

## Pesticides Fact Sheet

### *What Are The Potential Hazards?*

Pesticides applied to plants during crop, lawn, and garden maintenance may leach into the ground water and cause contamination. Proper storage, mixing, application, spill cleanup, watering, and disposal procedures should be included in pesticide best management practices.

### *Storing Pesticides*

The fewer pesticides you buy, the fewer you will have to store. Therefore, only purchase the amount and kind of pesticide that is needed. Pesticides should always be stored in sound, properly labeled, original containers. ***Sound containers are the first defense against spills and leaks.***

- Ensure that there are no holes, tears, or weak seams in the containers and that the label is readable.
- Pesticides should be stored in locked, dry cabinets.
- Be sure to store dry products above liquids to prevent wetting from spills.
- Storage and mixing areas should not be located near floor drains of any kind.
- Storage facilities should have secondary containment, such as a berm or dike, which will hold spills or leaks at:
  - 10% of the total volume of the containers, or
  - 110% of the volume of the largest container, whichever is larger.

### *Mixing Pesticides*

- Mix pesticides on an impermeable surface, such as concrete, so any spills will be contained.
- Mix only the amount that you will use:
  - Measure the total square feet you intend to treat.
  - Read the label on the pesticide container and follow the instructions. (These are often given in terms of amount of pesticide to use per thousand square feet.)
  - By properly measuring and calculating, there should be little or no pesticide left in the spray tank when the job is finished and it will be applied at the recommended rate.

### *Applying Pesticides*

Pesticides are used to kill or control weeds (herbicides), insects (insecticides) and fungi (fungicides) that attack plants. Some of these pesticides can move through the soil and into the ground water. Guidelines for the safe use of pesticides are listed below:

- Be willing to accept a low level of weed, insect, and plant disease infestation.
- Use pesticides only when absolutely necessary.
- Identify pests correctly. Use the proper pesticides.
- Read and follow the directions printed on the container labels. Remember, the label is the law.