

Clemson University Department of Pesticide Regulation

How to Recycle Your Pesticide Containers

A Guide for Commercial Applicators and Farmers



Department of
Pesticide Regulation

511 Westinghouse Road
Pendleton, SC 29670
864.646.2150

www.clemson.edu/dpr

Administration

Dr. Stephen Cole
Director, Clemson University PSA
Division of Regulatory & Public
Service Programs

Dr. Mike D. Weyman
Deputy Director, Clemson University
PSA Division of Regulatory & Public
Service Programs

Dr. Tim Drake
State Programs Manager, Department
of Pesticide Regulation

Ryan Okey
Pesticide Program Chief,
Department of Pesticide Regulation

Bulletin 6

Thousands of pesticide containers that once were sent to landfills by commercial applicators and farmers throughout South Carolina are now being collected for recycling.

Sponsored by the Clemson University Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) and the Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service, the recycling program has been in operation for over a decade. Successful collections are held in more than half of South Carolina's counties. This program is free for commercial applicators and farmers, and there is no registration required.

This publication was designed to answer frequently asked questions about opportunities for recycling pesticide containers in South Carolina.

Why recycle pesticide containers?

- It saves money! Pesticide rinsate goes back into the spray tank and can be reused.
- It protects you! It is illegal to burn, bury, or dump pesticide containers in South Carolina, and landfills do not always accept them.
- It protects the environment! Improper disposal of pesticide containers is a potential source of contamination.
- It protects your land value! Poor environmental practices can jeopardize the sale or refinancing of farmland.



Containers ready to be recycled.

How clean do my containers need to be?

No visible pesticide residue should be present on your containers. Only empty, dry containers that have been triple-rinsed or pressure-rinsed will be accepted for recycling.

How can I keep my containers clean and dry until recycling?

- Store containers in a covered shelter, such as a barn or shed.
- Store containers in plastic bags on pallets.
- Store containers in a cotton wagon.
- Store on plastic, such as a tarp, poly-sheeting, or mulch film. This should be surrounded by some type of fencing, and it should have a top to keep the containers protected from the rain.

How will my pesticide containers be reused?

Most pesticide containers are melted and reformed as plastic shipping pallets, lawn edging, and parking barriers.

A plastic shipping pallet made from recycled pesticide containers.



How do I learn where and when recycling days are being held?

The Department of Pesticide Regulation bases recycling days on demand and usage. Often recycling days are finalized very shortly before collection. Contact your local Clemson University Cooperative Extension office or call Leslie Godfrey, DPR Reduced Risk Specialist, at 803-736-7680 if you have questions about recycling day schedules.

How do I dispose of metal containers?

Metal containers should be triple-rinsed, punctured to prevent reuse, then disposed of in a landfill. There are also scrap metal processors and drum reconditioners in South Carolina that may accept metal containers for recycling. Contact your local Clemson University Cooperative Extension office for more information.

How do I dispose of paper pesticide containers?

Shake out as much of the powdered pesticide as possible, and dispose of the container in a landfill. Some pesticide bags have plastic or foil linings that can be rinsed. These should be rinsed to remove residue, then rolled up and disposed of in a landfill. These bags cannot be recycled at this time. **Burning these bags is illegal in SC!**

How can I get a recycling program started in my county?

Call your local Clemson University Cooperative Extension office to let them know that you are interested in recycling. You may also contact your local county administrator or solid waste director. Believe it or not, most of the counties that now host recycling days began because of just one or two local interested citizens. Ask them to call Leslie Godfrey at 803-736-7680 for further information on setting up a local recycling program. If your county already has recycling centers, it is possible to integrate pesticide containers into the existing program. Personnel at the site accept or reject containers, and they are stored at a central facility until the chipper is next in the area.

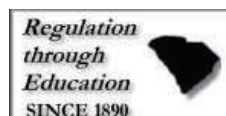
Private collections are an option if you generate sufficient containers per year on your own. You must collect at least 1000 containers. The chipper truck can come to your location and grind the containers on site. If you don't generate that many on your own, check with your neighbors. If you can persuade your neighboring growers to recycle, the chipper can come and grind on-site. One farm can be the designated "chip site," while everyone else in the area brings their containers to that location for grinding. The truck can also go from farm to farm within a local area, if convenient. To schedule a private collection call Leslie Godfrey, DPR Reduced Risk Specialist, at 803-736-7680, or call USAg Recycling, Inc., at 1-800-654-3145. You may also visit www.usagrecycling.com and send an e-mail request.

Quick Guide to Pressure Rinsing

1. Empty contents of container into spray tank, turning the container so that any product trapped in the handle is allowed to flow out. Once the flow is down to a drip, allow the container to drain for an another 30 seconds.
2. Immediately begin rinsing procedures, or the product may become difficult to remove.
3. Hold the container so the opening can drain into the spray tank,
4. Force the tip of the pressure nozzle through the lower portion of the side closest to the handle.
5. Connect the nozzle to a clean source of water of at least 40 psi. Turn the nozzle inside the container to ensure good coverage of all sides, including the handle.
6. Drain all rinse water into the spray tank.

Quick Guide to Triple Rinsing

1. Empty contents of container into spray tank, turning the container so that any product trapped in the handle is allowed to flow out. Once the flow is down to a drip, allow the container to drain for an another 30 seconds.
2. Immediately begin rinsing procedures, or the product may become difficult to remove.
3. Fill container 1/4 full of water.
4. Replace the cap securely on the container. Shake vigorously for at least one full minute.
5. Drain rinse water into spray tank,
6. Repeat steps 3, 4, and 5 (fill, shake, and drain) two more times.



Prepared by Leslie Godfrey Edited by LeAnn Carver and Katie Moore