

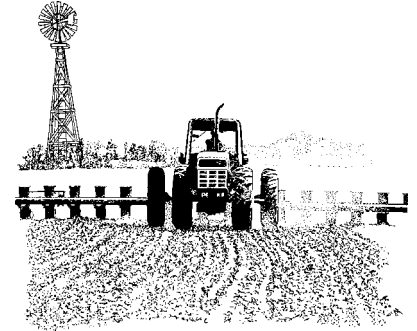
HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT

The University of Arizona • College of Agriculture • Tucson, Arizona 85721

5/98

FARM*A*SYST **Farm/Ranch Self-Assessment System** **for Arizona**

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This fact sheet is taken from the Arizona Farm*A*Syst workbook. Farm*A*Syst is a voluntary groundwater pollution prevention program designed for farmers and rural residents. The goals of the program are to help rural residents: understand potential causes of groundwater contamination, identify farmstead management practices that pose risks to groundwater, and develop a plan to reduce those risks.

The wide variety of products commonly used in households and on farms include paints, solvents, oils, fuels, cleaners, wood preservatives, batteries, adhesives, and pesticides. Hazardous substances found in these products can contaminate groundwater if they are not used, stored, and disposed of properly.

Improper use of hazardous products may cause toxic health effects. Farmers and their families are generally familiar with the hazards of commonly used pesticides, but they may be less aware of the hazards associated with other chemicals used on the farm and in the home.

Improper storage can allow chemicals to leak, causing potentially dangerous chemical reactions, toxic health effects, or groundwater contamination.

Improper disposal may give these chemicals direct entry into surface water or groundwater supplies.

What can you do?

Minimizing the amounts of these products used on the farm, and following proper storage and disposal practices, can reduce health risks and the potential for groundwater contamination.

1. **Use.** Make sure you use the product according to label directions and only for its intended purpose.
2. **Storage.** Store your products safely to reduce accidental spills and make sure only authorized persons have access to them.
3. **Disposal.** Find out the preferred method of disposal for each product and develop a plan to remove unused products from your property.

| Item | Question | Yes | No |
|---|--|-----|----|
| 1. Ash disposal from farm burn barrel or incinerator. | a. Disposal of ash from <u>dry combustibles only</u> , on farm or at dump, or spread on fields. | | |
| | b. Disposal of ash from <u>mixed trash</u> on farm in consistent location near well. | | |
| 2. Adhesives such as caulk and solvent-based glues. | a. Used up or shared with someone, or leftovers collected by hazardous waste service. | | |
| | b. Disposal on farm. | | |
| 3. Plastic pesticide containers. | a. Triple-rinsed containers returned to retail store or collection center for recycling, <u>or</u> triple-rinsed containers disposed of at licensed landfill. | | |
| | b. Disposal of partially filled or nonrinsed container on farm (may be illegal depending upon pesticide). | | |
| 4. Plastic container for oil or other vehicle product. | a. Product used up, container recycled, or empty container taken to licensed landfill or municipal incinerator. | | |
| | b. Disposal of partially filled container at dump or on farm. | | |

The questions listed above can help you determine whether hazardous waste management practices on your farm may pose a risk to groundwater.

Take a few minutes to complete the questions. If you answered **yes** to mostly "**a**" questions, your groundwater is probably safe from becoming polluted from your hazardous waste management practices. If you answered **yes** to mostly "**b**" questions, then your groundwater may be at high risk of becoming polluted.

Worksheet number nine in the Farm*A*Syst book will give you a more complete assessment of your hazardous waste management practices. If you are interested in obtaining a copy of Arizona's Farm*A*Syst workbook, please contact the College of Agriculture's Publications Distribution Center, 4042 North Campbell Avenue, Tucson, Arizona 85721. The office phone number is (520) 621-1713 and the FAX number is (520)795-8508. The cost of the workbook is \$5.00 plus shipping. Contact your county extension office or NRCS office if you have questions about how to use the workbook.