



# Department of Pesticide Regulation



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Director

Gray Davis  
Governor  
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December 28, 2000

WHS 00-09

TO: COUNTY AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: PESTICIDE INCIDENT RESPONSE INFORMATION

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Pesticide incidents, such as pesticide drift episodes, have received greater public, media, and hazardous materials response attention in recent years. While local county agricultural commissioners (CAC) are the best initial contact for identifying the pesticides involved and evaluating the hazard potential of the incident, they are sometimes not consulted until response efforts are well underway. The lack of early CAC involvement has sometimes resulted in an atmosphere of misinformation, public fear and criticism, and inappropriate decontamination efforts. In February 2000, WH&S staff began addressing these issues to assist CACs. WH&S staff developed the following strategies and materials to encourage greater CAC involvement in local emergency response planning, and to guide both CAC and emergency responders in their incident response efforts. Please share these attachments freely with your staff and other interested parties.

1. *CAC Role in Haz Mat Incidents Involving Pesticide Exposure* – WH&S distributed and discussed the 2-page document bearing this title at the CACASA Spring 2000 conference. In summary, several CACs have not had a significant presence as technical experts during emergency response to pesticide exposure incidents. Emergency responders are eager to include CAC expertise in both emergency planning and response efforts. CACASA discussed the document and supported greater involvement in planning and response. Attachment 1 provides the contacts for the six Local Emergency Planning Commissions (LEPCs), which oversee regional emergency response planning. By statute, CACs are included as members of the LEPCs, but only active participation will ensure you have a voice in developing policies and making decisions regarding local Haz Mat response plans. Greater participation on the LEPCs is the primary way to gain a larger role in the process.
2. *Pesticide Incident Response Guidance Document* - Following the metam sodium drift incident in Earlimart in November 1999, the Office of Emergency Services (OES) was tasked with developing both a Mass Casualty Decontamination Guidance document and a training program to increase responder sensitivity to cultural, language, and modesty issues. A focus group, comprised of fire, public and private health, public safety, and public agency personnel, met over the summer to develop the Guidance document and training elements. The document addresses a multitude of emergencies including weapons of mass destruction, earthquake, flood, fire, and industrial, agricultural, biological and radiological incidents.



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WH&S staff developed the section titled "Pesticide Incident Response Guidance Document" (Attachment 2). The Guidance document was included in emergency responder training presented in November 2000, at OES' California Specialized Training Institute in San Luis Obispo. This document is intended to assist agricultural commissioners and others on-site in assessing and responding to pesticide incidents.

If you have any questions, please contact Janet Spencer of my staff by phone at (916) 445-4198 or by e-mail ([jspencer@cdpr.ca.gov](mailto:jspencer@cdpr.ca.gov)).

Sincerely,

**[Original signed by C. Andrews]**

Charles M. Andrews, Chief  
Worker Health and Safety Branch  
(916) 445-4222

Attachments

cc: Mr. Daniel J. Merkley, Agricultural Commissioner Liaison

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bcc: Dr. Tobi Jones, Assistant Director  
Mr. Douglas Y. Okumura, Assistant Director  
Mr. David Duncan, Acting Chief, Pesticide Enforcement Branch

**Governor's Office of Emergency Services Mutual Aid and Administrative Regions**

*List of Counties by Region for Local Emergency Planning Commissions (LEPCs) (responsible for emergency response planning)*

**Coastal Region: II**

**Inland Regions: III, IV, V**

**Southern Regions: I and VI**

**Region I (5 counties)**

Los Angeles	Santa Barbara
Orange	Ventura
San Luis Obispo	

**Region II (16 counties)**

Alameda	Mendocino	San Francisco
Contra Costa	Monterey	San Mateo
Del Norte	Napa	Solano
Humboldt	San Benito	Sonoma
Lake	Santa Clara	
Marin	Santa Cruz	

**Region III (13 counties)**

Butte	Plumas	Tehama
Colusa	Shasta	Trinity
Glenn	Sierra	Yuba
Lassen	Siskiyou	
Modoc	Sutter	

**Region IV (11 counties)**

Alpine	Nevada	Stanislaus
Amador	Placer	Tuolumne
Calaveras	Sacramento	Yolo
El Dorado	San Joaquin	

**Region V (7 counties)**

Fresno	Mariposa
Kern	Merced
Kings	Tulare
Madera	

**Region VI (6 counties)**

Imperial	Riverside
Inyo	San Bernardino
Mono	San Diego

**LEPC Chairs and OES Staff - Primary Contacts for Regional LEPCs**

<u>Region I LEPC Chair</u>	<u>OES Staff for LEPC Region I</u>
STEVE TSUMURA El Segundo City Fire Department 314 Main Street El Segundo, CA 90245 <b>Phone: 310-607-2242</b> FAX: 310-414-0929 E-mail: stsumura@elsegundo.org	SEAN GRADY OES Southern Region 4671 Liberty Avenue Los Alamitos, CA 90720-5158 <b>562-795-2912</b> FAX: 562-795-2877 E-mail: Sean_Grady@oes.ca.gov
<u>Region II LEPC Chair</u>	<u>OES Staff for LEPC Region II</u>
JIM NELSON Cargill Salt Division 7200 Central Avenue Newark, CA 94560-4206 <b>Phone: 510-790-8613</b> FAX: 510-790-3863 E-mail: Jim_Nelson@cargill.com	LEN MILLER OES Coastal Region 1300 Clay Street, Suite 400 Oakland, CA 94612 <b>510-286-6745</b> FAX: 510-286-0853 E-mail: Leonard_Miller@oes.ca.gov
<u>Region III LEPC Chair</u>	<u>OES Staff for LEPC Region III</u>
GEORGE DAY CA Regional Water Quality Control Board 415 Knollcrest Drive, Suite 100 Redding, CA 96002 <b>Phone: 530-224-4845</b> FAX: 530-224-4857 E-mail: dayg@rb5r.swrcb.ca.gov	NELLIE LEE BARBER OES Inland Region (North) 2395 N. Bechelli Lane, Suite A Redding, CA 96002 <b>530-224-4113</b> FAX: 530-224-4114 Nellie_Lee_Barber@oes.ca.gov
<u>Region IV LEPC Chair</u>	<u>OES Staff for LEPC Region IV</u>
DENNIS R. SMITH, CHIEF Sacramento City Fire Department 1231 I Street, 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor Sacramento, CA 95814 <b>Phone: 916-264-5268</b> FAX: 916-264-7079 E-mail: drsmith@cityofsacramento.org	MADELINE MARTIN OES Inland Region 2800 Meadowview Road Sacramento, CA 95832 <b>916-262-1774</b> FAX: 916-262-2869 madeline_Martin@oes.ca.gov
<u>Region V LEPC Chair</u>	<u>OES Staff for LEPC Region V</u>
TIM HENRY, CHIEF Battalion 9, C-shift Fresno City Fire Department 450 M Street Fresno, CA 93721 <b>Phone: 559-498-5154</b> FAX: 559-498-2862 E-mail: Timothy.Henry@ci.fresno.ca.us	MADELINE MARTIN OES Inland Region 2800 Meadowview Road Sacramento, CA 95832 <b>916-262-1774</b> FAX: 916-262-2869 Madeline_Martin@oes.ca.gov
<u>Region VI LEPC Chair</u>	<u>OES Staff for LEPC Region VI</u>
GREG COON Victorville City Fire Department 14343 Civic Drive Victorville, CA 92392-2399 <b>Phone: 760-955-5229</b> FAX: 760-955-1098 E-mail: gcoon@ci.victorville.ca.us	JIM HUNT OES Southern Region 1350 Front Street, Suite 2041 San Diego, CA 92101 <b>619-525-4289</b> FAX: 619-525-4943 E-mail: James_Hunt@oes.ca.gov

## **Department of Pesticide Regulation Pesticide Incident Response Guidance Document OVERVIEW**

Except for fumigants, SKIN is the primary exposure route!  
Inhalation hazard is NEGLIGIBLE for most pesticides

Serious public exposure incidents are RARE - most  
incidents  
affect agricultural workers

Exposure incidents can occur during application activities  
OR following contact with treated crops

Odor detection indicates a potential hazard exists;  
exposure occurs only with CONTACT

Pesticides are typically diluted up to 100-fold before  
applying.  
The label and MSDS cautions refer to the

Soap and water are ALWAYS the most  
appropriate decon materials for pesticide contamination

Decon of pesticide spills in agricultural fields is  
assessed individually following emergency response efforts

## **Department of Pesticide Regulation Pesticide Incident Response Guidance Document**

### **INCIDENT EVALUATION**

1. DETERMINE nature of incident: crash, drift, applicator, fieldworker, public, spill, odor; few or many victims
2. DETERMINE the hazards of pesticide(s) involved: confer with Ag Commissioner, product labels, applicators.  
**FUMIGANTS AND INSECTICIDES GENERALLY POSE THE GREATEST HAZARDS**
4. DETERMINE WHETHER exposure occurred:  
interview, observation, sampling
5. EVALUATE EXTENT of exposure: Low, Medium or High?  
Consider symptoms, degree of contact, length of contact
6. IF exposure occurred, decon appropriately with soap and water, considering the hazard of the materials, extent of exposure, and personal privacy.
7. DO NOT DECON if NO exposure occurred

## **Department of Pesticide Regulation Pesticide Incident Response Guidance Document Exposure Evaluation**

### **LOW Exposure Incidents**

- NO contact with pesticide mix or treated foliage
- NO symptoms - may detect odor
- LIMITED clothing contamination
- LITTLE secondary contamination potential

**Decon: Limit to washing exposed skin**

**Do NOT remove clothing**

**Transport for observation or interview as needed**

### **MEDIUM Exposure Incidents**

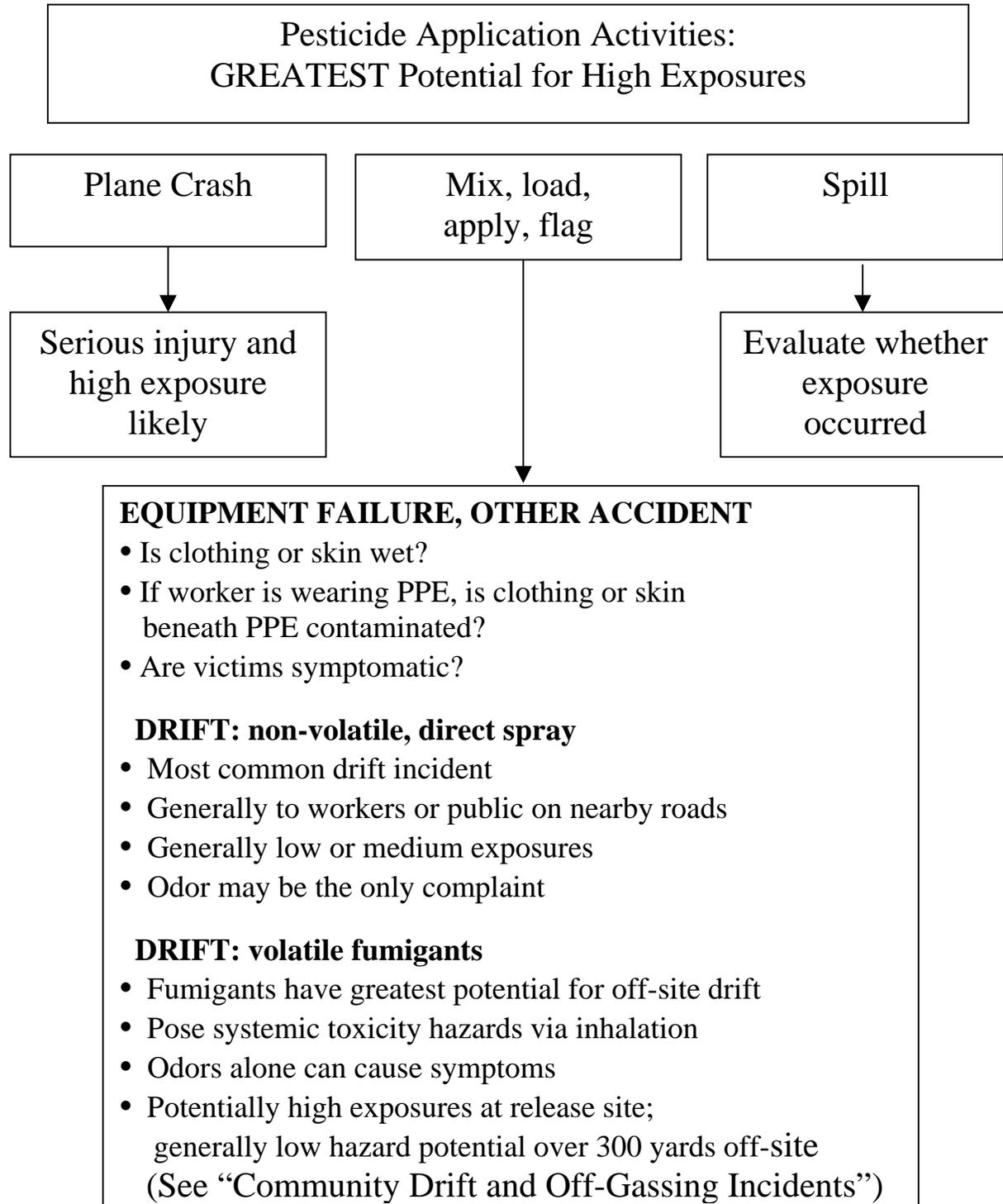
- SIGNIFICANT contact with pesticide mix or treated foliage
- Outer clothing or PPE and/or skin is DAMP with pesticide
- SYMPTOMS MAY be noted - may detect odor
- Potential for secondary contamination
- **Decon: Remove outer clothing or PPE, wash head to toe, transport deconned victims in cloth or disposable coveralls**

### **HIGH Exposure Incidents**

- Suicide attempts
- PROLONGED, INTENSE contact with pesticide mix or treated foliage
- Inner clothing and/or skin is WET OR SOAKED from pesticide contact
- SYMPTOMS LIKELY
- Potential for secondary contamination

**Decon: Remove outer clothing or PPE, wash head to toe, transport deconned victims in cloth or disposable coveralls**

## Department of Pesticide Regulation Pesticide Incident Response Guidance Document Incident Strategies



## Department of Pesticide Regulation Pesticide Incident Response Guidance Document

### Pesticide Residue Incidents: GREATEST Potential for Mass Fieldworker Casualty

- Incident triggered by SYMPTOMATIC workers
- Symptoms may be systemic, respiratory and/or dermal
- Assume exposure began at start of workday
- Assume skin is contaminated
- Symptoms may develop over 12-18 hours post-exposure

### Pesticide Community Drift and Off-Gassing Incidents: GREATEST Potential for Community Outrage, LEAST Potential for High Exposures

