

MINISTER'S MESSAGE



Hon. Dr. Leslie Ramsammy MP
Minister of Agriculture

The Ministry of Agriculture commemorates the launch of Pesticides Awareness Week, 2013 from the 27th October – 2nd November, 2013 under the theme "Pesticides – Store Wise, Save Lives".

From healthcare to food production, the manipulation of chemicals for human use has been nothing short of ground breaking. The most recent manipulation of chemicals for varying applications as pesticides has enabled advances in food technology areas like biotechnology and pest control.

Globally, large scale use of pesticides has resulted in environmental degradation and exposing humans and wildlife to high levels of chemicals that cause adverse impacts on nature and human health. Public concerns about the adverse impacts of chemicals on human health and the environment have made the sound management of chemicals and their associated wastes an essential component of overall public policy in countries at all stages of development, especially developing countries.

While chemicals can make significant contributions to resolving many modern issues like pest control products to restrict the spread of vector borne diseases such as malaria, if not properly managed, these chemicals can cause significant damage to human health and the environment. Hence, the ever present need for Government to direct increasing attention to risk management actions so as to protect our citizens and our precious environment from the threats posed by pesticides.

Note should be taken that pesticide use has been one reason why food production has increase. Its use has contributed to decreased hunger in the world.

These chemicals are inherently poisonous in nature and since the inception of their use have resulted in accidental poisonings both acute and chronic in nature to human health. Storage of pesticides is an area of severe concern in a society where suicide rates are high using chemicals. It is important today that we send a message that all pesticides must be stored under lock and key and away from children, animal feed and foods. These and other storage guidelines are important to be followed to prevent cases of pesticides poisonings. The easy access to these chemicals by persons who are not pesticide users is alarming. Many persons also store pesticides in other containers which can be easily mistaken and result in pesticide poisonings. We have seen where drinks, water and rum bottles just to name a few are used to store pesticides. These chemicals should never be stored in containers other than their originally labeled containers. Pesticides containers MUST NEVER be used for storage of foods or any other products. For households, remember to store pesticides high enough so that they are out of reach of children and pets.

Over the next few days our aim is to raise awareness on pesticides storage and improve current storage practices in Guyana among pesticides users. It is important that everyone stand up and take note and encourage that person that you know who has pesticides and is practicing improper storage to do better for their health and yours. Improper storage contribute to its being used for suicide. As the theme suggests, wise storage can be lifesaving and crucial to the protection of our families.

Against this backdrop, we celebrate Pesticides Awareness Week 2013 with our Caribbean brothers and sisters, with the theme: "Pesticides-Store Wise, Save Lives!" Stakeholders including farmers, pest control operators, teachers, environmental health workers, sales persons, household users and stock room keepers should be acquainted with the regulations governing the safe storage of pesticides and should adhere to them at all times.

Lastly, in the commercial setting, we should strive to design and build pesticide storage structures to keep pesticides secure and isolated from the surrounding environment. Keep a written pesticide inventory and the material safety data sheet for the chemicals used on site. Sensitization and sharing of best practices regarding pesticides use can never be overdone.

Pesticides will continue to be an integral part of our lives in the foreseeable future. Therefore for the sustainable management of our environment, our health and our future, we must remember: "Pesticides-Store Wise, Save Lives!"

Dr. Leslie Ramsammy
Minister of Agriculture



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PESTICIDES AWARENESS WEEK, 2013



SAFE PESTICIDE STORAGE



The farmer who decides to use a pesticide is not only responsible for his own health but also for that of others and the environment, therefore safe and proper storage of pesticides is important.

A suitable Storage Site:-

- Protects people & animals from accidental exposure & poisoning
- Protects the environment from accidental contamination
- Prevents damage to pesticides & avoids wastage of money
- Protects the pesticide from theft.



Where can I safely store my pesticides?

Pesticide storage facilities must be located away from humans & animals

- A separate structure like a utility room or garden shed should be built. If this is not possible a cabinet can be used, that is high enough to be out of the reach of children & animals
- It must be well ventilated
- It must not be in an area that floods or in places where the pesticides might spill or leak into drains, rivers or water ways
- Store away from open flames like your kitchen, grill area and far from ignition sources like cars or lawn mowers



Do I need to secure the area?



Keeping unauthorised persons out is an important function of your pesticide storage facility

- Keep the facility securely locked
- Post "PESTICIDES – KEEP OUT" signs in a clearly visible area
- You can also post "NO SMOKING" and "DANGER" signs



What containers can I use to store my pesticides?



- Always store pesticides in their original containers
- Don't transfer the chemical to other containers, unless the original container is damaged. If this occurs, make sure the new container is clearly labelled
- The label is a legal requirement and should have the listing ingredients, directions for use, first aid and expiry date of the pesticide



- NEVER transfer pesticides to food or beverage containers., children or others may mistake them for something to eat or drink.
- NEVER store pesticides in Application Equipment like spray bottles, spray cans or mist blowers.
- Always read the label to calculate the amount of pesticide required to avoid wastage.



How should I organise my storage area?

- Pesticide storage facility should be clean and neat
- Pesticides should be stored off the floor and low to the ground. This prevents metal cans from rusting and plastic bags from caking due to dampness
- Store dry pesticides above liquid pesticides. This will prevent the liquid pesticide from spilling or leaking on to the dry pesticides and contaminating them
- Ensure containers are tightly closed and bags tightly sealed



Safety Tips for Your Storage Facility

- Post emergency telephone numbers by your storage facility
- Have clean water, soap and a first aid kit close at hand in case of emergency
- Install a fire extinguisher approved for all types of fires including chemical fires – never use water on chemical fires
- Ensure empty pesticide containers are triple rinsed and punctured and stored in a separate section of the facility until the can be recycled or disposed of
- Keep an inventory of the pesticide in the storage facility and keep stocks low. Only buy what you need for one season.

Remember!

**PESTICIDE STORED WISE -
SAVE LIVES**



Coordinating Group of Pesticides
Control Boards of the Caribbean

For further information contact:



**PESTICIDES
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CONTROL BOARD**

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