

# **Transporting Pesticides Safely**

## **A Guide for Cornell Employees**

Safety is NO accident. Preventing mishaps requires thoughtful practice everyday. This is just as important with transporting pesticides as it is with other safe practices in the work place. It is also important to know how to properly respond when a mishap occurs. Knowing proper spill/accident response may be the difference between disaster and an annoying inconvenience.

### **Vehicle Decisions**

#### **Passengers and Pesticides do not MIX**

Pesticides should not be carried in the passenger compartment of a vehicle.

- **Pickup Truck Cargo Area considerations**
  - ❖ Secure the containers
  - ❖ Provide protection from:
    - Tears
    - Punctures
    - Impacts, that could lead to container damage
  
- **Flatbed Truck considerations**
  - Side and tail racks should be in place
  - Tie-down rings used to secure the load
  - Cleats or racks used to secure the load
  - Steel beds are better than wood
    - More easily cleaned

If the only option available is a passenger type of vehicle, follow the guidelines below:

- ❖ **Station wagons, utility vans**
  - Properly ventilate the cargo and passenger compartments
  - Keep passengers away from the containers during transport
  - Provide secondary containment for pesticides

## Who is Responsible if an Accident Occurs

### In Most Cases:

- Both the vehicle owner and operator are responsible for and must deal with the consequences of an accident

## Rules of the Road for State Employees

### DEC Rules and guidance:

- ❖ Vehicle must have the Triangular DEC pesticides decal posted on two sides of the vehicle when pesticides are being transported
- ❖ Product must be labeled
- ❖ Suggested but not required
  - ❖ DEC - a copy of the pesticide label in the vehicle
  - ❖ An MSDS for each product or a copy of the Emergency Response GuideBook

**Special Note:** If you are not a **State Employee**, and/or are not driving a state vehicle or are shipping by any alternative method, you must also follow the DOT Rules.

When DOT rules apply, a proper shipping paper must be used. A sample Federal DOT shipping paper is available from the EHS WEB site. When DOT rules do not apply, it is recommended to use the CALS shipping paper found in the employee Pesticide Applicators Handbook. A brief explanation of the DOT rules follows at the end of this sheet.

## Safety Precautions

- **Pack an emergency spill kit**
  - ❖ Absorbent spill containment pads, sweeping compound
  - ❖ Brush, broom
  - ❖ Dust pan, shovel
  - ❖ Plastic bag, for the dirty stuff
  - ❖ PPE, etc.
- 2) **Inspect the containers prior to loading**
  - ❖ In serviceable condition
  - ❖ Legible and attached labels
  - ❖ Tight closures
  - ❖ Pesticide - free outside surfaces
- 3) **Inspect cargo areas for:**
  - Nails
  - Stones
  - Sharp edges
- 4) **Packing or shipping containers can be used and useful**

- ❖ Extra protection
- ❖ Secondary containment
- 5) Use a synthetic liner or tarpaulin large enough to cover the floor and sides of cargo area
  - ❖ Provides for an easier cleanup of spilled materials
- 6) **Secure the load**
  - ❖ Brace bars
  - ❖ Ropes
  - ❖ Tarps
- 7) **Organize load of pesticide containers**
  - ❖ Separate herbicides from plant protectants
  - ❖ Separate flammables
  - ❖ Separate fertilizers from pesticides
  - ❖ Maximize stability while maintaining access to containers for unloading
- 8) **Further separate:**
  - ❖ Food
  - ❖ Feed
  - ❖ Seed
  - ❖ Veterinary supplies
  - ❖ Plant materials such as planting soil, etc.
- 9) **Protect pesticides from temperature extremes and moisture during transit**
  - ❖ Keep from freezing
  - ❖ Keep from extreme heat
  - ❖ Shade from direct sun
- 10) **Parking the vehicle**
  - ❖ Owner and operator are responsible if:
    - Children
    - Careless adults
    - Or Vandals are poisoned, or release pesticides that result in contamination or injury to other persons
  - ❖ If the cargo cannot be locked
    - Covering the load with a tarp can reduce the likelihood of tampering

## **What to Do When a spill Happens**

- ❖ Call for emergency assistance
- ❖ Protect yourself First
- ❖ Control the flow of material
- ❖ Shut off the source
- ❖ Contain the spread

### **On campus spill**

- ❖ Call 911
  - Cornell Police will involve Environmental Health and Safety and Environmental Compliance as needed

### **For off-campus spill**

- ❖ Call 911
  - Or other local emergency number
- ❖ Contact Cornell Environmental Compliance
  - Environmental Compliance Office (ECO) 607-254-8722, during normal business hours

### **Where-ever the spill occurs**

- ❖ Do not leave site unattended
  - You will be responsible for preventing injury to others that may contact the spill

### **US Department of Transportation (DOT) Rules**

- ❖ State Agencies and employees operating state-owned vehicles are exempt from these rules
- ❖ To be sure that is the way the State Police are enforcing these rules in your area, check with the Troopers in your area

### **US DOT regulations for pesticides on public roadways**

- ❖ Most pesticide controls fall under FIFRA
- ❖ However, some pesticides meet the DOT definition of:
  - A "Hazardous material" or
  - SARA Title III hazardous substances

## **Basic purpose of DOT regulations**

- ❖ Transporters are required to:
  - Have sufficient knowledge to react to chemical spills
  - Communicate information to first-response emergency personnel
    - ✓ Protect the emergency personnel
    - ✓ Expedite the clean up and protection of others

## **DOT Training Requirement**

- ❖ 1997 revision of the DOT
    - Training is required for those transporting DOT regulated hazardous materials and those who are:
      - ✓ Mailing DOT regulated hazardous materials
      - ✓ Receiving DOT regulated hazardous materials
        - by Mail
        - by Air
        - by UPS
    - Any employee who:
      - ✓ Prepares
      - ✓ Loads
      - ✓ Transports
      - ✓ Receives
      - ✓ Packages
      - ✓ Performs similar activities
- All must have DOT Training.

## **DOT training covers the basics**

- ❖ General awareness training
  - regulations, labels, MSDS, shipping forms
- ❖ Function-specific training
  - ✓ Emergency response training and first aid
  - ✓ Basic safety training for vehicle drivers
  - ✓ Must maintain records of training for previous two years
  - ✓ Must receive new training every three years

## Other sources of information

- 1) Hazardous Materials Compliance Pocketbook
- 2) Emergency Response Guidebook
  - ❖ Environmental Health and Safety has copies
- 3) EH&S WEB Pages
  - ❖ <http://www.ehs.cornell.edu/lrs/hazshipping.htm>
  - ❖ 607/255-8200
  - ❖ DOT Training source
  - ❖ Campus Hazmat shipping center
- 4) Pesticide Management Education Program (PMEP)
  - ❖ 607/255-1866
- 5) Mary-Lynn Cummings, CALS Environmental Health Specialist
  - ❖ 607/255-2557
- 5) J.J. Keller
  - ❖ 800/843-3174
  - ❖ Emergency Response Guidebook

Information compiled by Ronald Gardner, Pesticide Management Education Program, 1998.