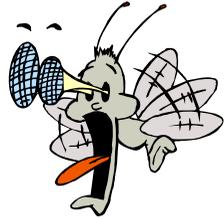


### Bugs and Critters

- Items such as gloves, hats, pants, long-sleeved shirts, and boots can act as protection from insect and snake bites, as well as insect repellents for mosquitoes.
- Avoid wearing strong scents. They attract bees and other insects.
- Do not place hands or feet into areas that are hidden from your eyesight. They are good hiding spots for rodents, snakes, and spiders. Be aware of specific local hazards such as rattlesnakes.
- Be sure to have necessary **personal** medical supplies on hand, especially if you have allergies to insect stings, bites, or plants.
- Do check your body over after returning from the field for any suspicious irritable insect bites. Attend to them immediately.



### First Aid/ CPR

- Travel with a buddy if possible. Make sure that one person holds a current first aid card and CPR training. Have a first aid kit in the vehicle at all times. A light weight blanket is a good addition since trauma victims need to be kept warm.
- Keep a list of medical emergency numbers that are near your destination site. 911 may not be accessible in some remote locations.

- Prevention of bloodborne pathogens (BBP) cross-contamination includes gloves, CPR shield, sanitization, decontamination, and appropriate first-aid procedures.



### Getting Assistance

Contact EH&S if you have any questions about agricultural research field technician safety regarding general requirements, precautions, and tips.



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### Environmental Health and Safety

P.O. Box 641172  
Pullman, WA 9164-1172  
(509) 335-3041

Wenatchee....509-663-8181  
Tri-Cities.....509-372-7163  
Vancouver....360-546-9706  
Spokane.....509-358-7993

<http://www.ehs.wsu.edu>



Environmental Health and Safety

## Agricultural Field Technician Safety



## General Requirements, Precautions, and Tips

This fact sheet was designed to provide safety guidelines for you, the seasonal research technician in the field. Always inform your supervisor if you observe any unsafe conditions or acts and work-related accidents, illnesses, or injuries.

### Worker Protection Standard (WPS)

The Worker Protection Standard is designed to protect you from potential exposure to chemical pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers while working in field and greenhouse activities.

- WPS and pesticide safety information is required to be accessible and understandable.
- Hazard Communications training is required before entry or handling materials in a treated area.
- Get proper training and your supervisor's approval before operating any equipment such as ATV's, fork lifts, or tractors.
- Use personal protective equipment (PPE) for early entry activities and general protective clothing for 30 days after a restricted entry interval (REI) or treatment.
- Follow proper decontamination procedures.

### Restricted Entry Interval (REI)

The purpose of the REI is to limit your chemical exposure in the field after application through entry restriction and control.

- Before entering any site, check your

location's central pesticide information board for applications, their locations, and applicable REI's. Do the same when entering commercial fields.



- For more information, see one of the 3 EH&S factsheets about *Restricted Entry after Pesticide Applications: The First 30 Days in Ag Fields, in Greenhouses, or in Nurseries*.

### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- General PPE for entry into fields 30 days after a pesticide application or a REI has been in effect should include long sleeve shirts, full length pants, and water-resistant closed-toe shoes.
- When conducting early entry activities during an REI, wear PPE specified by the pesticide label.
- Adequate potable water along with single use towels and soap must be available for drinking, hand washing, and decontamination.
- If you require a respirator, training, a medical questionnaire, and a fit test are mandatory through the WSU Respiratory Protection Program. Contact EH&S for more information.
- Be aware that PPE for protection from pesticides can increase risk of heat-related illnesses. Take the necessary steps to reduce



heat-related illnesses.

- \* **TIP:** Keep a spare set of PPE in the vehicle to use for impromptu entries into treated areas.

### Planting, Sampling, and Plot Maintenance

- PPE is required if handling materials treated with agricultural chemicals. This may include chemical resistant gloves, eye protection, and respiratory protection.
- When moving heavy items, use proper lifting techniques such as bending at the knees to reduce the possibility of back strain.
- Leather or kevlar gloves can minimize the occurrence of puncture or cut wounds.
- If heavy equipment is used, receive training in the applicable safety protocol to reduce the likelihood of an accident or injury.



### Harvesting:

Harvesting can occur anytime during the growing season depending on the type of research being performed.

- Make sure PPE is issued to provide protection from heat and sun, handling materials from treated areas, possible eye injuries, or hearing loss.

- Avoid wearing loose clothing or untied hair. These can get caught in machinery.
- Observe ladder safety rules and proper machine guarding
- Remember back safety when bending and lifting. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. You can refer to the EH&S *Back Safety* factsheet for more information.



### Processing:

- Review equipment operation procedures periodically. Even long term employees can forget necessary precautions of operating processing equipment.
- Lockout/tagout procedures are required if you are reaching in or being exposed to moving parts, releasing a jam, or cleaning where electrical currents are present, parts powered by hydraulic pressure, or where an unexpected start-up can potentially occur.
- Forklift operators must carry a current certification card.
- Environments that are slick or wet can be slippery. Keep floor surfaces clean and dry. Wear appropriate footwear.
- Areas where walking surfaces have stairs, platforms, uneven surfaces, or clutter are potential hazard zones for slips, trips, and falls.

- Hearing protection and hard hats might be necessary for some processing tasks, while steel-toed boots must be worn when lifting heavy items such as heavy boxes or objects.



### Heat Stress

Heat stress occurs during the summer months when the body becomes over heated and dehydrated. Remembering these simple tips can minimize the effects of heat stress.

- Bring an adequate amount of water to prevent dehydration when working outdoors. Some sites may not have potable water for drinking. Thirst is a poor indicator for the need to drink. At that point, the body is already dehydrated.
- Light colored clothing can deflect UV rays and keep the body cooler while lightweight fabrics allow greater airflow.
- Hats provide shade to the neck and face.
- Wear sunscreen to prevent sunburn.
- Know the signs and symptoms of heat stress! TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION!
- For more information, see the EH&S factsheet *Heat Related Illness*.

