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Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources
CROPWATCH

How to Rinse Pesticide Containers

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Nebraska's pesticide container recycling program [https://cropwatch.unl.edu/2019/do-your-part-recycling-pesticide-containers-heres-how] accepts 1- and 2.5-gallon plastic agricultural pesticide or crop oil containers; in some locations, 15-, 30- or 55-gallon drums are accepted.

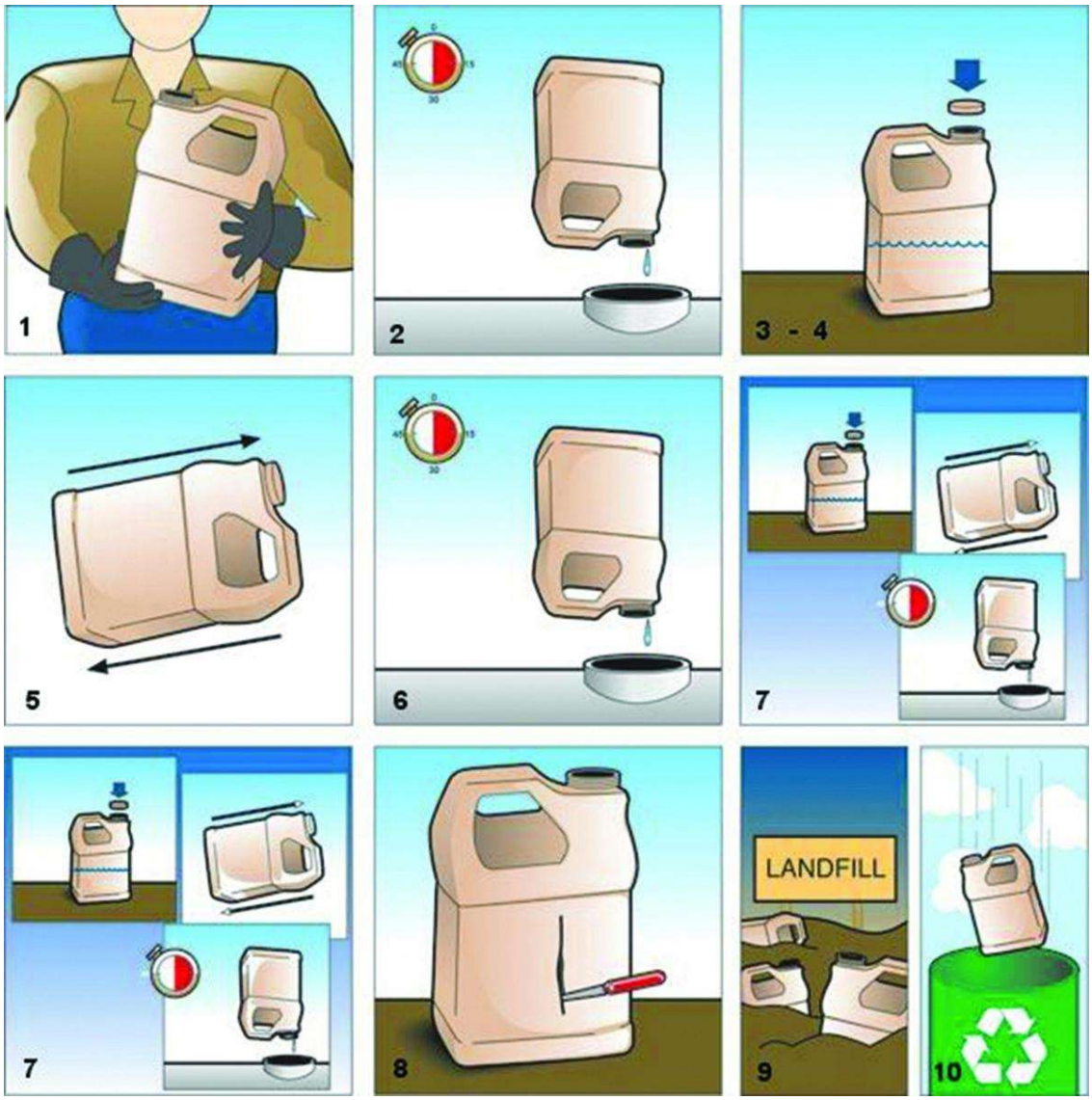

Figure 1. Triple-rinsing procedure for plastic pesticide containers. Used with permission from Fred Whitford, Purdue University. Scott Dallas and John Metzinger, illustrators.

Containers must be pressure- or triple-rinsed and drained. Rinsate must be returned to the spray tank and used appropriately.

Remove and throw away any labels, booklets, and slipcover plastic labels on the containers. Glued paper labels may be left on, and container caps should be rinsed off before disposed of. Before being accepted, containers are thoroughly inspected.

Properly rinsing pesticide containers saves money, protects you and the environment, and meets federal and state regulations for pesticide use.

Save money: It's easy to leave 6 or more ounces of pesticide in a 2.5-gallon container, or about 2%. Not rinsing means you basically throw away product then, or later when the product left in the container gets sticky. Containers with residue are *not* accepted.

Apply rinsate immediately to the load and spray on a labeled site; never dispose of it on the ground, in water, or on any other nonlabeled area.

Protect Yourself

Follow these six steps for proper container rinsing:

1. Wear the same PPE (personal protective equipment) while rinsing containers as the label requires for handling and mixing. This may include a heavy-duty apron and goggles, in addition to the standard long-sleeved shirt, long pants, socks, and liquid-resistant gloves and shoes. Most pesticide poisoning [https://cropwatch.unl.edu/tips-avoiding-pesticide-poisoning] occurs when the product gets absorbed by the skin and moves into the bloodstream.
2. Remove the container cap and empty all pesticide into the spray tank. Allow the container to drain for 30 seconds, then rinse immediately, before the product becomes sticky and hard to remove.
3. Fill the container 10%-20% full of water or rinse solution; replace the cap.

4. Swirl liquid within the container to rinse all inside surfaces. Remove cap and pour rinsate into the spray tank, again allowing the container to drain for 30 seconds.
5. Repeat previous steps **two more times**, for a total of three times.
6. Drain and puncture container so it cannot be reused.

Never store unused pesticide in any container other than the one it came in.

For easy-to-follow instructions on triple-rinsing drums and pressure-rinsing, see the Nebraska Extension NebGuide Rinsing Pesticide Containers [http://extensionpublications.unl.edu/assets/pdf/g1736.pdf] (G1736).

Tags: **Pesticide Container Recycling**

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