

“The time is always right to do what is right.” – Martin Luther King, Jr.



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A Quarterly Insight into the Environmental Services Division

The ESD Review

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The dangers of aerial applications. (See page 3)



Featured inspection: Worker Protection Standard. (See page 5)

ESD, celebrating 65 years of safeguarding proper pesticide usage!

Much has evolved from the days of the “Arizona Board of Pest Control Applicators”.

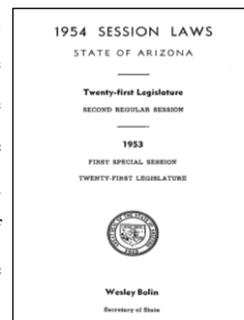
Established in March of 1954, the Arizona Board of Pest Control Applicators, which became the ESD, predates the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) who is tasked with oversight of the production, sale and usage of pesticides at the federal level. Before the existence of this board, pesticide usage in Arizona pretty much went unregulated.



By: Yuma ESD Staff

As we celebrate 65 years of overseeing the production, sales and use of pesticides in Arizona, first as the Board of Pest Control Applicators established in 1954, then as the Board of Pesticide Control, after the state legislature renamed it in 1968, and now as the Environmental Services Division of the Arizona Department of Agriculture, we look back and see the progress made in creating a culture of safe and appropriate pesticide usage in the great state of Arizona. From our successful licensing system where we manage statutory licensing of the pesticides themselves, those who manage & sell them, to the professionals who recommend and apply them. Our oversight methods assure that all licensees keep proper records as well as continue their education in the safe handling and application of agricultural use

Pesticides. Today the Arizona Department of Agriculture through the Environmental Services Division, licenses over 2,700 Growers, Pilots, Pesticide Sellers, Commercial Applicators, Private Applicators, Custom Applicators and Pest Control Advisors. The vast majority of license holders strive to do things right. Our compliance inspectors conduct hundreds of inspections and audits each year to ensure compliance and provide compliance assistance when needed. We are proud of the segment of the agriculture industry in Arizona that uses pesticides because in almost every case they do so in a safe manner and in compliance with state and federal regulations. We look forward to continue protecting Arizona's citizens, the environment and our industry for many more years to come!



Ag Pest Management in Compliance with Food Safety

"Doing the right thing... even when no one is watching"

By: Ernie Lugo, Yuma ESD

Arizona has recently been in the Ag spotlight because of food safety issues with contaminated Romaine lettuce. As we reflect on what our industry has been through with this situation, those who apply crop protection products on leafy greens and other edible crops must keep in mind the possibility that careless or improper actions during an application could create a similar situation involving pesticides, and of course those who apply them.



does not compromise the commodity.

From our mere presence on production or harvest sites to the actual application, there are many things that can go wrong if we are not careful or simply because

we do not know about food safety rules. But what can we do to make sure we are in compliance with food safety rules? We recommend you consult the growers' food safety professionals to seek guidance. In many cases these food safety professionals require that application operation managers, review and sign Good Agriculture Practices or GAPs as they are commonly known. But is that



information reaching applicators and handlers in the field? Unfortunately that is not always the case.

From personal hygiene to introducing and leaving behind foreign objects inside fields, to over spraying, there are many bad situations we can create if we are not cautious. Developing and implementing food safety protocols and a training program related to what we do is an inexpensive and easy way to protect your operation from being in the spotlight because of crop contamination.

Food Safety is everyone's responsibility and we should all do our part to help growers deliver a safe product. By doing the right thing, we will also be protecting our segment of the industry.

From the ESD Case Files....

In this section of our newsletter, we will share with you brief descriptions of cases and their outcomes.

In November of 2018, Complainant A called the Arizona Pesticide Hotline to file a report against Grower B for spraying pesticides on his property. Complainant A alleged that during an application of pesticides on a field located next to his home, Grower B caused pesticides to drift onto his home. Complainant A told the investigating inspector that he could smell a strong odor of a pesticide and he was sure Grower B sprayed his home. The inspector explained to Complainant A that smell does not necessarily mean drift had occurred but that he would investigate including collecting swab samples from different surfaces of the home. After collecting samples the inspector obtained Grower B's side of the story; the grower told the inspector that he has had previous encounters of this nature with Complainant A and was always careful when spraying that field. The ESD inspector submitted samples collected from the complainant's home to the Arizona State Agricultural Laboratory for analysis and completed a report. The results were negative for the presence of the products being applied by Grower B the day of the complaint. Complainant A and Grower B were informed of the findings and the case was closed without further action.

In December of 2018, Complainant C reported to ESD that while driving home from work, Aerial Applicator D, who was conducting an application nearby, sprayed his vehicle and because his window was rolled down, also sprayed his person with an unknown oily substance. The investigating inspector assigned to this case interviewed Complainant C and collected evidence from his vehicle. The inspector also obtained Aerial Applicator D's side of the story who said he was applying pesticides in that area at the time of the complaint. The inspector submitted samples collected from the complainant's vehicle to the Arizona State Agricultural Laboratory for analysis and completed a report. The results revealed the presence of the products being applied that night by Applicator D on Complainant C's vehicle. Applicator D was found responsible for failing to prevent drift. A monetary fine was imposed. Applicator D has the right to appeal this decision.

In September of 2018, a routine pesticide seller audit of Restricted Use Pesticides was conducted by a state inspector at Seller E's place of business. During the audit several sales records of Restricted Use Pesticides were provided by Seller E as part of the audit process. A review of the records by the state inspector revealed that an x amount of a Restricted Use Pesticide product had been sold to an uncertified applicator by Seller E, in violation of state and federal regulations. Further investigation of the suspected violation revealed that the Restricted Use Pesticide product was purchased, received, and applied by an uncertified applicator. Seller E was found responsible for unlawful sale of pesticide sales. A monetary fine was imposed. Seller E has the right to appeal this decision.

The dangers of aerial applications.

The dangerous job of an aerial applicator is often overlooked and taken for granted.



By: Yuma ESD Staff

The job of an agricultural pilot remains one of the most dangerous in the industry and the third most dangerous job in the US according to the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (2016).

Aerial applicators apply pesticides to fields to protect grower's crops from pests, such as bugs and weeds. Planes and helicopters fly really close to the ground to prevent drift from damaging other nearby crops or contaminating nearby residents. They make multiple passes or sweeps to make sure the entire field is covered. Without aerial application, farmers take a risk of ruining some crops by applying the product with heavy machines. It is also almost impossible for ground application equipment to properly operate after it rains because of heavy mud, and applying under these conditions will also cause extensive damage to the crop.

What is so dangerous about aerial applications you may ask? Pilots carry hundreds of gallons of pesticides and work with them all day long. Exposure to these chemicals can be hazardous to their health. They work long shifts and often during night time hours. They have to monitor GPS equipment and look for powerlines and trees all while flying at speeds close to 150 miles per hour.

In recent years, the Yuma area and nearby agriculture communities have seen aerial application related accidents.

In November of 2014 an application airplane went down near Gadsden, the pilot did not survive. Then in June of 2015 Yuma also lost a pilot during an application in Blythe, CA. More recently, this past December, a helicopter went down near Yuma but this time the pilot thankfully survived. The photos on this page are of this crash.

Remaining alert and being aware of their surroundings, the chemicals they are spraying, and the aircraft itself, makes for a difficult job and proves why pilots have to be extraordinary multi-taskers.

We are grateful for what these pilots do every day, and we pray for their safety.

Most Dangerous Jobs in 2016			
Rank	Occupation	Fatal injuries per 100,000 workers	Total deaths
1	Logging workers	135.9	91
2	Fishers and related fishing workers	86	24
3	Aircraft pilots and flight engineers	55.5	75
4	Roofers	48.6	101
5	Trash and recycling collectors	34.1	31
6	Iron and steel workers	25.1	16
7	Truck and sales drivers	24.7	918
8	Farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural managers	23.1	260
9	First-line supervisors of construction trades and extraction workers	18	134
10	Grounds maintenance workers	17.4	217

Source: Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, 2016

The label is the law! Read it carefully!!

We find that even experienced licensed applicators and handlers can sometimes miss directions that are 'buried' within the text of a label. Others feel that because they have read the label many times, of products they have been using for many years, they feel they no longer have to. This could present a problem because labels do change. As we all know, labels are legal documents providing directions on how to mix, apply, store and dispose of leftovers. This means that using a pesticide inconsistent with the label is a violation of both Arizona and federal law.



It is common for an ESD inspector conducting an application monitor inspection to come across applicators and/or handlers that are mixing, loading or applying a pesticide and have not read the label before they start to do so.

So for your own safety and the safety of those that work with or for you, read the label and remind others to do so as well!

Unusable Pesticides Collection Events

By: Arturo Aguirrebarrena, Yuma ESD

The Arizona Department of Agriculture's Environmental Services Division (ESD) offers the agricultural community an array of services. One of these services is the annual Unusable Pesticides Collection Event held in Yuma and Maricopa.

During these events growers and other licensees have the opportunity to bring pesticides that are considered unusable, such as products that are too old, no longer registered or otherwise deemed unusable by the holder. Since 2017 ESD's Unusable Pesticides Collection Event's have safely disposed of 3005 gallons of liquid pesticide products, and 12,625 pounds of unusable dry pesticides. The collection and disposal of unusable pesticide products reduces the risk of potential pesticide related spills, injuries or incidents of this nature. This is beneficial to both those who are storing these pesticides and the environment.

This event is free of charge to all ESD licensees such as sellers, growers, and applicators. Participants must submit the proper forms and be approved by the Arizona Department of Agriculture before they are allowed to participate; walk-ins are not permitted. Materials other than pesticides such as other hazardous waste, empty containers, paints, oils, adjuvants, fertilizers, etc. will not be collected. For further information or to be added to the ESD email list, please contact Leslie Perea-Angulo at lperea-angulo@azda.gov.



Use of birds of prey for ag pest control

By: Ernie Lugo, Yuma ESD

During this year's Southwest Ag Summit in Yuma, we got to see an interesting presentation by Sonoran Falconry, an organization based out of Scottsdale that uses falcons, hawks and owls to keep rodents, pigeons and other birds considered pests, out of produce growing areas. These unwanted animals not only eat crops but could also contaminate them by potentially introducing bacteria and pathogens that could injure or kill consumers if they eat contaminated produce.

This trial program which is managed by Dr. Paula Rivadeneira of the University of Arizona, and funded by the Center for Produce Safety, began in January of 2018 and will continue until December of 2019.

During the presentation Dr. Rivadeneira mentioned that JV Farms is one of the growers participating in this trial which is showing positive results. Another presenter told the audience that when these birds of prey are brought to the fields, unwanted birds are gone in matter of minutes.

An important component of this trial is to figure out how to make this program affordable on a large scale so that all growers are able to participate.

Overall this program has been a success and is welcomed by food safety professionals as an alternative to conventional methods of pest management.



A Falcon on-site during a trial in the Yuma Valley.



L to R: Dr. Rivadeneira (U of A), an unidentified handler & Joanne Kidd (Mellon Farms).

The Worker Protection Standard (WPS) and respirators

By: Yuma ESD Staff

The latest update to WPS in 2015 has aligned with most of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) provisions for using respirators.

The revision requires those who mix, load and apply pesticides, to have a medical evaluation and annual fit-tests for each type of respirator required by the pesticide's label and annual training regarding the proper use of said respirator(s).

A respirator is a personal protective device that is worn on the face, that covers at least the nose and mouth, and is used to reduce the wearer's risk of inhaling hazardous airborne particles (including dust particles and infectious agents), gases or vapors.

The many types of respirators available include Particulate Respirators, which filter out airborne particles; "Gas Masks," which filter out chemicals and gases; Airline Respirators, which

use compressed air from a remote source; and Self-contained Breathing Apparatus, which include their own air supply.

To find whether a pesticide requires a respirator to mix, load or apply, see the PPE requirements listed in the Precautionary Statement section.

For more information about WPS regulations regarding the required use of respirators, see:

www.pesticideresources.org/wps/htc/htcmanual.pdf



Featured inspection: *Worker Protection Standard (WPS)*

By: Alex Bellotti, Yuma ESD

One of the joys of my job is actually being out in the field. It's so nice to get out of the office, get some sun, drive to exotic locales such as Wellton, Roll and Tacna. These are some of the main winter vegetable producing areas in the state. During the winter months these and other towns in this area are hustling and bustling with agricultural activity. I see thousands of people working for dozens of different labor contractors who have to comply with WPS. It provides one with an opportunity to meet many people, some from other countries, some local.

My job concerning these labor contractors is to make sure they are following WPS safe practices to prevent employees from being exposed to dangerous levels of pesticides.

During a WPS inspection I seek answers to the following questions:

Are employees trained in how to protect themselves and their family from pesticide residues which end up on their clothes after a day of work?

Does the company provide adequate facilities for them to wash up before going to the restroom or taking a lunch break?

Is the labor contractor complying with regulations that require the display of pesticide safety information, such as posters and pesticide application information?

These are some of the details I find out during a typical Worker Protection Standards inspection on a labor contractor's crews.

It's really nice when I come across a crew whose employer takes pesticide safety seriously. But it's even nicer when I come across workers who are on the same page as their employers. Who have taken to heart the safety information that Jenny Weber, Ernie Lugo, Roberto Rios and myself teach every time we conduct a Train The Trainer course.



A typical labor contractor's decontamination unit towed behind a bus. Pesticide Safety posters added in view of the hand wash station to comply with recently enacted EPA requirements.



A thinning crew eager to show me they all had their training verification cards. A+

In our Train The Trainer class, AZDA certifies an individual to train other people about pesticide safety. Usually the trainers are employees of the same

company who will impart their knowledge to co-workers.

After they conduct a training they're required to give their trainees a training verification card which is good for a year and to keep documentation about the trainings they've conducted.

During an inspection I will ask workers if they have their pesticide safety training verification card on their person. About 50% of the time, workers claim they left their cards at home, or lost it, or it was in their wallet when it got stolen. This is usually not an issue as long as I have written proof from the company trainer that the employee was trained and the training was conducted within a year. Regardless of whether they have their training verification cards or not, I will ask employees questions pertaining to pesticide safety. For the most part, people answer the questions I pose to my satisfaction. Some of them have been doing the work long enough that they've received the training many times over.

Once in a long while I come across a crew where most of the workers have their cards and they're only too eager to show the state guy they're on the up and up. These are the inspections I like the most because it gives me the feeling that what we do isn't for naught. That what we teach doesn't fall on deaf ears and in our own way, we're making a positive impact on someone and their family.



Jack Peterson, Assoc. Dir.

From the AZDA Associate Director for ESD

Thanks for taking the time to read our first quarterly newsletter. We hope that you find it to be interesting and helpful to better understand some of the regulations we are responsible for. Please feel free to share this newsletter with others. If you are one of our licensees we will be

publishing the newsletter quarterly and you will receive a copy...as long as we have your correct email. Don't forget you can go in and update your own information online. We are open to suggestions or if you have an interesting story, please let us know. Items to come in future editions: more compliance

related stories, changes occurring relating to your certification driven by changes at the federal level and other timely topics of interest.

Be safe and continue helping to provide the world's most abundant and safe food supply.