what we may think, no substance is completely safe or unsafe. Any substance, even the most harmless, can be harmful if you are overexposed to too much of it.

Pesticides are designed to be toxic to the target pest, while being safe to the people using them. As we all have experienced, accidents and misuse incidents do occur; and when they do, there is always the potential for an illness or injury to happen.

The potential for a pesticide to cause injury depends upon several factors:

- **Toxicity** – Toxicity, by definition, is the potential a chemical has for causing harm. Some pesticides have a low human toxicity rate and others have a higher rate.
- **Doses** – The greater the quantity of a chemical you are exposed to, the greater risk of injury. The effect of a given dose varies with the weight and age of the person. So, obviously, the same dose induced to an adult would have less effect than the same dose to a child.
- **Routes of absorption** – The ways the body comes in contact with chemicals are: through the skin, by mouth and breathing. Swallowing a pesticide usually creates the most serious problem. In actual practice, the most common route is absorption through the skin.
- **Duration of exposure** – The longer a person is exposed, the more chemical the body will absorb.
- **Physical and chemical properties** – Some pesticides evaporate faster than others, so they can be inhaled easier. Some break down quickly on surfaces, others last longer. These qualities affect the potential risk of overexposure.
- **Population at risk** - People who mix or apply pesticides are at the greatest risk. However, consumers who use pesticides in their homes may also be overexposed, especially if they do not follow the instructions on the label.

RECOGNIZING PESTICIDE POISONING –

Like other chemicals, pesticides may produce injuries externally or internally. Pesticides can cause contact-associated skin irritation or allergies. Symptoms of irritation and allergic reactions can be redness, itching, pimples, swelling or blistering. The mucous membranes of the eye, nose, mouth and throat are all sensitive to chemicals. Internal injuries can occur, depending upon where a chemical is transported in the body or what organ is affected. Symptoms include: short breath, rapid breathing, excessive saliva, vomiting, diarrhea, nausea, headaches or dizziness.

FIRST AID TREATMENT –

- **Skin Poison** – Run water over the area for about 15 minutes. Call a doctor or the poison control center. Discard affected clothing.
- **Eye Poison** – Open the eyelid; wash the eye slowly and gently with warm water for 10-15 minutes. Call for Medical Help.
- **Inhaled Poison** – Take the victim to fresh air. If unconscious, give artificial respiration and call for medical assistance.
- **Swallowed poison** – If the person is alert and able to swallow, dilute the ingested substance with water or milk and call for medical help.

An MSDS should be available for the medical personnel. All the affected clothing should be disposed of, and the individuals helping the victim should be very careful in the area affected.

Keep the Poison Control Center number available, along with all other emergency call numbers.

Always have protective clothing available, accessible and ready when using pesticides.

Pesticides are a good friend and helper, when used correctly, but when used incorrectly and abused, they can become your worst enemy.

Ted Gordon
Risk Mgmt. / Loss Control Mgr.
MAFES - MSU-ES
662-566-2201

Excerpts: www.cdc/nasd.

1/8/2008

MAKE YOUR FARM THE BEST!

SAFER THAN ALL THE REST!!

SAFE TODAY – ALIVE TOMORROW!