

# Landscaping

## Landscaping - Pesticides - Precautions

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### Why should I be careful when using pesticides?

Pesticides can be hazardous if not used safely. Pesticides can enter the body in three ways - by mouth, through the skin and eyes, and through inhalation (breathing into the lungs).

READ labels carefully- one section of the label will tell you about the toxicity of the product when it enters the body.

Please see the OSH Answers series on [Pesticides](#) for more information about how to work safely with pesticides, first aid, labels, re-entry time, etc.

There are many tips in other [Landscaping](#) OSH Answers documents.

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### What are some key factors to remember when using pesticides?

- Be trained in the correct use and handling of pest control products - some products can be used by specially trained and certified personnel.
- Become familiar with regulations that apply to pesticide use and follow all regulatory requirements.
- Minimize the use of pesticides where possible.
- Choose the correct pesticide for the job. Only use the pesticide for its specific purpose (e.g., only use pesticides indoors if specifically stated to be used indoors).
- Wear appropriate [personal protective equipment and clothing](#) when handling and spraying pesticide products.

- Follow the precautions that appear on the [pesticide label](#).
- Inspect pesticide containers for leaks before handling.
- Contact the power utility to determine the proper distances between the spray nozzle and power lines.
- Learn to recognize the typical signs of poisoning and the correct [first aid procedures](#).
- Stop work and seek medical attention immediately if you feel ill during pesticide use or you notice signs in a co-worker.
- Have washing facilities as close as possible to mixing and loading sites.
- Keep products in their original labelled packages.
- Mix pesticides using equipment reserved only for that purpose. Mixing and loading areas should be designed to contain any spills and facilitate cleanup.
- Fill mixing tanks about one-third full with water before adding pesticide concentrate.
- Tap sides of containers to ensure that any remaining wettable powder falls into the spray tank.
- Keep containers below eye level to minimize splashes to the face.
- Use proper tools to open a container. Work in a well-ventilated area.
- Stand upwind of all opening, pouring, and mixing operations, if working outdoors.
- Ensure that all spraying equipment is in good repair and properly calibrated.
- Use the proper nozzle for the job. Control spray angle and droplet size. The wider the angle and the smaller the droplets, the greater the potential for drift.
- Stand and apply so that the wind blows the pesticide away from you.
- Wait until the treated surface has dried completely before entering the area. The directions on the label will provide this information.
- Dispose of empty containers according to the directions on the label.
- Familiarize yourself with disposal arrangements.
- Ensure effective storage.
- Wash your face and hands thoroughly after completing the mixing operation.
- Wash hands before eating, drinking, smoking, or using the toilet.
- Shower thoroughly, with special attention to hair and fingernails, after each pesticide application or at the end of the work shift.
- Change clothes daily and more often if any contamination occurs.
- Wash contaminated clothing separately from normal, family laundry.

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## What should I not do when working with pesticides?

- Do not work alone when handling pesticides.
- Do not handle containers roughly.
- Do not allow other people or pets into the treatment area.
- Do not mix different pesticides together unless specifically instructed by the manufacturer.
- Do not guess at the amount of pesticide to mix or apply.
- Do not stir pesticides with your hands.
- Do not keep food, beverages, tobacco, cigarettes, cups or cutlery near work areas or in work clothes.
- Do not rub your eyes or touch your mouth with your hands while working with pesticides.
- Do not use your mouth to siphon liquid materials or blow out a clogged spray nozzle.
- Do not spray near electrical power lines.
- Do not fill tanks completely when spraying hilly areas using spraying equipment pulled by a tractor.
- Do not make sharp turns.
- Do not spray if the wind speed is more than 8 km/h (5 mph) or if the air temperature is above 30°C (86°F). Consult regulations - ultra-low volume spraying may have different requirements.

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## What are some tips when using compressed air sprayers?

- Check hoses and connections for leaks.
- Ensure that the material the strap is made from does not absorb chemicals.
- Secure the sprayer lid before lifting.
- Place the unit on a waist-high surface before slipping shoulder straps on or off.
- Walk upright to avoid any leakage through filling caps or air-bleed holes.
- Check clothing periodically, especially the back of pants, for pesticide deposit.
- Do not walk backwards while carrying a compressed air sprayer.

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