

Sprayed! Know what to do.

A Fact Sheet from Toxic Free NC

The chemicals in many pesticides are toxic and dangerous.

Even when applied correctly and carefully, there is always a chance of drift and unwanted exposure – for other vegetation, for animals, and for people. This can lead to property damage and serious illness.

Based on conversations with drift victims across the state, Toxic Free NC has developed this list of tips and advice for victims of pesticide drift in North Carolina. If you're sprayed, take these important steps to protect yourself and put a stop to pesticide drift:

1) Protect yourself.

- If you have come into direct contact with chemical pesticides, immediately leave the area and take off any contaminated clothing. Put your contaminated clothes in plastic bags so you won't be re-exposed by handling them, and so they can be used as samples for lab work if necessary.
- Take a shower as soon as possible, or wash with the nearest source of clean water.
- Ask the pesticide applicator for the labels and material safety data sheets (MSDS) for the formulations s/he sprayed.
- Even if you do not have immediate symptoms, it is possible that your health may be at risk, so it is important to go to a physician for an exam. Tell your health care provider about the exposure, and take any information you have about the chemicals with you.

2) Report the incident. It is important to call the state enforcement agency anytime pesticides have been misused or caused damage or harm. **To report a pesticide incident in North Carolina, call the Pesticide Section of the NC Department of Agriculture at 919-733-3556.** An investigator should come to the site within 24 hours of a phone call, and should bring equipment for collecting samples for lab-work. If taken promptly, laboratory tests are capable of identifying the chemicals that were used.

3) Keep good records. For your own safety and to help the investigation run smoothly, it is very important to keep track of the details of the pesticide incident. It can be helpful to create a notebook where you can keep all the information about the incident for easy reference.

- Keep any contaminated clothing articles in sealed plastic bags, out of the sun.
- Keep track of any symptoms you have, and any information that a doctor provides.
- Write down the date and the specific details of the event, as they can be easy to forget in the following weeks.
- Write down the names of the people that you speak with over the phone, and the investigator that you speak with.
- Tell the pesticide investigator that you would like to be notified of any information that is found or action that is taken.
- Be sure to follow up to get the information you asked for, especially if the applicator and/or the investigator are not forthcoming.

It can be frightening to witness careless application of pesticides or to be exposed to pesticide drift, and sometimes intimidating to report incidents to the state Pesticide Section. Nonetheless, reporting these incidents is one of the most important steps you can take to keep them from happening again. **Toxic Free NC is here to help you, so call us toll-free at 1-877-NO SPRAY for help in English or in Spanish.**

Picture this: You and your family are working outside in your yard on a breezy day and notice a small plane flying low in your neighbor's field. Suddenly you feel yourself covered in a strong-smelling liquid that burns your skin and throat.

Would you know what to do next?



Call the Pesticide Drift Hotline toll free at 1-877-NO-SPRAY for more information and assistance with pesticide drift in North Carolina.

Fighting pesticide pollution since 1986.
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