



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
EXTENSION

MSU DAWG TRACKS

So many rules and regulations to keep up with. Believe me, it can all get very confusing! Years ago, I got a fortune cookie that had a message that actually made sense, so I taped beside my desk. It reads, “Get to the point and keep it clear and simple” ... If you work with pesticides – moving them around in the storage room, applying them after someone else mixed, the person mixing them up for application, or even using them at home – **READ THE LABEL.**

Do not get safety data sheets (SDS) and labels confused. While they relay similar information, and both important, they are somewhat different. SDS are more standardized and generalized following the Globally Harmonized System. Labels give specific details on what personal protective equipment (PPE) to wear and how to specifically mix, use, and dispose of the pesticide. **So, if you use pesticides and want to “get to the point”, look on the container, unfold, and read the label.**

To “keep it clear and simple”, there are **3 label items a user should focus on:**

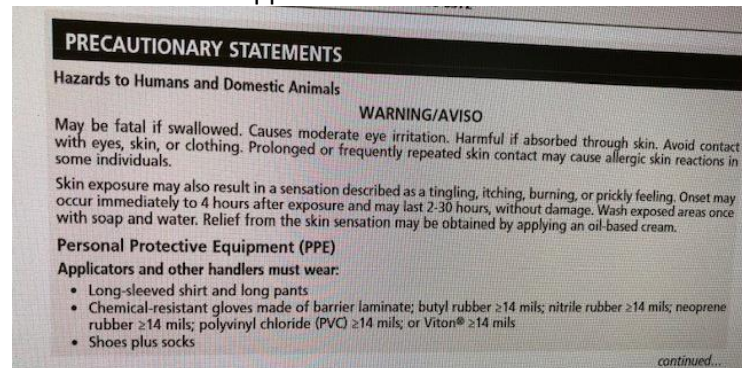
1. Does it have skull & crossbones? If so, it’s in the highest toxicity category. You can’t skip on your PPE use, and you must tell others that might come into the area you are using it. This symbol will be on the very front. It identifies pesticide products that are determined to be in Toxicity Category I based on at least one of the following acute toxicity studies: acute oral, acute dermal, or acute inhalation.



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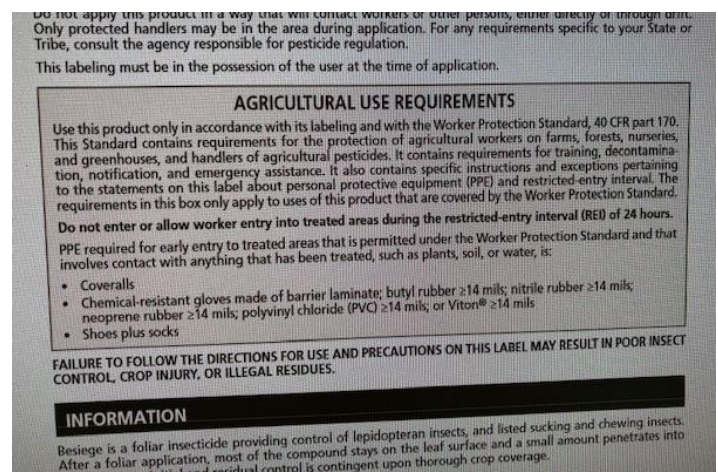
2. What PPE is needed?

Within the first few sections on the label, there is an area **PRECAUTIONARY STATEMENTS**, this will tell you the exact PPE to wear as an applicator or other handler.



3. How long to keep other people/animals away and what PPE to wear if have to go in that area before that time frame is over?

Look at the **AGRICULTURAL USE REQUIREMENTS**. It is always in a boxed area of the label and refers to the requirements of the Worker Protection Standard (WPS) which includes the time to wait before going back into a sprayed area (REI - restricted entry interval).



Sources:

<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-labels>
<https://pesticidestewardship.org/homeowner/how-to-read-the-label/>