



Disposal of Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals

Rural Chemicals Program

Introduction

Under the *Agricultural and Veterinary Products (Control of Use) Act, 2002* any person disposing of an agricultural or veterinary chemical must take all reasonable and practicable measures to prevent or minimise contamination, environmental harm and risks to human health and safety. The *Environment Protection Act, 1993* also requires a person to take all reasonable and practical measures to prevent or minimise any resulting environmental harm when disposing of chemicals. This fact sheet provides advice about proper disposal of agricultural and veterinary chemicals, containers and associated waste in order to comply with legislative requirements.

Planning

Avoid disposal problems associated with excess product by purchasing only the amount of pesticides that you will need in one season. Do not stockpile materials. Recommendations for use may change and newly released chemicals may be superior to older ones. Extended storage may cause the effective shelf life of products to be exceeded.

Read the Label

The product label must include instructions for disposal. Always read the label for advice.

Spray Mixes and Rinse Water

Mix only as much product, according to the label directions, as you need for a particular job. If you do mix too much, use the material in the recommended manner on another crop or for another use listed on the label. Clean out the equipment when spraying is completed and dispose of rinse water from the spray tank over part of the target area. DO NOT dump the tank contents in one spot.

Decontaminating Equipment

There are two acceptable approaches to decontaminating equipment. The choice depends on the property and the amount of spraying that is done. Both approaches can be combined on the same property. DO NOT allow wastewater carrying pesticide residues to run into any stormwater drain, sewer or watercourse. This is an offence under the Environment Protection Authority's Water Quality Policy.

- Decontaminate spray equipment at the site of application and shift the working site frequently. This encourages natural degradation of the pesticides and avoids accumulation of residues.
- Use a dedicated wash-down area, such as a concrete apron next to the chemical storage shed, and collect the waste water in a holding tank or lined evaporation basin. Ensure that the tank or basin is secure from unauthorised access, clearly sign-posted and away from any sensitive areas. A licensed waste disposal contractor equipped to handle chemical waste can empty the holding tank or basin as required. An evaporation basin may require emptying very infrequently. DO NOT create an **unlined** disposal pit for pesticide waste that might allow residues to contaminate the soil or leach into groundwater.

Rinsing Containers

Triple-rinse or pressure-rinse glass, metal, plastic and even some heavy paper containers and add the rinsate to the spray tank. The **drumMUSTER** website at www.drummuster.com.au explains methods to rinse containers properly. Keep empty containers in a secure place prior to disposal.

Disposal of Containers

DrumMuster

DrumMUSTER is a national program for the collection and recycling of empty, cleaned, non-returnable crop production and on-farm animal health chemical containers. It is funded by a levy paid on purchase of chemicals in non-returnable containers over 1 litre or kilogram in content. This levy funds the **drumMUSTER** program and is available to reimburse participating councils for all agreed costs incurred in running **drumMUSTER** collections.

Product eligibility is indicated by a '**drumMUSTER** eligible' containers logo. This logo may be applied to the container as a sticker, as part of the label, or embossed into the container material. A few chemical containers are not eligible for disposal through **drumMUSTER**.

Details of collections are available from participating local councils or chemical resellers, or by visiting the **drumMUSTER** website www.drummuster.com.au.

If a container cannot be returned through **drumMUSTER**, puncture it so that it cannot be re-used, crush if possible, and dump at a municipal rubbish tip. If it is not possible to access a municipal tip, as a last resort you can dispose of clean crushed containers on your property by the following steps:

- select a site that will not allow seepage into watercourses or groundwater
- bury the containers under at least 50 cm of soil
- signpost the site as a contaminated area that cannot be otherwise used.

DO NOT burn containers as toxic fumes may be released.

Unwanted and Unused Chemical Concentrates

If the product is still registered for use and the container, label and product are in good condition, you may be able to pass on the chemical to someone who has an appropriate use for it and is competent to apply it. Ensure that the person receiving your unwanted product is eligible to purchase it for him or herself through normal retail outlets.

Alternatively, one of the following waste disposal programs may be suitable.

Zero Waste SA: Collection and Disposal of Household Hazardous Waste and Farm Chemicals

Zero Waste SA, in conjunction with local councils, offers a collection program for household hazardous waste and farm chemicals. Licensed professional waste management contractors set up temporary collection points in metropolitan and country areas of the State. Householders and farmers can deliver their unwanted chemicals to the collection points for free disposal. Householders and farmers (not businesses) can also dispose of unwanted chemicals free of charge at Zero Waste SA's Household Hazardous Waste collection depot at Dry Creek. The depot is open on the first Tuesday of every month (excluding public holidays) between 9.00 am and midday. Special weekend openings are arranged each year. Visit the Zero Waste SA website www.zerowaste.sa.gov.au for further information or ring 8204 1961 (collection programs) or 8204 1947 (collection depot).

ChemClear

ChemClear is an industry program that will collect some agricultural and veterinary chemicals for disposal. Unwanted chemicals must be registered for disposal, either by ringing 1800 008 182 or by making an online booking on the ChemClear website www.chemclear.com.au. You will be advised when a collection is scheduled for your region. ChemClear is a demand-driven program and collections are only held when there are sufficient quantities to make the operation viable.

Further information:

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