

What is a Pesticide?

Definition: Any substance or mixture of substances intended for *preventing, destroying, repelling, or mitigating* any pest.

Pests can be:

- insects
- mice and other animals
- unwanted plants (weeds)
- fungi
- bacteria and viruses (micro-organisms)
- snails and slugs

Examples: Many household products are pesticides. Did you know that all of these common products are considered (or contain) pesticides?

Mosquito repellents



Cockroach sprays and baits



Rat and other rodent poisons



Some swimming pool chemicals



Products that kill mold and mildew



Kitchen, laundry, and bath disinfectants



Flea and tick sprays, powders, and pet collars



Lawn and garden products, such as weed killers



Safety:

- Read the label before using the pesticide! The label is your main source of information on how to use the product correctly, effectively, safely, and legally.
- It is very important to use the proper substance to combat the proper pests. If you don't, you are endangering the environment and wasting money.

Conclusions:

Any substance can be harmful if used improperly. By their very nature, *most pesticides have the potential to create some risk of harm* to humans, animals, or the environment because they are designed to kill or otherwise adversely affect living organisms.

At the same time, pesticides *are useful to society* because of their ability to kill potential disease-causing organisms and control insects, weeds, and other pests.

For more information on Pesticides in California contact:

CA Dept. of Pesticide Regulation:
1001 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95812,
916-445-4300, www.cdpr.ca.gov

CA Dept. of Food and Agriculture:
1200 N Street, Sacramento, CA 95814
916-654-0462, www.cdafa.ca.gov

or your local Agricultural Commissioner's Office