Pesticide Use in Michigan

What is a pesticide?

A pesticide is any substance – natural, organic, or man-made – used to kill, repel, or control plants, animals, and micro-organisms considered to be pests. Pesticides include, but are not limited to, herbicides for destroying weeds and other unwanted vegetation; insecticides for controlling insects; fungicides used to control or prevent the growth of fungus, molds, and mildew; disinfectants for killing bacteria or viruses; and rodenticides used to control mice and rats. Plant growth regulators (such as rooting hormones), defoliants, and plant desiccants are also classified as pesticides.

A substance is likely to be a pesticide if the labeling or advertising:

- Claims to prevent, kill, destroy, mitigate, eliminate, or repel a pest.
- Indirectly states or implies an action against a pest.
- Draws a comparison to a pesticide.
- Pictures a pest on the label.

Pesticide labels

Label directions on pesticide packages or containers are legally enforceable. The label provides critical information about how to properly handle and safely use the pesticide product and avoid harm to human health and the environment. State and federal law requires a person using a pesticide to follow the product label directions. When using a pesticide, always read the pesticide label and use caution to protect yourself, others, and the environment. The label is the law.

Personal protective equipment

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is protective clothing, gloves, footwear, eye protection, or other garments or equipment designed to protect the wearer's body from exposure to pesticides. When using pesticides, applicators must follow all label directions regarding PPE.

Questions?

The Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development (MDARD) enforces laws and regulations for pesticide use in Michigan. For further information regarding pesticides and other areas regulated by MDARD, visit www.michigan.gov/mdardpest, or call 800-292-3939 and ask to be referred to your local pesticide inspector. MDARD inspectors are available to provide compliance assistance.