

Customers look to you for information

about the yard and household chemicals that they purchase. Home-use pesticides pose a particular risk to our stormwater system.



Sometimes people pollute our local waterways by washing pesticides and other chemicals such as motor oil into storm drains. Contaminated runoff is a major cause of pollution in northeast Oklahoma's waterways.

The purpose of this brochure is to assist the managers of hardware and garden stores to **educate employees** on how to advise customers about safe pesticide use and disposal. They in turn can help keep members of the public educated about pesticide use. By doing your part, you and your employees can play a big role in helping to protect our streams and lakes.

Additional Resources

Visit the Green Country Stormwater Alliance web site listed below for more details about stormwater protection, including pesticides and household waste disposal.



Green Country Stormwater Alliance
www.stormwaterok.net

Contact Information

For local information, contact your city or county stormwater coordinator.

For more information about stormwater protection, contact the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Water Quality Division at 405-702-8100 or visit the DEQ web site at

www.deq.state.ok.us/WQDnew/stormwater/index.html

For stormwater related complaints, call the DEQ statewide hotline at 1-800-522-0206. This number is answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Citizens may fill out an online complaint form at the DEQ web site at www.deq.state.ok.us/ECLsnew/Complaints/onlncompl.htm and submit it electronically to the DEQ. The site also provides contact links to DEQ.

For local pollutant collection events, contact The Metropolitan Environmental Trust at 918-584-0584 or visit www.metrecycle.com.

No part of this brochure may be construed to provide complete guidance on the use or disposal of pesticides. Always refer to package labeling or other credible information sources. This brochure is for general information purposes only.

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Hazardous Waste (inside background) —
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A Retailer's Guide to Pesticide Basics





Things to Tell Your Customers about Over-the-Counter Pesticides

Reducing Risks of Pesticides

Anyone can buy a wide variety of off-the-shelf pesticide products to control weeds, insects or other pests. A trip to the local hardware or lawn and garden store reveals a wide variety of choices.

Many of these products are harmful to people and animals — not to mention our environment. What's more, the results achieved through pesticides are generally temporary. This means that a repeat pesticide treatment may be required. However, over time some pests become resistant to chemicals and are no longer harmed by them.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the following are the basic steps that consumers should take to reduce the risks associated with pesticide use:

- Choose the right pesticide product
 - ≡ Identify the problem
 - ≡ Identify the least toxic solution to that problem AND to you and the environment
 - ≡ Look for the signal words (see “How to Determine Toxicity” at right).
- Read the product label, which should include the following information
 - ≡ EPA Registration Number
 - ≡ Active ingredients
 - ≡ Signal words
 - ≡ Precautionary statements
 - ≡ Environmental hazards
 - ≡ Directions for use
 - ≡ First aid instructions
 - ≡ Storage and disposal.

- Calculate the correct amount of pesticide to purchase
 - ≡ Buy premixed solutions, if available
 - ≡ If mixing the product is required, mix only the amount needed for the target area
 - ≡ Use level (exact) measures (e.g., cup or teaspoon)
 - ≡ Mix in a well ventilated area
 - ≡ Never reuse a tool used for measuring pesticides for food preparation.
- Use the product safely and correctly
 - ≡ Wear protective clothing
 - ≡ Read and follow the label directions
 - ≡ Apply only the amount needed for the area
 - ≡ Don't change the recommended amounts
 - ≡ Don't smoke or eat while using pesticides
 - ≡ Keep children, pets and toys away from the area to be treated
 - ≡ Never transfer pesticides into other containers.
- Store and dispose of pesticides properly
 - ≡ Store pesticides in a locked cabinet out of reach of children and pets
 - ≡ Never store pesticides with or near food, animal feed or medical supplies
 - ≡ Apply small amounts of excess pesticides to the lawn to dispose of them
 - ≡ Do not pour leftover pesticides down a sink, into a toilet, or down a sewer or storm drain
 - ≡ Take unused pesticides to a local household pollutant collection event.

How to Determine Toxicity

Pesticide labels have what are called “signal words,” which describe the level of toxicity. These levels are as follows:

- **Danger** or **Danger/Poison** — *High Toxicity*
Danger means that a product is highly toxic and can be highly corrosive or cause burning to the eyes or skin. **Danger/Poison** means that a product is highly toxic if eaten, absorbed into the skin, or inhaled. Damage from these types of products can be permanent or irreversible.
- **Warning** — *Moderate Toxicity*
Warning means that a product is moderately toxic if eaten, absorbed into the skin, inhaled. It may cause moderate eye or skin irritation.
- **Caution** — *Low or Very Low Toxicity*
Caution means that a product is slightly toxic if eaten, absorbed into the skin, or inhaled. It may cause slight eye or skin irritation.

Tips for Pesticide Use

The following are other tips for pesticide use:

- Use a calibrated sprayer. Applying too little or too much pesticide may be ineffective and may damage the environment.
- Properly label all mixed solutions with the name of the solution, the date mixed, and the purpose for which the solution is used.
- Do not over-water or apply pesticides when rain is forecast or when it is windy.
- If you are wary about using pesticides, consider hiring a professional company to do so.
- Avoid using pesticides if at all by learning about Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approaches at www.epa.gov/pesticides/ipm/.