

November 2024

## Restricted entry intervals for pesticides

This guidance outlines what a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) is required to do if they have management or control of an area where a pesticide with a restricted entry interval (REI) has been applied.

### What is an REI?

An REI is the length of time people are not allowed in an area where a pesticide has been applied unless they are wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). This protects workers and others from being exposed to harmful levels of pesticides through contact with skin or inhalation.

### How to tell if a pesticide has an REI

REIs are not needed for all pesticides. If an REI has been set for a pesticide, this should be stated on its product label and safety data sheet. You can also check WorkSafe's webpage [Restricted entry intervals for pesticides](#)

### Length of time for an REI

As pesticides vary widely in toxicity, REIs will have different lengths of time. The REI for a pesticide can also be different between crops because the REI is determined by:

- the type of foliage the pesticide is applied to
- the type of activity carried out
- the amount of contact or exposure a person may have with the treated foliage or soil after application.

For example, the REI for a pesticide could be 10 days when used on apples and 6 days when used on strawberries.

REIs can only be set for crops specified on the label. For off-label uses, you need to carry out your own risk assessment considering the application rate, type of crop and the factors described below.

**Note:** If a pesticide does not have an REI, it is good practice for a person without PPE to wait until the residue is dry before they enter an application area.

## What you are required to do

You, as the PCBU with management or control of an area where a pesticide with an REI is being applied, must make sure:

- no one enters an application area until the end of the REI unless they are wearing appropriate PPE
- signs are put up for an indoor application area such as a greenhouse.

## PPE for entry during REI

People can be exposed to a pesticide during an REI by:

- skin contacting sprayed foliage or soil
- breathing in spray droplets or vapourised residues.

You must make sure people who enter an application area during an REI use appropriate PPE.

You must provide the PPE unless it is provided by another PCBU, or the person chooses to provide their own PPE for reasons of comfort or convenience, and you are satisfied the PPE is appropriate.

You must provide the person with information and training on how to correctly wear or use the PPE, and how to store and maintain the PPE.

## What is appropriate PPE?

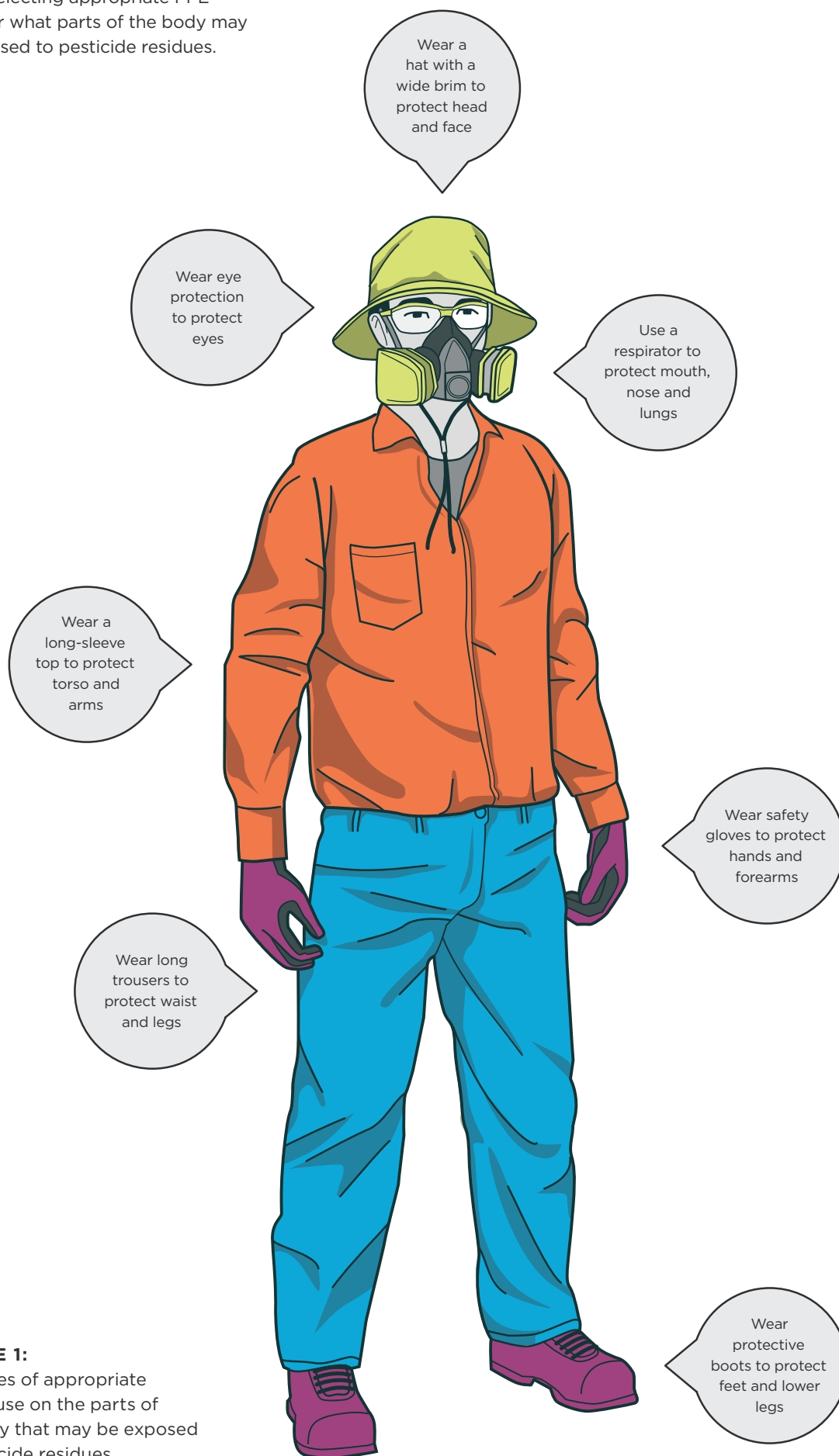
The appropriate PPE a person should wear or use in an application area during an REI will depend on the type of activity they will carry out and their potential exposure to pesticide residues. Different activities in the same application area may require different PPE.

Consider the factors in Table 1 to help you determine the potential exposure a person may have to pesticide residues.

FACTORS THAT AFFECT POTENTIAL EXPOSURE	QUESTIONS TO ASK
Type of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Will the person come into contact with the pesticide residue?</li> <li>- Will the person be at risk of inhaling pesticide dust or vapours?</li> </ul>
Time since spraying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is dried residue likely to be disturbed and create an inhalation risk?</li> <li>- Is the foliage still wet?</li> <li>- Could there still be aerosols in the air?</li> </ul>
Amount of exposure time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Will the person be spending lots of time moving in or through the application area?</li> </ul>
Height of the crop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Will the person be reaching up into foliage? Is foliage near the head of the person?</li> </ul>
Structure of crop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What parts of the body are likely to contact pesticide residue because of the way the crop is arranged?</li> </ul>
Amount of foliage present and its density	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Will workers need to reach their arms into foliage?</li> </ul>
Whether the crop is indoors or outdoors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How ventilated is the application area?</li> </ul>

**TABLE 1:** Factors that can affect potential exposure

When selecting appropriate PPE consider what parts of the body may be exposed to pesticide residues.



**FIGURE 1:**  
Examples of appropriate PPE to use on the parts of the body that may be exposed to pesticide residues

Depending on the level of exposure, appropriate PPE for entry during an REI may include one or more items from Table 2.

TYPE OF PPE	HOW PPE PROTECTS PERSON
Hat with a wide brim, a visor or face net	Reduces the risk of the head and face being exposed to the pesticide.
Eye protection (for example, goggles or a face shield)	Reduces the risk of the eyes being exposed to the pesticide.
Respirator or dust mask	Reduces the risk of inhalation of pesticide vapours or dust through the mouth and nose.
Safety gloves	Reduces the risk of hands and forearms from contact with the pesticide and to minimise risk of rubbing eyes.
Long-sleeve top or other protective clothing (for example, coveralls, head and neck cover)	Reduces the risk of the torso and arms from contact with the pesticide.
Long trousers or other protective clothing (for example, coveralls)	Reduces the risk of the waist and legs from contact with the pesticide.
Protective boots or other protective footwear	Reduces the risk of the feet and lower legs from contact with the pesticide.

**TABLE 2:**  
Examples of PPE that may be appropriate for entry during an REI

### Selecting PPE for different activities carried out during REI

People should wear PPE that covers hands, legs and feet (at minimum) for most activities carried out in application areas during an REI.



**FIGURE 2:**  
PPE for hands, legs and feet

Covering the head, torso, and arms (including shoulders) is usually required for activities that involve bending or reaching into plants, or crops above waist height.

### Cleaning PPE

PPE and work clothing that has been exposed to pesticides will need to be replaced or cleaned after use. PPE and work clothing should be washed separately from other items.

Cleaning PPE should be carried out by someone with the right training and knowledge to do it properly and thoroughly.

For more information about PPE, see WorkSafe's webpage [Personal protective equipment \(PPE\)](#)



**FIGURE 3:** PPE for head, torso and arms

## Signage

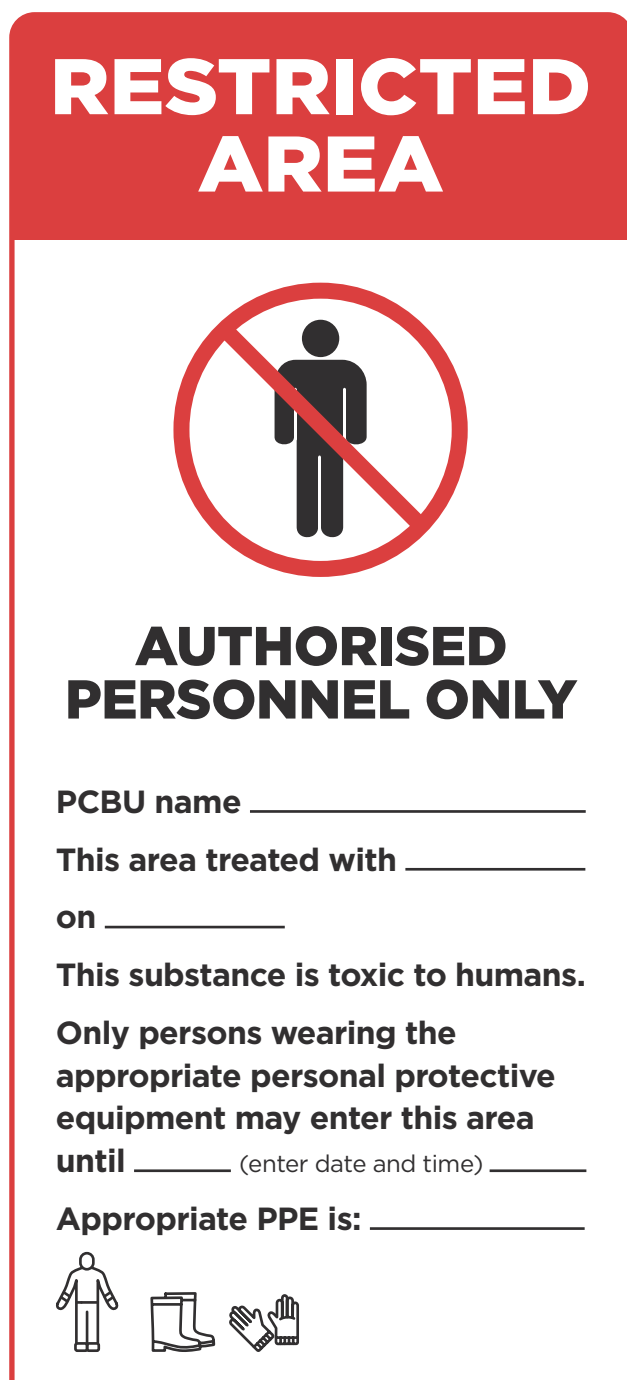
### Signs for indoor application areas

If the application area is indoors you must:

- put signs up outside the application area, at every routine point of entry into the area from the start of the application until the end of the application or the end of the REI, whichever is the later
- remove the signs within 72 hours of the end of the application or the end of the REI, whichever is the later.

### Signs for outdoor application areas

For an outdoor application area there is no regulatory requirement to have signs. However, you may choose to make people aware that an REI is in place by putting up signs or sending out an electronic notification.



**FIGURE 4:** Example of sign for indoor application area