

California's Pesticide Use Reporting (PUR)

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California regulations require that all agricultural pesticide use and some non-agricultural uses be reported to the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR). The data are stored in the Pesticide Use Reporting (PUR) database. Since 1990, there has been an average of 2.5 million records per year in the PUR. The PUR contains two types of records: applications in production agriculture and all other uses by commercial pest control businesses, which include postharvest and non-agricultural applications. Each production agricultural record represents a single application and includes the amount and name of pesticide applied, date and location of the application, crop or site treated, area treated, acres planted, application method, grower ID, and field ID. The second type of record represents the total use of a pesticide product by a company on each site treated in each county during each month.

Each year's data is available in a summary report giving use in pounds of active ingredient (AI) and acres treated by crop and pesticide active ingredient. To get more specific or detail information there are several interactive web sites (calpip.cdpr.ca.gov/main.cfm, www.pesticideinfo.org, and www.ehib.org/page.jsp?page_key=135),. The full database is available in text format on DPR's ftp site ([/pestreg.cdpr.ca.gov/pub/outgoing/pur_archives/](ftp://pestreg.cdpr.ca.gov/pub/outgoing/pur_archives/)).

The data is extensively checked for errors, but errors, of course, still exist. Two common errors are incorrect units of measure and product registration number. When doing an analysis it is important to check for possible errors, especially rates of use because even one or two big errors can have a huge effect on results. It is also important to read the documentation since some of the meaning of some the database field names are not obvious.

The PUR is used by many different individuals and organizations for a wide range of purposes. Pesticide use reports help DPR estimate dietary risk and ensure compliance with clean air laws and ground water regulations. Site-specific use report data, combined with geographic data on endangered species habitats, help County Agricultural Commissioners resolve potential pesticide use conflicts. DPR also uses the data to analyze how, when and where pesticides are used on different crops. Reduced-risk pest management alternatives can then be developed considering the different regions of the State and the commodities grown in these regions.