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On-Farm Pesticide Storage

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Careless or improper pesticide storage procedures are an invitation to personal grief and economic disaster. About 75 percent of all pesticide accidents are non-use incidents. Pesticide accidents often involve children under 5 years of age. Also, livestock losses can occur if pesticides are inadvertently mixed with feed or cattle eat them.

Improper storage of pesticides and disposal of pesticide containers are contrary to federal and state regulations. Improper storage can result in a citation, a lawsuit or both. Storage and disposal instructions are on product labels, and information in this publication does not override the manufacturer's directions. Always read and follow specific label instructions for proper pesticide use, storage and disposal.

Selecting a Safe Storage Site

The site you select should be located downwind and with drainage away from dwellings, play areas,

feedlots, barns and gardens. Avoid a site near a pond and any structure or area that could be contaminated by pesticides in case of fire or accident. Also, choose a site free from flooding and where any runoff or drainage will not contaminate surface or groundwater.

Ideally, pesticide storage should be in a secure, fire-resistant structure with a dirt or concrete floor and good ventilation. Depending on the amount of pesticides to be stored, a separate building, room or enclosure may be needed. If your inventory is small, you do not need a separate building. In that case, the storage area should be enclosed on the first floor of a building and kept locked.

Preventing Accidents: Recommendations and Precautions

You are responsible for the security of your pesticides at all times — during transportation, their stay in a mixing-loading area and at all other

times. Here are some precautionary measures to help prevent accidents. Some of these are required by law but all should be practiced.

Purchase and Transportation

- Buy and store only that amount of pesticide that will be used during a growing season. This reduces the chances of pesticide accident.
- When pesticides are delivered, store them immediately and lock the storage facility. This helps prevent theft and access to the materials by children or other unauthorized persons.

Storage

- Keep only pesticides and pesticide equipment in a pesticide storage facility.
- Never store respirators or protective clothing in the same place pesticides are stored.
- Keep pesticides in the dark. Light causes some pesticides to break down.

- Place weatherproof signs with the following warning on all four sides of the storage facility:

DANGER
PESTICIDE STORAGE AREA
ALL UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS KEEP OUT
PELIGRO
AREA DE ALMACENAMIENTO DE PESTICIDAS
PROHIBIDA LA ENTRADA A PERSONAS NO AUTORIZADAS

- Never store pesticides where food, feed, seed, fertilizers, veterinary supplies or other materials can become contaminated. Also, do not keep any of these items in an old pesticide storage area.

- Never use an old pesticide storage area as an animal shelter.

- If possible, keep pesticides below 85° F in summer and above freezing (40° F is best) in winter. Temperature extremes can cause deterioration.

- Keep storage areas dry.

- An explosion-proof exhaust fan may be needed in the storage area to reduce the temperature and concentration of toxic fumes. The fan should be installed so that fumes can be exhausted where they will not endanger people, plants or animals.

- Store pesticides off the floor on wood pallets or shelves. This helps keep them from picking up moisture and helps prevent containers from rusting.

- Many chemical companies recommend that pesticides be stored for no longer than 2 years. Some manufacturers will not guarantee their products beyond this time.

- To prevent contamination or accidental use of the wrong chemical, store herbicides, insecticides and fungicides separately in designated areas within the storage facility.

- Treated baits, such as rodent and bird poisons, should be protected from picking up offensive odors that will make them ineffective. Store treated baits in several layers of plastic bags such as garbage bags. Also, keep them as far away from other pesticides as possible to help reduce contamination.

Application

- Take pesticides from a storage area **only** when they are to be applied,

returned to a dealer or manufacturer or discarded.

- Do not leave pesticide containers unattended during application procedures.

Containers

- Pesticides should be stored only in their original containers with labels that are clearly visible. A pesticide's shelf life is shortened once the container is opened. All pesticide containers in storage should be checked frequently for corrosion, leaks and loose caps and bungs.

- The contents of a damaged container should be transferred only to a container that originally contained exactly the same pesticide formulation and has its label intact.

- Remove leaking or damaged containers from the storage area. Dispose of both container and contents properly and legally.

- Pesticides should **NEVER** be stored in a food or drink container.

- Empty containers must be kept in a storage area until they can be disposed of properly and legally. Never use old containers for feeding or watering animals or for storage of any other material.

Accessibility

- You are breaking state and federal law if you allow unauthorized persons to have access to pesticides.

- Records of the different pesticides, their location and storage area floor plans should be available to the local police or county sheriff, fire department and public health departments.

Handling Pesticide Spills

Accidents do happen, and you may be unfortunate enough to be involved in a pesticide spill. The accepted practice of controlling, containing and cleaning up a spill is:

1. **Control the spill first.** If a valve is open, turn it off. If a hose has burst, turn off the pump. If a container has leaked, place the leaking container into a larger one or somehow stop the flow of the pesticide. Do all of this with utmost care so that you do not contaminate yourself, anyone else or any animals. Be sure to wear protective clothing and a respirator when working on the spill.

2. **Contain the spill!** Take actions that will stop the pesticide's spread. For liquids, put up a dike of soil or anything else that will keep the pesticide from spreading or flowing downhill. Cover it with an absorbent material. For pesticides that can be blown around, cover with plastic or mist with water.

3. **Clean up a small spill.** Cat litter, clay, soil or sawdust will all act as absorbents. A powder can be misted until it can be shoveled. All contaminated dirt, absorbent material and spilled pesticide should be placed in a sealable 55-gallon drum.

For a large spill that is more than local services can clean up, call Chem Trec or one of the pesticide spill teams listed below:

Chem Trec (800) 424-9300

Idaho Spill Teams:

F.M.C. — Caldwell

Don Slack 459-0733, Home 375-1535

Western Farm Service — Ft. Hall
 Jeff Nale 529-3090, Home 785-0465

NORTRACE — Jerome
 Joyce Rosencrantz 324-8183,
 Home 734-8355

Different materials can be used to neutralize the pesticide that you cannot pick up. These are: hydrated lime, lye, ammonia, laundry bleach, soda ash or detergent. If you do not know which to use, telephone the manufacturer of the pesticide. You can also get this information from Chem Trec.

All excess pesticides and contaminated cleanup materials must be disposed of at Wes Con, Grand View, Idaho.

Remember, you are responsible for the security of your pesticides.