

Illegal Pesticide Products

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Stop Sale Order

4-23-08: EPA orders Scotts to stop selling certain Miracle-Gro products. These products are illegal, unregistered and misbranded pesticides. EPA will also issue a stop sale order to Scotts Lawn Care Service. Find out what consumers should do.

Quick Resources

- Protect your Business
- Counterfeit Flea and Tick Products for Pets
- Controlling Pests
- How to solve pest problems in homes, yards, or schools
- Legal pesticide products have an EPA registration number. Read the Label First
- Public Service Announcement: Willie Colon on Illegal Pesticides
- National Pesticide Information Center (NPIC)
1-800-858-7378

Questions on Pesticides?

- National Pesticide Information Center (NPIC)
1-800-858-7378

You may have seen people selling them on the street or in small neighborhood stores. They go by names like *Tres Pasitos* or *Chalk*, and they come with a guarantee to kill roaches, mice and other household pests like nothing else on the market. But most such products are illegal. And illegal pesticides can hurt much more than roaches. They can harm you and your family.

on this page:

- Why be concerned?
- Common illegal products
- What you should do

Illegal pesticides are often much more toxic than registered pesticides -- those pesticides that EPA has approved -- after strict testing -- for use in your home. They often come in familiar shapes and packaging. EPA has identified illegal flea and tick repellents for pets, antibacterial cleansers, mothballs, and other products that claim to get rid of household pests.

Across the country, EPA has initiated an effort to protect consumers from these products. In areas where illegal products are an acute problem, EPA has increased enforcement actions against companies selling or distributing illegal household pesticides. EPA has also increased efforts to raise public awareness of these product dangers.

Why be concerned?

Many illegal pesticides are very toxic. Others contain unknown ingredients, or the ingredients may vary from time to time. Some of the illegal products are also available to the public in legal, EPA registered versions. However, consumers may unknowingly purchase or obtain the illegal versions. Though the illegal products may look similar to and make the same claims as their legal counterparts, these products have not been thoroughly tested. And since the products are unregistered, their labels have not been reviewed for clear directions and safety warnings.

Common Illegal Pest Products

mothballs | pet products | insecticidal chalk | "Tres Pasitos" | antibacterial products



Illegal naphthalene moth repellent products -- mothballs -- pose a hazard to young children. Mothballs can be easily mistaken for candy, or simply tempt young children to touch and play with them. Recent studies have linked naphthalene to illnesses, including nasal cancer. Widespread sale and distribution of these products make illegal mothballs a particular concern.

Illegal Pet Products, including foreign-labeled, unregistered versions of the common pet products Advantage and Frontline, have been illegally imported and sold throughout the U.S. Though registered for use in other countries, some foreign-labeled versions have omitted important warnings, especially those pertaining to children, that are required in the U.S. Versions imported from such countries as England and Australia often give doses in metric units, which can cause Americans to accidentally over-dose or under-dose pets. Read more about counterfeit pesticide products for dogs and cats. Retailer information about counterfeit pesticide products for dogs and cats (PDF) (4 pp, 360k, About PDF).

Illegal Insecticide Chalk is also known as "Miraculous Chalk" or "Chinese Chalk." You may have seen the chalk in a neighborhood store or sold on the street for about \$1 a box. It is mostly

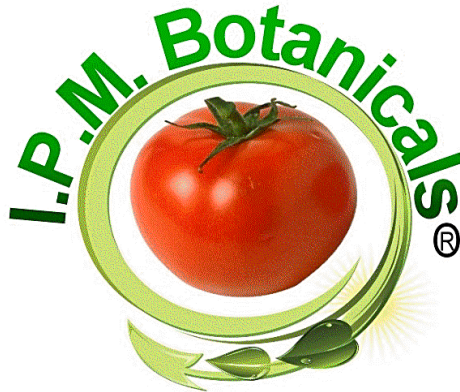
imported illegally from China and often bears a label in both English and Chinese. Sometimes the manufacturer claims that the chalk is "harmless to human beings and animals" and "safe to use." These claims are untrue and dangerous.

Read more about insecticide chalk.

"Tres Pasitos" is imported illegally from Mexico and other Latin American countries. Its name means "three little steps" in English, because after eating it, this is all mice can muster before dying. The active ingredient (or the chemical that actually kills the pest) in "Tres Pasitos" is a chemical called aldicarb . EPA considers aldicarb to be a very toxic chemical - and one that should never be used in your home. Children are especially vulnerable to poisoning by aldicarb when it is sprinkled around the home to control roaches, mice and rats. Exposure to high amounts of aldicarb can cause weakness, blurred vision, headache, nausea, tearing, sweating, and tremors in people. Very high doses can kill people, because it can paralyze the respiratory system. What "Tres Pasitos" does to pests, it can also do to you.

Antibacterial products. Many common household products, ranging from cleansers to cutting boards, claim to protect against bacteria. Such claims are illegal unless the product is registered with EPA or the claim only applies to protecting the item itself from damage by microorganisms, not to provide additional health benefits. In addition, the pesticide used to treat the item must be registered for use in or on the treated item.

Read more about consumer products treated with pesticides.



Integrated Pest Management

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