



SAFE STORAGE AND HANDLING OF RODENT BAIT

Rodent control in Saskatchewan has been an ongoing concern since the early days of agriculture. Rodents such as mice, rats, and Richardson's Ground Squirrels (RGS) often affect people that live in rural areas, so Rural Municipalities (RMs) are often faced with the task of assisting their ratepayers in controlling these pests. Appointed Pest Control Officers (PCOs) often manage the rat/mouse problem in RMs, being responsible for identifying rodent damage and often dispensing the appropriate bait/rodenticide directly to the ratepayer. When it comes to RGS baiting, however, the dispensation of the products is frequently handled by RM administration and other staff.

The reason that we must be careful when storing and handling these products, is that these products will work the same on a human body as they will on a rodent.

So how can you protect yourself and your staff? Let's start with storage.

The labels for rodent bait products indicate that they must be stored in a cool, dry place in the original container. The baits must never be handled near food or drinking water. Additionally, several of these products have high inhalation toxicity, which means that if they are not stored properly and the particles are inhaled, they could have a negative effect on humans. This could be a concern if the products are stored inside a poorly ventilated room.

Regarding handling of rodenticides, all labels recommend the use of chemical-resistant gloves any time you touch these products. Also, proper handwashing after handling is critical just in case you were exposed to any residue, as many of these products are also toxic if absorbed through the skin.

To improve safe storage and handling of pest control products, it is recommended to move the products out of the RM office and storing them at the RM shop. It is less likely that the product could come into contact with food or water there, and there is typically better ventilation. If this is not possible, other things such as an old non-operational freezer or fridge with a padlock installed, or even an old filing cabinet in the basement could help to store the products away and prevent unintended human contact.

LEAFY SPURGE BEETLE COLLECTION

Thank you to all that participated and spread the word about our annual leafy spurge beetle collection days at Besant campground. 70 people came out to collect leafy spurge beetles for release on their own property, despite being rained out 3 of the 5 planned days! If you collected beetles, don't forget to forward your release form to your PHO so we can monitor the sites for establishment in future years.

WEEDS TO WATCH FOR PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE

Purple Loosestrife has started blooming in Saskatchewan!

Here's what to look for:

- Tall, upright plants with several stems per plant
- Woody, square stems
- Pretty, dark purple flowers arranged on dense spikes
- Most often found near water (ditches, sloughs, lakes, dugouts)

Why is it bad?

Purple loosestrife can produce up to 2 million seeds per plant. This makes the plant very competitive, causing it to choke out other vegetation. It also disrupts ecosystems and can clog waterways. It is a noxious weed in Saskatchewan and should be reported to your Weed Inspector or RM office.



WHAT ARE THE PHOS UP TO THIS SUMMER?

The Plant Health Officers have had a busy summer so far conducting crop disease surveys, insect surveys, and biocontrol insect monitoring. We've also been working with landowners, Weed Inspectors, Pest Control Officers, and RMs/FNBs on issues ranging from field scabious to grasshoppers and everything else in-between.

In August, we are gearing to start up canola and flax disease surveys, a tall waterhemp and palmer amaranth survey, and the provincial clubroot survey.

While we are out and about please feel free to still reach out if you have any questions and we will get back to you as soon as we can!

Please contact your Division PHO for more information, to answer any questions, or suggest content for future newsletters.

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