

Brought to you by —



To help communicate the significant and diverse benefits of pesticides. If you find this booklet helpful and would like copies or more information on a particular topic, please contact us.

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Our goal is to share easy-to-understand, scientifically accurate information about pesticides and their use. Please help us in this goal by becoming an advocate for healthy lawns and trees and the products we use to keep them that way.

Additional resources

National Pesticide Information Center: <http://npic.orst.edu/>

EPA's Pesticide Home Page:
<http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/about/index.htm>

Washington State University Pest Management Resources:
<http://extension.wsu.edu/wsprs/Pages/Garden.aspx>

Benefits of Pesticides

Understanding why pesticides are used in

Lawn & Tree Care



Pesticide safety and regulation

Every pesticide must be thoroughly tested and registered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) before it can legally be sold or used in the United States. Pesticides must be used according to the directions on the label. Any other use is illegal.

Pesticide use is also regulated by the Washington State Departments of Agriculture, Labor & Industries and Ecology. Pesticide applicators must be licensed by the Department of Agriculture. An applicator who applies pesticides illegally is subject to disciplinary action including fines, license suspension or revocation or more depending on the situation.

The research and development process to bring a new pesticide to market is long and expensive. It often takes 10 years or more and costs hundreds of millions of dollars for each potential product. After all that, only one product out of approximately 140,000 researched ever makes it to the market.

EPA sets limits for pesticide residue in food and animal feed. These limits have extra safety factors built in to ensure that the most sensitive populations, like children, will be protected.

Pesticides are designed to act on their target pest (insect, weed or disease). Because herbicides are designed to kill plants, most are nontoxic to people and pets.

Testing and evaluation does not end when a product is approved for sale. Pesticides are periodically evaluated and must be re-registered.

Lawn & Tree Care

Beautiful landscaping is not only pleasing to look at; it adds value to properties and neighborhoods and benefits the environment. Lawns, public areas, trees and shrubs all require maintenance to look their best and to remain healthy and beneficial.

- Dense, healthy grass slows rainwater runoff and filters contaminants allowing clean water to return to the underground water supply.
- Lawns and trees cool the atmosphere. Eight healthy front lawns have the cooling effect of 70 tons of air conditioning, enough to cool 16 homes. Shade trees further reduce the need for air conditioning.
- Grass and trees convert carbon dioxide to oxygen and help give us clean air. A 50-foot by 50-foot lawn produces enough oxygen for a family of four. Lawns also keep air clean by trapping dust and pollen.
- Lawns and trees reduce noise by absorbing sounds.

Can't weeds just be pulled? Simple as it seems, it's often not practical, especially in public places. Manual labor is expensive and weeds grow back quickly if the root remains in the ground or if allowed to go to seed.

Weeds growing through cracks in pavement create larger cracks and rough spots that are difficult for crutches and wheelchairs to navigate. Weeds in a play field may seem insignificant, but rough surfaces increase trips and falls when children are running.

Weeds also trigger allergies and attract bees and wasps. Many people have life-threatening reactions to insect stings. Other insects, such as mosquitoes, carry diseases like West Nile Virus.

Pesticides can help keep lawns and other outdoor spaces healthy. Public areas are maintained by licensed professionals. Homeowners may also choose to use a professional service to maintain their property. Professionals are trained to identify the pest, select the appropriate product and follow all application requirements for safe and effective control.