



# Information

DEPARTMENT OF ENTOMOLOGY • COLLEGE PARK, MD 20742 • (301) 405-3913

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## Pesticide Storage Security

### Pesticide Information Leaflet No. 39

Amy E. Brown, Ph.D., Coordinator  
Pesticide Education and Assessment Programs  
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Security of pesticide storage areas should always be a prime consideration for pesticide dealers, distributors, and users. The potential for human harm through incidental exposure of persons, especially children, who should not have access to the area is one concern. Others include environmental harm, vandalism or theft with possible misuse of products, and, unfortunately, the potential for use by terrorists and saboteurs. Some pesticides, including organophosphates, paraquat, and others, have rapid, highly visible effects on human health. Other pesticides, including many herbicides, are capable of causing eye, skin, and respiratory irritation. Even products not considered to be highly acutely toxic would disrupt the infrastructure and/or cause panic if introduced into water sources, sprayed over populated areas, or otherwise misused. Legal limits of the amount of various potential contaminants in water exist; if these limits are exceeded, the water source must be cleaned up to bring levels down below the maximum allowable contamination before the water can be used.

This leaflet describes general good storage practices as well as considerations to prevent theft and/or accidental exposure from storage areas. Many of the guidelines apply to all types of pesticide storage areas; a few are appropriate only for dealers and distributors. Additional resources include information posted on the following web sites:

<http://www.epa.gov/swercepp/pubs/secale.pdf>

<http://www.epa.gov/swercepp/factsheets/lepccct.pdf>

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Maintain a separate location for the storage of pesticides. If the storage area is located within a larger structure, provide access through a separate outside door. Establish and maintain facility perimeter security through installing fencing, caging areas, or other means.

Keep the storage area locked. Limit access to all storage areas, and tightly control access keys. Keep a list (in a separate place, such as an office) of all individuals with keys. Do not allow customers or unauthorized people to have access to the storage area even during business hours.

Assure that locks are case-hardened, tamper-resistant, and in top working order. Use cable seal locks to secure individual storage containers.

Ventilate the storage area appropriately, but do not use structures with windows large enough for someone to enter.

Consider installing security lighting and systems for handling emergency situations (video cameras, alarms, etc.). Check systems frequently to make sure they are functioning fully. Dogs can also be effective deterrents against criminal activity.

Post the storage area appropriately to deter accidental exposures. Example: "Danger -- Pesticides – Keep Out." Consider the need for posting this information in a second language. Also post "No Smoking" signs and do not allow smoking in or near the storage area or facility.

Store pesticides only in their original containers. Make sure the label is intact and all information is legible.

Store pesticides away from food, feed, seed, and fertilizers and away from areas with other activities.

Do not sell or give pesticides to someone you do not know. If you do sell pesticides, make sure the buyer has appropriate documentation.

Post the name, address, and telephone number of at least one contact person at the primary entrance to the storage area and keep another copy of this information separately, as in a central office. Indicate the location of the nearest telephone.

Establish contact with local law enforcement and fire authorities. Post emergency telephone numbers (Poison Control Center, police, fire department) in the storage area and in a central location.

Maintain copies of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) in a central location.

Maintain an updated inventory of products. List at least the product name, date of purchase, and location within the storage area. Store the inventory list separately from the storage area so that a copy can be accessed in case of an accident.

Inspect the storage area regularly and maintain a log of the inspection procedure. Maintain the storage area in good repair.

Make sure products identified for disposal are kept in the locked storage area until they are actually disposed of.

Keep pesticide application equipment secure, also. Equipment small enough to be carried should be locked in a shed or other appropriate storage area. Control the number of keys to the area, and maintain a list of individuals who have keys. Never leave ignition keys in application equipment (tractors, airplanes, etc.).

Where possible, aircraft and crop protection products should be stored in locked hangars with electronic security systems when not in use. Loader trucks, forklifts, or other equipment may also be parked and temporarily disabled in such a manner as to block movement of the aircraft.

In cases where hangar space is not available and aircraft must be left outdoors, propeller chains, locking high strength tie down chains, or blocking equipment are practical alternatives. Operators are also encouraged to explore the possibility of installing hidden security switches to prevent unauthorized aircraft starting. This, however, must be accomplished in compliance with FAA regulations governing aircraft modification.

Lock pesticide transport vehicles whenever the driver is away from the vehicle, and ensure that unauthorized persons cannot get into areas of vehicles where pesticides are stored, such as open truck beds. Do not leave vehicles containing pesticide unattended, and never leave pesticides unsecured. Be aware of the potential for siphoning or otherwise stealing pesticide from filled tanks such as mini-bulk equipment.

Security also involves being alert to unusual or suspicious actions. Maintain awareness of unusual activity of unauthorized persons during transport and

application of pesticides. Indications that something is amiss may include unusual behavior by a purchaser or other individual who:

- seems unfamiliar with details of using an agrochemical;
- acts nervous, seems uneasy or vague, and avoids eye contact;
- demands immediate possession of purchased material instead of available future delivery;
- asks for material in smaller, individual containers rather than in bulk;
- insists on paying with cash instead of using credit or a check.

Appropriate law enforcement agency telephone numbers should be posted in a prominent place and employees should be instructed to maintain enhanced security awareness.

Promptly report any thefts of pesticides or equipment and any suspicious activity to designated authorities.

- Contact your local law enforcement agency.
- Contact the FBI field office. Information on the location of the nearest FBI office is available at [www.fbi.gov](http://www.fbi.gov).
- Contact the Maryland Department of Agriculture, Pesticide Regulation Section, Annapolis, MD at 410-841-5710.

## References

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