

# LEARN HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM PESTICIDES! -MONTEREY COUNTY-

## The Dangers of Pesticides

California is the state that uses the most pesticides in the U.S. Children in agricultural communities are the most at risk. Many pesticides used in California are among the most hazardous known to cause acute poisoning, cancer, birth defects, sterility, neurotoxicity, damage to the developing child and young children.

## What is pesticide drift? Where Am I at Risk?

**Pesticides are chemicals designed to kill** pests, weeds, insects, fungi in fields, homes, parks and schools and can also be harmful to humans.

When pesticides move away from the desired target as droplets, dusts, or invisible gases. Pesticides can be applied by plane, helicopter, tractor, backpack or hand sprayers.

**You can be at risk anywhere**, in your home, at school and at work. Pesticides may be used in the garden or may drift in through open doors and windows, or be carried in on clothing. Drift may carry pesticides from nearby fields or be used to kill weeds outside or insects indoors.

## Symptoms of Exposure: What are my rights?

*Eye, nose and throat irritation, blurry vision, headaches, dizziness, difficulty breathing, nausea, stomach aches vomiting. Skin irritation, rash, tremors, muscle weakness. Diarrhea, excessive sweating, fever. Onset asthma, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, tingling or numbness of skin or mouth, chemical taste in your mouth, sore throat. Disorientation or confusion, allergy-like symptoms (sneezing and runny itchy nose.)*

**Pesticide exposure is illegal!** If others expose you to pesticides, they are breaking the law.

**You have the right to;** + Report all pesticide drift immediately! + Know what pesticide has been applied.

**California law gives Farmworkers and other workers the right to;** + Be transported to the doctor or hospital if exposed. +Employer must cover medical costs of pesticide illness if exposure happened at work.

**It is illegal to fire workers for reporting pesticide drift or for seeking medical attention if exposed to pesticides.**

If you feel any symptoms of pesticide poisoning **REPORT IT!**

Learn more on page 2 ---->

# IF YOU FEEL SYMPTOMS OF EXPOSURE, SEE DOCTOR & REPORT IT IMMEDIATELY!

IF YOUR EXPOSURE RESULTS IN A MEDICAL EMERGENCY, CALL 911!

## WHY SHOULD I REPORT IT?!

- 1.) It helps prevent future drift in your area.
- 2.) Reporting drift creates a record that shows it's a problem.
- 3.) You can possibly receive reimbursement for medical costs. This cannot and will not happen if you don't report drift incident to the authorities.

## What do I tell the doctor? Who do I call to report?

1.) Remember to ask the doctor to report your poisoning to your county's Health Officer.

2.) Make sure your doctor files a report about your illness and follows up with your County Agricultural Commissioner.

**\*BE CLEAR & PERSISTENT!** Many doctors confuse pesticide exposure with other illnesses. Tell them what you know about how you were exposed

**\* If you were exposed to pesticides at work your medical costs must be paid by workers' compensation insurance.**

**\* If you are exposed anywhere else the pesticide applicator or farmer who caused the exposure may be required to pay your immediate medical costs not covered by insurance.**

**Business hours:** Call (831) 759-7325  
**Evenings & weekends:** Call your local police department. **(831) 759-7325**

### When reporting remember to:

- Get the name of the person you spoke with.
- Ask the County Agricultural Commissioner to:
  - 1) Investigate the drift incident.
  - 2) Test clothes for pesticide residue (don't wash them!).
  - 3) Give you a written report of your complaint.

## What do I report?

Your name and the name and contact info of others who were exposed, the date, the time, location, weather conditions.

\*Did you feel, smell, taste anything at time of exposure? If so, what?

\*Did you know what pesticides were sprayed? \*Describe the exposure (What were you doing, was it a gas, a spray, from a plane, etc.?) \*Did you see the pesticides being applied How far were you from it? What symptoms did you or others experience? (See page 1 of 'symptoms of exposure')

Did it happen at work? School? Home? While driving?