

Safety Note #96

## ATV PESTICIDE SPRAYER SAFETY



Photograph Courtesy of Hopland REC

All-terrain vehicles (ATVs) are frequently outfitted with pesticide spraying equipment in order to apply pesticides over relatively large and/or inaccessible areas. According to information available from the Department of Pesticide Regulation, approximately 250 California workers that handle or apply pesticides were injured or became ill during 2003. In addition, a total of 135,000 people were treated in hospitals for ATV injuries during 2003. Safe use of an ATV pesticide sprayer encompasses awareness of how to properly operate an ATV and handle and apply

pesticides, including appropriate selection and use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

### Pre-Use Activities

- Prior to first use, employees assigned pesticide application tasks requiring the use of an ATV shall receive instructions on safe operation of the vehicle and pesticide application equipment, including descriptions of specific property hazards/obstacles such as rocks, stumps, and holes and vehicle weight carrying/towing limits.
- Thoroughly review and understand information provided in the ATV operator's manual with particular attention given to descriptions of safety procedures.
- Before using, always inspect the ATV and pesticide application equipment for damage or disrepair.
- If an ATV pesticide sprayer fails the pre-use inspection, notify your supervisor and remove the vehicle from service by attaching a red tag that states "DO NOT USE." Complete red tag with appropriate information.

### Operating Requirements

- ATV sprayer operators are required to wear approved helmets and PPE appropriate for the pesticide being applied, including eye protection, respirator, chemical-resistant gloves, and coveralls or chemical-resistant clothing.
- Follow instructions on the pesticide label when mixing pesticides for use in an ATV sprayer.
- ATV pesticide sprayer operating speeds shall be safe for the prevailing weather and terrain conditions and recommended pesticide application rates.
- When operating an ATV pesticide sprayer, particular attention must be paid to stability due to the additional weight of the fluids in the pesticide tank. More specifically, extra care must be taken when ATV pesticide sprayers traverse uneven or sloping ground.
- The pesticide tank, hoses, regulator, and nozzles shall be rinsed thoroughly after each use.
- Rinsate and pesticide containers shall be disposed of properly as described in the Department of Pesticide Regulation Pesticide Safety Information sheet A-2.

***Additional information about safe practices when applying pesticides is given in Safety Notes #7, #67, and #73 and Pesticide Safety Information sheets A-1 through A-5 and A-7 through A-11. Likewise, Safety Note #30 provides additional information about safely operating an ATV.***