

PestSure Safety Tips

INSURING THE FUTURE OF PEST CONTROL

A Five-Minute Training Series For Pest Management Professionals.

HAND PROTECTION



Each year about 12 percent of work-related injuries are to hands and fingers. When handling pesticides, most of the exposure is through our hands and forearms. Container labels and the **Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS)** for a particular chemical are the best sources of information for proper **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** for your hands.

Pest control exposure hazards and PPE requirements differ greatly depending upon the form (dry, water based, non water-based, or fumigant) of chemical being used. Precisely follow the label instructions regarding gloves for each different chemical you utilize.

While at work, your hands are exposed to three general kinds of hazards:

- Irritating substances—skin conditions such as dermatitis can be caused by contact with chemicals and biological agents (bacteria, fungi, and viruses). Chemicals and toxic substances can also enter the bloodstream through abrasions or cuts.
- Mechanical hazards—are present wherever tools and machinery are used. Injuries resulting from tool and machinery use might include cuts, punctures, abrasions, or crushing.
- Environmental hazards—factors like extreme heat or cold can cause hand and finger injury.

What you should know:

- When PPE is necessary.
- What PPE is necessary.
- The limitations of the PPE.
- The proper care, maintenance, useful life, and disposal of the PPE.

Types of Gloves:

- Chemical resistant gloves (butyl rubber, natural rubber latex, neoprene, thick plastic) protect against corrosive and irritating chemicals like pesticides, acids, cleansers, or solvents. No one type of chemical resistant glove can protect you from ALL chemicals.
- Leather gloves protect against sparks, moderate heat, blows, chips, and rough objects.
- Fabric gloves can protect against dirt, slivers, chafing, and abrasion. These gloves do not provide sufficient protection to be used with rough, sharp, or heavy materials.
- Coated fabric gloves are useful for general-purpose hand protection and offer slip-resistant qualities.

Considerations when selecting appropriate hand protection:

- **Breakthrough**—how fast will gloves break down and allow chemicals to seep through?
- **Dexterity**—how much flexibility does the glove have?
- **Length**—how exposed are your arms?
- **Size**—do the gloves provide the right amount of dexterity and comfort?

Hand protection limitations:

All protective equipment has certain limitations. For example, gloves that provide protection from chemical exposure often break down over time and allow the chemical to seep through. Dexterity may be limited with the use of some gloves. Proper fit is an important component in being able to work effectively while wearing gloves.