

Worker Protection Standard Trainings (WPS) across Montana

Cecil Tharp (MSU Pesticide Education Specialist)

WPS is an EPA regulation designed to protect agricultural workers and handlers. It contains requirements for protective equipment, restricted-entry intervals (REI) following pesticide applications, safety training, and other elements to prevent injury from pesticides. Individuals must follow WPS requirements if a pesticide application is for the purpose of managing an agricultural commodity on an agricultural site and the pesticide has an agricultural use requirements box. Individuals meeting these conditions should pay special attention to the new 2015 WPS requirements. This includes, among many others, annual worker / handler training, the application exclusion zone (AEZ) and updated posting and re-entry interval requirements. Most of the revised WPS requirements became effective on January 2, 2017. All applicators meeting the definition of WPS (defined above) must meet some of the WPS requirements, however if the owner has workers/handlers that are not family members they must meet the expanded WPS requirements that can be more difficult to understand. For more information on WPS see the Montana State University (MSU) website at [‘MSU WPS’](#).

In an effort to update the agricultural community, the MSU Pesticide Education Program (PEP) & Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA) are coordinating three regional WPS trainings across Montana. Trainings are offered in Glasgow on May 1st, Great Falls on May 2nd, and Kalispell on May 3rd, 2018. Private applicator credits will be offered, however pre-registration is mandatory. These half day programs are designed to deliver WPS guidance to owners of agricultural establishments, while training workers and/or handlers according to WPS standards:

- Pesticide handlers: those who mix, load, or apply agricultural pesticides; clean or repair pesticide application equipment; or assist with the application of pesticides.
- Agricultural workers: those who perform tasks related to growing and harvesting plants on an agricultural site.

See program details:

Date	Host	Location	Info	Fee	Registration
5/01/18	MSU Valley County Extension & MSU PEP	Glasgow Cottonwood Inn 54250 US - 2	Agenda	\$10	Online 994-5178 amy.bowser@montana.edu
5/02/18	MSU Cascade County Extension & MSU PEP	Great Falls MT ExpoPark's Paddock Club 400 3 rd St NW	Agenda	\$10	Online 994-5178 amy.bowser@montana.edu
5/03/18	MSU Flathead County Extension & PEP	Kalispell Hampton Inn 1140 Hwy. 2 W	Agenda	\$10	Online 994-5178 amy.bowser@montana.edu

MSU and MDA personnel speaking at these events include Dr. Cecil Tharp (MSU Pesticide Education Specialist), Amy Bowser (MSU Pesticide Education Technician), Jolene Warnke-Roszel (Commercial Training Coordinator) Theresa Schrum (MDA District 2 Agent) and Kima Caddell (MDA District 7 Agent).

WPS information can be found on the [EPA website](#) or the [MSU PEP website](#). WPS manuals titled “*How to Comply with the 2015 Revised Worker Protection Standard*” are available for free from the Montana Department of Agriculture (406-444-3732). All other WPS resources can be found on the [PERC website](#). Contact Amy Bowser, MSU Pesticide Education Technician (406-994-5178; amy.bowser@montana.edu) regarding WPS trainings or contact Cecil Tharp, MSU Pesticide Education Specialist (406-994-5067; ctharp@montana.edu) with other pesticide education questions.