

## Review Article

### **A Review of "The Homeowner's Guide to Pesticide Safety."**

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#### **The Homeowner's Guide to Pesticide Safety**

Producers: Carrie R. Foss (Pesticide Education Associate) and  
Carol A. Ramsay (Extension Pesticide Education Coordinator)

This video illustrates basic principles of pesticide safety. It is designed for a lay audience. The review panel represents both the target audience and Extension educators who might use this video in educational programs. In addition to the credentials listed above, all reviewers are avid gardeners at home and, as volunteers, in their communities.

Date: 2000  
Format: Video (VHS)  
Length: 19 minutes  
Source: Cooperative Extension, Washington State University  
Target Audience: Master gardeners, garden clubs, homeowners

**Pat Hipkins is a pesticide safety educator who has worked with master gardener programs and trained pesticide applicators for over 10 years. Pat has also developed a number of training media for use in pesticide safety education programs. Pat's comments include:**

*This video begins and ends well, with a concise but comprehensive introduction and conclusion. It opens with good, clear definitions of the terms "pest" and "IPM." At the outset, it stresses the importance of proper selection before purchase. The video reinforces the point that the intended use site must be listed on the product label, and it does a good job of explaining what "use site" means in layman's terms.*

*In between the beginning and the end, all of the basics are covered and treated well. In every case, it shows what to do, how, and why. For example, calibration is illustrated briefly but accurately and demystified; however, ready-to-use products are presented as alternatives. The only negative thing I can point to is minor - and debatable. In the video, rinsate is applied to the treated site vs. used to make another batch or sprayed on an untreated but legal site. However, the main point is that the video stresses proper disposal. In summary, this video is an excellent overview of pesticide management and is very well suited for the target audience.*

**Doug Harris is an Extension Agent with over 20 years experience working with Virginia Cooperative Extension. Doug has worked with various clientele groups, including master gardeners. His comments are as follows:**

*This is a good introduction to the typical safety issues a homeowner encounters when choosing and using pesticides. The presentation moves briskly but treats all appropriate topics and then reviews them for emphasis. The program stresses the importance of reading and understanding the label to determine appropriate safety precautions. There is a good discussion of safety in transportation, storage, mixing, and applying pesticides, as well as a good demonstration of spill cleanup. This video is well suited for use in educating adults about pesticide safety.*

*My only quibbles: during the discussion of choosing the right pesticide, the video mentions consulting a "professional" but doesn't mention Extension agents. I'd at least prefer it to say "professionals, like Extension agents." I would apply the same criticism to the closing segment, where Extension agents are not mentioned explicitly as a source of information on pesticide safety. During the discussion of signal words, I think it would have been appropriate to mention that most pesticides with "Danger" or "Danger-Poison" signal words are restricted-use products and are unavailable to most homeowners. I would also prefer to see clearer wording in the spill cleanup section that discusses disposal of kitty litter with absorbed pesticide. The video shows a person using kitty litter to absorb spilled liquid pesticide, sweeping it into a bag, and placing the bag into a trashcan. The narrator says, "Dispose of the bag as you would an unused pesticide." However, this material cannot be added back to the spray tank as a rinsate, for example, and it may be spread on a legal site in the landscape.*

**Becky Hepler is a library media specialist and a freelance writer. Before becoming a public school media specialist, she was a television producer for the Roanoke (VA) CBS and PBS affiliates. She is also an avid gardener. Her comments represent those of a person with expertise in visual communications as well as a member of the video's intended target audience. Becky's comments include:**

*This program is useful for both beginning and experienced gardeners. It gives a good overview of pesticide safety practices. Simply stated, this video gives a very complete explanation of how to use chemicals, what all the jargon on the container means, and how to deal with the chemicals post-treatment. The video stresses the safety issues involved in using proper protective clothing and eyewear, proper disposal techniques, and, most importantly, doing your homework to be sure the answer addresses the question of why your plant is not doing well in the first place.*

**Erica Jones has been a master gardener for over five years. Erica's comments also come from the end user's perspective. They include:**

*This video is a good review of the principles of pesticide safety. Although it does a thorough job of presenting these basic principles, I could have done with less repetition and more information. (As a somewhat experienced gardener, I did not learn a whole lot.) It is very well organized and, overall, a pretty "slick" presentation. The video is useful for all gardeners in any region of the United States.*