

No. 102: Appropriate and Allowable PPE for Pesticide Applicators in the Covid19 Era

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Pesticide applicators may have trouble obtaining the label-listed (and thus required) PPE while safety supplies are in short supply due to new and expanded needs as individuals seek to minimize their potential exposure to sources of the Covid19 virus. In many cases, pesticide labels call for the same PPE that is currently needed to protect front-line workers such as first responders and medical professionals. It is important to understand that label-listed PPE for working with pesticides has been required because of demonstrated or scientifically-based necessity to protect the applicator's health. It is acceptable to choose PPE that is more, but not less, protective. When possible, the best alternative is to choose a product that simply does not require the hard-to-obtain PPE.

State Pesticide Safety Education Programs (PSEPs) are aware of the problems and have been working together to address this issue. The following resources may help.

PPE for Pesticides

- The American Association of Pesticide Safety Educators (AAPSE) has information and resources on a page created specifically to address the Covid19-related shortage of PPE. Available at <https://aapse.wildapricot.org/COVID-19PPE/>, the site includes a listing of resources to help applicators search for alternative pesticides and/or methods that do not require the short-supply items.
- The National Pesticide Safety Education Collaborative has developed a decision-making tree for choosing respiratory protection when respirators and other airway protectors are hard to come by. It's available at <https://pesticidestewardship.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2020/04/Respirator-Decision-Tree-NPSEC.pdf>
- Rutgers University PSEP has a very good publication on respirators, completed in 2018 – *Respiratory Protection for Occupational Users of Pesticides*. It's available through PERC, the Pesticide Education Resources Collaborative, at <https://pested.osu.edu/sites/pested/files/imce/e358.pdf> The booklet is also available directly from Rutgers at <https://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/publication.php?pid=E358>
- Penn State University PSEP revised the following publication in 2017 – *Respiratory Protective Devices for Pesticides* – <https://extension.psu.edu/respiratory-protective-devices-for-pesticides>

- Some good respirator information is available from the Pesticide Environmental Stewardship site at NC State University PSEP at <https://pesticidestewardship.org/respirators/> Be sure to check out the embedded pages including:
 - *Types of Respirators*
 - *Purifying Elements*
 - *TC Numbers and Cartridge Colors*
 - *What Respirator Do I Need?*
 - *Medical Clearance*
 - *Fit Test*
 - *Fit Test or Seal Check*
- The California Department of Pesticide Regulation has issued some guidance for applicators on alternatives if you can't find N95 masks or appropriate gloves:

N95 Masks –

https://mcusercontent.com/203dd6a15b155118e8ec30e72/files/ae5ece75-1abe-48e9-909f-25be857c530b/Acceptable_PPE_Alternatives_N95.pdf?utm_source=Updated+WAPA+List&utm_campaign=d4d46d1e91-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_04_15_12_12&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0c23a4dca7-d4d46d1e91-268032177

Gloves –

https://mcusercontent.com/203dd6a15b155118e8ec30e72/files/edfc9ec7-b78b-4cba-b021-c2f71d334881/Acceptable_PPE_Gloves.pdf?utm_source=Updated+WAPA+List&utm_campaign=d4d46d1e91-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_04_15_12_12&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0c23a4dca7-d4d46d1e91-268032177

- The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has released a guidance document, *Use of Respirators, Facemasks, and Cloth Face Coverings in the Food and Agriculture Sector During Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic*. Access the full text at <https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/use-respirators-facemasks-and-cloth-face-coverings-food-and-agriculture-sector-during-coronavirus>. Most of the information in the FDA document merely describes what is required, and which types of masks may be used for protection from covid19, not for pesticides. However, it does state the following: “If you are managing a farm, facility, or establishment and need assistance finding suppliers of PPE or face coverings, please contact FEMA [the Federal Emergency Management Agency] at NBEOC@max.gov.”

General Farming Respirator Information

- The National Agricultural Safety Database (NASD) has a fact sheet on use of respiratory protective devices for farm-related jobs in general. It may be of help in choosing PPE to provide protection against farm dusts, particulates, and other hazards. The fact sheet is available at <https://nasdonline.org/197/d000146/respiratory-health-on-the-poultry-farm.html>
- AgriSafe Network has developed two one-page publications aimed at helping farmers decide which respiratory protective device(s) would be the most appropriate for the jobs they do.

Which Respirator is Right for the Farm Work You Do?

<https://agn.memberclicks.net/assets/docs/RespiratoryResources/respirator%20decision%20guide.pdf>

Agricultural Respirator Selection Guide

https://www.ehs.iastate.edu/sites/default/files/uploads/forms/Farm_Resp_selection_guide.pdf