

# MAFES Dawg Tracks

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MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™  
MS AGRICULTURAL AND  
FORESTRY EXPERIMENT STATION

Safe Pesticide  
Storage and Disposal

Pesticides in our agriculture industry are very necessary. Our agriculture crops would resemble those back in the 40s and 50s when we have very little control of invasive grasses, weeds and insects. The whole industry has flourished including agronomy, horticulture, forage crops, along with beef and dairy cattle.

However, while all these new chemicals for the industry were being released, there was a down side, that being the misuse of handling them and applying them in the fields, orchards, and pastures. As the technology of these various chemicals progressed, so did the handling, disposal and other safety aspects.

In this issue we shall discuss the storage and disposal of pesticides:

## Undiluted Pesticides are Dangerous-

- ✓ Even small amounts of undiluted pesticides  
~significantly damage the environment  
~contaminate your clothing.  
~result in a serious illness or death to a person or an animal

These are the reasons why it's important to be extra cautious when storing pesticides. It is also extremely important to take certain precautions when disposing of them.

## Tips for Safe Storage-

- ✓ Always read the pesticide label for specific storage instructions.
- ✓ Store the pesticides in their original containers. Be sure the labels are legible.
- ✓ Containers should be marked with the date of purchase. This enables you to use the older ones first.
- ✓ Never store pesticides in soda bottles or food containers- no matter how small the amount is. Accidental poisonings by ingestion can and do occur.
- ✓ Store pesticides in cool, dry areas, protected from moisture and temperature extremes. Freezing or heat may cause pesticide containers to break. It can also reduce the effectiveness of some pesticides.
- ✓ Avoid storing pesticides in full sun or near heat sources such as heaters, incinerators, or gas-powered equipment. Many pesticides are flammable and may explode or ignite.
- ✓ Store pesticides away from personal protective equipment, food, clothing, seed, and cleaning materials and oily rags.
- ✓ Store all pesticides out of the reach of children and animals to avoid an accident.
- ✓ Store pesticides in a locked area with warning signs on the door or entrance.

## Disposing of Left- over Pesticides-

- ✓ Never dump left over pesticides on the ground or into or near water, down a toilet or a drain.
- ✓ If you have a small amount of chemicals left over, ask your supervisor about :  
~applying it to another site listed on the label.  
~follow all label directions **or**  
~give the left over pesticide to another trained and qualified applicator.  
~if you have to dispose of the left over material –follow the label and/or the material safety data sheet (MSDS).

## Disposing of Empty Containers-

- Always wear your PPE required by the label or MSDS when handling pesticide containers.
- Never reuse an empty pesticide container for any other use.
- Don't bury them, burn them or take them home.
- Emptied containers should be triple rinsed. Do this by the following method:  
-Fill the empty container with clean water until it is ¼ full.  
-Put the cap on. Carefully shake or roll the container so the water completely rinses the inside.  
-Pour the rinse water from the container into your spray tank.  
Repeat this 2 more times –total of 3 times (triple rinse).
- If you are uncertain about whether a specific container can be triple rinsed, ask your supervisor for guidance.
- Another method to rinse pesticide containers is with a high pressure nozzle, specifically designed for this use. Again you should ask your supervisor if you are uncertain as to whether this type of equipment is available.
- Follow your supervisor's instructions for temporarily storing clean pesticide containers. The supervisor may have an arrangement with an approved recycling company that will dispose of them through shredding and reselling the material.

## Pesticide Storage and Disposal - DOs and DON'Ts

### DO:

- ~Always store pesticides in their original container.
- ~Report any pesticide leaks or spills to your supervisor.
- ~Triple rinse empty containers immediately as they are empty.  
After triple rinsing and replacing the cap on the container, you may punch a couple of holes in the bottom and dispose in your garbage, unless there is a program for recycling.

### DON'T:

- ~Ever store pesticides in soda bottles or food containers.
- ~Transport pesticides in the passenger compartment of your car or truck.
- ~Eat, drink or smoke in the pesticide storage room.
- ~Never reuse an empty pesticide container for any purpose.
- ~Never dump leftover pesticides on the ground, into or near water, down a toilet or a drain.

**BEWARE!! A SLIP OR A TRIP  
MEANS A HOSPITAL TRIP!!!**

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**AVOID A SCENE  
KEEP YOUR WORK PLACE CLEAN**

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