Proper Pesticide Storage

Pesticide storage is deadly serious. Half the pesticide-related deaths in the United States are children under the age of 10. To control access, lock pesticides securely in a storage area with a warning sign on the door or window. Warning signs should have emergency numbers on them. Do not store pesticides near food, feed, or personal protective equipment because of contamination.

“Child-resistant” packaging does not mean child-proof. You still must store pesticides properly out of children’s reach. Be sure to close containers tightly.

Minimize storage problems through good planning:
- Buy only the amount of pesticide that you need for a specific job or for the current season
- Buy smaller volume containers, even if more expensive
  This eliminates waste and storage space
- Consider ready-to-use products rather than concentrated solutions

Maintaining a pesticide storage area:
- Keep out unwanted visitors, especially children and animals
- Consider fencing or locking pesticide storage area.
- Use good lighting and ventilation
- Secure area to prevent spillage in adverse weather conditions
- Reduce dampness. This decreases shelf life of many chemicals
- Avoid high and freezing temperatures

Proper storage of pesticides:
- Do not store pesticides with or near food, medicine, or cleaning supplies
- Do not store pesticides with or near seed or animal feed
- Do not store flammable materials with pesticides
- Do not store pesticides with fertilizers
- Do not allow pesticides to freeze
What do I do with open containers of pesticides?

- Recap containers and reseal bags
- Put original container in clear plastic bags or see-through plastic ware
- Mark all containers with the date of purchase
- Record product name, active ingredient, record of use, date, and volume
- Keep pesticides in their original containers

Throughout the year:

- Inspect your storage area
- Check containers for damage or leaks
- Dispose of unwanted or outdated materials according to the label recommendations

Important information:

- Keep spill control supplies within the pesticide storage area
- Keep pesticides in their original containers
- Never put pesticides in containers used for food, drink, or household products
- Use transparent tape over labels to keep them legible
- Never reuse a pesticide container

Minimize length of storage:

- Take a pesticide inventory. This eliminates over-ordering and storage
- Buy pesticides just before application. This shortens storage to weeks or days
- Return unopened pesticide containers to your dealer
- Use last year’s chemicals first and avoid carryover in the future

Always read the pesticide label for specific storage requirements

References and Resources


Wintersteen, W., Miller, L. and Brink, M. January 1993. *Consider Zero Pesticide Storage*. Fact Sheet Pm-1518a, Iowa State University Extension, Ames, IA.

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