

STORING AND DISPOSING OF PESTICIDES

Guidelines for Agricultural Producers and Commercial Applicators

Pesticides are often used to control weeds, insects, diseases and other pests thus, enhance crop production. Protecting both humans and the environment extends beyond safe application of pesticides. Safe storage and disposal of these chemicals also helps to guard against accidental contamination and poisonings.

Pesticide Storage: Improper storage conditions can result in breakdown of pesticides and reduce their effectiveness. Proper storage can lessen the chance of pesticide-related accidents and make handling accidents easier should one occur. Incorporating as many of the following guidelines as possible will help to ensure safe and proper pesticide storage.

- ❶ Avoid the problem of storing pesticides by purchasing only the amount needed for the current season.
- ❷ Store pesticides in their original container with the original label attached. Read each label to determine suitable storing conditions.
- ❸ Don't store pesticides with food, feed, seed, planting stock, fertilizers, veterinary supplies or pesticide safety equipment. Also, avoid storing them next to a water supply.
- ❹ Date containers as they are purchased and keep an inventory list so outdated material can be disposed of.
- ❺ Designate a building, room or cabinet specifically for pesticide storage and nothing else. The optimum storage "facility" should have a concrete floor, which is impermeable and easy to wash; adequate ventilation to avoid extreme heat and reduce the concentration of toxic or flammable vapors; insulation and supplemental heating if required to meet label specifications; good lighting; and access to water to handle accidental spills.
- ❻ Always keep the building, room or cabinet where pesticides are stored locked when the area is unattended.
- ❼ Post caution signs which warn the area is used for pesticide storage at all entrances or doors.
- ❽ Routinely examine pesticide containers for leaks, corrosion, breaks and tears. Clean up spills immediately and properly dispose of containers and clean up materials. Sawdust, industrial absorbent, cat litter or dry soil may be used to soak up liquid spills. Sweeping compound can be used with dry spills. Store clean up materials in the storage area for quick access.

Disposal of Pesticides and Pesticide Containers: Improper disposal of pesticides and their containers may pose a potential hazard to both humans and the environment. However, if a few basic guidelines are followed, the possibility for problems can be greatly reduced.

- ❶ Avoid leftover diluted pesticides by mixing only the amount needed for the current job or day.
- ❷ Follow all label instructions for the disposal of pesticides and their containers. NEVER reuse a container unless it is a designated refillable pesticide container.

③ The best way to dispose of small amounts of excess pesticide is to apply it according to label directions. If this is not possible, excess pesticides may be able to be returned to the pesticide manufacturer. Unusable pesticides which meet criteria of the SDDA's Waste Pesticide program, may be disposed of at no charge. All products must be pre-registered with the department.

④ Triple rinse or pressure rinse empty pesticide containers then dispose of them using any one of the following methods described in South Dakota Administrative Rule 12:56:02.

- Landfill - Properly rinsed containers can be disposed of at permitted landfills.

- Bury - Small quantities of properly rinsed containers can be buried in open fields by the pesticide user if the amounts do not exceed more than one day's accumulation or 50 pounds.

- Recycle - Clean 2½ gallon (or less) or metal drum pesticide containers can be recycled in the South Dakota Department of Agriculture's Pesticide Container Recycling program. Also, some pesticide dealers and manufacturers will accept properly rinsed pesticide containers for reuse.

⑤ When disposing of pesticides or their containers, make sure that the method does not cause or allow the contamination of water, the environment, or human or animal food.

⑥ **Never reuse a pesticide container.** Even after proper rinsing, containers still contain residues of the pesticide. To discourage reuse, puncture plastic or metal containers after rinsing.

⑦ If there is any doubt about how to handle pesticides or pesticide containers, contact your chemical dealer or county extension agent.