



## Pesticide and Container Disposal for Homeowners <sup>1</sup>

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What should you do with the empty container once you have used all of the pesticide or how should you dispose of unusable, unwanted or excess pesticide?

### Empty Containers

To dispose of empty residential-use pesticide containers properly, follow the directions provided on each product label. The directions for disposal of pesticide containers often differ from product to product. Typical container disposal statements found on labels include:

- Do not reuse bag. Securely wrap original container in several layers of newspaper and discard in trash.
- Do not reuse container. Wrap container and put in trash collection.
- Replace cap and discard container in trash. Do not incinerate or puncture. (aerosol containers)

- Do not reuse container. Rinse thoroughly before discarding in trash.

If the label on your empty pesticide container tells you to rinse the container, use the rinse water to dilute the pesticide in your sprayer or applicator container to the correct concentration, or spray it directly on your target site. Do not pour the rinse water into a household drain, on the ground, or into a gutter or storm drain.

For ready-to-use products that do not need to be diluted, such as some lawn weed-control products or indoor-use insecticides, do not rinse the container. There is not a good way to dispose of this rinse water. Some lawn pesticide products come in a single-use hose-end sprayer. You should not try to open and rinse these containers when they are empty.

A primary rule for pesticide containers has been “*Never save or reuse an empty pesticide container for any reason.*” However, there are now a limited number of homeowner-use products which permit the re-use of the application container but only with refills containing exactly the same product.

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Empty household pesticide containers may NOT be recycled in most community recycling programs. Do not dispose of empty pesticide containers by open burning. Do not burn, incinerate or puncture aerosol containers. Follow instructions on the label to prepare the empty container for disposal and put it in the trash.

### **Unwanted, unusable, or excess pesticide**

Sometimes, you may have excess, unwanted or unusable pesticides. What should you do with them?

The label on the product container usually has general guidance for disposal, but unlike the information for container disposal, you may need to check with state or local authorities to determine what to do with the product. Some disposal statements on pesticide products marketed for residential use include:

- It is best to use all of the product in accordance with label directions. If it necessary to dispose of unused product, please follow applicable state or local guidelines.
- Securely wrap container in several layers of newspaper and discard in trash.

It is generally best, if possible, to dispose of the product by using it in accordance with the directions on the product label. This can be done by applying dilute spray mixture to sites listed on the label. There may be times, however, when the contents of a partially filled container cannot be used. Rather than wrapping the container in several layers of newspaper and discarding in the trash, call your local solid waste agency or the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for guidance. Most counties or municipalities in

Florida have collection programs for household hazardous waste that accept residential use pesticide products for disposal. Such programs operate all year round or have specified collection days during the year and are the preferred way of disposal of unwanted, unusable or excess residential-use pesticides. To find the nearest location to drop off your unwanted pesticides call 1-800-CLEANUP or visit [www.Earth911.org](http://www.Earth911.org).

Never pour unwanted pesticides down the drain or on the ground.

To minimize the need to dispose of unwanted pesticides, use them only when necessary; purchase only the amount needed; and use up the product in accordance with the label directions.

## **Be safe, not sorry.**