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Household Hazardous Waste Reduction

PESTICIDE WASTE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT

DID YOU KNOW?

Pesticides are products used to kill or repel insects, weeds, rodents and other pests. Depending on the use they are called insecticides, herbicides, and rodenticides, respectively.

Pesticide ingredients can harm humans and the environment if improperly used, stored or disposed. Small amounts can be toxic to humans or pets. Pesticides may enter the body through contact with skin, inhalation or through ingestion (via accidental swallowing). Birds, fish, beneficial insects, aquatic organisms and groundwater can be accidentally harmed if pesticides are applied beyond the amounts recommended by the manufacturer or in inappropriate locations.

You can help protect the environment by taking unused pesticides to a household hazardous waste (HHW) collection event or using up small amounts of pesticides which are not banned.

HUMAN HEALTH RISKS

If you use pesticides, remember, they are designed to be toxic. Follow label instructions strictly about where and how much to apply. Keep the Massachusetts Poison Control Center number available: 1-800-682-9211.

All pesticide products sold in Massachusetts must be registered with the state. If you have old pesticide products make sure the product is still registered by calling the Pesticide Bureau at (617) 727-3020.

PREVENTING PESTICIDE WASTE AND OVER-APPLICATION

- Before you buy, be sure you need the product and read the label's hazard information.
- Avoid buying and storing excess products which could become waste if you move or no longer need them. As long as the product is not restricted and is registered in the state, try to use up what you already have.
- Store products in places inaccessible to children and pets. Make sure containers are securely closed.

- Low-risk pesticides and alternatives to pesticides are available. Learn about Integrated Pest Management (IPM), a range of methods to reduce pesticide risks. For information contact the Massachusetts Department of Food & Agriculture, Pesticide Bureau at (617)727-3020 or OTA at (617)727-3260 x 696.
- If you hire a professional pesticide applicator, make sure the person is licensed and/or certified by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. For applicator licensing and regulatory information, contact the Massachusetts Department of Food & Agriculture, Pesticide Bureau at (617)727-3020.

MANAGING WASTES

Some pesticides have been banned for use due to the risk they pose. Common banned products with the following active ingredients should be saved for a HHW collection event:

Aldrin * Chlordane * DDT * Heptachlor * Silvex * 2,4,5 T

For more information on identifying pesticides, their health hazards, and use and disposal guidelines call the National Pesticide Telecommunications Network at 1-800-858-7378.

Don't put pesticides in the trash or down the drain. Take to a local HHW collection event if there is one. Empty containers can be wrapped and put in the trash after being triple rinsed and the rinse water used as a pesticide in the sites stated by the label instructions. For information about HHW collection events, call OTA at (617)727-3260 x 696. If your community does not sponsor an HHW collection event, call Clean Harbors, Inc. in Natick at (508)650-6910 x 6306.

TO LEARN MORE

For further information about pesticides and alternatives, call the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency at (617)565-3603 and ask for their publications which include Citizen's Guide to Pesticides, Healthy Lawn, Healthy Environment, Pesticides and Child Safety and Using Insect Repellents Safely. At your local library request information under categories such as household pest management, biological controls, low-risk chemical pest control or urban integrated pest management.

For more information about this and other household hazardous wastes or products, contact the Massachusetts Office of Technical Assistance at (617)727-3260 x 696.

This fact sheet is one in a series prepared by the Office of Technical Assistance (OTA), a branch of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. OTA's mission is to assist in reducing the use of toxic chemicals or the generation of hazardous waste by manufacturers and residents of the Commonwealth. OTA assumes no responsibility and disclaims liability for any injury or damage due to information herein. This information is available in alternate formats upon request. For further information about this fact sheet and other household hazardous waste reduction strategies, or about OTA's technical services, contact: Office of Technical Assistance, 100 Cambridge Street, Room 2109, Boston, Massachusetts, 02202; phone #(617)727-3260; fax #(617)727-3827; electronic bulletin board #(617)727-5621.