

Agrichemicals

WPS – Closed Systems



Ag Center

Helping Agriculture Comply with
Environmental Requirements

F O C U S O N

Closed Systems

The Agricultural Worker Protection Standard (WPS) is a regulation issued by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 1992 and amended in 1995. It covers pesticides that are used in the production of agricultural plants on farms, forests, nurseries, and greenhouses. The WPS requires you to take steps to reduce the risk of pesticide-related illness and injury if you (1) use such pesticides, or (2) employ workers or pesticide handlers who are exposed to such pesticides.

This fact sheet will help you understand how to comply with WPS requirements for protecting people from pesticide exposure when they are using a “closed system” for mixing, loading, or application.

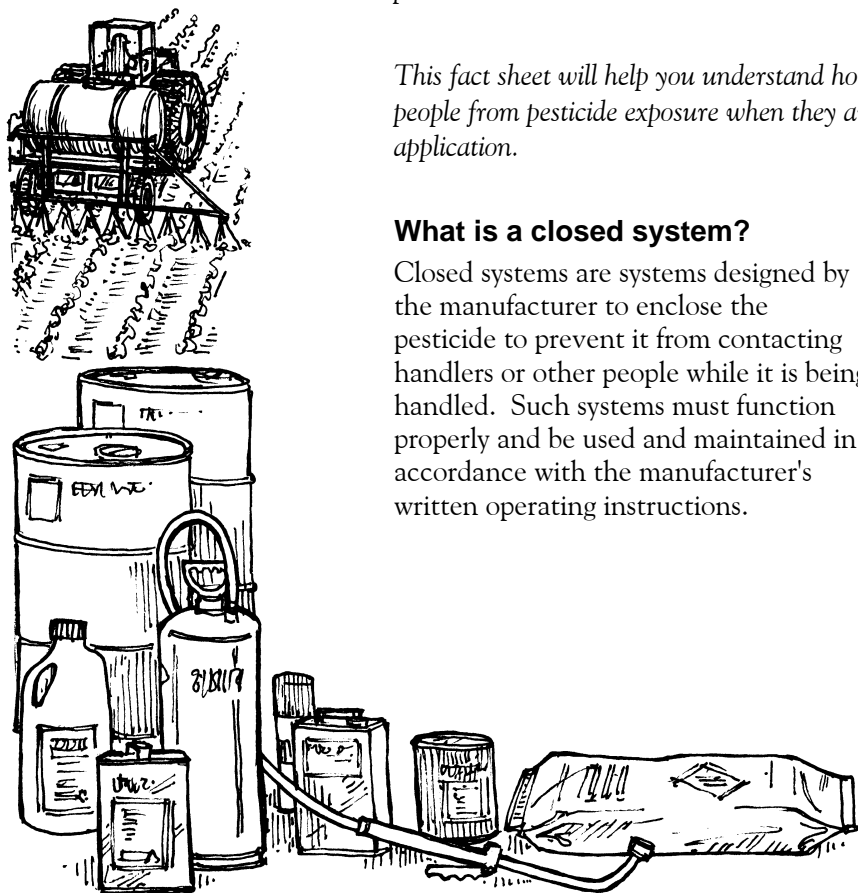
What is a closed system?

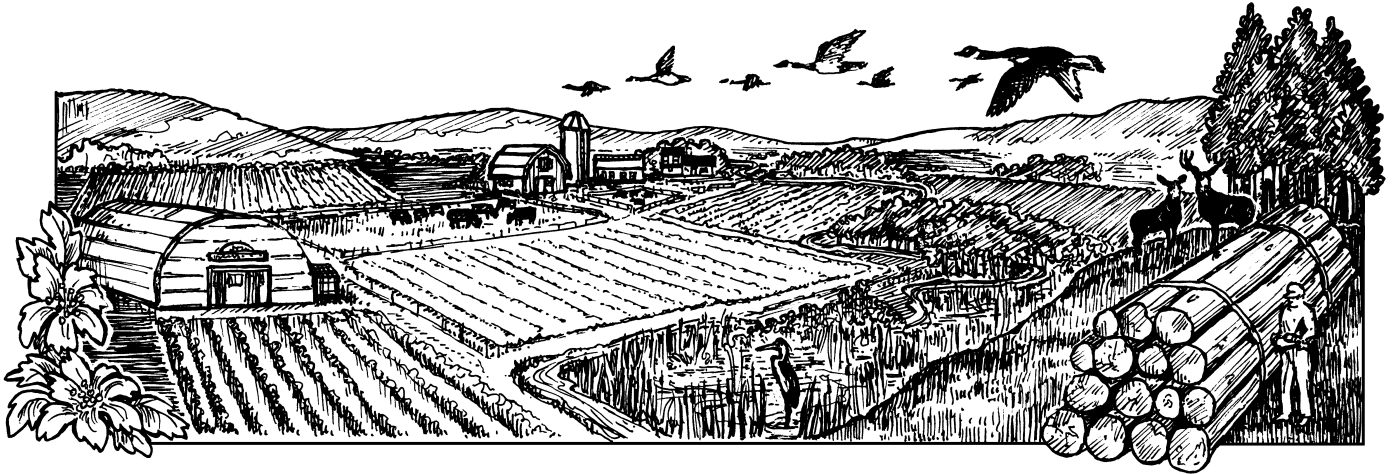
Closed systems are systems designed by the manufacturer to enclose the pesticide to prevent it from contacting handlers or other people while it is being handled. Such systems must function properly and be used and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's written operating instructions.

Examples of closed systems

Examples of closed systems include:

- closed mixing/loading systems,
- closed application systems designed to incorporate pesticides into soil, but only if the system does not allow any pesticide contact with the air throughout the entire application process,
- water-soluble bags while the bag is intact.





These exceptions to PPE are allowed unless expressly prohibited by product labeling.

PPE can be reduced

You may allow handlers to omit *some* of the personal protective equipment (PPE) listed on the pesticide labeling for a handling task if the handlers are using a closed system.

Even when reduced PPE is permitted to be worn during a task, handlers must be provided all PPE required by the pesticide labeling for that task and have it immediately available for use in an emergency.

PPE for mixing or loading

When using a closed system to mix or load pesticides with the signal word "DANGER" or "WARNING," handlers need not wear all the PPE listed on the pesticide labeling, but must wear at least:

- long-sleeved shirt and long pants, shoes and socks,
- a chemical-resistant apron, and
- protective gloves specified on the pesticide labeling for mixing, loading, and other handling tasks.

When using a closed system to mix or load pesticides with the signal word "CAUTION," handlers need not wear

all the PPE listed on the pesticide labeling, but must wear at least:

- long-sleeved shirt and long pants, and shoes and socks.

PPE for other handling tasks

When using a closed system to do handling tasks other than mixing and loading with ANY pesticide, handlers need not wear all of the PPE listed on the pesticide labeling, but must wear at least:

- long-sleeved shirt and long pants, and shoes and socks.

Such closed systems might include closed application systems designed to incorporate pesticides into soil, but only if the system does not allow any pesticide contact with the air throughout the entire application process.

Eye protection

When using a closed system that operates under pressure, handlers may wear the reduced PPE specified above, but must add protective eyewear.

*The Ag Center
welcomes comments
on this document
and its other
services.*

For more information

You can get more facts about compliance by calling the Ag Center's toll-free number. Materials can be sent to you by fax or mail, or you can talk to an Ag Center representative. For a list of all publications available from the Ag Center, request document number 10001, "Ag Center Publications."

National Agriculture Compliance Assistance Center

901 N. 5th Street
Kansas City, KS 66101

Toll-free: 1-888-663-2155
Internet: www.epa.gov/agriculture
Fax: 913-551-7270



United States Environmental
Protection Agency
Washington, DC 20460