

Water Wise Pest Control Program Fact Sheet

What is the Water Wise Pest Control Program?

The Water Wise Pest Control Program seeks to protect the health and vitality of Sacramento's creeks and rivers by providing residents with information on healthy pest control and gardening practices. The program is a partnership between the Sacramento Stormwater Management Program, the UC Master Gardeners and the UC Integrated Pest Management Project. Participants in the Sacramento Stormwater Management program include the County of Sacramento and the cities of Folsom, Galt, Citrus Heights and Sacramento.

Why was the program created?

The program was created because water quality tests indicated that Sacramento's rivers and creeks are being polluted by toxic chemicals found in common pesticide products. The chemicals which pose the greatest threat to Sacramento's waterways include diazinon and chlorpyrifos, frequently applied by residential pesticide users. Due to rain and overwatering these pesticides run off lawns and gardens and enter storm drains. Runoff entering the storm drains flows directly into local waterways, untreated.

What's at stake?

Clean water is a basic necessity for people, animals and plants. Toxins in the water — even small amounts — pose a threat to our water supply and the environment. The actions of individuals can make a difference in helping keep our creeks and rivers clean.

What can we do to protect our rivers and creeks?

Residents, businesses and government agencies in the Sacramento Region can help protect local waterways by reducing the amount of pesticides they use, preventing pesticide runoff into storm drains and wastewater, and using less-toxic pest control alternatives.

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How can pests be controlled without the use of pesticides?

There are many ways to control pests in your yard, garden, lawn and home without polluting our water. The key is to only use non-chemical alternatives, or less toxic chemicals when pesticides are necessary. Protect the health of local waterways by using these tips the next time you work in your garden or yard:

- ▶ View your garden as a habitat – both good bugs and bad bugs are at work in your garden. Protect the beneficial species.
- ▶ Determine if you really have a pest problem – many people spend time and money treating for pests they do not have, or an insect that is occurring at numbers far below damaging levels.
- ▶ Discourage outdoor pests by planting pest resistant or well-adapted plant varieties such as native plants, watering and fertilizing correctly, and altering the garden environment to deprive pests of food and shelter they need to thrive.
- ▶ Manage indoor pests by vacuuming, sponging or sweeping, followed by removal of food sources, hiding places and plugging entryways — methods which are often safer and more effective than pesticides.
- ▶ If you use a pesticide, identify your problem pest, and choose a pesticide that specifically targets the pest – don't over apply pesticides!
- ▶ Read pesticide product labels carefully and follow all instructions on proper use.

What you use in your garden affects our creeks, lakes and rivers!

For pesticide disposal information call (916) 379-0500.

For more information on healthy gardening methods contact the UC Master Gardeners at (916) 875-6913, Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. to noon and 1- 4 p.m., or visit the UCIPM Web site at www.ipm.ucdavis.edu.

To find out more about what you can do to protect the health of local waterways, visit us on the Web at www.sacstormwater.org/wise or check out www.sactostormwater.org.



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