

Chlorpyrifos banned for home, home garden and domestic pest control use in South Africa

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The announcement by the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery, Tina Joemat-Petterson, was published as regulation no. R375 in the Government Gazette of 14 May 2010.

Dr Gerhard Verdoorn of the Griffon Poison Centre said that although chlorpyrifos has become known as an effective insecticide over many decades, it became increasingly implicated in adverse effects on people and pets due to irresponsible and blatant misuse of the product. Dow AgroSciences, who invented chlorpyrifos, has already withdrawn the product from the home and garden market in the USA.

"It did its job to the extent that older folks would use nothing else than chlorpyrifos. Sadly, as with other pesticides, some users were perhaps not as responsible as they should have been. Poison centres often had to cope with cases of accidental or deliberate poisoning by chlorpyrifos," Verdoorn said.

The Association of Veterinary and Crop Associations of South Africa (AVCASA) hopes that the ban of chlorpyrifos from home, home garden and domestic professional pest control use will bring an end to the flow of calls to the Griffon Poison Information Centre after people and domestic animals were affected by it.

Pest Control Company Rentokil phased out chlorpyrifos ten years prior to its banning from home, home garden and domestic professional pest control use in South Africa, after the company had noted the potential danger. Terry Ivison, Rentokil's Technical and Training Manager, says that the correct implementation of the

principles of exclusion, restriction, destruction and monitoring, called ERDM for short, are the best way to treat any pest problem.

Ivison also notes that complete elimination of products containing the ingredient from store shelves will take from 6 to 12 months. That should allow the public sufficient time to gain access to less toxic alternatives.

Says Ivison *"Should consumers wish to buy pesticides, they should ensure that A) the pesticide is registered for use against the pest they wish to control and B) read the label very carefully, noting dilution and application rates. They should also note the active ingredient, ensuring that it is not an organophosphate. If they have any doubts, always contact a registered, professional pest control company."*

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