

For Immediate Release - Joint Press Release

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Mainers Urged to Sign Up for Free Disposal of Unusable Pesticides

AUGUSTA—This October, the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry's (DACF) Board of Pesticides Control (BPC) will team up with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to help Mainers dispose of unusable and waste pesticides. The Obsolete Pesticides Collection Program, jointly sponsored by the BPC and DEP, and funded through pesticide product registration fees, has kept more than 99 tons of pesticides out of the waste stream since its start in 1982.

This free annual program is open to homeowners, family-owned farms and greenhouses. Collections will occur at four sites: Presque Isle, Bangor, Augusta, and Portland. **Participants must pre-register by September 29, 2017. Drop-ins are not permitted.** The collected chemicals will be taken to out-of-state disposal facilities licensed by the federal Environmental Protection Agency where they are incinerated or reprocessed.

Pesticides may become unusable due to age, freezing or evaporation, or because their legal registration changes. It is important to remember that the term "pesticides" includes not only insecticides, but also herbicides, fungicides and rodenticides. Past participants in the program have reported finding obsolete pesticides in barns of inherited properties, garages of newly purchased homes and other unexpected places.

Governor Paul R. LePage is urging Mainers to take advantage of this opportunity to protect the environment and save money through this once a year collection event that highlights cooperation between government agencies. "This is an opportunity for Mainers to dispose of unusable pesticides properly and at no expense," said Governor LePage. "Through consolidated collections at four central locations and the use of in-house resources and expertise, disposal costs are reduced to about \$2 per pound. That is a great value for Maine taxpayers lowers costs and helps protect the environment."

DACF Commissioner Walt Whitcomb is encouraging Mainers to seize this free opportunity for pesticide disposal. "This program provides essential protection of the public, wildlife, and environment. Pesticides thrown in the trash or poured down the drain contaminate drinking water and cause environmental damage," said Commissioner Whitcomb. "I urge people storing these products to contact the BPC and register as soon as possible for the October program."

"Providing Maine residents with a free and easy solution to properly dispose of pesticides gives everyone an opportunity to make a positive impact on our environment and public health," said Paul Mercer, DEP Commissioner.

To register, get details, and learn important information about the temporary storage and transportation of obsolete pesticides, go to the BPC Web site at thinkfirstspraylast.org , or call 207-287-2731.

Finally, a way to dispose of old, unusable pesticides safely, easily and for free



Maine's Obsolete Pesticide Collection Program

Maine Board of Pesticides Control

Maine Department of Environmental Protection

October 2017 Collection:

- Registration is required; no drop-ins accepted
- Register by September 30th
- Sites in Presque Isle, Bangor, Augusta, and Portland

For more information and to register:

www.thinkfirstspraylast.org

207-287-2731



Annual Obsolete Pesticide Collection

The program

The Board of Pesticides Control (BPC) and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) provide Maine citizens with a responsible, free opportunity to dispose of their obsolete pesticides. Once a year, these agencies collect obsolete, banned, or otherwise unusable pesticides for secure disposal. The program is available to homeowners, family farms and greenhouses.

How to participate

1. Obtain an Obsolete Pesticide Inventory form online at thinkfirstspraylast.org , or call the BPC at (207) 287-2731 to have one mailed to you.
2. Fill out the form completely. Describe unidentified products in as much detail as possible.
3. Store unwanted pesticides properly until the date of the collection. BPC staff will contact you two weeks prior to the collection to inform you of your local collection date and location. Travel directions with a map, transport instructions, and two copies of shipping papers will be mailed to you.
4. Safely pack and transport your pesticides to the assigned site on the collection date. At the appropriate time.

Safe storage and transportation

Until the day of the collection, safe storage practices remain the best way to prevent a health or environmental crisis from occurring in your backyard.

- Keep pesticides high, dry and locked away from kids and pets.
- Dry materials should be free of moisture and wrapped in heavy duty plastic bags.
- If a bottle, bag, or other container leaks, call DEP for advice on proper cleanup.
- Never transport pesticides in the interior of your vehicle. Use the truck bed or the car trunk and brace items to prevent shifting while traveling.
- During travel, keep emergency numbers and one copy of the shipping papers on yourself. Keep the other copy in your vehicle in case an accident requires you leave the vehicle and inform authorities.
- Drive directly to the pesticide collection site after you load your vehicle. Drive carefully, please! You are responsible for any spills and their subsequent clean-up costs.

Prevention

The best way to prevent obsolete pesticides is to buy the right product and only enough for a given job.

- Know your pest. Not sure?
 - ◆ Visit our GotPests.org site
 - ◆ Call the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Pest Management Office at 1-800-287-0279
 - ◆ Call the Maine Forest Service at (207) 287-2791
- Make sure the product you buy controls that pest. If the pest is not listed on a product's label, the product is not for you!
- Avoid volume and buy-one-get-one-free promotions. The dollar or two saved today can later cost hundreds in hazardous waste disposal fees.
- Surplus pesticides can be difficult to store properly.
- Keep products in good condition. Don't let liquids freeze or moisture damage dry materials.
- Give recently purchased pesticides you no longer need to someone who does. **The best way to dispose of a pesticide is to use it according to its labeled directions.**

For questions and more information:

Maine Board of Pesticides Control

Tel. 207-287-2731

thinkfirstspraylast.org

