Checklist for



Spraying pesticides

Risk assessment tool for employers

June 2017

The type of pesticides used in the workplace

- eg insecticides, weedicides, herbicides, fungicides
- and the way they are used or handled may be harmful to the health of employees and contractors.

Many pesticides are classified as hazardous substances as they have the potential to harm human health. Part 4.1 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (OHS Regulations) imposes specific duties on employers aimed at ensuring the safe use of these substances in the workplace.¹

Under the OHS Regulations employers must eliminate risks associated with hazardous substances so far as is reasonably practicable, or where this is not practicable, put controls in place to reduce those risks so far as reasonably practicable.

Where a risk cannot be eliminated, employers must reduce the risk with one or more of the following controls:

- substitution (eg replacing a pesticide with a less hazardous substance)
- isolation (eg distancing workers from pesticides)
- engineering controls (eg enclosed tractor cabin or use of robots to minimise operator exposure)

If a risk remains, employers must reduce it using administrative controls (eg instruct employees on how to use substances safely). Any remaining risk must then be controlled through the provision of personal protective equipment (eg ensuring the use of gloves, dust masks). Under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* employers must provide employees and contractors with the necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to perform their work safely

For further information, refer to the Compliance Code for hazardous substances, available at: **worksafe.vic.gov.au**.

Don't confuse the OHS Regulations with the Dangerous Goods (Storage and Handling) Regulations 2012. The OHS Regulations are aimed at protecting people's health while the Dangerous Goods Regulations are aimed at preventing such things as fire, explosion or corrosion.

Using this form

The purpose of this form is to help employers assess the risks associated with using pesticides in the workplace so that they can put appropriate controls in place.

This form divides the job of using pesticides into its different tasks, such as mixing and spraying.

Look at each task separately to work out if pesticides can harm the health of employees or contractors, as some tasks may be more dangerous than others.

Work through the form by ticking the boxes. Record any relevant information in the comments section.

At the end of each task you should decide whether there is a risk to health and how that risk can be controlled.





and without risk to health.

Note that if organophosphate pesticides or pentachlorophenol are used health surveillance may be required.

Risk assessment checklist for spraying pesticides

Workplace/company:	Date	:
Assessor:		
This assessment can apply to more than one workplace or value or similar form and are mixed and sprayed in the sam	•	are the same or of the
Product names:	What form do the pesticides	come in?
	liquid powder	granular
Are all the pesticides labelled ² ?	yes no	
Have safety data sheets (SDSs) been obtained for each pesticide from the manufacturer or supplier ³ ?	yes no	
Have the pesticides been included in a hazardous substances register4?	yes no	
Who uses or who may be exposed to these pesticides?	mixers/sprayers pickers	thinners/pruners other
How often are these pesticides used?		
Seasonal:	from:	to:
Approximate number of days per week:		
• Other:		
Have users of these pesticides been trained?	yes no	
If yes, what training has been undertaken?	ACPU training	Other
 All containers of pesticides must be labelled with the manufacturer's or in name or some other means of identifying the pesticide must be used. Lab SDSs must be current, readily accessible to any employee who may be exaddition to English, and must not be altered. A register of all hazardous substances (including pesticides) supplied to to The register must include the product name of each substance and a cop 	pels must remain legible and not be remove exposed to the pesticide, available in appro the workplace must be maintained by the	red, defaced or altered. Opriate languages in employer.

Exposure to pesticides may occur when undertaking the following tasks:	Comments
Mixing	
Mixing can be dangerous as pesticides may come in contact with the skin, be inhaled or ingested as a result of any leaks, spills, splashes or dust generated.	
Are the following methods of mixing used?	
■ manual decanting/mixing	
 pesticide poured into spray unit at or above head height 	
If yes, consider other methods of mixing that are less likely to expose employees or contractors.	
Can you reduce the risk of exposure to the pesticide using one of the methods below?	
• pump/bung/tap fitted on drum yes no	
• closed transfer system yes no	
• changing the container size yes no	
• other, eg dissolvable packs	
Consider the size of containers being used as it is easier to pour from smaller containers. If pesticides are decanted into smaller containers, ensure they are clearly labelled.	
Are the following safe work procedures in place?	
 pesticides are mixed in an area yes no with good lighting and ventilation 	
• washing facilities are provided yes no	
 spills are cleaned up immediately yes no and properly 	
measuring equipment is rinsed yes no after use	
workers wash their hands yes no after mixing	
 workers wash their hands before yes no eating, drinking or smoking 	
If no to any of the above, there may be a risk to workers' health.	

• Are people not involved in mixing kept away from the mixing area?	yes no	Comments
 Are pesticides locked away from children and animals? 	yes no	
If no, there may be a risk to others nearby	/.	
Is personal protective equipment (PF	PE) worn?	
gloves	yes no	
type		
 PVC apron 	yes no	
gumboots	yes no	
• face shield	yes no	
 PVC pants and jacket 	yes no	
• respirator:		
disposable dust mask, or	yes no	
chemical type (charcoal)	yes no	
• other, eg overalls		
Employers must ensure that employees a are given appropriate training, information and supervision to use PPE safely.		
Is PPE in good condition?	yes no	
Is PPE stored properly away from chemicals?	yes no	
Is PPE cleaned, maintained and checked for holes or damage?	yes no	
If no to any of these, there may be a risk to workers' health.		
Incidents:		
Have any incidents, near misses or illnesses occurred when mixing the pesticides?	yes no	
If yes, there may be a risk to workers' hea ways to ensure these incidents, near mis- do not happen.		
Result of assessment:		
Could there be a risk to	yes no	
workers' health?		
If there is a risk, is it because the pestici	des can:	

contact the skin?	yes no	Comments
• be inhaled?	yes no	
 be ingested because food has come in contact with contaminated hands? 	yes no	
As an employer, you must control any ris	sk to health	
or safety by eliminating the risk or reduction far as is reasonably practicable.		
Spraying		
Type of equipment used:		
 tractor-drawn air blast sprayer 	yes no	
boom spray	yes no	
type		
other, eg backpack	yes no	
The equipment or spray technique used how much pesticide may be inhaled or of		
How do you reduce the risk of expo		
the pesticide?	sule to	
 by using a tractor with an enclosed cabin 	yes no	
If yes, is:		
• the cabin air filtered?	yes no	
 a container of clean water carried for washing? 	yes no	
a clean pair of gloves carried?	yes no	
 by using a more appropriate spray technique 	yes no	
If yes, which technique is used:		
 coarser spray, ie bigger droplets 	yes no	
more directed spray	yes no	
 spraying low to the ground 	yes no	
• other	yes no	
If you are not using an enclosed tractor		
safer spray technique you should think a	about doing so.	

Are the fellowing sets were governed to the	2	Comments	
Are the following safe work procedures in place	r	Comments	
 reduce exposure to spray by spraying yes one way while driving into cross wind 	no		
 reduce exposure to spray drift by not yes spraying on windy days 	no		
 spray when it's cooler if wet weather yes [gear has to be worn 	no		
 persons not involved in spraying activity are kept away 	no		
• only prepare enough pesticide	no		
• workers wash hands after spraying yes [no		
 workers wash hands before eating, drinking or smoking 	no		
• contaminated clothing yes _	no		
washed separately	_		
Is personal protective equipment (PPE) worn?			
■ gloves yes	no		
type			
• cotton hat yes [no		
■ long sleeve overalls	no		
■ gumboots	no		
■ leather boots	no		
■ PVC pants and jacket	no		
■ respirator:			
• disposable dust mask, or yes [no		
• combined chemical/dust mask yes [no		
Employers must ensure that employees and contractor are given appropriate training, information, instruction and supervision to use PPE safely. Don't just rely on poworking safely – eliminate or reduce the risk to expose by using higher order controls where reasonably practors do so.	people ure		

Is PPE in good condition?	yes no	Comments
Is PPE stored properly away from the pesticides?	yes no	
 Is PPE cleaned, maintained and checked for damage or holes? 	yes no	
If no to any of these, there may be a ris	k to workers' health.	
Incidents:		
 Have any incidents, near misses or illnesses occurred when spraying pesticides? 	yes no	
If yes, there is a risk to workers' health. to make sure these incidents, near miss do not happen.	<u>-</u>	
Result of assessment:		
Could there be a risk to workers' health?	yes no	
If there is a risk, is it because the pesti	cides can:	
contact the skin?	yes no	
be inhaled?	yes no	
 be ingested because food has come incontact with contaminated hands? 	yes no	
As an employer, you must control any roor safety by eliminating the risk or reduction far as is reasonably practicable.		
Thinning, pruning, picking		
Is a minimum 24 hour re-entry		
period observed?	yes no	
• Are workers kept away (upwind) from areas being sprayed?	yes no	
Do workers know which area or crop has been sprayed, when and with what pesticide?	yes no	
If yes, how do workers know?		
 spray diaries are kept 	yes no	
workers are told	yes no	
signs are put up	yes no	
• other	yes no	
If no to any of the above, there may be a n	isk to workers' health.	

Result of assessment:		Comments
Could there be a risk to workers' health?	yes no	
If there is a risk, is it because the pestici	des can:	
contact the skin?	yes no	
• be inhaled?	yes no	
 be ingested because food has come in contact with contaminated hands? 	yes no	
As an employer, you must control any rist or safety by eliminating the risk or reducing far as is reasonably practicable.		
Cleaning, service and repair of	of equipment	
Is spray equipment, including tractors cleaned or hosed down after use?	yes no	
• Are spray nozzles flushed after use?	yes no	
Is equipment cleaned before it is serviced or repaired externally?	yes no	
If no to any of the above, there may be a workers' health.	risk to	
Result of assessment:		
Could there be a risk to workers' health?	yes no	
If there is a risk, is it because the pestici	des can:	
contact the skin?	yes no	
be inhaled?	yes no	
 be ingested because food has come incontact with contaminated hands? 	yes no	
<i></i>		
If your assessment shows that the		
a risk to workers' health you need or reduce the risk of exposure.	to eliminate	

Further information

Further information on controlling risks associated with the use of pesticides can be obtained from:

A step by step guide for managing chemicals in the workplace – WorkSafe

A practical safety guide for the horticulture industry in the Murray Valley, section 4 – WorkSafe

A guide to using agricultural chemicals in Victoria

- Department of Environment and Primary Industries

This Checklist is intended for general use only and may not be applicable in every circumstance. You should always check any applicable legislation and make your own judgement about what action you may need to take to ensure you have complied with the law. Accordingly, WorkSafe Victoria cannot be held responsible and extends no warranties as to the suitability of the information for any particular purpose; or actions taken by third parties as a result of information contained in the Checklist.

This guidance has been reviewed and updated for the sole purpose of amending year and regulation references relating to the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, in line with amendments which came into effect on 18 June 2017.