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Pesticides Fact Sheet

LAUNDERING PESTICIDE CONTAMINATED CLOTHING

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1. Consider using disposable clothing which eliminates the need for washing. Read the pesticide label to check for any special instructions. The pesticide formulation has the greatest influence on how easily clothing will launder clean.

2. Applicators should start with new or very clean coveralls each application season. Do not wear contaminated clothing. Launder after each use. For best results, clothing should be washed soon after being worn. The longer the clothing is stored before washing, the harder it is to remove pesticides.

3. Empty pesticide granules from cuffs and pockets. Do this outdoors. If the granules are left in the clothes, they will dissolve in the wash water and may not be completely removed from the clothing during the wash cycle.

4. If concentrated liquids are spilled on clothing, discard the clothing. High levels of an undiluted emulsifiable concentrate remained in clothing even after ten washings.

5. Contaminated clothing should be stored and washed separately from other family clothing as residues can be transferred from contaminated clothing to other items. The person doing the laundry should know which clothing has been worn to apply pesticides and should wear rubber gloves when handling highly contaminated clothing to prevent absorbing pesticide into their body through their hands.

6. Prerinse or presoak contaminated clothing and thoroughly wring or spin the water out before washing. Prerinsing is especially useful for removing wettable powder formulations.

7. Use the longest wash cycle with hot water and a full rinse cycle. Hot water is more effective in removing pesticides than warm. Cold water is not effective at all. Hot water is defined as 140ºF, warm 120ºF, and cold 86ºF or lower. Do not overload the washing machine. Use the appropriate water level.

8. Use the recommended amount of detergent. Most people do not use enough detergent. If you live in a hard water area or clothing is especially dirty, use more detergent. Liquid detergents are more effective than powdered detergents for removing oil-based pesticides. Neither bleach nor ammonia have been shown to contribute to pesticide removal.

9. Line drying in direct sunlight is recommended.

PRECAUTIONARY STATEMENT

All pesticides have both benefits and risks. Benefits can be maximized and risks minimized by reading and following the labeling. Pay close attention to the directions for use and the precautionary statements. The information on pesticide labels contains both instructions and limitations. Pesticide labels are legal documents and it is a violation of both federal and state laws to use a pesticide inconsistent with its labeling. The pesticide applicator is legally responsible for proper use. Always read and follow the label.

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