

Storing and Disposing of Pesticides

Guidelines for the Homeowner

Many times pesticides are used for lawns, gardens, homes and spot treatments. Even small amounts of pesticides can be dangerous if they are not properly stored and disposed of or if adverse conditions affect pesticides or their containers. Correct handling of pesticides can decrease the potential danger of accidental poisonings and contamination.

Pesticide Storage

- ✓ If possible, buy only the amount needed for the current season to reduce storage problems.
- ✓ Lock up all pesticides! Lock the room, cabinet or shed where the pesticides are stored.
- ✓ Pesticides should be kept **only** in their original containers with the label attached.
- ✓ Write the date of purchase on the container so old material can be used first.
- ✓ Store pesticides out of reach of children and pets.
- ✓ Do not store pesticides where they may contaminate food, cleaning supplies, feed, seed or water.
- ✓ Keep pesticides in a dry, well ventilated place, out of sunlight and at temperatures above freezing.
- ✓ Many pesticide formulations are flammable, therefore take precautions against potential fire hazards.
- ✓ Monitor the storage area. If spills or leaks occur, clean them up immediately.

Disposal of Pesticides and their Containers

- ✓ Mix only the amount needed for the current job to avoid leftover diluted pesticide.
- ✓ The best way to dispose of small amounts of excess pesticide is to apply it according to the label directions.
- ✓ Take advantage of the Department's programs for the disposal of unusable pesticides and pesticide containers.
- ✓ Follow label directions for container disposal if a program is not available.
- ✓ **Do not** pour pesticides down a sink or into a toilet.
- ✓ Use caution when cleaning up after flooding. Water may contain broken glass and pesticide residue. Wear chemical resistant gloves and rubber boots to protect yourself. If water pumped from a flooded area may contain pesticide residue, do not allow children or animals to enter it.
- ✓ Follow label directions, but generally packages of less than five pounds of dry pesticide formulations or containers containing less than one gallon of liquid pesticide can be wrapped in several layers of newspaper, tied securely and placed in a covered trash can for pick up, or taken to a permitted landfill. For safety reasons, wet material should be dried prior to disposal.

- ✓ Damaged pesticides can be registered with the Department for disposal through the Waste Pesticide Program. If the contents of a pesticide container labels is unknown because the label is un-readable or detached from exposure to water, the product may also be registered with the Department for disposal. Contact your local County Extension Agent or the chemical manufacturer if you have questions relating to the usability of materials after flooding.
- ✓ Pesticides or pesticide containers that have been damaged or deteriorated by water, or other means, should be carefully re-packaged in a heavy plastic bag or other appropriate, larger leakproof container to decrease the possibility of leakage or spillage.
- ✓ Properly dispose of the material according to label directions or store in a secure location for disposal through the Department's Waste Pesticide Program. Wear proper clothing when handling pesticides including chemical resistant gloves.
- ✓ Ensure pesticide contaminated areas are free of contamination. In general decontamination can be achieved by cleaning the area with ammonia or hot water and liquid, heavy-duty detergent.
- ✓ Empty containers from liquid pesticides should be triple rinsed. Fill the container about 1/4 full, secure the cover and shake. Pour the rinse water into the sprayer tank. Repeat this two more times. Apply the rinse water according to label directions. Paper or cardboard containers should be shaken and inspected to remove all pesticides.
- ✓ **Never reuse a pesticide container.** Even after rinsing, it will still contain residues of the pesticide. To discourage re-use, puncture plastic or metal containers after rinsing.
- ✓ Empty, rinsed pesticide containers should be wrapped in several layers of newspaper and placed in a covered trash can for pick up or taken to a permitted landfill. Plastic pesticide containers can be offered for recycling in the Department's Pesticide Container Recycling Program.
- ✓ If there is any doubt about how to handle pesticides or pesticide containers, contact your county extension agent or chemical dealer.

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