

Frequently asked questions

Q: Why shouldn't I bury a pesticide container if the label says I can?

A: It is against the law to bury pesticide containers in Wisconsin. While the pesticide label is a legal document, it is based on federal laws; state laws may be more strict.

Similarly, burning containers is often prohibited by local ordinances. Burning may also produce toxic fumes.

Q: Why should I give unwanted pesticide away rather than throw it in the trash?

A: Applying a pesticide according to label directions poses less risk to people and the environment. Be sure the pesticide product is in its original, labeled container when you give it to someone else.

The risks increase as soon as you put pesticide in the trash: your dog may get poisoned if it gets into the trash, garbage collectors may get pesticide on their skin, or some pesticide may spill onto the road and enter a storm sewer.

Q: What should I do if I have pesticide mixture left in my sprayer?

A: The only thing to do is to apply the mix to a site listed on the label.

This poses a problem if you have treated your entire lawn; applying the leftover mix to the lawn would exceed the label rate, which is illegal and could damage your lawn. You can give the mix to a neighbor, but be sure to give them the labeled product container; lend your sprayer as well, or pour the mix directly into your neighbor's sprayer. The best solution is to only mix as much product as you will need for an application.

Home PEST seeks to provide homeowners with the knowledge they need to make informed decisions about pesticides.

This publication is available from your county Cooperative Extension office.

The Home PEST project was developed by the University of Wisconsin-Extension Pesticide Applicator Training (PAT) program.

Any reference to pesticide products are for your convenience and are not an endorsement or criticism of one product over other similar products.

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Storing and Disposing of Pesticides



Home PEST

Home Pesticide Education & Safety Training
University of Wisconsin-Extension

You probably use at least one pesticide around your home. By properly storing pesticides and disposing of pesticide wastes, you can prevent accidental poisoning or environmental contamination.

Pesticide storage

Even if you buy the smallest amount of a pesticide available, there will likely be times when it is necessary to store the pesticide product.

Always store pesticides:

- In their original, labeled container. Putting pesticides in old soda bottles or food jars is a leading cause of accidental ingestion. To help prevent degradation, mark containers with the date of purchase and use older products first.
- In a cool, dark, dry area protected from temperature extremes.
- Away from any heat source. Some pesticides are flammable.
- Separate from food, seeds, and protective clothing. This will prevent accidental contamination of these items.
- Out of the reach of children and pets: at least 5 feet from the ground preferably in a locked cabinet or room. Even if you don't have children, friends and relatives may bring theirs to your home.
- According to specific requirements listed on the product label. This will prevent degradation, contamination, and accidental exposure.

Pesticide disposal

Each type of pesticide waste has its own set of disposal options. **NEVER pour unwanted or leftover pesticide on the ground, in the storm sewer, or down the drain.** However, household disinfectants may be washed down the drain with plenty of water.

Unwanted pesticide product in its original container.

- Give it to someone who understands how to use the product.
- Bring it to your local clean sweep site.
- Return unopened containers to the retailer.

Leftover pesticide mix in the sprayer.

- Apply it to another site listed on the label (e.g., lawn, garden).
- Give it and the labeled container to someone who understands how to use it.

Pressure-treated wood.

- Dispose of in trash. **DO NOT burn:** toxic chemicals may be produced.

Contaminated clothing.

- You cannot fully clean clothing that is drenched with pesticide product.
- Discard rubber gloves after several uses.
- Wrap in newspaper and put in the trash.

Pesticide impregnated materials.

(Used flea and tick collars, no-pest strips, ant and roach baits, and treated garden seed.)

- Wrap in newspaper and put in the trash.

Pesticide containers

Regardless of the type of container or pesticide that it held:

- **DO NOT** reuse for any purpose
- **DO NOT** recycle
- **DO NOT** bury or burn
- Instead, wrap empty containers in newspaper and put them in the trash.

Empty aerosol cans.

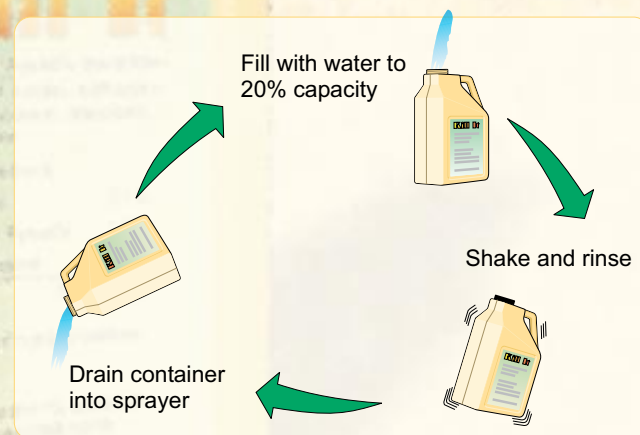
- Do not puncture because contents are often under pressure.

Paper or cardboard containers.

- Shake thoroughly to remove all dry pesticide residue for application.

Plastic containers.

- After you use all the pesticide, complete this rinse cycle **3 times** and crush the container.



It is important to empty both cardboard and plastic containers of any pesticide residue. Not only is it safer to dispose of a clean container but it is a waste of money not to use all of the product you purchased.