

Homeowner Pesticides: How to choose?

Not all pesticides are created equal!

Did you know?

- **Homeowners use more pesticides, on a pound per acre basis, than farmers do.** Ask yourself – is it really necessary to use a pesticide, or is there another way to control the pest?
- **Every pesticides has one word on the label that tells you about how toxic it is.** Look on the package front for the “Signal Words”: Caution (least toxic), Warning, or Danger (most toxic).
- **Risk of pesticides=Exposure x Toxicity.** Reduce risks of pesticides to yourself and others by choosing products least likely to get on/in you, wear protective gear and choose least toxic products.
- **If some is good, more is not better!** Use pesticides at recommended rates, not double or triple. This only increases your chances of exposure, increases contamination of the environment and helps pests become resistant to pesticides.

(over please)

- **Be a discriminating consumer when buying pesticide products. Examples:**

How a chemical is “packaged” can make a difference in toxicity.

The **same chemical** in liquid concentrate, dust, ready-mixed or covered baits will have differing toxicities. This is because the Active Ingredient (poison) is in different concentrations and the type of formulation determines the likelihood of pesticides being breathed or contacting the skin.

Understanding pest biology can tell you about which product may be the most effective.

Spraying worker ants in your kitchen contaminates the kitchen **and** is not effective because the source of the ants has not been eliminated. A product in covered bait formulation that will be carried back to the ant nest and kill the queen is both safer and more effective.

Read labels carefully and decide if you want to use the product in question. Note:

- Specific pests controlled (is that what you have?)
- Special precautions about toxicity to animals, bees?
- Will you **realistically** be able to use the product and not breathe it or get it on you?