

such as “precautionary statements” or “hazards to humans and domestic animals.” The minimum protective clothing is often stated on the label, but you can opt to wear additional items to increase protection. Use common sense to decide what additional clothing to wear.

*Before using any pesticide,  
READ AND FOLLOW THE LABEL!*

### When to Wear PPE

Protective clothing and gear should be worn from the moment you start handling the pesticide product, including when:

- opening the container,
- mixing or diluting the pesticide,
- attaching the pesticide container to a water hose,
- applying the pesticide,
- cleaning up after applying,
- disposing of pesticide waste, and
- coming into contact with freshly treated surfaces.



### Cleaning PPE

After completing pesticide application and cleanup:

- Wash rubber gloves or boots *before* taking them off.
- Remove (as soon as possible) the clothing worn during application.
- Launder the clothing separately from other items, so that any pesticides do not spread to other clothes.

- Wash any exposed areas on yourself, or shower, to ensure no residue remains, especially if pesticides were spilled on the clothing.
- Be careful not to come into contact with the treated area after removing the protective clothing, at least until the pesticide has dried. Review and follow the product label directions for re-entry to treated areas.
- Do not use PPE for other purposes, such as reusing gloves for washing dishes.



### Brochures in this series are:

- #1 *Why Manage Pests?*
- #2 *IPM in and around Your Home*
- #3 *Understanding Pesticide Product Labels*
- #4 *Home Pest Management and Children*
- #5 *Water Quality and Home Pesticide Use*
- #6 *Protective Clothing for Handling Pesticides*

*They are available from  
the NYSDEC, Bureau of Pesticides  
Management, Albany, NY,  
or the DEC regional offices.  
Visit the NYSDEC website,  
<http://www.dec.state.ny.us/>*



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*PEST MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SERIES  
#6 Protective Clothing*



# Protective Clothing for Handling Pesticides



New York State  
Department of Environmental Conservation  
George E. Pataki, Governor    Erin M. Crotty, Commissioner



# Protective Clothing for Handling and Using Pesticides



for Homeowners and Apartment Dwellers\*

## Why Wear Protective Clothing?

It is important to protect yourself from exposure to pesticides when handling and applying them indoors and outdoors. Pesticides designed to kill certain living organisms can also harm non-target organisms, such as humans and pets, if handled improperly.

Pesticides can potentially enter the body via inhalation, ingestion and absorption through:

- skin,
- eyes,
- mouth, and
- nose.

You can help avoid direct contact with pesticides by wearing proper protective clothing and gear when handling them.

**Remember:** pesticides include insecticides, herbicides, fungicides and rodenticides used indoors or outdoors.

## Importance of Product Label

The pesticide label will tell you what protective clothing or gear is necessary for the pesticide you are using. Such clothing is sometimes referred to on the label as “personal protective equipment” (PPE), or it may be listed under other headings,



Depending on the pesticide and how it is applied either indoors or outdoors, a range of protective clothing may be needed:

### HEAD COVERINGS

- ✓ Hat with brim, especially when spraying overhead

### EYE PROTECTION

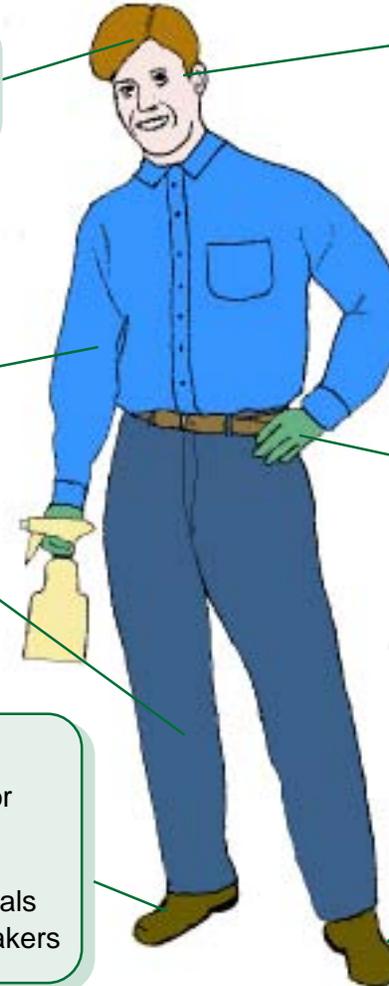
- ✓ Safety glasses or goggles that have brow and side shields

### BODY COVER

- ✓ Long-sleeved shirt, long pants
- Not appropriate*
- ✗ shorts or skirt
- ✗ T-shirts
- ✗ sleeveless tops

### HAND PROTECTION

- ✓ Waterproof or chemical resistant gloves.
- Not appropriate*
- ✗ fabric garden gloves



### FOOT PROTECTION

- ✓ Closed, nonabsorbent shoes or boots, worn with socks.
- Not appropriate*
- ✗ open shoes, such as sandals
- ✗ fabric shoes, such as sneakers

### FOOT PROTECTION OPTION

- ✓ Shoe/boot covers (for cloth and leather shoes, which are absorbent and difficult or impossible to clean adequately)



\*Note: commercial pesticide applicators may have additional PPE requirements.