

Disposing of Excess Pesticides and Pesticide Containers.

Despite one's best efforts to avoid accumulating excess pesticides, it is sometimes necessary to dispose of leftover chemicals. And, occasionally it may be necessary to dispose of pesticide wastes, such as materials collected while cleaning up a spill. Pesticide wastes are as hazardous as the pesticide itself. These guidelines should be followed in handling both excess pesticides and pesticide wastes.

In addition, empty pesticide containers need to be disposed of properly. Empty containers that have been properly rinsed may be recycled. Other containers are refillable and may be returned to the supplier unrinsed. Empty containers which have been properly rinsed may be disposed of in a sanitary landfill if allowed by state and local laws. In Michigan, it is illegal to burn pesticide containers on site.

Types of Pesticide Containers

There are several types of pesticide containers. A common agricultural pesticide container is the 2.5 gallon plastic jug. Many liquid agricultural pesticides are also sold in bulk containers (mini-bulks, shuttles, shuttle juniors, etc.) which are intended to be returned and reused by the supplier. Liquid, dry and granular pesticides are often sold in various sizes of plastic containers and some granular pesticides are sold in bags. Another type of pesticide container is the pressurized can, which is commonly used for indoor pesticides.

Some containers are designed to be returned to the supplier upon emptying without rinsing. These containers are commonly referred to as "refillables". Refillable containers must not have the seal broken or the container opened. They should never be rinsed.

Removing Pesticide Residues From Nonrefillable Liquid Containers

Proper rinsing of nonrefillable liquid pesticide containers is easy to do, saves money, is required by state and federal regulations and is a good, sound management practice that helps protect the environment. Even during a busy season, the few extra min-

utes it takes to properly rinse empty pesticide containers is time well spent. Here are some rinsing guidelines:

Unless the container is rinsed immediately, the remaining residue may dry and become difficult to remove. An unrinsed pesticide container is typically considered hazardous waste, but once rinsed, the same container is usually considered solid waste. Rinsing containers also removes a potential source of pesticide exposure to people, pets, livestock, wildlife and the environment.

The rinse solution (rinsate) should be added directly into the sprayer tank. This action eliminates the need to store and later dispose of the rinsate.

Proper Rinsing

Two commonly used procedures are effective for properly rinsing nonrefillable liquid pesticide containers: pressure-rinsing and triple-rinsing.



Pressure-rinsing a pesticide container.