## Penn State Extension

# What you need to know about . . . Disposing of a Pesticide

Il pesticide users have the responsibility to properly dispose of pesticide wastes, such as unused chemicals and pesticide containers. Improperly disposed pesticide wastes can create serious hazards for humans, animals, and the environment. Reducing pesticide waste requires careful selection of the correct pesticide and correct quantity, and careful calculation of the amount of pesticide needed for each application.

#### Do's and don'ts

**Read the label!** Follow the disposal directions on the label for more specific or special requirements.

Remember that state and local laws for disposal may be more restrictive than directions on the label. Check with your local solid waste authority, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, or the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection before disposing of leftover pesticides and recycling pesticide containers.

NEVER pour pesticides down the drain, on the ground, or in a storm sewer.

Unless directed by the pesticide label, DO NOT bury or burn pesticides and/or pesticide containers.

### Three types of pesticide wastes that require proper disposal are:

- 1. Unused pesticides that remain in the original container
- 2. Pesticide mixtures that are left unused after an application
- **3.** Empty pesticide containers

# If possible, dispose of unused pesticide in its original container

#### **CHEMSWEEP Program**

CHEMSWEEP is a waste pesticide collection program designed to give agricultural and other operations that use pesticides a way to dispose of old, unusable, or unwanted pesticide products.

At no cost up to 2,000 pounds, participants can legally dispose of waste pesticides.

To participate, contact the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture at 717-772-5231 or visit **www.pda.state.pa.us/CHEMSWEEP** on the Internet.

For homeowners, some communities have household hazardous waste (HHW) collections; however, not all may accept pesticide products. Contact your local solid waste authority.

## PENNSTATE



#### Dispose of unused pesticide mixtures

To avoid the problem of excess mixture, carefully calculate and measure the amount of pesticide required for the application.

After application, if excess mixture remains, it should be applied according to label directions to your property.

**Never store diluted pesticides in sprayers.** Not only can this damage the sprayer, but more important, this can lead to a future misapplication because you may not correctly remember the type of unused product that remains in the sprayer.

## Dispose of empty pesticide containers

When the pesticide product has been completely used from its original container, empty drums, bottles, or cans must be triple-rinsed. In addition, empty paper and plastic bags should be shaken clean and triple-rinsed before disposal. Remember to puncture holes in containers to make sure they cannot be reused for any other purpose.

To be recycled, containers must be free of any pesticide residue inside and outside.

Empty, triple-rinsed pesticide containers and bags can possibly be recycled with your local recycling program, depending on local ordinances.

To find local HHW collection sites, go to **www.depweb.state.pa.us** and type "HHW" into the search. The HHW page will have a link to the upcoming scheduled collection programs.

### **Triple-rinsing pesticide containers**

### **Triple-Rinse Process**

Triple-rinse immediately after last application or the pesticide product may become difficult to remove.



Wearing gloves, empty contents of container into sprayer.



 $\mathbf{2}_{ullet}$  Fill container  $\frac{1}{2}_{5}$  full of water.



Replace cap and shake container for 30 seconds.



Repeat two more times, shaking container in different directions.



Remove foil seal and label booklet and dispose in regular trash.



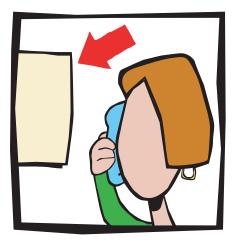
Prain rinse water into sprayer.



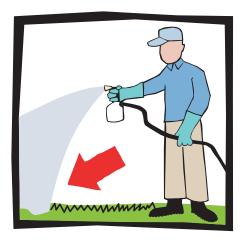
Rinse the outside of the container over the sprayer opening or a bucket so rinsate can be emptied into the sprayer. Clean the bucket by triple-rinsing and add the rinsate to the sprayer.



Render unusable. Never reuse a pesticide container for any purpose.



Recycle the container! Contact your local HHW collection facility for dates and locations.



Diluted rinse material remaining in the sprayer should be sprayed according to the label where the pesticide was intended to be used.

#### **For More Information**

Contact your county Penn State Extension office: **extension.psu.edu/counties** 

Penn State Pesticide Education Program 222 Special Services Building University Park, PA 16802 Email: pesticide@psu.edu

extension.psu.edu/pesticide-education

Updated by the Penn State Pesticide Education Program. Original text prepared by Richard H. Johnson Jr., former extension associate.

## extension.psu.edu

An OUTREACH program of the College of Agricultural Sciences

Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences research and extension programs are funded in part by Pennsylvania counties, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

This publication is available from the Publications Distribution Center, The Pennsylvania State University, 112 Agricultural Administration Building, University Park, PA 16802. For information telephone 814-865-6713.

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

The Pennsylvania State University is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. It is the policy of the University to maintain an academic and work environment free of discrimination, including harassment. The Pennsylvania State University prohibits discrimination and harassment against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, genetic information, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status and retaliation due to the reporting of discrimination or harassment. Discrimination, harassment, or retaliation against faculty, staff, or students will not be tolerated at The Pennsylvania State University. Direct all inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy to the Affirmative Action Director, The Pennsylvania State University, 328 Boucke Building, University Park, PA 16802-5901; Tel 814-863-0471.

© The Pennsylvania State University 2013

Produced by Ag Communications and Marketing

Code UO214 Rev4.5M03/13payne

This fact sheet is also available in Spanish.