

DELIVERING A UNIQUE APPROACH TO PESTICIDE SAFETY TRAINING ACROSS MULTI PROGRAMATIC AUDIENCES

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SITUATION

The Center for Disease Control and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health track the number of reported acute pesticide-related illnesses by state. From 1998-2011 in Florida, of the reported cases, only 2% were wearing safety protection during the accident. These two situations clearly show the need for personal safety training related to pesticide and fertilizer applications.



OBJECTIVES

To increase knowledge about pesticide residues and the importance of personal protective equipment (PPE), and encourage a behavior change to begin wearing PPE if they were not already wearing it correctly.



METHODS

This program involves an instructional media presentation and hands-on activities or scenarios. The original workshop that was created in 2015 was adapted from the "Fluorescent Tracer Manual" from Washington State. Since then, the authors have created their own scenarios and adapted the hands-on training to make it their own and also appropriate for their clientele. This training was developed as either a hands-on group activity or the activities can be used during the training module. It has been modified to accommodate agriculture groups and pest control professional applicators. The presentation has been designed to be flexible and can range from thirty minutes to two hours, depending on the audience need.



MPACTS

When asked how often the applicator wore their personal protective equipment (PPE) correctly, 4% (2 of 50) said never, 10% (5 of 50) said sometimes; 49% said all the time (40 of 82) and 38% said most of the time (31 of 82). When asked if they always read the label before applying a product, 78% (25 of 32) said they always read the label before applying a product; 21% said they sometimes read the label (7 of 32). By educating applicators on the importance of wearing personal protective equipment, potential savings may occur from a health standpoint and from fines avoided. Most fines are between \$500 and \$1000. This totals a potential savings of \$17,000 (34 X \$500) for the individuals who said they would be more mindful of or change how they wore safety equipment during a follow-up or exit survey.