

Hazardous Waste Factsheet

Category 1 Pesticides and Their Unrinsed Containers

“Fires that occur in storage areas present a hazard to public health and the environment.”

The Problem

Storage locations for Category I pesticides and their unrinsed containers must be posted with warning signs in accord with Washington State Department of Agriculture standards. Inadequately posted storage locations can pose a greater risk to emergency response personnel, customers, and employees.

- Fires that occur in pesticide storage areas present a hazard to public health and the environment. Appropriate signage will help alert firefighters to the presence of toxic pesticides stored in the structure. It's a good practice to also keep a current inventory of the types and quantities of pesticides at your facility. Keep an updated copy of the list in an accessible place away from the storage area.
- Posted warnings will alert customers to stay out of the storage area and decreases the likelihood of accidental exposures.
- Signage will also remind your employees about specific locations where pesticides must be stored.

Catastrophes involving pesticide storage areas do happen, even in Thurston County. On June 16, 1987 a pesticide applicator's storage shed caught fire, exploded, and sent up a 1,000-foot plume of toxic smoke and gas that spread through neighborhoods. Fifty residents were evacuated immediately and 200 more were advised of the situation and urged to evacuate. Fortunately, no one was injured during the event, even though the fire department was not aware that pesticides were involved. The storage shed was not marked with any warning signs.

The Regulatory Requirements

The Washington State Department of Agriculture is responsible for enforcing pesticide regulations throughout the state, including the storage area posting requirements for Category I pesticides and their unrinsed containers (Washington Administrative Code 16-228-1220 (6) and (7)). Other agencies, such as the Thurston County Fire Marshal and the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries, may have additional regulations that apply to businesses handling and storing pesticides.

Thurston County Public
Health and Social Services
Environmental Health Division

412 Lilly Rd. NE
Olympia, WA 98506-5132
Hazardous Waste Hotline:
360-867-2664

TDD Line: 360-867-2603

<http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehhw/index.html>



What Is A Category 1 Pesticide?

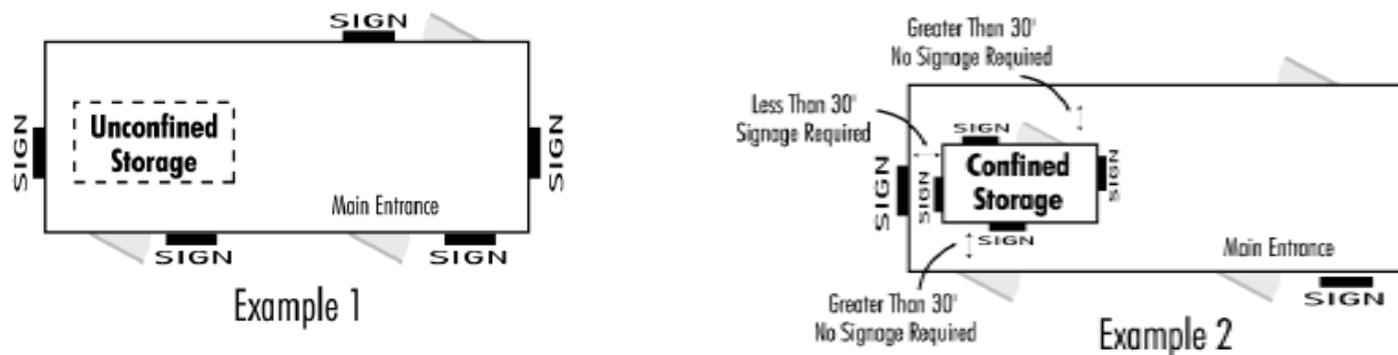
Category I pesticides are identified by the signal word, “DANGER/POISON” found on the product label. Postings for Category I storage facilities must meet the Department of Agriculture’s standards for wording, size, and placement. Category 1 pesticide products are generally only available to certified commercial applicators.

Placards

Wording: Placards must have the skull and crossbones symbol accompanied by the words “DANGER/POISON STORAGE AREA. KEEP OUT.” Instead of “DANGER/POISON” the words, “PESTICIDE” or “CHEMICAL” may be used.

Size: The letters must be large enough to be plainly legible at a distance of 30 feet.

Placement: See the following diagrams.



Why is Thurston County Promoting Proper Storage?

Pesticide storage areas can pose serious health risks to workers, first responders, and the public if there is an accidental spill or release. Several regulatory agencies have specific requirements for how storage areas must be placarded. In 1991, the Thurston County Public Health and Social Services Department, Environmental Health Division was given a new role to offer education, collection, technical assistance, and compliance services to prevent hazardous waste pollution and public health exposures. Programs for both homeowners and small businesses are being carried out.

From 1999-2002, technical assistance campaigns for businesses that use and store pesticide products were conducted by the Hazardous Waste Program of the Health Department’s Environmental Health division. This fact sheet is presented to help businesses learn about the Washington State Department of Agriculture’s warning sign requirements for Category I pesticide storage areas.

Additional Information

Do you have questions about hazardous waste disposal or selecting a hazardous waste disposal company? If so, please call the Business Pollution Prevention Program at (360) 867-2664 or TDD (360) 867-2603, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., or see our website at <http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehhw/index.html>.