



## FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information on the Regulations controlling pesticides please contact:

Biocides and Pesticides Unit  
Health and Safety Executive  
Magdalen House  
Stanley Precinct  
Bootle  
Merseyside L20 3QZ  
Tel: 0151 951 3535  
email: [biocides@hse.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:biocides@hse.gsi.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.hse.gov.uk/pesticides](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pesticides)

(For information on the safe use of non-agricultural pesticides - insecticides for use in the home, mould-killing pesticides, antifouling paints for boats, rat and mouse poisons, cat and dog repellents and wood preservatives.)

Pesticides Safety Directorate  
Mallard House  
Kings Pool  
3 Peasholme Green  
York YO1 2PX  
Tel: 01904 640 500  
email: [information@psd.defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:information@psd.defra.gsi.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.pesticides.gov.uk](http://www.pesticides.gov.uk)

(For information on home garden insecticides, weedkillers and pesticides to protect house plants.)

An HSE free leaflet *Reporting incidents of exposure to pesticides and veterinary medicines: What to do if you think people, animals or the environment have been harmed by exposure to pesticides or veterinary medicines* is available from HSE Books (INDG141(rev1)).

HSE priced and free publications are available by mail order from HSE Books, PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 2WA Tel: 01787 881165 Fax: 01787 313995 Website: [www.hsebooks.co.uk](http://www.hsebooks.co.uk) (HSE priced publications are also available from bookshops and free leaflets can be downloaded from HSE's website: [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk).)

For information about health and safety ring HSE's Infoline Tel: 08701 545500 Fax: 02920 859260 e-mail: [hseinformationservices@natbrit.com](mailto:hseinformationservices@natbrit.com) or write to HSE Information Services, Caerphilly Business Park, Caerphilly CF83 3GG.

This leaflet contains notes on good practice which are not compulsory but which you may find helpful in considering what you need to do.

© *Crown copyright* This publication may be freely reproduced, except for advertising, endorsement or commercial purposes. First published 9/97. Please acknowledge the source as HSE.

INDG257 Reprinted 7/04 C40

Printed and published by the Health and Safety Executive



# Pesticides USE THEM SAFELY





## WHAT ARE PESTICIDES?

Pesticides contain chemicals, known as active ingredients, which destroy pests, or drive them away. They may be products that you use every day without realising, such as fly sprays, weedkillers, mould killers and products to protect wood from insect or fungal attack. They are used against fungi, mould and insects that may be present in your home or garden, or against weeds and insect pests in your garden. Some are also used in special paints to prevent barnacles and seaweed settling on the hulls of boats.

## WHAT ARE THE CONTROLS ON PESTICIDES?

Unlike most chemicals, pesticides are designed to harm living organisms and therefore there is the potential for harm to people and the environment if they are misused. In the UK, pesticides must have an approval under The Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986 (amended 31 January 1997), The Plant Protection Products Regulations 1995 or the Biocidal Products Regulations 2001, and these Regulations ensure that the correct use of a pesticide should not harm people, non-target species or the environment. All approved pesticides are subject to review and an approval can be amended or withdrawn at any time if necessary.

## USING THE PESTICIDE SAFELY

The label tells you how to apply the pesticide

effectively and how to protect yourself, other people nearby (including children), pets and the environment from harm.

It is very important to read and understand the pesticide label. The instructions must be followed so that the pesticide is used safely and effectively.

The label will also contain an approval number (eg HSE 3456, MAFF/MAPP 03456) and only pesticides approved under the Regulations can carry such a number. The approval number and the names of the active ingredients should be noted in cases of accident or emergency.

The label also tells you the following.

- What the product is approved for, eg 'For use only as a wood preservative'. *The pesticide must not be used for any other purpose.*
- Instructions on who is allowed to use the pesticide, for instance whether it is approved for use by:
  - an *amateur user* - the pesticide is available to the general public, eg the use of weedkillers in your garden;
  - a *professional user* - the pesticide can *only* be applied by people who have to use pesticides as part of their work and who have received appropriate training to enable them to do this safely;
  - an *industrial user* - the pesticide can *only* be used in industrial wood pre-treatment plants to

protect wood against fungi or insect attack. It can only be applied by people who have to use pesticides as part of their work and who have received appropriate training to enable them to do this safely.

- Whether any protective clothing or equipment needs to be worn when using the pesticide.
- How to use the pesticide without harming yourself, other people or pets.
- Whether access to treated areas needs to be restricted.
- How to use the pesticide without harm to the environment and wildlife, for example fish, bats and bees.
- How to apply the pesticide effectively.

Provided that the instructions are followed, there should be no health problems, but if you feel ill after using a pesticide, you should contact your doctor. Make a note of the product name, approval number and active ingredient to give to your doctor - keep the container if possible. You should report the incident to your local HSE office (which should be in the phone book) so that any necessary action can be taken.

Always read the label

Where pesticides are used professionally or industrially, the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, and regulations made under the Act may also apply.

