

Safe, Smart, Solutions for Iowa



If you use or store your household chemicals improperly, they could end up in the wrong package.

Pesticides

Pesticides quickly destroy unwanted insects, rodents and weeds, but let's look at the whole picture. Pesticides also kill beneficial insects that pollinate flowers and prey upon harmful insects. More importantly pesticides are toxic, posing a health threat to animals and humans, and can contaminate ground or surface water if used, stored or disposed of improperly. Children are particularly at risk. Even low levels of exposure to some chemicals can cause developmental problems in children. Forty-seven percent of households with children under the age of 5 have at least one pesticide within reach of a child.

Alternatives

Before you buy pesticides consider using a safer alternative.

Instead of rat and mouse poison,

- ▶ Use traps
- ▶ Set out a dish of dry potato flakes and a separate dish of water

For roaches try

- ▶ Set out a mix of baking soda and powdered sugar
- ▶ Don't leave food out overnight
- ▶ Seal gaps around pipe and cracks along walls to prevent infestation

Instead of mothballs try

- ▶ Sachets made of a mix of rosemary, mint, lavender, thyme and cloves
- ▶ Cedar chips

Instead of insecticides try

- ▶ Beneficial predators such as lady bugs, praying mantes, frogs, spiders and dragonflies
- ▶ Spray a mixture of soap and water on leaves and rinse
- ▶ Place hedge apples (osage orange) in the basement and around cabinets to repel insects

Instead of herbicides try

- ▶ Weeding by hand

Using pesticides

If you do decide to use pesticides be sure to:

- ▶ Read and follow label directions
- ▶ Wear protective clothing such as rubber gloves, wraparound goggles and pesticide approved respirator if using a spray
- ▶ Wear long sleeved shirts and pants to avoid skin contact. Wash clothing separately from other laundry using a full load setting, hot water, and detergent
- ▶ Use the proper application rate. Through overapplication urban households apply over three times as much pesticides per acre than in agricultural settings
- ▶ **DO NOT** water pesticide-treated areas after application unless instructed to do so on the label. The pesticide could runoff into storm drains that empty directly into lakes, rivers and streams
- ▶ Buy only the amount you will need to avoid storage or disposal of leftover chemicals

Storage

- ▶ Return any unopened containers to the retailer.
- ▶ Keep pesticides in original containers with the original labels. They should never be stored in an unlabeled bottle or jug. A child may mistake it for food or drink and become poisoned.
- ▶ Store safely away from children and pets, preferably in a locked storage area.
- ▶ Store in an area where they will not freeze or become wet.
- ▶ Do not store near food or animal feed, which could become contaminated by vapors.

Disposal

Unwanted and banned pesticides should be brought to a toxic cleanup day or Regional Collection Center for proper disposal. To locate a Regional Collection Center near you visit our web site at

www.safesmartsolutions.org.

Empty containers should be triple rinsed and disposed of in the trash. Unfortunately, empty pesticide containers cannot be mixed in with other plastics for recycling.

NEVER

- ▶ Dump chemicals down a drain or storm sewer
- ▶ Throw pesticides in the trash
- ▶ Bury them
- ▶ Pour on ground
- ▶ Use banned pesticides, you are endangering your health and the environment

For more information please visit our web site at **www.safesmartsolutions.org**



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