

Clean beaches and healthy creeks, rivers, bays and ocean are important to Los Angeles County. However, many common activities such as pest control can lead to water pollution if you're not careful. Pesticide treatments must be planned and applied properly to ensure that pesticides do not enter the street, gutter or storm drain. Unlike water in sanitary sewers (from sinks and toilets), water in storm drains is not treated before entering our waterways. You would never dump pesticides into the ocean, so don't let it enter the storm drains. Pesticides can cause significant damage to our environment if used improperly. If you are thinking of using a pesticide to control a pest, there are some important things to consider.

For more information on the **University of California Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners**, visit these websites:

celosangeles.ucanr.edu/UC_Master_Gardener_Program

www.ipm.ucdavis.edu

For instructions on collecting a specimen sample, visit the Los Angeles County Agriculture Commissioner's website at: acwm.lacounty.gov/wps/portal/acwm

To report a spill, call the **Los Angeles County 24-Hour Water Pollution Reporting Hotline** at **1-888-CLEAN-LA (1-888-253-2652)**

For emergencies, dial 911.

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Help Prevent Ocean Pollution:

Responsible Pest Control



Tips for Pest Control

Key Steps to Follow:

Step 1: Correctly identify the pest (insect, weed, rodent, or disease) and verify that it is actually causing the problem.



Three life stages of the common lady beetle, a beneficial insect.

This is important because beneficial insects are often mistaken for pests and sprayed with pesticides needlessly.

Consult with a Certified Nursery Professional at a local nursery or garden center or send a sample of the pest to the Los Angeles County Agricultural Commissioner's Office.

Determine if the pest is still present – even though you see damage, the pest may have left.

Step 2: Determine how many pests are present and causing damage.



Small pest populations may be controlled more safely using non-pesticide techniques. These include removing food sources, washing off leaves with a strong stream of water, blocking entry into the home using caulking and replacing problem plants with ones less susceptible to pests.

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Integrated Pest Management (IPM) usually combines several least toxic pest control methods for long-term prevention and management of pest problems without harming you, your family, or the environment.

Step 3: If a pesticide must be used, choose the least toxic chemical.

Obtain information on the least toxic pesticides that are effective at controlling the target pest from the UC Statewide Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program's website at www.ipm.ucdavis.edu.

Seek out the assistance of a Certified Nursery Professional at a local nursery or garden center when selecting a pesticide. Purchase the smallest amount of pesticide available.

Apply the pesticide to the pest during its most vulnerable life stage. This information can be found on the pesticide label.

Step 4: Wear appropriate protective clothing.

Follow pesticide labels regarding specific types of protective equipment you should wear. Protective clothing should always be washed separately from other clothing.

Step 5: Continuously monitor external conditions when applying pesticides such as weather, irrigation, and the presence of children and animals.

Never apply pesticides when rain is predicted within the next 48 hours. Also, do not water after applying pesticides unless the directions say it is necessary.

Apply pesticides when the air is still; breezy conditions may cause the spray or dust to drift away from your targeted area.

In case of an emergency, call 911 and/or the poison control hotline at (800) 222-1222.

For general questions you may also visit www.calpoison.org.

Step 6: In the event of accidental spills, sweep up or use an absorbent agent to remove any excess pesticides. Avoid the use of water.

Be prepared. Have a broom, dust pan, or dry absorbent material, such as cat litter, newspapers or paper towels, ready to assist in cleaning up spills.

Contain and clean up the spill right away. Place contaminated materials in a doubled plastic bag. All materials used to clean up the spill should be properly disposed of according to your local Household Hazardous Waste Disposal site.

Step 7: Properly store and dispose of unused pesticides.



Purchase Ready-To-Use (RTU) products to avoid storing large concentrated quantities of pesticides.

Store unused chemicals in a locked cabinet.

Unused pesticide chemicals may be disposed of at a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center or collection event.

Empty pesticide containers should be triple rinsed prior to disposing of them in the trash.

To find the nearest **Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center** or collection event, call **(888) 253-2652** or visit **www.CleanLA.com.**

PROJECT Pollution PREVENTION