

# The Register-Guard

OPINION HOME

LETTERS IN THE EDITOR'S MAILBAG

## OSHA misses point on pesticides

DEC 21, 2017

Oregon OSHA Administrator Michael Wood makes some valid points on farm worker pesticide protections in his guest viewpoint (“Proposed pesticide drift rule would exceed EPA’s,” Dec. 12).

Yes, OSHA is proposing stronger regulations than the EPA in some areas (thanks for the boxes for shoe storage). But he misses the point of why farm workers need stronger pesticide rules. Farm-worker housing, in many cases, is located in the orchard. Sometimes the trees nearly touch the roof of the buildings. Workers need OSHA to be a leader by implementing a true no-spray buffer around farm-worker housing. A permanent distance away from the spray is the only safe option.

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Wood argues that Oregon's rule is stronger because, in the event that a pesticide applicator must wear a gas mask or full space suit to protect themselves from pesticide inhalation, workers will evacuate 150 feet for 15 minutes. Does Wood think that workers won't breathe volatile pesticides a short distance away? Also, it doesn't address the fact that housing is adjacent to, or within, orchards. Even if the housing is evacuated, it is well documented that these chemicals can still harm people by sticking around on grass, laundry lines and cooking areas. Workers deserve better from OSHA.

**ANA MOLINA TREJO**

# ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMUNITY LIAISON, BEYOND TOXICS

*Springfield*

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