

PESTICIDE STORAGE AND HANDLING

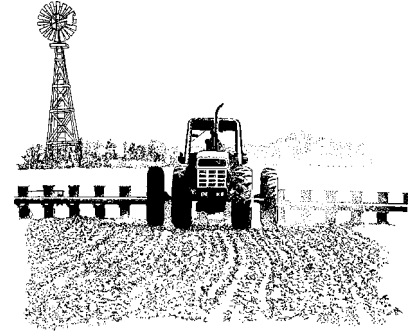
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5/98

FARM*A*SYST

Farm/Ranch Self-Assessment System for Arizona

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This fact sheet is taken from the Arizona Farm*A*Syst workbook. Farm*A*Syst is a voluntary groundwater pollution prevention program designed for farmers and rural residents. The goals of the program are to help rural residents: understand potential causes of groundwater contamination, identify farmstead management practices that pose risks to groundwater, and develop a plan to reduce those risks.

Pesticides are important for the agricultural industry. They increase crop production while saving time and labor. But pesticides can show up where they're not wanted, such as in groundwater or surface water. The greatest concern with using pesticides is the health risk they pose to humans and animals.

Pesticides can cause acute or chronic health effects. Acute effects occur almost immediately after exposure to large amounts of a pesticide. Symptoms include nausea, dizziness, vomiting, skin rashes, lung and eye irritation, and even death. Chronic effects develop over time from exposure to low levels of pesticides. Cancer, birth defects, organ damage, and disorders of the nervous system are examples of chronic health effects.

The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality has detected some pesticides in groundwater throughout the state. Although they usually are found in amounts legally considered safe for drinking water, their presence in groundwater is a concern. Proper use, storage and handling of pesticides will reduce the risks of further polluting groundwater sources.

What can you do?

1. Follow label directions and handle pesticides carefully, especially during mixing and loading. Make sure that everyone knows what to do if a leak or spill occurs.
2. Avoid the prolonged storage of pesticides. Buy only the amounts you need and make sure that you have a secure storage area. Dispose of empty pesticide containers safely. Apply rinsate to a labeled site — one that is listed on the pesticide label as being legally approved for application of the pesticide.
3. Keep good records regarding pesticide purchases, inventories, applications, and Material Safety Data Sheets.
4. Attend Arizona Pesticide Applicator Training sessions.

Item	Question	Yes	No
1. Maximum storage time for any pesticide.	a. Pesticides are stored for immediate use period, or up to one month.		
	b. Pesticides are stored for more than 6 months.		
2. Distance from pesticide storage to nearest well.	a. Pesticide storage is greater than 100 feet from the nearest well.		
	b. Pesticide storage is <u>less</u> than 100 feet from the nearest well.		
3. Spill or leak containment in mixing/loading area.	a. Area has permanent roof, impermeable floor with curb, and floor drain empties into holding tank, <u>or</u> mixing is done at spray application site.		
	b. Area has no roof or floor.		
4. Transporting pesticides on the farm.	a. Pesticides are secured during on-farm transport.		
	b. Pesticides are not secured during transport.		

The questions listed above can help you determine whether your pesticide storage and handling practices may pose a risk to groundwater.

Take a few minutes to complete the questions. If you answered **yes** to mostly "**a**" questions, your groundwater is probably safe from becoming polluted from your pesticide storage and handling practices. If you answered **yes** to mostly "**b**" questions, then your groundwater may be at high risk of becoming polluted.

Worksheet number three in the Farm*A*Syst book will give you a more complete assessment of your pesticide storage and handling practices. If you are interested in obtaining a copy of Arizona's Farm*A*Syst workbook, please contact the College of Agriculture's Publications Distribution Center at 4042 North Campbell Avenue, Tucson, Arizona 85721. The office phone number is (520) 621-1713 and the FAX number is (520)795-8508. The cost of the workbook is \$5.00 plus shipping. Contact your county extension office or NRCS office if you have questions about how to use the workbook.