

Chemical Resistant Glove Selection. Lisa A. Blecker, Pesticide Safety Education Program Coordinator, University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources Statewide IPM Program, 2801 Second Street #157, Davis, CA 95618-7774, lblecker@ucanr.edu

Chemical resistant gloves are commonly used personal protective equipment (PPE) worn by pesticide handlers – those who mix, load and apply pesticides. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) Chemical Resistance Category Selection Chart for Gloves is used to determine the type of gloves to be listed on pesticide labels, based on glove material resistance to solvents used in pesticide formulations. Agricultural pesticide product labels are required to reference the different glove materials on labels, and they do so either by specifying by name (e.g., nitrile, butyl, etc.) or by code (A through H). California regulations require employees to wear chemical resistant gloves for most pesticide handling tasks, even if the label does not require them. The consequences of not wearing gloves and other required PPE can be great. For example, a query of the California Pesticide Illness surveillance Program (PISP) database from 1992-2011 showed that 33% of reported handler pesticide illnesses that involved skin or systemic symptoms corresponded to a failure to wear required PPE. Participants in this session were asked to identify 10 different gloves – each made of one of the eight resistant materials. We displayed photos of each glove, in addition to distributing example gloves to some participants. The majority of the gloves were miss-identified. This activity highlighted some of the impediments to selecting and wearing the appropriate chemical-resistant gloves, which include: unclear or missing pesticide label statements, difficulty in distinguishing among different glove materials, and lack of identifying information on the actual gloves. Participants were instructed how to use the Glove Category Selection Key (California Department of Pesticide Regulation) to better understand label statements, and were shown how to use product information from glove distributors to make more informed decisions. Participants were reminded to keep themselves safe from pesticide exposure by following these practices: wear chemical resistant gloves for all handling activities; consult the label and California requirements for the appropriate glove material, and check manufacturers' specifications for thickness, uses, lining type, and other details that may affect the safety of the glove.