

Background

Eye or skin contact with some pesticides can cause immediate or delayed blindness, paralysis, and other severe, debilitating, or even life-threatening illnesses or injuries.

In general, risk for harm increases the longer pesticides remain on the skin or eyes.

Prompt action, and access to adequate emergency supplies and washing facilities, can reduce risk for injury or illness.

Routine and Emergency Decontamination

What supplies are required?

Basic supplies for routine and emergency decontamination include **all** of the following:

- Soap
- Single-use towels
- Sufficient water to wash thoroughly
- A clean change of clothing (e.g., coveralls) in case of emergencies

Are hand sanitizers or moist towelettes acceptable alternatives to soap?

No.

Where do I need to locate decontamination supplies?

Decontamination supplies must be accessible and available at each of the following locations:

- Mixing and loading sites
- Where handlers remove their PPE
- Outside treated areas and areas where an REI (restricted entry interval) is in effect
- On aircraft or at aircraft loading sites (for aerial applications)

Be sure to keep supplies reasonably accessible within ¼ mile of handlers and protect them from pesticide contamination.

Can I store supplies at vehicle access points?

You can, as long as you ensure supplies will be accessible within ¼ mile from individuals performing handler activities.

Can I store supplies in treated areas? REI areas?

Yes, but only when supplies are protected from contamination in closed containers.

How much water is required?

The goal is to provide sufficient water to allow handlers to wash thoroughly during routine and emergency decontamination.

The minimum amount required is 10 gallons for one handler and 20 gallons for two or more. Additional water could be required depending on the circumstances. Consider the type of application, individual user needs, severity and likelihood of harmful contact should an accidental emergency exposure occur, etc.

Must water be potable?

No, however, the water must be of a quality and temperature that will not cause illness or harm:

- when it contacts the worker's skin or eyes, or
- if it is swallowed (e.g., due to the presence of chemicals or biological pathogens).

If wash water comes from the same tank used for pesticide mixing, make sure the supply line is equipped with a properly functioning check valve, air gap, or other device that prevents pesticides from siphoning back into the tank.



Can I rely on water from springs, streams, or lakes?

You can, but only in certain emergency circumstances when such water:

- is more readily accessible than what is available at vehicle access points or other locations, and
- isn't likely to cause illness or harm to the handler.

Showers

Are showers required by the WPS?

Not specifically by the Worker Protection Standard (WPS), however, showers may be the best solution for full-body emergency washing.

Depending on the chemicals that are in use, showers may be required by other rules, such as **WAC 296-800-15030 (1)**.



Emergency showers may be the best solution for full-body emergency washing.

Emergency Eyewashes and Eye Flush Water

Where do I need to set up an eyewash?

A plumbed or portable emergency eyewash must be set up at each of the following locations when pesticides are used in closed, pressurized systems or have a label requiring PPE:

- Permanent mixing or loading sites
- Mixing and loading stations
- Handler decontamination sites

How much water is required?

Plumbed or portable emergency eyewashes must continuously deliver a minimum of 0.4 gallons (or 1.5 liters) per minute of tepid, gently running water for at least 15 minutes (i.e., a total of at least six gallons or 22½ liters).

When is emergency eye flush water required?

At a minimum, provide one pint of water to handlers when they will perform a task for which the pesticide label requires protective eyewear.

Eye flush water must be immediately available in a portable container that is:

- carried by the handler, or
- readily accessible to the handler in a vehicle, or
- in an aircraft occupied by the handler (for aerial applications)

Assistance

How can I get help?

Visit www.Lni.wa.gov/DOSHConsultation to find a consultant near you. You may also call 1-800-423-7233 or visit a local L&I office to speak to a Consultation Manager.

To find safety rules, training materials, videos, and other resources, visit www.Lni.wa.gov/safety-health.