

Pesticides and Wildlife

Pesticides include things like insect repellants, weed killers, disinfectants and swimming pool chemicals. These pesticides are designed to control pests. They are also sprayed on the land to help reduce weeds and fungi. When used in the water, they help kill bacteria and viruses.

When used incorrectly, pesticides can harm our watershed. Fish, birds and other creatures can be killed. Different animal habitats can be destroyed.

Pesticides are used in nearly every home, business, farm, school, hospital and park in the United States. Pesticides can be found anywhere in our environment.

Pesticide Facts:

- In recent studies of major rivers and streams, one or more pesticides were detected more than 90% of the time in water, in more than 80% of fish sampled, and in 33% of major water sources.
- Pesticides are one of the 15 leading causes of pollution for streams.
- Pesticides can cause amphibian mutations and deformities. Some examples of these mutations are frogs with extra legs or fish with no eyes.
- Pesticides kill helpful insects. Some of these insects include honey bees, butterflies, and mosquito-hawks (they eat mosquito larvae).

Most pesticides are harmful because they are designed to kill certain plants or animals. Even when they are used correctly, pesticides still kill millions of fish and birds each year. However, pesticides are useful because they control or kill insects, weeds and other pests.

The US government requires that pesticides be studied before they can be sold and used in the United States. Before a pesticide can be used, it has to meet these requirements.

- It cannot pose *unreasonable* dangers to human health.
- It cannot pose *unreasonable* dangers to the environment.
- It cannot harm endangered or threatened species.