

Pesticide Storage FACT SHEET



Introduction


To reduce possible health and environmental risks and to maintain pesticide shelf-life, containers for storing pesticides must be kept clean and in good condition. If containers are not stored in accordance with the product label (and applicator manual for fumigants), or safety data sheet (SDS), there is the increased possibility of product volatilization, spills, leaks, or chemical reactions, and exposure to pesticide handlers and the environment. The product label will provide information about keeping the storage area locked and secured. The SDS will outline specific conditions to store each product, including temperature, incompatible products, and shelf life.

IMPORTANT:

Read the pesticide label(s) for specific storage instructions.

Remember, the label is the law!

Conditions for safe storage

- Store pesticides in a cool and dry location. 
- Store in original containers. Keep tightly closed when not in use. Unmarked containers can be a risk to people, as they do not have additional health precautions or personal protective equipment (PPE) instructions.
- Do not store near food, foodstuffs, drugs, potable water supplies, medical supplies, or application equipment.
- Keep all pesticides out of reach of children. Storing pesticides at heights inaccessible to children will help to limit incidents.

Keep emergency contact information, personal protective equipment (PPE) and safety data sheets outside of the pesticide storage area. In an emergency situation, this information and equipment will be necessary for a proper response to the situation. Ensure that all employees know the location of this information and PPE.

Pesticide Storage Areas

Pesticide storage areas should be constructed in such a manner to be secure, well ventilated, well-lit with ignition-proof lighting, and not located near ignition sources, water bodies, or wells.

- Lock your storage area, as it prevents access to unauthorized people.
- Do not store pesticides near waterways, storm drains or sewer systems. Do not locate storage areas in or near a flood zone.
- Ensure the storage area floor non-porous.



- Separate and label sections in storage areas for each category (e.g., herbicides, insecticides, fungicides). This helps prevent contamination. Ensure that pesticides are stored in a manner that prevents incompatible products from reacting.



- Keep the area around the pesticide storage area free of combustible material, include grass, brush and wood pallets.
- Store dry pesticides above liquids, to prevent contamination in case of a spill.
- Provide sufficient containment for leaks. Putting pesticides in storage bins or trays can limit the spread of spills or leaks.
- Never store pesticides in any food or drink containers, even temporarily.
- Store pesticides in their original containers. However, if you do have to briefly store a pesticide solution in a secondary or service container, follow OSHA regulations and EPA regulations, <https://oda.fyi/PesticideContainers>.
- Shovel, broom, and dustpan
- Heavy duty detergent
- Containers compatible with the material cleaned up and labeled as to the contents.
- First aid equipment, including eye wash stations, wash soap and water, and clean towels should be easily accessible outside the pesticide storage area.

Be Prepared: Emergency Information

Prior to an emergency event, arrange to have your responding fire agency visit to determine how to respond in an emergency. If you store large quantities of pesticides, you may be required to report them to the State Fire Marshal. Reporting quantities vary with the toxicity of the pesticides. If required, NFPA placards are to be posted on the storage area. For more information about the storage of hazardous chemicals, consult Oregon Administrative Rules 437-004-1680.

In case of a fire or an accident, be prepared to communicate the quantity and the name of pesticides stored on site. Notify first responders where you keep pesticides on site. Use signs in accordance with NFPA 704 to show buildings that contain chemicals.

Maintaining A Spill Kit

Keep your spill kit in good condition. Items for a spill kit are determined by Section 6 of the SDS for the stored pesticides.

- Phone numbers for emergency assistance
- Personal protective equipment (in line with Section 8 of the SDS)
- Absorbent materials such as spill tubes, cat litter

Resources

- Remember that pesticide storage is regulated by multiple agencies.
- In case of an accidental release or fire, call 911.
- For accidental spills, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) recommends that all spills are reported to the Oregon Emergency Response System (OERS) at 800.452.0311 or 503.378.6377. There is no DEQ-direct number for reporting spills, but the agency does have duty officers on-call 24/7 to respond to spill reports made to OERS.
- Call Oregon Poison Center for emergency information regarding pesticide exposures, 800.222.1222
- Call the National Pesticide Information Center for non-emergency information about pesticides, 800.858.7378

