

# PESTICIDE CONTAINER DISPOSAL



## PESTICIDE USE



Pesticides (which include herbicides, insecticides, fungicides and other pest control products) are important products for landscaping, horticulture and agriculture. However, their toxicity and persistence can pose serious environmental and occupational hazards if handled improperly.

Every time you use a pesticide, you face the problem of how to dispose empty containers. “Empty” containers may still hold about 1 percent of the original amount of pesticide, which is harmful to humans, animals and the environment. Never be careless when disposing empty containers, leftover solutions or surplus pesticide concentrates. You can prevent environmental damage if you take the time to follow proper disposal procedures.

Consequences of improper management of pesticide containers:

- Drinking water can be contaminated if improperly rinsed containers are deposited in landfills.
- Local, state and federal laws may be violated and cause legal problems for the applicator.
- Expensive material can be left in each unrinsed container.



## HOW TO DISPOSE PESTICIDE AND HERBICIDE CONTAINERS SAFELY

Product labels direct applicators to triple rinse each empty container, pour the rinse solution (rinsate) into the spray tank mixture and use the product according to the label. This method reduces the potential for environmental damage by converting these containers from hazardous waste to solid waste. Also, triple rinsing ensures that all of the pesticide product is incorporated into the tank mixture so that applicators get their money’s worth. Follow these simple steps for disposal:

- Triple rinsing is defined by a 1974 federal regulation as the “flushing of containers three times, each time using a volume of the normal diluents equal to approximately 10 percent of the container’s capacity, and adding the rinse liquid to the spray mixture.” Pressure rinsing is an acceptable alternative to triple rinsing.
- Render all plastic and metal containers unusable by puncturing or crushing.
- Recycle the container or deposit the empty container in a licensed sanitary landfill.

## EXCESS PESTICIDE DISPOSAL

Ideally, the need to dispose excess pesticides can be eliminated by planning the job and buying only the amount of product needed. If the product cannot be used and must be discarded:



- For homeowners or businesses that are Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generators (CESQG) of hazardous waste, contact your local regional collection center for household hazardous waste. [www.iowadnr.gov/Environment/HouseholdHazardousMaterials/RegionalCollectionCenters.aspx](http://www.iowadnr.gov/Environment/HouseholdHazardousMaterials/RegionalCollectionCenters.aspx)
- Contact a hazardous waste company for disposal.