



## WSDA Pesticide Applicator Advisory

With the pesticide use season well underway, the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) strongly urges growers and their employees to properly select, use and decontaminate their personal protective equipment (PPE). This is especially important when applying organophosphate and carbamate insecticides, such as azinphos-methyl (e.g. Guthion), chlorpyrifos (e.g. Lorsban), formetanate hydrochloride (e.g. Carzol) and carbaryl (e.g. Sevin), through airblast sprayers. These types of insecticides can negatively impact humans by inhibiting cholinesterase, a chemical that regulates nervous system function.

Pesticide labels list the minimum PPE requirements for different activities – mixing and loading, applying and early entry into treated fields. Review these requirements carefully to comply with the law but take the extra steps to best protect yourself and others. WSDA recommends that people mixing, loading and applying organophosphate and carbamate pesticides always use respiratory and eye protection.\*

While it requires additional commitment on the part of the employer and employee, the best protection when applying organophosphate and carbamate insecticides with an airblast sprayer is a full-face respirator. The second best option is a properly fitted half-face respirator, safety glasses and face shield, a combination which not only offers better protection to the eyes, but also to parts of the face that would otherwise be unprotected. If none of these two options is available, WSDA suggests the use of a half-face respirator with safety goggles as opposed to safety glasses. Safety glasses are not as protective as goggles and they may not be chemically resistant, a requirement of some labels.

### PPE Selection and Use

The following are some important pesticide safety recommendations to keep in mind while using pesticides.

- Use all the PPE required by the pesticide label. Remember, you can use more protection (recommended) but not less.
- Use PPE correctly and for the entire duration of the handling task.
- Replace PPE parts as they get damaged or worn out.
- Clean and inspect all PPE parts before using. Note: Refer to the WSDA 12-Step *Personal Protective Equipment Removal and Decontamination* process available at <http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/Pesticides/WorkerProtection.aspx>.
- Store PPE in a clean place, such as a locker, away from pesticides and other clothing.
- Do not take PPE home or carry it in a family vehicle.
- Do not use gloves made out of leather or fabric when handling pesticides.
- Always use eye protection especially when mixing, loading and applying organophosphate and carbamate insecticides.
- Do not remove PPE during mixing, loading and applying activities or when cleaning pesticide contaminated spray equipment.
- Do not eat while wearing contaminated PPE.
- Change respirator cartridges according to manufacturer recommendations. In the absence of such recommendations, change them at the end of each day's work period or after eight hours of use, whichever is longer.

\*The Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) has extensive requirements for protecting workers from both chemical and physical hazards that includes the use of respirators. For further information on respirator requirements, see WAC 296-307-594-61210 Part Y-5.