

Guidelines for Supervisors of Pesticide Applicator Apprentices and WPS Handlers

These guidelines apply to those situations where Worker Protection Standard training is required for all employees and students who handle agricultural plant materials:

- 1) if those materials are grown on a farm, forest, nursery or greenhouse,
- 2) if those materials are treated with any type of pesticide, and
- 3) if the work with the plant material occurs within 30 days of the expiration of the restricted entry interval for the pesticide.

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- If an employee is not applying pesticides but is doing other tasks defined as pesticide use¹ s/he must have basic training that must include, but is not limited to, the following topics: site-typical detailed guidance for pesticide use, pesticide safety, use of personal protective equipment including selection of appropriate respirators² and restricted entry intervals. The basic training requirement is met by sending the employee to Worker Protection Standard (WPS) Handler training³, as long as the supervisor supplements the WPS training with site-specific information.
 - Employees who are WPS Handlers but not pesticide apprentices can work an unlimited number of hours doing "pesticide use" activities - exclusive of applications - without on-site supervision.
 - If an employee wishes to become a pesticide apprentice, the supervisor should document the number of hours and type of training on the form "Documentation of Apprentice Training." Supervisors need not document pesticide use activities for employees who do not wish to become pesticide apprentices. An employee should become an apprentice if the supervisor intends to train that employee to make applications; an employee who needs to "use" pesticides but will never need to apply pesticides need not become an apprentice. Obviously, the decision as to whether an employee will become a pesticide apprentice should be made carefully, and documenting all apprentice-type training would be the cautious approach.
 - Pesticide apprentices must always work under the direct supervision of a fully certified applicator. The level of supervision, off-site or on-site, depends upon whether the apprentice is applying Federally restricted products (on-site) or general use products (off-site).
 - An apprentice can apply general use products with off-site supervision once s/he has received 40 hours of pesticide use training and 8 hours of "core" training.
 - During the first 40 hours of pesticide use training, an apprentice only has to have on-site direct supervision while applying pesticides. On-site supervision is not required during the first 40 hours for pesticide uses other than application.

¹Pesticide use means performance of the following pesticide-related activities: application; mixing; loading; transport, storage or handling after manufacturer's seal is broken; cleaning of pesticide application equipment; and any required preparation for container disposal.

²An employee must join the Cornell Respiratory Protection Program if a respirator is required.

³WPS Handlers can, according to the Federal guidelines, mix, load, transfer, and apply pesticides (among other activities). CALS policy is more restrictive and requires that anyone applying pesticides become a commercial pesticide apprentice, a certified commercial pesticide technician or a certified commercial pesticide applicator.

- The level of certification will be based on education and experience qualifications as set forth by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).
- A commercial pesticide apprentice will become a certified pesticide technician as soon as s/he meets the education and experience eligibility requirements set forth by the DEC.
- A certified commercial pesticide technician will become a certified commercial pesticide applicator as soon as s/he meets the education and experience requirements set forth by the DEC.