

- ✓ Become familiar with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Worker Protection Standard (WPS) which is a regulation aimed at reducing the risk of pesticide poisonings and injuries among agricultural workers and pesticide handlers.
- ✓ All agricultural employers, owners, and managers, as well as labor contractors, are required to comply with the WPS when pesticides with labeling that refers to the WPS have been used on an agricultural establishment.
- ✓ Consult the EPA Web site <http://www.epa.gov/oecaagct/htc.html> which provides information to help employers comply with the WPS, including a Quick Reference Guide, sample forms, fact sheets, and checklists. The document can be downloaded as one large file or in smaller sections by unit.

## **WORKER PROTECTION STANDARD**

The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Worker Protection Standard (WPS) is a regulation aimed at reducing the risk of pesticide poisonings and injuries among agricultural workers and pesticide handlers. The WPS contains requirements for pesticide safety training, notification of pesticide applications, use of personal protective equipment, restricted entry intervals following pesticide application, decontamination supplies, and emergency medical assistance.

All agricultural employers, owners, and managers, as well as labor contractors, are required to comply with the WPS when pesticides with labeling that refers to the WPS have been used on an agricultural establishment. Most WPS requirements apply to agricultural workers or pesticide handlers, but there are some requirements that apply to all persons and some that only apply to certain persons such as those who handle pesticide application equipment or clean pesticide-contaminated personal protective equipment. EPA's National Agriculture Compliance Assistance Center provides information and numerous resources to assist the regulated community with WPS compliance.

### **Implementation of the Worker Protection Standard**

Implementing the WPS is a key part of EPA's strategy for reducing occupational exposures to agricultural pesticides. EPA has taken a number of steps to ensure effective national implementation and enforcement of the WPS regulation. EPA works closely with its state pesticide regulatory and extension partners to communicate WPS requirements to the regulated community and assure the regulation is being adequately implemented and enforced. State pesticide regulatory agencies, which have primary jurisdiction over pesticide use enforcement, have conducted thousands of WPS inspections nationwide, resulting in numerous enforcement actions for WPS violations. For additional information, please visit EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Web page about national WPS inspection and enforcement accomplishments.

### **Certification and Training**

To protect the health and safety of workers and handlers, employers are responsible for training them in the safe use of pesticides.

Certification and training regulations require pesticide applicators to meet certain training and/or testing requirements before they use or supervise the use of pesticides labeled "restricted use." In addition, the pesticide label indicates how a pesticide may be used and what protective clothing or other measures may be necessary for maintaining worker safety.

### **Training Manual**

The *Worker Protection Standard for Agricultural Pesticides How To Comply Manual* provides detailed information on who is covered by the WPS and how to meet regulatory requirements. The updated manual will facilitate better protection from the potential risks of pesticides to pesticide workers and handlers in agriculture.

### **Reference**

<http://www.epa.gov/oecaagct/htc.html>