



April 15, 2011

OLD PESTICIDES CREATE PROBLEMS

We used to be able to collect old or unwanted pesticides typically at Plymouth each year. It was an excellent service to the farm communities in this area. The collections were paid by grant dollars and many took advantage and it is good you did. These collections were sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Agriculture with grant dollars from the EPA and Environmental Trust Fund. We removed a lot of old DDT, Chloradane, Heptachlor, Toxaphene and other banned pesticides or unwanted pesticides from our environment.

With government dollars in short supply these programs are no longer available to us. So what do you do when you inherit an old shed with old or unlabeled pesticides, paints, solvents and grease? It's too bad people have to inherit problems that were created and not taken care of by the owner and now it's a relatives problem.

The best solution is if a product is still labeled for use, use it up as the label allows or give it to someone that can use according to the label. An example would be like 2,4-D and Banvel. If you have no use for it, give it to someone that would control thistles and weeds in pastures or use according to label on farm ground. Most would be glad to take it off your hands as long as the product is still in a useable condition.

The EPA banned all uses of Chlordane in 1983 except termite control, then all uses of Chlordane in 1988. According to a source at the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, if you inherit Chlordane labeled for termites from the Goldcrest Company, you can still use it. The key is use according to the original label around structures you own on your property. The Co-op brand labeled for farm and garden use would be illegal for use.

Landfill operators may vary on their rules for paint, grease, solvents, etc. If you are cleaning up a place, before the bulldozer comes in, inventory what you can and get to know your landfill operator manager on what they can and can't do for you.

Larger counties such as Douglas and Lancaster routinely have public collections for household hazardous wastes or the smaller pesticide containers, grease, paints and solvents. You can take advantage of those programs, but you better have a Douglas or Lancaster county license plate that is making the delivery.

What if you have something that cannot be used by others, doesn't work for a collection point and the landfill won't take it? A farm owner said I'll just make a trench and pour it out on the ground on my own. That's a terrible idea because that can contaminate groundwater on your land. Worse yet, if discovered in the groundwater, you become liable.

To avoid this hire a company such as Clean Harbors who use an incinerator at Kimball, Nebraska or Safety Clean out of Grand Island who specialize in picking up hazardous wastes from industries. If you are lucky, piggy backing when they are in your area can save on the cost of disposal that could be in the range of 4 to 5 dollars per pound to dispose of properly. There's no



silver bullet here when talking about agricultural waste. Planning ahead of time really helps.

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