

With Winter On Hand, Store Pesticides Properly

With winter on hand, we need to remind ourselves of a few basic principles about proper pesticide storage.

Regardless of the size of your operation or the volume of materials you use, pesticides should be stored in a separate building, room or enclosure. The storage area should be kept dry, reasonably cool, and out of direct sunlight. An exhaust fan should be used for proper ventilation to help reduce the temperature and build up of toxic fumes.

Be sure to locate the exhaust fan where it will not damage plants or harm humans. Some pesticides have special storage requirements and require protection against freezing or extreme heat.

As a general rule, most pesticides will begin to deteriorate at temperatures below 40°F. and above 90°F. Be sure to read the label for proper storage requirements. Pesticide bags, cartons and boxes should be stored off the floor on shelves or on pallets to avoid moisture and deterioration of the packaging.

The storage area should be securely locked when not in use and warning signs with "**Danger—Pesticides, Keep Out**" should be posted on the door and other appropriate areas. Be sure not to store glass and metal pesticide containers near a heat source such as steam pipes or in direct sunlight. Heating of the container may result in expansion of the liquid contents and lead to an explosion.

If you are using several different types of pesticides (i.e., insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides), be sure to keep each pesticide type in separate areas to avoid confusion and inadvertent misuse. Keep a current inventory of your materials as to purchase date, quantity, and condition of the container, and use up pesticides that may be reaching the limits of their shelf life storage.

By doing this, you will reduce the volume of unused chemicals preventing a large disposal problem and avoid the mistake of spraying with a pesticide that has lost its pest controlling ability. **Under no circumstances should a pesticide be stored in a food or drink container!**

When examining chemicals for evidence of deterioration, look for these warning signs:

Emulsifiable Concentrates: Milky coloration does not occur with the addition of water, sludge is present or any separation of components is evident in the container.

Oil Sprays: Milky coloration does not occur with the addition of water.

Dusts: Granules and Wettable Powders: Excessive lumping.

—The Bull Sheet

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