



Pesticides

Use, Storage, Disposal & Alternatives

Pesticides control pests like insects. Pesticides can also hurt or even kill people. They must be safely and properly used. They must also be stored and disposed of properly.

USE

Pesticide strength and hazard potential varies, depending on use and length of storage time. Some pesticides remain in the environment for long periods of time while others disappear rapidly.

Read the label before buying. Follow instructions carefully. Use only currently registered products and safely dispose of outdated and banned products. Store pesticides in a locked cabinet in their original containers, with labels intact and readable. Try to use all of the product before disposing of the container.

STORAGE

Read product labels that list the chemical ingredients. Store all hazardous products away from water pumps and well heads to eliminate pollution of the water supply.

Store all hazardous products out of the reach of children. Keep all hazardous products in original containers with labels intact. Material safety data sheets may be obtained from the manufacturer for many hazardous products.

ALTERNATIVES

Do not overuse chemicals. When possible, use safe and economical control products. Biological products include natural predators, such as lady beetles and spiders, and bacterial control agents specific to pests, such as *Bacillus popilliae* and *Bacillus thuringiensis*.

Physical controls include diatomaceous earth, proper fencing or screen, and properly sealed structures.

To control fleas on pets, bathe them every two to four weeks with pet shampoos containing insect-repellent. Herbs such as rosemary, eucalyptus and citronella offer some protection. Commercial flea repellents also work well.

When biological and physical controls need to be supplemented, first identify the pests that are causing problems, find suitable alternative control measures, and then treat for the specific problem. The more specific the control measure for the identified pest, the less chance there is that similar beneficial organisms will be harmed. Also,

the more timely a pesticide application can be made, the less need there is for a persistent chemical. This means the pesticide will be less available to susceptible beneficial organisms and to the environment.

DISPOSAL

If products contain warnings about environmental pollution or damage, be sure to dispose of the containers in a way that will minimize the risk. If your area has amnesty days, store containers until collection. Or, if there is a hazardous waste collection center nearby, take household hazardous waste to it.

If you have no other alternatives or directions for disposal, follow these guidelines:

1. Use it up or give it to someone who will.
2. If the container can be opened and triple rinsed, do so. Be sure to use the rinse water safely. Do not pour rinse water on a single limited location.
3. Unless your community has a collection site, dispose containers by wrapping them in several layers of newspaper, then tying them securely or placing them in a plastic bag. Place package in a covered trash can.

REFERENCES

1. Center for Science in the Public Interest. *The Household Pollutants Guide*. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1978.
2. Elkington, J., Halies, J., and Makower, J. *The Green Consumer*. New York: Penguin Group. Viking Penguin, 1990.
3. Hollender, J. *How to Make the World a Better Place*. New York: Quill William Morrow, 1990.

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