

GUIDELINES FOR THE PROTECTION OF HONEYBEES FROM INSECTICIDE APPLICATIONS

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Produced by the
Montana
Department of Agriculture

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Guidelines for the Protection of Honeybees from Insecticide Applications

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The Department of Agriculture recognizes that the pollination, honey and wax production provided by commercial honeybees are beneficial to agriculture and the environment. The department also recognizes the benefits of using insecticides to control or reduce insect pests that adversely affect crop production. Loss of honeybees from pesticide applications results in a reduction in honey production and pollination of crops. A reduction in crop production may also result if applications of insecticides to control insect pests are delayed or prohibited. Consideration, communication, common sense and cooperation are the keys to minimizing pesticide damage to commercial bees.

The department has established the following guidelines, in cooperation with the agricultural industry, to assist in minimizing damage to honeybees and other pollinators while recognizing the need to protect producer's crops from pests. These guidelines are non-regulatory and are not intended to replace or preempt any applicable rules, statutes, or pesticide label requirements.

GUIDELINES FOR PESTICIDE APPLICATORS

Observe all pesticide label directions and adhere to the requirements of the Montana Pesticide Act (Sections 80-8-101 through 121, Montana Code Annotated) and associated Administrative Rules of Montana (Administrative Rules of Montana 4.10.101 through 209).

- For assistance in determining the best management practices to use in your situation, consult your local extension agent, Montana State University specialist, crop consultant, or chemical company representative.

Know your service area:

- Locate any apiary sites within 1½ miles of the area to be treated.
- Periodically, contact beekeepers in your area to familiarize yourself with their operations. Obtain names, addresses, telephone numbers and a map of apiary sites if possible. Make sure you know where the apiaries are located in relation to the intended treatment area.
- The applicator should examine the treatment area prior to any chemical application to determine if commercial bees are using the area and evaluate the life stage of plants (blooming crops and weeds).
- When economically feasible, use insecticides that are less hazardous to bees.
- When possible, apply insecticides at appropriate times of the day to avoid the actively foraging bees.
- Applicators should also avoid applying insecticides when temperatures are expected to be low or humidity is expected to be high following treatment. Residues can remain toxic to bees for a much longer time during periods of low temperature or conditions of high humidity.

Check the Natural Resource Information System (NRIS) Website:

- Use the Montana Natural Resource Information System website, located at <http://maps2.nris.mt.gov/mapper/county.html>, to check for apiary sites in the area you intend to spray. Keep in mind that this website shows the locations of commercial apiaries only. **Landowner and hobbyist apiaries are not shown on the map.** After accessing the website, click on the county of interest. Select "Biological data" from the tabs in the middle of the page. Click on "Registered commercial apiaries." On the right side of the screen, you can select "identify"

next to “registered commercial apiary”, then click on triangles of interest to get

- the legal description of the site. **The map is updated on a regular basis, but should not be assumed to show all apiaries located near a treatment area.**
- Additional contact information on agricultural organizations can be accessed at the Montana Department of Agriculture website at <http://agr.mt.gov/> under references, or by calling 406-444-3144.

Communication:

- The key to the success of these guidelines is communication between applicators and commercial beekeepers. Contact should be made with the beekeeper at least 48 hours prior to the application of insecticides. This allows the beekeeper the opportunity to remove or protect bees when an apiary is within 1½ miles of the area to be treated.
- Inform the beekeeper about the insecticides that will be used in the application and provide a copy of the label whenever possible.
- Whenever possible, provide the exact location and the approximate time of application.

GUIDELINES FOR BEEKEEPERS

All apiary sites must be registered with the Montana Department of Agriculture per 80-6-102(1), Montana Code Annotated and associated Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM 4.12.101 through 111).

- Mark apiaries legibly with your name, address, phone number and, if possible, the landowner's name. This information should be legible at a safe distance.
- Notify lessors and landowners of the presence and location of all apiaries, and the date hives were placed on land leased or owned by the same. Provide them with your address and phone numbers.
- When possible, choose apiary sites that are relatively isolated from potential insecticide applications and drift.
- Contact producers within a 1½ mile radius of the apiary. Give each producer your name, address, phone numbers, and a copy of this guide.
- Learn about local insect pest problems and control programs. Be familiar with various pesticides that might be used on the crops around your bees, and their potential effects on honeybees.
- Contact all pesticide applicators in your area of operation to familiarize yourself with their operations. Provide them with your name, address, phone numbers, map of your apiaries, and a copy of this guide.
- Once notification has been made, allow the applicator 48 hours to make the application, unless both parties agree to an increased or decreased time period.
- Additional contact information on agricultural organizations can be accessed at the Montana Department of Agriculture website at <http://agr.mt.gov/> under references, or by calling 406-444-3144.

Recognize that applicators are concerned with the pesticide label and laws governing the use of pesticides, as well as their own personal safety. This may influence when they actually can spray and what they prefer to apply.

GUIDELINES FOR PRODUCERS

Producers include those on whose land the apiary is located and those in the vicinity of the apiary.

- Know the beekeepers using your land and property in the surrounding area.
- The producer should examine the field to determine the insects present, and the types and life stages of plants (blooming crops and weeds).
- Request that the applicator apply insecticides in a manner that minimizes the impact on bees.
- Learn which insecticides adversely affect bees. For assistance in determining the best material to use in your situation, consult your local extension agent, university specialist, crop consultant, or chemical company representative.
- Contact the beekeeper if an apiary is located 1½ miles of your crop or site to be treated with an insecticide.
- Additional contact information on agricultural organizations can be accessed at the Montana Department of Agriculture website at <http://agr.mt.gov/> under references, or by calling 406-444-3144.