

For Immediate Release

April 20, 2009

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Pesticides can do the job – but also can harm

A pesticide is any chemical used to kill, prevent or control pests. When used properly, pesticides can help you deal with specific problems. The Washington Poison Center (WAPC) warns that these products can also be very harmful if used the wrong way and offers the following tips for proper use and storage of your pesticides:

Be Aware Common pesticides could include: mothballs; ant or roach sprays and baits; insect sprays and repellents; rat or mice poison; flea and tick sprays, powders or pet collars; and weed killers.

Buying Pesticides Pesticides can come in different forms: aerosols, sprays, dusts, granular materials or baits. It is important to use based on need. When buying pesticides buy only the amount you need to minimize left over.

Storing Pesticides Store all pesticides in a well-ventilated cabinet; out of the reach and sight of children and pets. Never store with food, medical supplies or cleaning materials. Put pesticides safely away after purchase and each use. Keep chemicals in their original, labeled containers - put a Mr. Yuk sticker on the container.

Applying Pesticides Always follow directions and apply pesticides in well-ventilated areas away from children and pets. Wear protective clothing such as gloves, closed shoes, goggles and a mask. Remove any toys, food, furniture and dishes before application. Put back items when area is dry. If you mix or dilute chemicals, mix only as stated on the label. Always clean spills right away. Apply only to areas needing treatment. Never spray or dust outdoors on a windy day. People with lung problems, such as COPD or asthma, should avoid pesticides.

Clean Up and Disposal of Pesticides Clean up equipment and safely dispose of all containers. Follow label instructions for disposal – it is the law. Empty pesticide containers are just as dangerous due to residue. Never pour pesticide down the drain. Wash all your body parts exposed to the pesticide with soap and water after each use; wash clothing. Throw away any leather goods that may have come in contact with the pesticide.

Pesticide Misuse Keep the telephone number of the Poison Center on or near your telephones, **1-800-222-1222**. If you suspect a pesticide poisoning has occurred, call the Poison Center right away. **DO NOT** wait for symptoms to occur. Bring the container with you to the phone, if possible. Important information about the product may be found on the label.

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