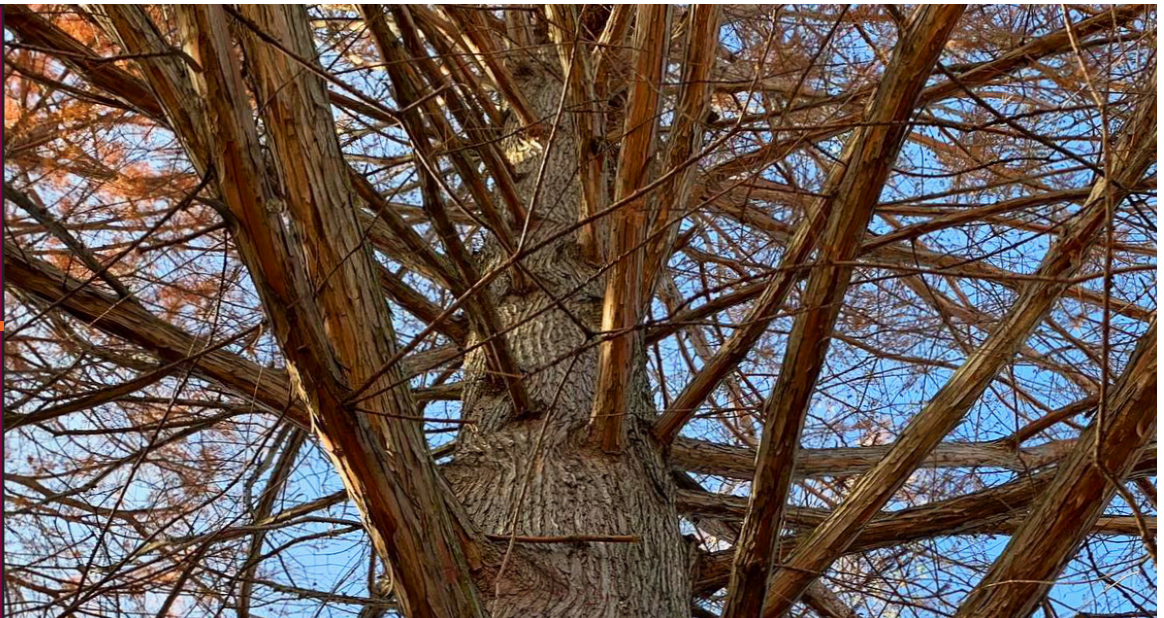


VTPP Quarterly

A Newsletter From Virginia
Tech Pesticide Programs

IN THIS ISSUE

- Safe Transportation of Pesticides
Pages 1-2
- Selecting a Pest Control Company
Pages 2-3
- Blast From the Past: Pesticide Safety Poster of the Month
Page 3-4
- Program Updates
Pages 4-5
- National Pesticide Safety Education Month
Page 6



Winter 2023 • Volume 4, Issue 1 • VTPP.ORG

Safe Transportation of Pesticides

Kathleen Miller – Extension Associate

As planting season nears, it will soon be time to purchase — and subsequently transport — pesticides for upcoming applications. Transporting pesticides can be a hazardous task, making it essential to take safety precautions to reduce the risk of accidents.

Vehicle Safety

When transporting pesticides with a vehicle, it is safest to place them in the back of a flatbed truck lined in steel or plastic and equipped with side and tail racks. If the bed is made of porous material (e.g., wood), it should be lined with an impervious material, such as a plastic tarp. An impervious lining will make clean up much easier in the event of a spill. If a truck is not available and pesticides must be transported in an enclosed vehicle, keep the pesticides in the rearmost (cargo) area of the vehicle, away from the driver. Be sure to open windows for ventilation to decrease the chance of inhaling harmful fumes.

Pesticides should never be transported in

the passenger area of a vehicle or with passengers, children, or pets. Pesticides should never be transported with consumer goods, such as food or clothing, as these items can be easily contaminated. When transporting pesticides, never leave your vehicle unattended if the pesticides are in an unlocked compartment or the open bed of a truck. It is best to transport pesticides in a locked compartment or a locked, enclosed bed.



Containers

Pesticides should always be transported in clearly labeled containers. Before loading the containers, check for any leaks, cracks, rips, or other defects and confirm they are tightly closed. Rolling and sliding may lead to puncturing or ripping of containers. To

prevent this, anchor all pesticide containers securely to the vehicle. Also, be aware of environmental conditions during transit. Pesticides should always be protected from temperature extremes and moisture. Copies of product labels and safety data sheets (SDS) for each product being transported should also be readily accessible in the vehicle during transit.

Spills

When transporting pesticides, be prepared for spills. Have a spill kit on hand and the proper knowledge and training to manage a spill. A basic spill kit should contain these items:

- Personal protective equipment (e.g., chemical-resistant gloves, goggles, coveralls).
- Absorbent materials (e.g., pad, containment tube, kitty litter).
- Broom or shovel.
- Dustpan.
- Container for waste (bin or disposable plastic bag).

If a spill occurs, respond immediately by following the three C's: control, contain, and clean-up.

- **Control** the spill by protecting yourself with PPE and stopping the source of the spill. Be sure to secure the area, and remain there until the issue has been resolved.
- **Contain** the spill using absorbent materials.
- Once the spill has been controlled and contained, **clean up** the material and decontaminate the site.

Refer to the pesticide label and Safety Data Sheet for additional spill management information. If a pesticide spill endangers any person, the general public, or the environment, contact first responders immediately for assistance. In this case, you will also be required to report the spill to the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Office of Pesticide Services within 48 hours by calling (804) 371-6560.

Responsibilities

The operator of a vehicle can be held responsible for any injuries, contamination, or damage resulting from a pesticide spill during transport. The vehicle operator should be knowledgeable of the nature and hazards of the pesticides being transported, and the safe and proper procedures for handling them. When transporting hazardous materials, including pesticides, always follow Department of Transportation regulations. These requirements may include, but are not limited to, displaying vehicle placarding, stringent recordkeeping, licensing drivers to transport hazardous materials, and implementing a security plan. Agricultural operations may be exempt from hazardous materials regulations when certain conditions are met.

These conditions include transportation of hazardous materials between fields on local roads and transportation to or from the farm. For information on what constitutes a hazardous material and their associated transportation regulations, contact the Hazardous Materials Information Center (800) HMR-4922.

For further information on the safe transportation of pesticides, please refer to:

- [How to Comply with Federal Hazardous Materials Regulations](#)
- [Transporting Agricultural Products Safely](#)

Selecting a Pest Control Company

Daniel Frank – Director, VTPP

For many pests, a combination of simple preventative and curative control tactics can be implemented by homeowners to reduce or eliminate a pest population. However, some pest infestations may be too serious or extensive for the general population to solve on their own. In these situations, a pest control professional may be needed. If you need help, what can you do to be sure the pest control company you hire will do a good job? Seek answers to these questions before hiring or signing a contract:

- **Does the company have a good track record?** Do not rely on the company salesperson to answer this question; research the answer yourself. Ask your neighbors and friends; have any of them dealt with the company before? Were they satisfied with the service they received? Call the Better Business Bureau; the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS), Office of Consumer Affairs; or the VDACS Office of Pesticide Services to check if the company has received any complaints.
- **Is the company licensed?** In Virginia, all pest control companies that use pesticides are required to carry a pesticide business license. All employees are required to be trained and certified as either registered technicians or commercial applicators. In addition, these applicators are required to be recertified every two years. The law requires that a certified commercial applicator be available to supervise the application of pesticides in your home. This means the supervisor must be in direct contact with the applicator, but he or she does not have to be on site. This is not the case with untrained applicators (registered technicians who have not completed training). These individuals must be under the direct on-site supervision of a certified commercial applicator at all times during the application. Before signing a contract, ask the company manager and the applicator to show you these credentials; both their pesticide business

license and their current pesticide applicator certificate. Licenses can be independently verified on the VDACS Office of Pesticide Services website.

- **Does the company have insurance?** What kind of insurance? Can the salesperson show documentation to prove the company is insured? In Virginia, businesses that recommend or apply pesticides are required to maintain liability insurance. You should never hire a company that is not insured. As a safety net, make sure you are adequately insured.
- **Is the company affiliated with a professional association?** Professional associations help member companies stay up-to-date on the latest information on pest control methods, safety, training, research, and regulation. Most associations also have a code of ethics that members agree to abide by. The fact that a company chooses to affiliate itself with a professional association shows they are concerned about quality and professionalism in their work. For pest control operators (PCO's or exterminators) these associations may include the National Pest Management Association or the Virginia Pest Management Association. Lawn care companies often belong to national and regional associations such as the National Association of Landscape Professionals and the Virginia Turfgrass Council. The Virginia Nursery and Landscape Association is also affiliated with many landscape firms who apply pesticides for hire in Virginia.
- **Does the company stand behind its work?** What assurances does the company make? Think twice before dealing with a company unwilling to stand behind its work. Be sure to find out what you must do to keep your part of the bargain. For example, in the case of termite control treatments, a guarantee could be invalidated if you make structural changes to the treated building without notifying the pest control company. In addition, many companies require an annual inspection or maintenance contract to keep the guarantee valid. Read the fine print in your contract, and ask questions.
- **Is the company willing and able to discuss the treatment proposed?** Selecting a pest control service is just as important as selecting other professional services. Look for the same high degree of competence you would expect from any professional. The company should inspect your premises and outline a recommended control program. The program should identify
 - Which pests are to be controlled.
 - The extent of the infestation.
 - Which pesticide formulations will be used in your home and why.
 - Methods that will be used in the application.
 - Alternatives that could be used instead.

- Special instructions you should follow to reduce your exposure to the treatment (e.g., vacating the home, emptying cupboards, removing pets, when you can reenter a treated area).
- Things you can do to minimize pest problems in the future.
- **Does the company address your safety in the proposed contract?** Contracts should be developed jointly with the customer. Any safety concerns should be noted and reflected in the choice of any pesticides used. These concerns should include the health of occupants (including allergies), age of occupants (infants and elderly), or pets. Make sure you understand all of the details before you sign the contract, especially those concerning the risks of using pesticides. Pesticide risk is related to the toxicity of the product(s) and the potential for exposure. Just because a pesticide is being used does not mean you are at great risk, as long as your exposure to the chemical is minimized. Make sure you know what is being done to minimize risk before you commit to the treatment. If you need details on the pesticides being used, ask your contractor to review the product labeling with you. If the contractor refuses, look elsewhere for service.

Before making any final decision, get two to three estimates from prospective companies. Focus on value, not price. What appears to be a bargain may merit a second look. Do not always settle on the lowest bid; look for quality. Also, remember that good cooperation is needed between the consumer and the pest control company in order to adequately control the pest(s) and reduce overall pesticide use.

Visit these websites for additional information on selecting a pest control company:

- Environmental Protection Agency – [epa.gov/safepest-control/tips-selecting-pest-control-service](https://www.epa.gov/safepest-control/tips-selecting-pest-control-service).
- VDACS Office of Pesticide Services – [vapesticidesafety.com/hiring_professional.shtml](https://www.vdacs.com/hiring_professional.shtml).

Blast From the Past

Stephanie Blevins Wycoff – Extension Associate

Pesticide Safety Poster of the Month

The two posters below were released by Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) between 1968 and 1974 as part of the Pesticide Safety Poster of the Month Collection. The messages on each poster are simple, concise, and still extremely applicable in the world of pesticide safety education today. Figure 1 reinforces reading pesticide product labels. You should always read the label before you purchase, use, store, or dispose of any pesticide product.

Even if you use a specific pesticide time and again, it is important to read the label on each product package as labeling tends to change over time. Figure 2 reinforces the importance of storing pesticides in their original containers. Never transfer pesticides into food or drink containers. This practice is not only illegal, but it can lead to poisoning or death if a pesticide is accidentally ingested.



Figure 1. VCE Pesticide Safety Poster of the Month, April 1969.



Figure 2. VCE Pesticide Safety Poster of the Month, March 1968.

Program Updates

VTPP Updates

VTPP will continue to host our online PAR course until midnight on Feb. 28, 2023. There is a \$30 fee for this self-paced online recertification course that provides full credit for categories 90 and 91. Share this registration link with any private applicator(s) any private applicator(s) who may be interested in this option: tinyurl.com/VCE-VTPP-PAR-90-91.

You can also find the registration on register.ext.vt.edu by searching under Programs and then under Agriculture or Natural Resources, or by using keywords (i.e., pesticide, applicator, private, recertification, PAR, private applicator, VTPP, Category 90, Category 91).

For guest account issues, please contact Traci McCoy (tsmccoy@vt.edu), and copy Stephanie Collins (collinss@vt.edu) and Patty Taylor (ptaylor1@vt.edu).

VDACS Updates

Errors Regarding Applicator Information

The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Office of Pesticide Services (VDACS-OPS) continues to work to correct any errors involving pesticide applicator recertification/licensing in the new database system. Applicators whose recertification and/or licensing information is incorrect should contact VDACS-OPS via email at: opsclrt.vdacs@vdacs.virginia.gov. In the email request, applicators should provide their name, certification # (if available), and a description of the problem. Multiple staff are monitoring the account daily to resolve any issues.

2023 Pesticide Collection Program

VDACS-OPS in cooperation with Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) is again offering localities or VCE offices the opportunity to participate in the 2023 Plastic Pesticide Container Recycling Program. The Plastic Pesticide Container Recycling Program is designed to provide agricultural producers, pesticide dealers, and pest control firms with an environmentally responsible alternative for the disposal of properly rinsed plastic pesticide containers. A total of 68,708 pounds of plastic pesticide containers were recycled in 2022, for a total of ~2.4 million pounds of containers recycled since 1993.

Localities or VCE offices that have never participated as well as localities or VCE offices that have participated in the past and would like to continue to participate, are required to submit an Administrative Plan. Of particular importance to potential participants are the following requirements which must be addressed in the

Administrative Plan:

- A secure, covered recycling site for the collection of containers.
- Sufficient personnel to assist the recycling contractor in the processing of the containers.
- The name(s) of the container inspector(s) and documentation of training that will be or has been provided to the container inspector(s).

The Project Period is Jan. 1 – Dec. 31, 2023.

Submissions of the activity report and expense reimbursement request, including receipts, for expenses incurred during the project period (Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2023) will be due to VDACS by Jan. 31, 2024.

ALL localities or VCE offices interested in participating in the 2023 Plastic Pesticide Container Recycling Program must submit an Administrative Plan by Jan. 31, 2023 to:

Marlene Larios, Pesticide Program Coordinator
VDACS - Office of Pesticide Services
PO Box 1163
Richmond, VA 23218
marlene.larios@vdacs.virginia.gov

As in the past, participants electing to participate in 2023 will have the option for four successive one-year renewal periods.

For complete guidelines outlining the respective party's program responsibilities, funding availability for the program, and additional requirements for participation (including submission of the Administration Plan), please contact Marlene Larios directly at (804) 371-6561 or via email.

NATIONAL PESTICIDE SAFETY EDUCATION MONTH

February
is
National
Pesticide
Safety
Education
Month!

There are about 1 million certified pesticide applicators in the U.S. 11,000-15,000 pesticide products are registered for use in each state. Common consumer products that contain pesticides include flea collars, ant and roach traps, and some lawn care products like weed and feed. Pesticide Safety Education Programs (PSEPs) are housed at land-grant universities.

*Facts provided by National Stakeholder Team for PSEP Funding

6th Annual NPSE Month - Pesticide Stewardship

Resources:

- Vtpp.org
- Pesticidestewardship.org

Organized by the National Stakeholder Team for Pesticide Safety Education Program Funding, this month-long awareness campaign aims to reinforce safe pesticide use with a wide variety of audiences.