



PESTICIDE ADVISORY

Pesticide Use Near Schools and Childcare Facilities

May 27, 2021

The Oregon Department of Agriculture would like to remind growers and other pesticide applicators of some best practices when using pesticides near schools, childcare facilities, and other sensitive sites. Pesticide applications near these sensitive sites may generate odor complaints and concerns about drift or illness. Remember that children are more sensitive than adults to the potential toxic effects of pesticides. By carefully following the pesticide label and implementing the best practices below, you can demonstrate your commitment to your community and minimize the chances of a complaint or pesticide incident.

Best Practices for Pesticide Use Near Schools and Childcare Facilities:

- Communicate with nearby schools and childcare staff early and often about pesticide and fertilizer applications on your property. By providing information about the pesticides you plan to apply and your schedule, you empower schools and parents to take steps to minimize potential risks.
- Time your applications when children, staff, and community members are not using the property, if possible. It is important to note that children may be present on school sports fields during evenings or weekends.
- Choose an alternative method of application. Aerial applications or applications that generate small droplets, such as airblast, often are more prone to drift. Use application equipment and techniques that release pesticides closer to the ground and that utilize coarse droplet sizes where possible. Select formulations or products that are low in odor and that do not volatilize.
- Monitor the weather closely for conditions that increase the risk of pesticide drift or off-site deposition (e.g., wind blowing toward sensitive site, wind speeds below or above those stated on label, or temperature inversions). Note: some pesticides may evaporate at high temperatures and can potentially move off-target after the application is made.
- Consider using lower toxicity products and taking more of an integrated pest management (IPM) approach. Are there non-chemical pest management techniques that can be utilized?
- Be aware of and carefully follow requirements for no-spray buffer areas between the target and sensitive sites, which may be specified on the pesticide label or otherwise required by state law (see below). Consider incorporating a voluntary no-spray buffer.

There is no universal no-spray buffer requirement for Oregon schools. However, it is important to be aware of the following:

- The Oregon Department of Forestry does enforce a 300-foot spray buffer around school property when pesticides are applied by helicopter in forestry settings. For more information about these forestry buffers, please visit <https://oda.fyi/SB1602> or contact your local stewardship forester (<https://oda.fyi/FindAForester>).

- In Oregon, the use of pesticides containing chlorpyrifos is prohibited within 60-300 ft. (depending on application equipment) of a school campus and other sensitive sites, <https://oda.direct/ChlorpyrifosRule>.
- Additionally, there may be no-spray buffers near schools or other sensitive sites on pesticide labels.

Additional Resources:

- Preventing drift: <https://oda.direct/PreventingDriftStory>
- Where to refer community members with questions about pesticides: National Pesticide Information Center (1-800-858-7378 or npic@ace.orst.edu)

If you have questions, please contact the ODA Pesticides Program at 503.986.4635 or pestx@oda.state.or.us.