

Garden Chemicals: Safe Use & Disposal

Pesticides (insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides) are designed to be toxic to the pests they target. When used properly, pesticides can protect your plants or home from damage. However, when the label instructions are not followed correctly, plant injury may occur, pests may not be controlled, human health may be impaired, and pesticides may contribute to soil, air, or water pollution. Fertilizer products can also have negative environmental impacts when they get into waterways. Pesticides should be used only when nonchemical methods are ineffective and pests are reaching intolerable levels; choose products carefully so that the least toxic, most effective material is used.

If you must use garden chemicals:

- ✦ Identify your pest problem and choose the least toxic pesticide that controls your pest. Examples of less toxic products include bait stations, insecticidal soaps and oils, and the microbial insecticide, *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt).
- ✦ Contact your UC Master Gardener or Cooperative Extension office for help identifying your pest or pest control method.
- ✦ Buy ready-to-use (RTU) products rather than concentrates, when possible. RTUs do not have to be measured and mixed.
- ✦ Don't water after applying garden chemicals unless the label tells you to do so. Never let pesticide or fertilizer runoff flow into storm drains.
- ✦ Avoid applying chemicals outdoors when rain is forecast or when it is windy.
- ✦ Don't apply pesticides or fertilizer on paved surfaces.

When using and storing garden chemicals:

- ✦ Always wear shoes, a long-sleeved shirt, pants, eye protection, and other equipment required on the product label.
- ✦ Properly measure concentrated formulations of pesticides. Keep all measuring tools for the garden separate from those used for food.
- ✦ Never apply more product than the amount listed on the label.
- ✦ Always keep chemicals in their original container and store tightly capped in a locked cabinet out of reach from children and pets.



✦ For help in an emergency call your Regional Poison Control Center: (800) 222-1222. Visit their Web site at www.calpoison.org.

Disposal of pesticides and fertilizers:

- ✦ If you cannot use up your pesticides, fertilizers, and weed killers, consider giving them away.
- ✦ Sewage treatment plants are not designed to treat for toxic chemicals. Pouring garden chemicals into a storm drain, down the sink, or in the toilet is never an option—and it is against the law!
- ✦ The only allowable way to dispose of pesticides is to use them up according to label directions or to take them to a household hazardous waste site.

For the Household Hazardous Waste Disposal site nearest you, call the headquarters at (714) 834-4000 or visit www.earth911.org for more information.

Finding active ingredients on a pesticide label:

Active ingredients0.1%
Inert ingredients99.9%

KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN
CAUTION See back panel booklet for additional precautionary statements
NET WT 10 lb (4.53kg)

Pesticide labels show the active ingredient in a product.

Minimize the use of pesticides that pollute our waterways. Use nonchemical alternatives or less toxic pesticide products whenever possible. Read product labels carefully and follow instructions on proper use, storage, and disposal.

For more information about managing pests, contact your University of California Cooperative Extension office listed under the county government pages of your phone book or the UC IPM Web site at www.ipm.ucdavis.edu.



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**What you use in your landscape
affects our rivers and oceans!**