Washing Pesticide Contaminated Clothing

As a field worker, you may be exposed to pesticides every day. The crops you work with may be treated with pesticides.

Pesticides can build up on your work clothes. They may cause skin irritations and illnesses.

Try to avoid pesticide buildup on your clothes and reduce your skin’s exposure.

Follow these safety measures:
• Wash your work clothes as often as possible.
• Place your work clothes in a separate laundry basket.
• Take a shower every day after work.
• Greet your children or spouse only after you have showered. This protects them from contamination.

Washing Clothes
• Wash work clothes separately from the family laundry. Put a light load of clothing into the washing machine.
• Set the washing machine on hot water.
• Set it on the largest and longest water cycle possible.
• Use a heavy duty liquid detergent.

After Washing
• Hang the clothes on a clothesline to dry. Sunlight helps get rid of any remaining chemicals.
• Be sure to dry clothes completely.

Pesticides with the signal word “Danger” or “Warning” require special care. If you handle, apply or work with these pesticides you must wear protective clothing. This second layer of clothing is called Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). The PPE is provided and cleaned by your employer. This clothing must not be taken home!

California regulation makes the employer responsible for providing and cleaning the PPE and workclothes of farmworkers who work with these pesticides. The workclothes are coveralls or long pants and long-sleeved shirt.