

A news release from the Maryland Department of Agriculture

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Maryland Recycles Pesticide Containers for 18th Year Collection Dates Open in June

ANNAPOLIS, MD (April 26, 2010) For 17 years, Maryland's pesticide container recycling program, offered by the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA), has helped prevent pesticide residues from entering the soil and local waterways and has saved valuable landfill space by recycling 616,000 empty, plastic pesticide containers. The program will open its 18th year of operation in June, asking farmers, pesticide applicators and others to properly rinse and recycle their empty pesticide containers. A total of 28 collection days are scheduled June through September at eight locations throughout the state.

"This beneficial pesticide recycling program is a win-win situation for everyone and protects the environment from possible contamination. We are very pleased with the response by farmers, commercial agricultural pesticide applicators and other pesticide users to this program," said Agriculture Secretary Buddy Hance. "It offers producers and others a free way to dispose of pesticide containers, protects the Chesapeake Bay and keeps Maryland smart, green and growing by removing potential contaminants through proper disposal, and provides source of recycled material for vendors. As the word has spread about the benefits of the program, participation has consistently increased."

The pesticide container recycling program is FREE and open to all agricultural producers and pesticide applicators. The Agricultural Container Recycling Council (ACRC) provides a chipper to grind the plastic containers into flakes, which are then transported to a contractor for recycling. The containers collected in Maryland have yielded more than 260 tons of recyclable plastic flakes.

"We are especially pleased with the cooperative effort of the Ag Container Recycling Council and USAg Recycling, Inc., which makes local recycling and special pick up for large quantities possible, providing a convenient and much cheaper alternative to landfill disposal," said Secretary Hance. "With continued cooperation among the participating groups, farmers and pesticide applicators, the program will continue to be successful and will protect the natural resources of the state from potential contamination by pesticides."

Maryland's container recycling program is a combined effort of state, county and federal agencies, as well as private industry, working together to protect the environment. With cooperation between MDA and Mid-Shore Regional

Solid Waste Facility, Kent County Public Works, Wicomico Public Works, Frederick County Bureau of Solid Waste Management, Harford County Public Works, Crop Production Services-Denton, Southern States Centreville Cooperative, Southern States Hampstead Cooperative, Southern States Kennedyville Cooperative, Martin's Elevator, Angelica Nurseries, Inc., The Mill of Black Horse, Willard Agri Service Inc., Chesapeake Ag. Air, Tim's Aerial Applications, Allen Chorman and Son, Eddie Mercer, Inc., Maryland Environmental Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Research Service, and Maryland farmers and applicators, the program has been effective in reducing the landfill disposal of plastic pesticide containers and in allowing the plastic to be reused.

A schedule of collection dates and sites is available on the MDA website at www.mda.state.md.us/pdf/recycle.pdf. For additional information, or to schedule a chipping date at your site, contact Rob Hofstetter, special programs coordinator, Pesticide Regulation Section, Maryland Department of Agriculture, Annapolis, MD, telephone 410-841-5710.

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