

News Release
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EPA PROPOSES NEW SAFETY MEASURES TO PROTECT FARM WORKERS FROM PESTICIDE EXPOSURE

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has announced proposed revisions to the Worker Protection Standard, which protects the nation's two million farm workers and their families from pesticide exposure.

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) conducts free worker protection safety training at "Ag Safety Days" meetings and at individual farms and businesses. For more information, contact the Health and Safety Coordinator or Pesticide Regulatory Programs Unit at (304)558-2209.

EPA is proposing significant improvements to worker training regarding the safe usage of pesticides, including how to prevent and effectively treat pesticide exposure. Increased training and signage will inform farm workers about the protections they are afforded under the law and will help them protect themselves and their families from pesticide exposure.

The proposal also includes revisions related to pesticide overspray and fumes. In addition, EPA has proposed that children under 16 be legally barred from handling all pesticides, with an exemption for family farms.

This proposal represents more than a decade of extensive stakeholder input by federal and state partners and from across the agricultural community, including farm workers, farmers and industry. The current EPA Worker Protection Standard (WPS) for Agricultural Pesticides was first established in 1992.

For more information on the EPA's Proposed Worker Protection Standard, visit www.epa.gov/oppfead1/safety/workers/proposed/index.html