

Tips For Using Pesticides

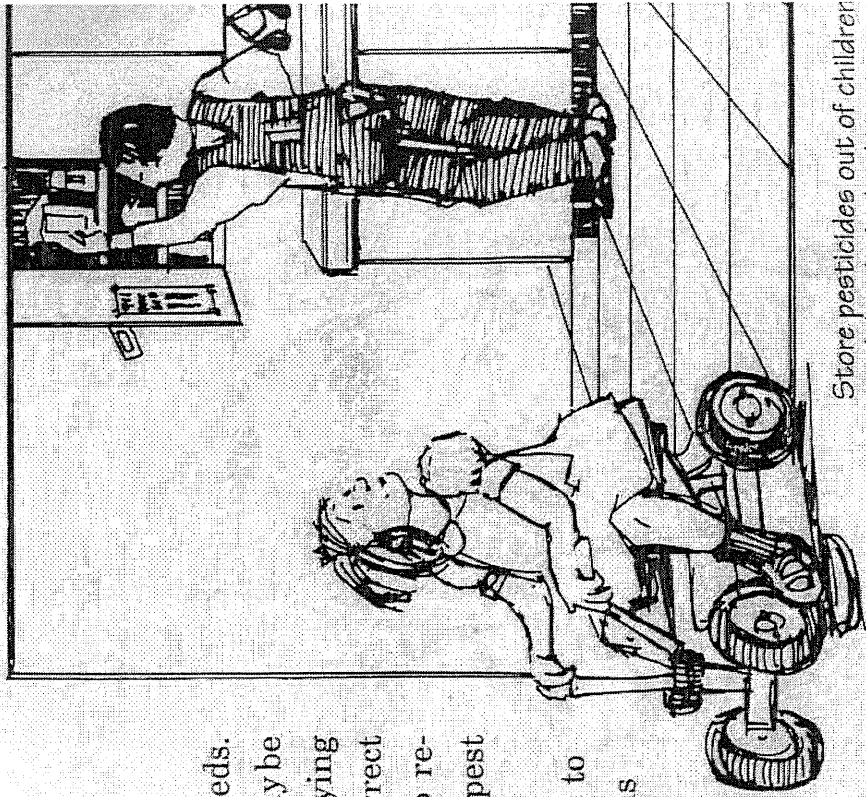
Sometimes, even with good lawn care practices, weather conditions or other factors can cause pest problems to develop. Pesticides can help control many lawn pests. But pesticides have risks as well as benefits, and it's important to use them properly.

The chemicals we call pesticides include insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides. These products are designed to kill or control pest insects, weeds, and fungal diseases. Pesticides can be very effective. But don't be tempted to rely solely on pesticides as a quick-fix solution to any lawn problem. Serious, ongoing pest problems are often a sign that your lawn is

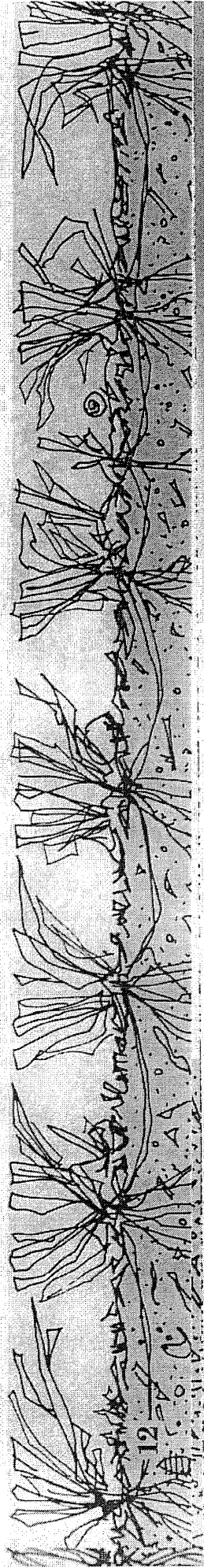
not getting everything it needs. In other words, the pests may be a symptom of an underlying problem. You need to correct the underlying problem to reduce the chance that the pest will reappear.

All pesticides are toxic to some degree. This means they can pose some risk to you, to your children and pets, and to any wildlife that venture onto your lawn—especially if these chemicals are overused or carelessly applied. Pesticides can also kill earthworms and other beneficial

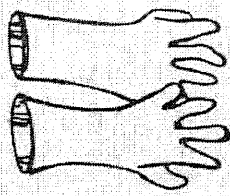
organisms, disrupting the ecological balance of your lawn.



Store pesticides out of children's reach in a locked cabinet or garden shed.



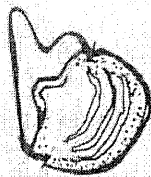
When Spraying, Protect



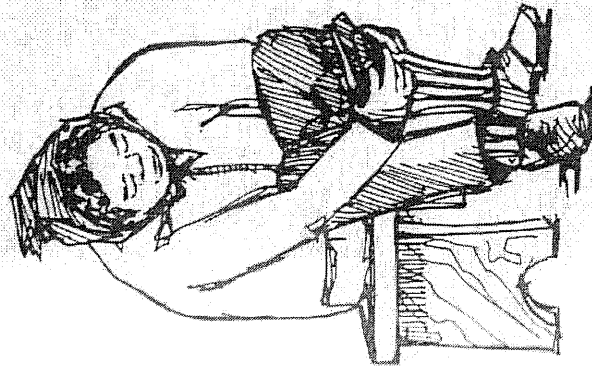
your skin



your eyes



your lungs

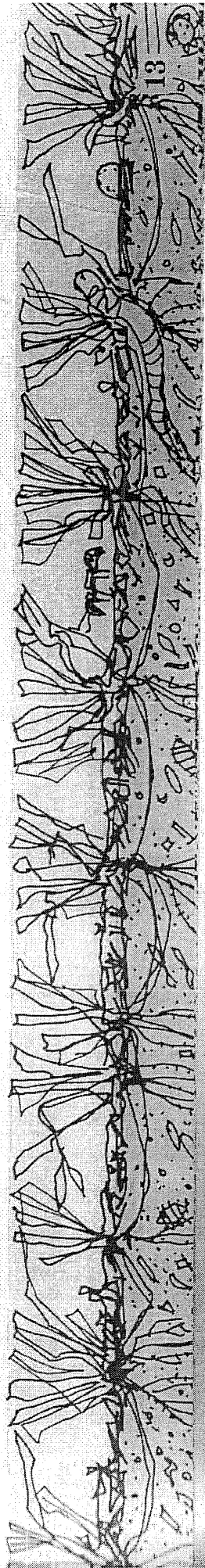


Wash this clothing separately before using it again.

Before Using Any Pesticide, Be Sure To Review These Basic Rules

1. Take safety precautions. Never assume a pesticide is harmless.

- Read the entire label and follow its instructions. Use only the amount directed, at the time and under the conditions specified, and for the purpose listed.
- Be sure to wear any protective clothing—like gloves, long sleeves, and long pants—indicated on the label. Wash this clothing separately before using it again.
- Keep children and pets away from pesticides, and make sure no one goes on a treated lawn for at least the time prescribed by the pesticide label.
- Remember to follow any state or local requirements for posting your treated lawn or notifying your neighbors that a pesticide has been applied.
- Store and dispose of pesticides properly, according to the label directions and any state and local regulations.



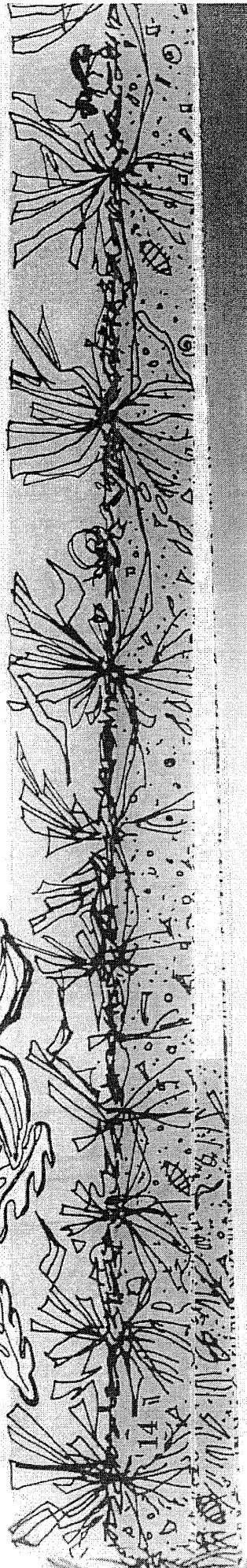
2. Use pesticides to minimize pests, not eradicate them. The latter is often impossible and unnecessary.

3. Be sure you have accurately identified the pest so you can choose the best pesticide for the job and use it most effectively. Obtain professional advice from your county extension agent or a local expert.

4. Spot treat whenever possible. In most cases, it isn't necessary to treat the whole lawn with pesticides if the problem is confined to certain areas. Spraying more than necessary is wasteful and can be environmentally damaging.



If you have questions about a pesticide, call EPA's toll-free National Pesticide Information Center (1-800-858-7378). For general information on minimizing pesticide risks, call EPA for a free copy of the *Citizen's Guide to Pesticides* (EPA 730-K95-001). The number to call is 1-800-490-9198.



Choosing A Lawn Care Service

Many people choose to hire a professional company to help maintain their lawn. Lawn care companies offer a range of services, from fertilizing and pest control to aerating, mowing, and renovation.

Lawn care companies should follow the same healthy lawn program outlined in this brochure. They should also follow the same precautions for minimizing pesticide risks.

How can you be sure that a service will do these things? Start by asking questions like these:

Q. Is the company licensed?

A. Nearly all states require lawn care companies to be licensed. The qualifications for obtaining a license vary from state to state, but having a license is one indication that the company is reputable and operating legally.

Q. Does the company have a good track record?

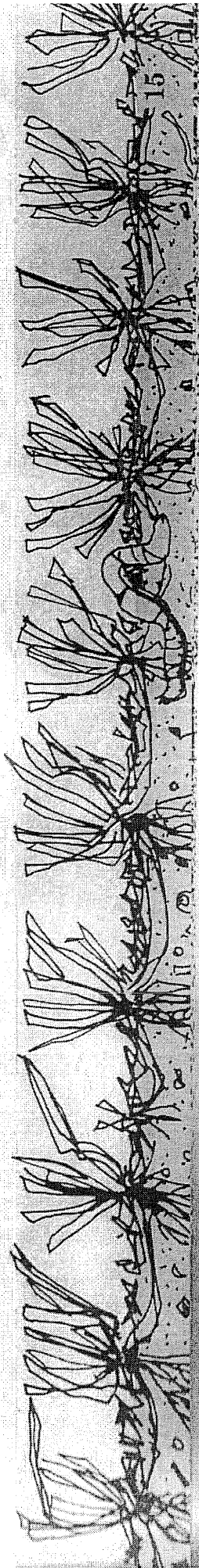
A. Ask neighbors and friends who have dealt with the company if they were satisfied with the service they received. Call the Better Business Bureau or the state or local consumer protection office listed in your phone

book; have they received any complaints about the company? Determine from the state pesticide regulatory agency if the company has a history of violations.

Q. Is the company affiliated with a professional lawn care association?

A. Affiliation with a professional association helps members to stay informed of new developments in the lawn care field.

Q. Does the company offer a variety of pest management approaches? Does it apply pesticides on a set schedule or only when they are really needed? Does it use integrated pest management, or "IPM"—an approach that

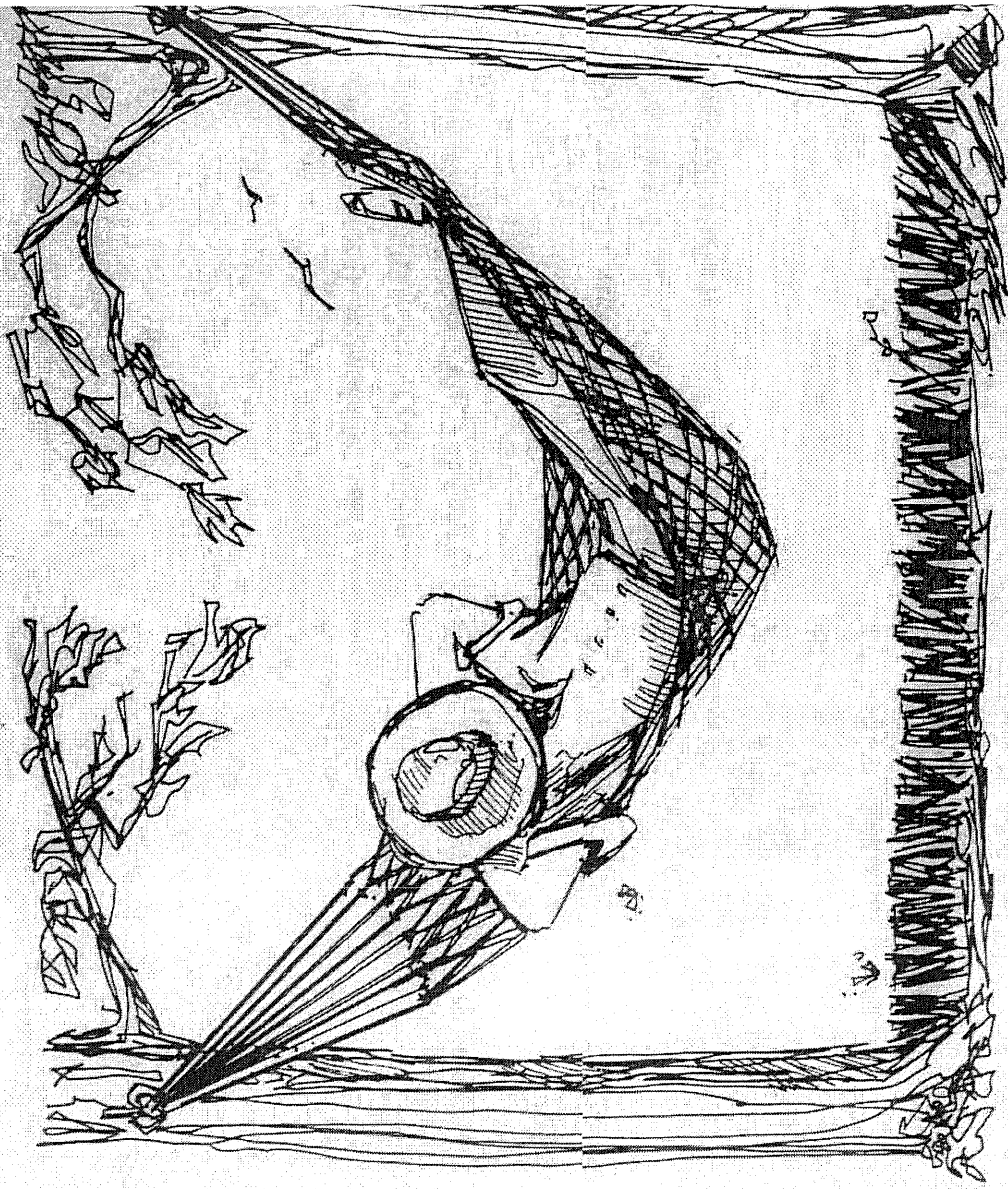


often reduces pesticide use by combining it with other, non-chemical methods of pest control?

A. More and more lawn companies are offering integrated pest management (IPM) in response to public concern about pesticides. Be aware that IPM is a general term and that companies may use it to describe a wide range of activities. Find out exactly what a company means if it says it uses IPM.

Q. Is the company willing to help you understand your lawn's problems and the solutions?

A. Lawn services generally apply fertilizers and pesticides. But you may be the one who mows and waters—and poor watering and mowing practices can lead to disappointing results. The



company should tell you how it plans to take care of your lawn, and advise you about the work you need to do to keep your lawn in good shape.

Q. Will the company tell you what pesticides it applies to your lawn and why, and what health and environmental risks may be presented by their use?

A. You have a right to this information. If asked, the company should readily supply it. All pesticides sold legally in the United States are registered by EPA, but such registration is *not* a guarantee of safety. Ask to see a copy of pesticide labels to make sure they bear an EPA registration number, and to review the directions that should be followed. If the company can't answer your questions about the chemicals it uses, call NPIC (1-800-858-7378) for more information.

