

Protective Clothing: Script

Agsafe, Coalition for Health and Safety in Agriculture¹

The following safety module is intended to be used as a refresher safety awareness session and is in no way to be used as a substitute for job training nor proper equipment use.

It is important to keep your skin protected as much as possible while working with or around pesticides. Pesticides can splash and spill and can be present on your clothing, even if you don't see any residue. Coveralls, aprons, spray suits, gloves, hats, boots, goggles and face shields are designed to protect you from getting the pesticide on your skin or into your body.

WEAR COVERALLS TO PROTECT YOUR BODY

Coveralls are available in disposable or rubber-like materials. (See Figure 1.) Disposable coveralls are lightweight and reasonably comfortable. They offer good protection if they are not damaged. If they become severely contaminated or damaged, discard them at once. Chemically resistant coveralls are similar to a rubber suit and must be worn when the label indicates the requirement for full-body protection. If you have questions about which coverall to wear, ask your supervisor.

DON'T WEAR CONTAMINATED CLOTHING HOME

Change out of your work clothes at the end of the work day, or sooner if they become contaminated. (See Figure 2.) Your employer is responsible for providing for

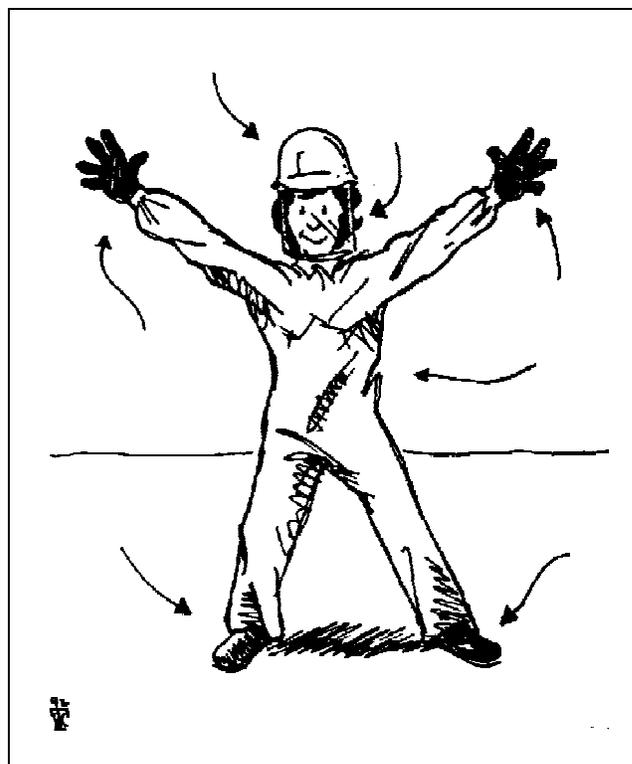


Figure 1. Wear coveralls to protect your body

the cleaning of your work clothes; therefore, if specific laundry bins are provided, leave your work clothes in them. Remember not to wash your work clothes together with your family laundry.

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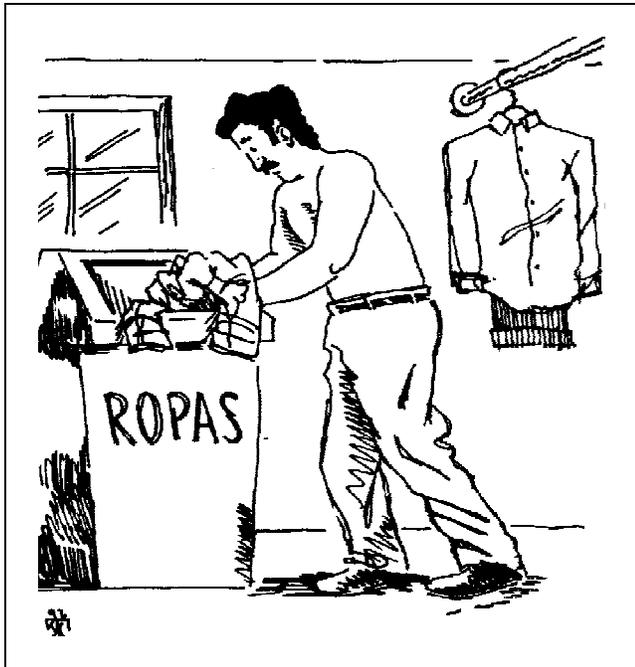


Figure 2. Don't wear contaminated clothing home

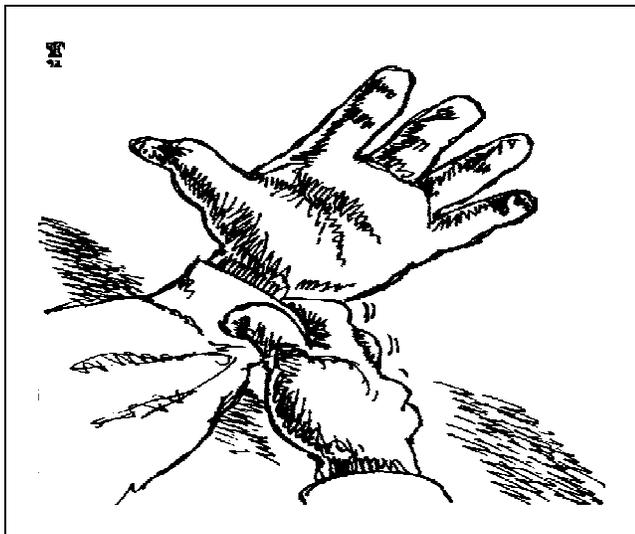


Figure 3. Wear gloves to protect your hands

WEAR GLOVES TO PROTECT YOUR HANDS

The skin on your hands can absorb pesticides and their solvents. Protect your hands by wearing liquid-proof gloves. (See Figure 3.) Never use gloves that have a cloth lining, wristband, or that are made of leather. These materials soak up pesticides instead of repel them. When wearing your gloves, wear your shirt sleeves on the outside of your gloves. This will prevent any spills and splashes from running down into your gloves and onto your hands. If your work requires you to raise arms overhead, tape your sleeve inside your glove. After using non-disposable gloves, rinse them well in clean water before removing them.

NEVER WEAR FABRIC HATS

Do not wear ordinary baseball type hats or straw hats that have leather sweatbands. These hats are dangerous because of their absorbent material. Wear a liquid-proof hat, preferably made of a washable plastic. (See Figure 4.) The hat may be a hard hat or made of flexible plastic. At the end of the work day, rinse your hat well in clean water.



Figure 4. Wear a liquid-proof hat, preferably of washable plastic

WEAR BOOTS TO PROTECT YOUR FEET

When you load, mix or spray large amounts of pesticides, wear liquid-proof, unlined overshoes or boots to protect your feet from exposure to pesticide residue. (See Figure 5.) When wearing boots, wear your pant legs on the outside to prevent spills and splashes from running into the boot and onto your leg. At the end of the work day, wash your boots well in soapy water.

WEAR CLEAN CLOTHES EACH DAY

Wear clean clothing each day. (See Figure 6.) If your clothes get wet with spray, change them immediately; don't wait until the end of the day. Pesticide residue can remain in the fibers of your clothing and can make contact with your skin.

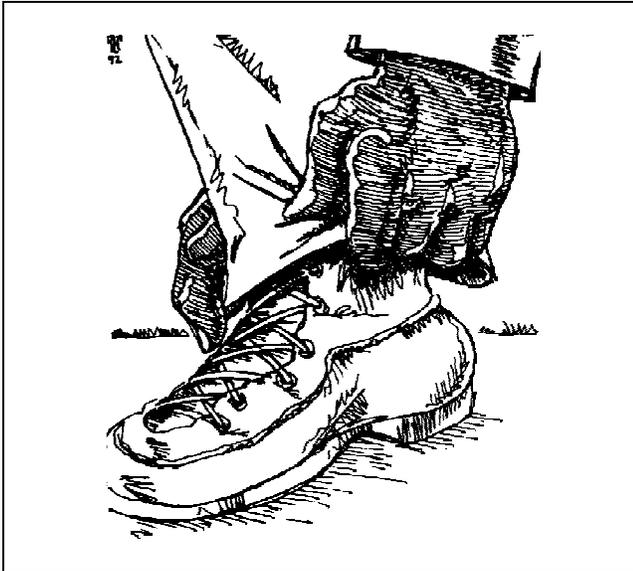


Figure 5. Wear boots to protect your feet



Figure 7. Protect your eyes, nose, mouth and face

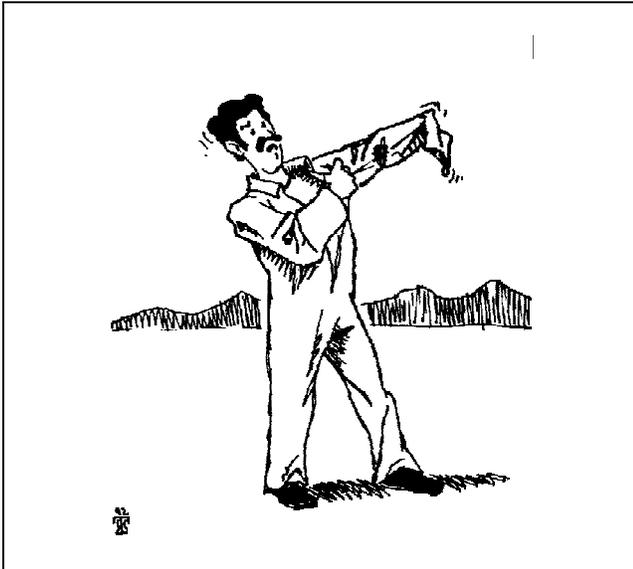


Figure 6. Wear clean clothes each day



Figure 8. Use a respirator to protect your lungs

PROTECT YOUR EYES, NOSE, MOUTH AND FACE

Pesticides can be very irritating or corrosive to the eyes. California law requires that goggles or face shields must be used and kept clean at all times to avoid contact with a pesticide. (See Figure 7.)

It is especially important to protect your eyes and face with goggles and face shield when pouring or mixing a liquid concentration of highly toxic pesticides. Remember to clean your goggles and face shields with soap and water daily.

USE A RESPIRATOR TO PROTECT YOUR LUNGS

A respirator is one of the most important pieces of equipment for pesticide applicators. (See Figure 8.) Chemical cartridge respirators have one or two cartridges attached to the face piece. These types are usually equipped with one-way valves that allow inhaled air to pass through the cartridges. If the respirator uses filters, the filters must be changed daily. Ask your supervisor if you have questions about the use of a respirator.