

Why Pesticide Application Notifications in Schools are Important

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One of the highest priorities of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is protecting children's health from unnecessary exposure to pesticides. Schools are an environment where students are present all day and where pesticides are used to control pests.

When it comes to risks associated with pests and pesticides, children are the most vulnerable because 1) their behavior increases the chance of exposure; 2) their developing bodies are more profoundly impacted by pest related disease, allergens, and toxic substances; and 3) because of their relatively smaller size, less of a toxic substance is needed to have detrimental effects on children.

Pesticide exposure can be reduced by controlling the type and frequency of pesticides applied in school environments. It is important to pay attention to **signal words** on pesticide labels, and to follow the label carefully (Wierda et al. 2016). Despite utmost care when applying pesticides, mistakes do happen and there are also individuals who have chemical sensitivities.

That is why pesticide application notifications are critically important!

Arizona Revised Statute (ARS) 15-152 (2002) (known as pest management at schools; notice) requires that the governing board of each school district, in consultation with others, shall develop and **adopt a policy** to provide pupils, employees, parents and guardians, with at least 48 hours' notice before pesticides are applied on school property.

ARS 32-2307 (2002) (known as pesticide applications at schools and child care facilities; notifications; exemptions) requires a licensed pesticide applicator should notify schools or child care facilities at least 72 hours prior to any pesticide application. The statute also states that **only licensed pesticide applicators are allowed to apply pesticides in schools, child care, food service and medical facilities.** There are sensible pesticide exemptions built into the statute.

The purpose is to reduce risks associated with pesticide use around vulnerable populations while allowing the use of effective pesticides for pest control, when they are needed.



A PDF of this publication is available on-line at:
http://cals.arizona.edu/apmc/docs/Pesticide_Notification_Schools.pdf

An effective and practical method to ensure that all staff, students and parents are aware of pesticide use in schools is to use electronic notifications and physical pesticide application warnings (signage) placed in relevant locations.



Notifications should include the following information: brand name, concentration, rate of application, pesticide label and safety data sheet and any use restrictions required by the pesticide label. A contact for emergencies or further information is desirable.

A summary of potential adverse health effects associated with products are listed on the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) and pesticide label. Schools and childcare facilities are required to have these documents on-hand.

ARS 32-2307 requires that pesticide treated areas are posted immediately after the application. The posting shall be at least 8.5 x 11 inches, and shall include the name of the pesticide, the registration number issued by the EPA, the date and time of application and the name and telephone number of the business licensee and certified applicator. A copy of the posting shall also be placed at the main entrance to the school or child care facility. The posting and the copy of the posting shall remain in place for at least 48 hours after the application.

Keeping Arizona Children Safe

The EPA and University of Arizona encourage schools and childcare providers to practice Integrated Pest Management (IPM). IPM is a risk reduction approach, which minimizes health impacts associated with pests and pesticides.

Additional information:

QR codes for resources

Wierda, M., Fournier, A., Li, S., Nair, S., Gouge, D.H. and Ellsworth, P.C. 2016. Caution! Warning! Danger! Understanding Signal Words on Pesticide Labels. University of Arizona Cooperative Extension IPM Short. <http://ag.arizona.edu/crops/cotton/files/SignalWords.pdf>



Gouge, D.H., Stock, T., Nair, S., Li, S., Bryks, S., Hurley, J., Fournier, A. 2015. Preparing your school integrated pest management (IPM) plan. University of Arizona Cooperative Extension. Publication no. AZ1669.



<https://extension.arizona.edu/sites/extension.arizona.edu/files/pubs/az1669-2015.pdf>

Pesticide Use in Schools and Public Health Facilities. Arizona Office of Pest Management.



http://www.sb.state.az.us/Assets/PDFDocuments/Outreach_Brochure.pdf

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This material is based upon work that is supported in part by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA NIFA) under the Crop Protection and Pest Management, Extension Implementation Program, award number 2014-70006-22488 which provides Extension IPM funding to the University of Arizona, and by the Arizona Pesticide Safety Education Program.



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