

10-Steps to Take If You Are Affected By Herbicide Drift

Beyond Toxics & Oregon Pesticide Action Coalition

People, pets, and wildlife can be at risk for health problems as a result of exposure to pesticides. These pesticides can be absorbed by breathing air with vapor or particles, by contact with skin, or through contaminated food or water. Off target pesticide drift can occur during any method of application (i.e., aerial, vehicles, backpack or hand methods). Be very careful when entering an area that has been sprayed with pesticides. Depending on the pesticide, vapors and pesticide particles may remain in the air or on a surface for hours to days after a spray. Pesticides can also adhere to soil particles and/or travel through soil and into groundwater.

What can you do to prepare yourself and protect yourself, your family and your property from pesticide exposures?

1. PREPARE: GET NOTIFICATIONS

- **Forestry:** If you live near a private or state forest land you may be exposed to herbicide drift and/or drinking water contamination from drift or run-off.
 - Contact the Department of Forestry (Website of ODF Offices: <https://www.oregon.gov/odf/aboutodf/Pages/mapoffices.aspx>; Phone: 503-945-7200), and ask about forestry operations taking place near your home, or up to 3-5 miles away.
 - Sign-up for [Forestry Spray Notifications \(https://ferns.odf.oregon.gov/E-Notification/\)](https://ferns.odf.oregon.gov/E-Notification/): If you are not currently a subscriber to the ODF Spray Notification System, register for an account immediately on FERNS. You can get help with FERNS by contacting the ODF office in your region.
 - Learn about your legal rights to receive advanced notification if your property and/or drinking water source is near industrial timber land. <https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2020S1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/SB1602/Enrolled>
 - Make sure your drinking water source is filed with the State Water Master and the Oregon Department of Forestry. This provides special rights for water protection and advanced pesticide notification.
- **Agriculture:** if you live near an agricultural operation, there is no notification system, but you can ask your neighbor to notify you in advance of when and which pesticides will be used.
- **Roadside/Right-of-Way:** If you live on a state highway or county road you may be able to sign up for notifications and/or a No Spray designation along your property. Call your county's Public Works Department to find out when your county is spraying on the roadsides, how to opt out, and what is required to opt out. Call ODOT to get on the list for notifications for spraying on state highways.

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2. PROTECT YOURSELF –

- If you know about any upcoming sprays, discuss a shelter-in-place or an evacuation plan with your family members. What will you do or where will you go if you believe you are in harm's way? If you are chemically sensitive, are pregnant or have children, consider how to protect yourself. Consider some options:
 - Shut all windows and doors
 - Turn off your HVAC system
 - Bring children and pets indoors; put livestock in barns
 - Cover play equipment and gardens
 - Replace pet or livestock water if open when spray occurred

3. (IF YOU HAVE BEEN EXPOSED: If you think you have been exposed by vapor or dust inhalation or dermal absorption to pesticides take the following precautionary actions:

- If you experience symptoms, call the Oregon Poison Center (1-800-222-1222) and follow their instructions.
- Call the National Pesticide Information Center for information **1.800.858.7378**
- Remove clothing and shower immediately. Shower for at least 15 minutes and wash your hair. If you are sweating, shower repeatedly.
- Place clothing in a clean sealed container or bag.
- Drink a lot of water and keep drinking water over the following 5 days. The purpose is to flush chemicals out of your system. You may wish to drink de-toxification teas in moderation, etc. (You may want to seek supervision from a healthcare provider)
- Do not drink the water if you get your water from a surface source (artesian spring, stream, etc.) near or downhill from the sprayed area for a few days.

If you are feeling ill go to the nearest Emergency Room or Urgent Care Clinic, or visit your doctor or nurse practitioner

- Report that you have been exposed to chemicals.
- Suggest that samples of your blood and urine be taken. If the medical facility or hospital is not able to send the sample, ask that it be frozen and kept for later collection by a lab or agency.
- If you have rashes or other signs of pesticide exposure, ask the medical staff to document this with photographs and chart notes.
- Make sure you get a copy of your chart notes.
- Take photographs or video to document physical symptoms from the spray exposure:
 - skin rashes and lesions; swollen tongue; red or itchy eyes
 - coughing blood or mucus, vomiting or other symptoms
 - Try to time/date stamp your photo or video

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4. HUMAN EXPOSURE SYMPTOMS:

- It is Oregon State Law (**333-018-0015**) that a medical provider must report a known or suspected pesticide exposure to the Oregon Health Authority. Keep a written or photographic record of symptoms and reactions. Symptoms of potential pesticide poisoning: • Headache • Sore throat, raspy throat • Burning eyes and/or nose • Vision problems, blurry vision • Nausea and/or stomach pain • Vomiting • Diarrhea • Achiness, achy joints • Other flu-like symptoms • Skin rashes • Lesions on tongue or other areas (especially where any direct contact occurred) • Coughing • Sneezing, stuffiness, running nose and respiratory irritation, excessive mucus production • Tiredness or lethargy • Loss of appetite • Instability, loss of balance
- Seek medical treatment as soon as possible.

5. OBSERVE AND RECORD DAMAGE as soon as possible after the incident which may become apparent days to weeks later.

- Vegetation: Look for damage to your plants like curled or elongated leaves or brown areas.
- Pets/Livestock: nausea/vomiting, tremors/seizures, loss of balance, inability to stand, vision problems, extreme lethargy, extreme thirst, loss of appetite.
- Take pictures and videos and keep handwritten notes with dates, times and location. Get other witnesses when possible for corroboration.
- Talk with your neighbors and encourage them to follow the above steps.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLE COLLECTION AND LAB ANALYSIS RESOURCES:

List of Analytical Laboratories serving Oregon:

<https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/em8677/html>

Contact Labs and get instructions for proper protocol for collecting and submitting sample: Proper container, storage, and delivery to lab.

7. FILE A COMPLAINT IMMEDIATELY OR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE:

All pesticide complainants receive a response from a state agency within 24 hours. You will be asked by an agency staff person if you are seeking information or filing a complaint. You must state clearly (on the phone or when filing a complaint form) that you are “filing a pesticide complaint.” If you do not make this statement, the agency is not obligated to respond to your complaint. Important: It is your right to ask for a case number, so be sure you ask for your case number and when you can expect an investigator to contact you directly.

- CONTACT THE PESTICIDE ANALYTIC RESPONSE CENTER (PARC)
 - Call PARC at 503-986-6470 OR CALL 2-1-1-. Your phone call will be routed 24 hours a day to someone who will take your information. PARC staffers will contact you within one business day.
 - PARC Coordinator: PARC@oda.state.or.us

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Website - <https://www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/Pesticides/Pages/PARC.aspx>

- CONTACT THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, PESTICIDE DIVISION
 - Online Complaint Form
<https://www.oregon.gov/oda/shared/Documents/Publications/PesticidesPARC/PesticidesComplaintForm.pdf>
 - You must file a Report of Loss Form - THIS IS IMPORTANT.
<https://www.oregon.gov/oda/shared/Documents/Publications/PesticidesPARC/ReportAllegedLossPesticidesForm.pdf>
 - Email: pestx@oda.state.or.us
 - Phone: 503-986-4635
 - Website: <http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/Pesticides/Pages/AboutPesticides.aspx>

- 8. REQUEST THE SPRAY APPLICATION RECORD FROM A STATE AGENCY:
 - Request the Spray Application Record so that you will know what you were exposed to and any treating medical professional will also be able to know what you were exposed to. You or your doctor may make this request.
 - The Spray Application Record contains the following information:
 - Location of spray (Township, Range, Section)
 - Active ingredient(s), Adjuvants and surfactants
 - Amount of active ingredient and adjuvant applied
 - Carrier
 - Date
 - Time of spray
 - Temperature
 - Wind speed and direction at time of spray
 - Name of pesticide applicator/company
 - Mode of application (aerial, ground, ATV with boom, backpack, hack & squirt, etc.)

- 9. REPORT OF LOSS FORM:
 - If you think you, your family, your livestock, pets or property has been damaged by pesticide exposure, file a Report of Loss form **within 60 days** of the pesticide application or your discovery of the loss.
 - If the loss deals with a growing crop, you must file before 50% of the affected crop is harvested.
<http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/shared/Documents/Publications/PesticidesPARC/ReportAllegedLossPesticidesForm.pdf>

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10. CONTACT ALL THE RESPONSIBLE PEOPLE ON THE FORESTRY NOTIFICATION FORM! TALK WITH THEM. WALK THE PROPERTY. DEMAND NO SPRAYING. ASK FOR A GOOD NEIGHBOR AGREEMENT TO PREVENT PESTICIDE DRIFT INCIDENTS

- Call the company who owns the land or is in charge of the pesticide spray and ask for any of the following “good neighbor agreements.”
 - Ask the company to substitute a ground spray (backpack spray) for an aerial (helicopter) or ATV spray. Many companies will honor your request because there is less chance of aerial drift onto private property, gardens, drinking water, streams and wildlife habitat.
 - Oregon law requires a minimum 300 ft. no-spray buffer for homes and schools, drinking water and fish-bearing streams. Ask the company to do more than the minimum as your “good neighbor.” Ask for a 500 yd. no-spray buffer for homes, schools, vegetable gardens, pastures and grazing lands, barns, drinking water (stream, spring, intake area, wetlands, protected groundwater) and make sure that the wind is blowing away from your property before spray commences.
 - Sign up for forestry herbicide spray notifications on ODF’S notification website, FERNS. And ask those who plan to spray for 24 - 48 hour advance notification of all pesticide applications so that you can choose to leave your property or shelter in place.
- Test your water and take pictures of healthy vegetation before the spray happens. Let the company know you have taken “before spray” samples and will be testing for pesticide drift with vegetation or water sampling after the spray. Let them know you are ready to submit these samples for lab analysis and will file a formal complaint for any type of damage.
 - Let the company know you appreciate any efforts to work together as good neighbors.
 - Take pictures of all timber operations that may affect your property, but DO NOT TRESPASS on another property.

READ THE INFOSHEET FROM THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ON [WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE EXPOSED TO PESTICIDES.](#)

- CALL BEYOND TOXICS FOR ASSISTANCE
We can help walk you through the process to file a complaint with the Oregon Department of Agriculture.
- We can help you connect with others who are knowledgeable about pesticide exposures.
- We may be able to advise you with pesticide drift sampling (vegetation, water).

Call **541-465-8860** or email: info@beyondtoxics.org

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Beyond Toxics

BeyondToxics.org

120 Shelton McMurfhey Blvd., Suite 280, Eugene, OR 97401

315 N. Main St., Phoenix, OR 97535

Community Organizations

Spray Free Coast

<https://sprayfreecoast.org/>

Forestry Spray Map Tools

<https://sprayfreecoast.org/sprays-across-oregon/>

North Coast Communities for Watershed Protection

<https://healthywatershed.org/>

