

# EPA's Worker Protection Changes To Take Effect In January 2017



The EPA has made a significant number of changes to the Worker Protection Standard (WPS)<sup>[1]</sup> that were put into effect in 1992. The new changes require growers of agricultural crops, including greenhouses and nurseries, to be compliant starting Jan. 2, 2017.

A new report on Michigan State University (MSU) Extension's website<sup>[2]</sup> outlines some of these changes in the new rules, including:

- Worker training
- Hazard communication
- Notification of treated areas
- Minimum age for handlers and early entry workers
- Entry restrictions during applications for outdoor production
- Handler suspends application in certain situations
- Exemptions and exceptions
- Basic pesticide safety information
- Personal protective equipment
- Decontamination supplies
- Emergency assistance
- Definitions of "family," "enclosed space production" and "employ"

To help growers learn more about how the changes will affect them, MSU Extension is offering EPA WPS Outreach Sessions<sup>[3]</sup> throughout Michigan in January 2017. These sessions will take place Jan. 10 in Clarksville, Jan. 17 in Traverse City, Jan. 24 in Benton Harbor, and Jan. 31 in New Era.

The Pesticide Educational Resources Collaborative<sup>[4]</sup> also has some excellent written materials to help growers comply with the changes, including checklists to be sure you have covered all the changes, an employee training video for worker training, and the “How to Comply With the 2015 Revised Worker Protection Standard For Agricultural Pesticides” manual<sup>[5]</sup>. The “How to Comply” manual includes:

- Details to help you determine if the WPS requirements apply to you
- Information on how to comply with the WPS requirements, including exemptions, exceptions, restrictions, options, and examples
- A “Quick Reference Guide,” which is a list of the basic requirements (excluding exemptions, exceptions, etc.)
- New or revised definitions that may affect your WPS responsibilities
- Explanations to help you better understand the WPS requirements and how they may apply to you.

### Links

1. <http://www.greenhousegrower.com/business-management/epa-department-of-labor-announce-updated-agriculture-worker-protection-standards/>
2. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/be\\_aware\\_of\\_changes\\_to\\_epas\\_worker\\_protection\\_standard\\_january\\_2017](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/be_aware_of_changes_to_epas_worker_protection_standard_january_2017)
3. <https://events.anr.msu.edu/event.cfm?eventID=45AB51972600918B>
4. <http://pesticideresources.org/index.html>
5. <http://pesticideresources.org/wps/htc/index.html>

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