 **Working Safely on Pesticide Application Equipment**

Pesticide application equipment should be assumed to be contaminated with pesticide residues no matter how well it has been cleaned. Because of this it is important for people who work on this equipment to know how to protect themselves from pesticide exposure.

Following the completion of a pesticide application and before allowing anyone to repair, clean, or adjust any equipment used for mixing, loading, or applying pesticides, all pesticide residue must be removed from the equipment. This task should ideally be performed by the applicator who performed the pesticide application wearing the label required personal protective equipment for making an application, as well as a chemical-resistant apron. Protective eyewear should be warn to protect against splashes, even if the label does not require it for the pesticide application.

The application equipment should be triple-rinsed and the outside of the tank as well as nozzles should be cleaned. Pay particular attention to these areas:

• Sprayer surfaces or components where buildup of dried pesticides may occur;

• Sumps and pumps on the sprayer; and

• Around irregular surfaces on the sprayer, around baffles, and mixing units.

At Penn State facilities covered by the Worker Protection Standard (WPS), the person servicing the pesticide application equipment must be either a certified pesticide applicator or a WPS trained handler. While this is not required at a non-WPS facility, it is recommended. In all cases, including if the person repairing, cleaning, or adjusting the equipment is not an employee, then they must be informed that:

* The equipment is contaminated with pesticides,
* That it may be harmful to be exposed to pesticides, and
* The correct way to handle such equipment.

The proper PPE must be worn. At a minimum this should include a chemical resistant apron, safety glasses or goggles, and chemical resistant gloves. If the types of pesticides used in the equipment are not known, barrier laminate provide the best protection, however these gloves are thin and require a more heavy duty glove over them to prevent tears. The outer gloves must not be used for any other purpose, and if re-used must have a chemical-resistant glove liner.

When working on this equipment, be prepared for accidental exposure to substances which may be in hoses, drain lines or pumps. Have an emergency eyewash kit nearby as well as decontamination supplies such as soap, a clean towel, a clean change of clothes and an adequate supply of clean water which can be used for washing.

The importance of personal hygiene practices, such as hand washing, removing contaminated clothing, and showering after work to reduce pesticide exposure must be emphasized. Anyone working on contaminated pesticide equipment should wash hands before eating, drinking, smoking, touching eyes or using the toilet. They should remove pesticide-contaminated clothes immediately following work and wash them separately from other clothing.