



## Worker Protection Standard: Information at a Central Location <sup>1</sup>

---

Frederick M. Fishel<sup>2</sup>

*The Worker Protection Standard (WPS) is a Federal regulation designed to protect agricultural workers (people involved in the production of agricultural plants) and pesticide handlers (people mixing, loading, or applying pesticides or doing other tasks involving direct contact with pesticides). It has been in full implementation since 1995. A complete reference for the WPS is provided by: How to Comply with the Worker Protection Standard for Agricultural Pesticides: What Employers Need to Know <http://www.epa.gov/agriculture/epa-735-b-05-002.pdf>*

### Basic responsibilities

- *Worker employers.* Worker employers must make sure that certain information, described below, is displayed at a central location whenever 1) any worker whom they employ is on their agricultural establishment, and 2) a pesticide is about to be applied or has been recently applied.

- *Handler employers.* Handler employers must make sure that certain information, described below, is displayed at a central location whenever 1) any handler whom they employ is on their agricultural establishment, and 2) a pesticide has been recently applied. However, this information does not need to be displayed if only commercial (custom) pesticide handlers will be on the agricultural establishment.

### What information must be displayed?

- *Pesticide-specific application information.* This must include:
  - The location and description of the area to be treated;
  - Product name;
  - EPA registration number;
  - Active ingredient(s) of the pesticide;

---

1. This document is PI-112, one of a series of the Pesticide Information Office, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Original publication date March 2006. Visit the EDIS Web Site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.

2. Frederick M. Fishel, associate professor, Agronomy Department, and Director, Pesticide Information Office; Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611.

**The use of trade names in this publication is solely for the purpose of providing specific information. UF/IFAS does not guarantee or warranty the products named, and references to them in this publication does not signify our approval to the exclusion of other products of suitable composition. Use pesticides safely. Read and follow directions on the manufacturer's label.**

The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) is an Equal Opportunity Institution authorized to provide research, educational information and other services only to individuals and institutions that function with non-discrimination with respect to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Florida, IFAS, Florida A. & M. University Cooperative Extension Program, and Boards of County Commissioners Cooperating. Larry Arrington, Dean

- Time and date the pesticide is scheduled to be applied; and
  - Restricted-entry interval for the pesticide.
- *Emergency information.* This must include the name, telephone number and address of the nearest emergency medical facility.
- *Pesticide safety poster.* This must be either the WPS safety poster developed by EPA (Figure 1) or an equivalent poster that contains the concepts listed in Criteria for Pesticide Safety Poster (see p. 83, How to Comply with the Worker Protection Standard for Agricultural Pesticides: What Employers Need to Know. United States Environmental Protection Agency. Revised 2005: <http://www.epa.gov/agriculture/epa-735-b-05-002.pdf> ).



Figure 1. WPS safety poster developed by EPA.

## Where must the information be displayed?

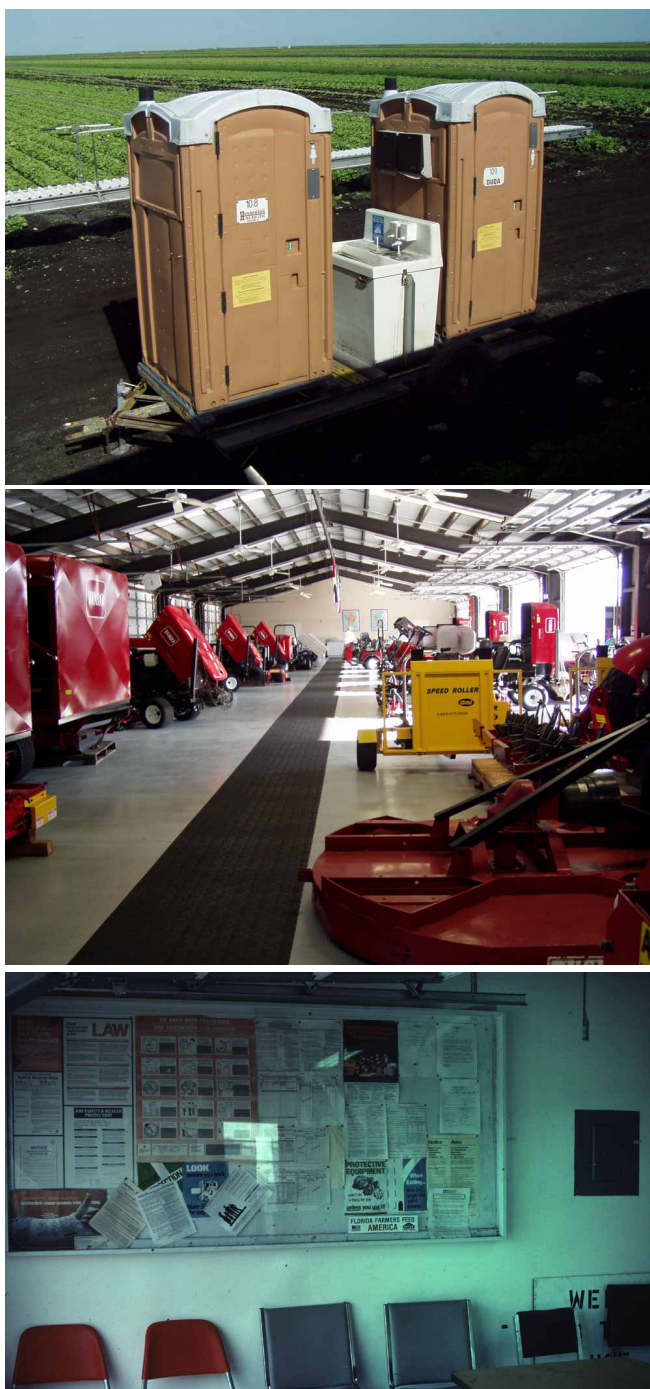
Display the required information together in a central location on your agricultural establishment where it is readily accessible and can be easily seen and read by workers and handlers. *Exception:* if the workplace is a forest, you may display the information near the forest. It must be in a location where workers and handlers can easily see and read it and where they are likely to gather or pass by. For example, you might display the information with the decontamination supplies, at an equipment storage site, or break area (Figure 2).

## When must the information be displayed?

Display the information whenever any worker or handler you employ is on your agricultural establishment and, in the past 30 days, a pesticide has been applied or a restricted-entry interval has been in effect. The information may be displayed continuously.

## Timing of displaying application information

- If workers or handlers are on your establishment at the start of an application, display the required pesticide-specific information before the application takes place.
- If workers or handlers are not on your establishment at the start of an application, display pesticide-specific information no later than the beginning of their first work period.
- Continue to display pesticide-specific information when workers or handlers are on your establishment until:
  - At least 30 days after the restricted-entry expires; or
  - At least 30 days after the end of the application, if there is no restricted-entry interval for the pesticides.



**Figure 2.** Sites that are commonly central locations on many agricultural establishments.

### Other responsibilities

- Inform workers and handlers where the information is located.
- Allow workers and handlers free, unhampered access to the information.

- Be sure that the poster, emergency information, and application information remain legible during the time they are posted.
- Promptly inform workers if there is any change in the information on emergency medical facilities and update the emergency information listed with the poster.

### Definitions

- **Worker.** Anyone who: 1) is employed, including self-employed, for any type of compensation and 2) is doing tasks, such as harvesting, weeding, or watering, related to the production of agricultural plants on a farm, forest, nursery, or greenhouse (Figure 3). This term does not include persons who are employed by a commercial establishment to perform tasks as crop advisors (refer to UF/IFAS EDIS Document, Certification and Licensing Programs for the Worker Protection Standard (WPS) Crop Advisor Exemption <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/PI013>).

- **Pesticide handler.** Anyone who 1) is employed, including self-employed, for any type of compensation by an agricultural establishment or a commercial pesticide handling establishment that uses pesticides in the production of agricultural plants on farm, forest, nursery, or greenhouse (Figure 4), and 2) is doing any of the following tasks:

- Mixing, loading, transferring, or applying pesticides;
- Handling opened containers of pesticides;
- Acting as a flagger;
- Cleaning, handling, adjusting, or repairing the parts of mixing, loading, or application equipment that may contain pesticide residues;
- Assisting with the application of pesticides, including incorporating the pesticide into soil after the application has occurred;
- Entering a greenhouse or other enclosed area after application and before the inhalation exposure level listed on the



**Figure 3.** Typical agricultural establishment worker tasks.

product labeling has been reached or one of the WPS ventilation criteria have been met to:

- Operated ventilation equipment;
- Adjust or remove coverings, such as tarps, used in fumigation; or
- Check air concentration levels.
- Entering a treated area outdoors after application of any soil fumigant to adjust or remove soil coverings, such as tarpaulins.



**Figure 4.** Typical agricultural establishment pesticide handler tasks.

- Performing tasks as a crop advisor:
  - During any pesticide application;
  - Before any inhalation exposure level or ventilation criteria listed in the labeling has been reached or one of the WPS ventilation criteria has been met;
  - During any restricted entry interval;

- Disposing of pesticides or pesticide containers.

### **Additional information**

How to Comply with the Worker Protection Standard for Agricultural Pesticides: What Employers Need to Know. United States Environmental Protection Agency. Revised 2005:  
<http://www.epa.gov/agriculture/epa-735-b-05-002.pdf>

Nesheim, O.N. and F.M. Fishel. 2005. Certification and Licensing Programs for the Worker Protection Standard (WPS) Crop Advisor Exemption. UF/IFAS EDIS Document PI-21.  
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/PI013>