



Extension Extra

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Waste Pesticides

Proper Storage, Handling, and Disposal

by Jim Wilson, Extension pesticide applicator trainer

South Dakota residents now have an opportunity to properly dispose of waste pesticides at no cost. The 1992 state legislature approved legislation to allow the South Dakota Department of Agriculture to provide a state-wide Waste Pesticide Collection program. The program is authorized for five years and is overseen by an advisory committee made up of agricultural commodity, agricultural industry groups, state agencies, and associations.

In order to be eligible for the program, waste pesticides must be pre-registered with the South Dakota Department of Agriculture in Pierre. Pre-registration forms are available from the South Dakota Department of Agriculture or your local County Extension Office.

What Are Waste Pesticides?

A waste pesticide is considered to be any pesticide product (herbicide, insecticide, fungicide, etc.) which is no longer usable. This includes pesticides:

- **canceled or no longer labeled for use (i.e. DDT and toxaphene)**
- **old products which have lost their labels and are considered to be unknown**
- **not in a usable form (i.e. dry products that have caked or liquids that have settled and can't be remixed)**

The best way to reduce pesticide waste is to purchase no more pesticide than you need and store it no longer than necessary. The Waste Pesticide Collection program is designed to dispose of *unusable* pesticides, not *unused* or left over pesticides.

If an old product is still labeled for use and is in a form which can be applied, it is not eligible for the collection program.

Use these products according to label requirements before they go out of condition. Rotate pesticides in storage by

using the oldest products first to reduce chance of a product becoming unusable.

Proper Storage

Evaluate conditions where waste pesticides are stored. Many pesticides require storage in relatively dry conditions and at temperatures between 40° to 100° F. Products not stored properly may crystalize and settle out or form a solid which can not be applied. Over a period of time, improper storage conditions may lead to deterioration of the container and a potential for leaks. Refer to the particular pesticide labels for specific storage requirements.

If the container is not in good condition, it may need to be placed inside a larger leakproof container or a heavy plastic bag. Use extreme care not to rupture the container and spill the contents.

Never move old pesticide containers without wearing proper protective clothing.

The most important item to wear is chemical resistant gloves. At a minimum, wear rubber gloves, long-sleeved shirt, long pants, socks, and rubber footwear. If there is a possibility that the pesticide is highly toxic, additional protective clothing (chemical resistant apron, respirator, etc.) may be appropriate.

If there is a question about the possible hazard from a particular product, contact the South Dakota Department of Agriculture, your local Extension office, or state Extension Pesticide Applicator Trainer for more information. Since information on many waste pesticides must be researched individually, allow ample time before the information is needed.

Store all pesticide products in a secure location away from occupied areas. This includes waste pesticides. If these products are stored in the basement, shop, or garage, move them to an uninhabited area with an impermeable floor, such as concrete, to allow detection and containment of spills. Move these pesticides

only after determining that the containers are of sound condition and safe to move.

Unknown Pesticides

Waste pesticides without a label or valid identification, will need to be analyzed to determine the active ingredients and whether they are eligible for collection. Individuals who list unknown pesticides on the pre-registration form may be contacted by the South Dakota Department of Agriculture for additional instruction prior to the collection. Any information regarding what the product was used on or was used to control may be helpful in confirming the analysis of the product.

Transportation of Waste Pesticides

Prior to the collection, the South Dakota Department of Agriculture will contact individuals who have waste pesticides pre-registered to indicate which pesticides will be accepted for collection. Place containers in heavy plastic bags, if feasible, and set in boxes or otherwise secure them to prevent tipping and possible spills. Ideally, transport waste pesticides to the collection site in the back of a pickup. Secure the containers to keep them from shifting during stops and turns or from blowing out of the vehicle.

Never carry pesticides in the passenger area of a vehicle.

Be prepared in case there is a spill. Carry absorbent material such as saw dust or cat litter to soak up liquids. Have extra plastic bags on hand to hold any material contaminated from a spill. Have soap and water available to wash thoroughly any area of your skin which may come in contact with a pesticide. If you are

transporting large quantities of liquids, consider carrying a shovel to form a dike around the spill area to contain the pesticide. Be sure to carry proper protective clothing when transporting pesticides.

Never try to control a spill without wearing proper protective clothing.

If the products must be carried in a car, seal the pesticide in plastic bags and carry in the trunk. Again, be sure the containers are secured and not allowed to tip. Do not drive with a window open, since this may cause the fumes from the trunk to be pulled into the passenger area. Instead, run the air conditioner or vent to pressurize the inside of the vehicle to reduce exposure to pesticide fumes.

Drive cautiously. Use extra care in bringing the waste pesticides to the collection site. Emergency response personnel will be notified prior to the collection concerning what materials will be brought in. Make every effort to insure that their services are not needed.

For more information on safe transportation of pesticides, ask to loan the video “*Be Prepared - Just in Case*” from your local Extension office.

Additional Information

For more information on the South Dakota Waste Pesticide program, contact your local county Extension office, South Dakota Department of Agriculture (773-3724), or Jim Wilson, Extension pesticide applicator trainer, SDSU (688-4752).

This publication and others can be accessed electronically from the SDSU College of Agriculture & Biological Sciences publications page, which is at <http://agbiopubs.sdstate.edu/articles/ExEx8091.pdf>



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