



# COLORADO ENVIRONMENTAL PESTICIDE EDUCATION PROGRAM

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## WORKING WITH AERIAL APPLICATORS

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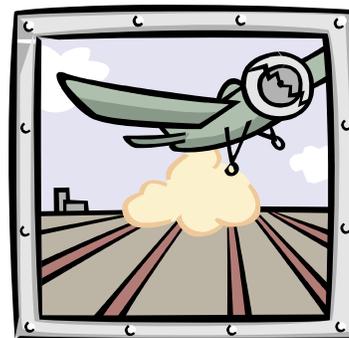
This fact sheet outlines what to remember when planning for aerial applications.

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## Working With Aerial Applicators

Aerial application of seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides play an important role in agriculture. The value of aerial application, however, is often lost on the general public. To many, aerial spraying symbolizes a public health risk and a source of concern, especially in areas where farms border suburban homes.

Consideration of environmental protection and relationships with neighbors can often play an important role in minimizing possible concerns.



**Planning.** The following are things you should do when working with an aerial applicator:

**Draw a map.** Identify the fields you want treated and any crucial areas to avoid. Keep the map simple and easy to read during flight, with boundary landmarks clearly identified. Review the map with your pilot and carefully identify nearby:

- Hazards to flight such as power lines, antennas, or wire fences
- Ponds, creeks, streams, or wetlands
- Sensitive or organically grown crops
- Beehives
- Sinkholes
- Buildings or neighbors close to the target field

**Notify your neighbors.** Let your neighbors know that you have called in an aerial applicator. Try to give them as much notice as possible, especially if they keep bee hives, have field workers near the application site, or grow sensitive or organic crops. Be prepared to tell them what chemical the applicator will be spraying, its' characteristics, and why the treatment is important. Check with your pesticide dealer or sales representative for this information.

Good public relations can be as simple as a handshake or a phone call. Long before you need an aerial application, let your neighbors know that you are as concerned about

safety and environmental protection as they are. Show them your field map and plants. They will be much more comfortable with an aircraft working nearby if they know that you are the person in charge.

**Work closely with the pilot.** Professional pilots are experts at interpreting the effects of changing weather conditions on operational plans of each job. Be sure to discuss this with your pilot and establish whose responsibility it is for making decisions on whether or not to spray. In the absence of foul weather, you must still consider wind conditions and the chance for damaging drift problems.

When hiring an aerial applicator, be sure to clarify who will rinse and dispose of empty containers, who will post reentry signs where required, where mixing/loading and plane rinse-out will occur, and who has responsibility for errors or misapplication.

### **References and Resources**

*Working With Aerial Applicators.* Alliance for a Clean Rural Environment (ACRE), Kansas City, MO.

[CEPEP Home Page](#)