

Disposing of Used Pesticide Containers

We used to get away with burning or disposing of used containers locally, but most municipal landfills exclude anything that has been associated with pesticides. There are some new options, however.

The easiest containers to dispose of are those which you haven't purchased yet. Can you buy pesticides in returnable or large refillable tanks? "Minibulk containers" hold a large volume of pesticide but remain the property of the manufacturer, and some large 30-55 gallon drums can be returned and reconditioned. Better still, why not do away with the container all together? Some pesticides can be purchased in soluble packaging ("toss packs") or dry tablet formulations. Yes, they are more expensive but may prove to be more economical if the cost and inconvenience of container disposal is considered.

Although finding a proper disposal site for pesticide containers can be hard, recycling used to be out of the question. Lately, however, many states are sponsoring new recycling programs. In Alabama, for example, used pesticide containers are collected, ground-up in a special machine, and re-sold to pesticide companies for use in new containers. Contact your State Department of Agriculture or Extension Service for more information.

Sources:

Something to Grow On: Alabama's Ornamental Newsletter, 3(2):1. 1992

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