

Safety Tips

Pesticides

Once we start eating and playing more outdoors, we are quickly reminded which living creatures dominate the earth: insects. Weeds attack the lawn. Mice carry off the dog food in the garage. Mildew grows on the siding. Here are some tips for making sure that you don't harm yourself, your family or your pets while fighting these pests.

1. Pesticides are the second leading cause of household poisonings in America. At least 2 million people have harmful exposures to aerosol bug killers and repellents and other sorts of household pesticides. More than half of those who die from pesticide-related poisoning are children.
2. Read labels carefully and follow the instructions for how to apply, how much and how often.
3. Try to substitute non-toxic insecticides.
4. If you have to dilute a pesticide, use a special container and mark it with the contents and the word "Poison." Never use a bottle or job that once contained food or drink. If you need mixing spoons, but a special one your using with pesticides and keep it with the pesticides in a secure cabinet.
5. Don't mix pesticides in an area that your family or pet uses.
6. Protect your eyes and skin. Stay upwind of the area you're spraying.
7. Unless the label says differently, don't store diluted pesticide sprays. They often don't remain effective. Instead, follow the instructions for disposal.
8. Don't contaminate the storage area with spilled pesticide.
9. Store undiluted pesticides correctly. Ideally, keep them in a cabinet or closet that you can lock. It should be dry and well-ventilated.
10. Store pesticides in their original containers. Don't remove the label.