

Pesticides need special, separate storage facility

WILMINGTON, Del. — An unwary child, a visitor to the farm, an employee, a family member — all are possible victims when farm chemicals are improperly stored. Livestock, too, can be lost if chemicals are carelessly stored where animals may inadvertently reach them.

For safety, and to avoid undue loss, crop protection chemicals need to be stored in a well-ventilated, secure building. A separate facility, locked against entry by other than authorized family members or employees, offers the best assurance against mishaps.

Yet, few farm operators maintain a special storage building for pesticides. In a just completed Du Pont Agrichemicals study, less than one-third reported using a special facility for storage of agricultural chemicals. Of 1,216 reporting, only 29.7 percent kept chemicals in a separate storage building. Only 12.8 percent — one in 8 — kept pesticides secured in a locked facility.

One-third of the reporting farm

operators, 33.7 percent, kept chemicals in the farm shop. Another one-third, 34.1 percent, used a barn or shed. Miscellaneous other types of storage accounted for the final 8.2 percent. The conclusion, according to Jim Borel, product specialist for Du Pont "Lexone" weed killer, sponsor of the study, is that crop protection chemicals are not being safely stored on most farms.

"Storing chemicals," Borel says, "requires the same careful management as other segments of the farm operation." He points out that besides the potential for human loss, and the possible monetary loss of livestock, a farm manager must consider the legal implications where unsafe practices exist. These apply to many areas of farm management where employees and visitors may fall victim to an accident.

In addition to storing farm pesticides in a separate, locked facility, Borel also stresses the need to limit such storage only to pesticides. No other products, he believes, should be kept in the

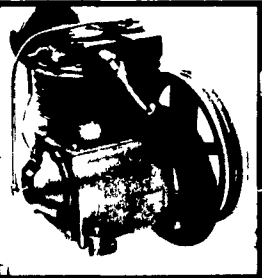
building because of the possibility of mistakenly interchanging them with pesticides. Borel also warns that any pesticide, regardless of how low its toxicity, should always be kept in its original labeled container.

Always, he says, select a storage building which is cool, dry and will protect the contents from the sun. Good lighting will aid in locating the correct chemical and in checking the label. At times during the storage period, Borel suggests checking containers for leaks or breaks. These seldom occur but if damage is found, the chemical needs to be transferred to another container, one which has held the same pesticide. Any spills need to be cleaned up to avoid tracking chemical to other areas of the farm.

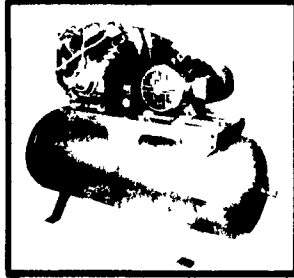
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