

Counterfeit Pesticides for Your Pet¹

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Introduction

Pesticides sold in Florida must be registered with both the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS). The EPA requirement is intended to ensure that all pesticides sold in the United States meet the EPA's pesticide label-use conditions, which guarantee safety when the product is used according to directions provided on the label. Additionally, the state pesticide registration ensures safety for environmental conditions specific to Florida, such as protection for water resources.

Each legitimate pesticide product will have its EPA registration number on the label. Always look for the EPA-registration number before purchasing any pesticide, including those used on your pets. The EPA number is most often found on the front of the label, as seen with this flea-and-tick collar product (Figure 1).

The EPA has determined that counterfeiters have placed as inserts within pet product retail cartons foreign-labeled application instructions printed to resemble the U.S.-registered labels.

Storage and Disposal

Storage: Store at room temperature

Disposal: Do not use empty pouch. Place in trash or offer for recycling if available.

Active Ingredients

Tetrachlorvinphos	14.55%
(S)-methoprene	1.02%
OTHER INGREDIENTS	84.43%
TOTAL	100.00%

For More Information

Call our flea and tick experts at 1-800-275-1414.

EPA Registration Number
2596-139

Net Contents

1.16 oz. (33g)

Figure 1. EPA registration numbers are usually found on the front of the product label.

The counterfeit products pose potential risks due to units of measure that are unfamiliar to U.S. consumers, lack of child-resistant packaging, lack of precautionary statements, and the potential for the pesticide to be other than what is indicated on the carton. For example, first-aid treatment directions may not be immediately available in case of an emergency. Further, a child may be harmed if he or she is able to open a package that is not child-resistant. Thus, EPA is recommending that consumers dispose of a product that has been discovered to be counterfeit.

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Action Taken by EPA

EPA, in cooperation with its state and regional regulatory partners, in August 2008 issued stop-sale, use, and removal orders to retailers and other distributors of counterfeit pesticide products for control of fleas and ticks on dogs and cats. The stop-sale, use, and removal orders are intended to disrupt an effort to distribute counterfeit pet pesticides. The counterfeit pesticides appear to have been unlawfully imported and were packaged in cartons designed to look like legitimately registered pesticides available in the United States under several popular trade names. The orders prohibit retailers and other distributors from distributing or selling the counterfeit pesticide products and require their proper disposal.

Is there a penalty for purchasing counterfeit pesticide products?

For individual consumers, there is no penalty for purchasing a counterfeit product. Penalties only apply to persons who distribute or sell counterfeit products. Persons who distribute, import, or sell counterfeit pesticides are subject to civil or criminal penalties up to \$27,500 per sale, one year of imprisonment, or both. Persons who distribute or sell counterfeit products after receipt of the EPA's order concerning the products are not only liable for illegal distribution or sale of a counterfeit pesticide, but also for the additional violation of failing to comply with the stop-sale order.

Disposing of Counterfeit Products

If you discover that you have a counterfeit pesticide product, contact your local solid-waste agency for information on proper disposal in your community. Your local government may recommend that you take the product to a household hazardous waste collection program. Or, if permitted by your local government, you may dispose of the counterfeit pesticide product in your trash. To identify your local solid waste agency, look in the government section of your phone book under categories such as solid waste, public works, or garbage, trash or refuse collection.

You may also contact an organization named Earth 911 at 1-800-CLEANUP or <http://www.earth911.org/> to obtain community disposal information.

What should I do if I suspect I have counterfeit pesticide products?

Notify the store staff where you purchased the product. You may also contact FDACS, which is Florida's pesticide regulatory agency. FDACS contact information is listed in the "Additional Information" section of this document. If you suspect that your pet is sick from a counterfeit pesticide, contact your veterinarian for medical assistance and advice. In addition, the National Pesticide Information Center (NPIC) is an EPA-sanctioned toll-free helpline and can provide answers to most questions regarding pesticides and pesticide poisonings. You can reach NPIC at 1-800-858-7378, daily from 6:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (Pacific Time). NPIC also has a Web site with comprehensive pesticide information at <http://npic.orst.edu/>.

Additional Information

Fishel, F.M. 2008. EPA approval of pesticide labeling. UF/IFAS EDIS Publication PI-203. <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/PI203> (accessed September, 2008)

Fishel, F.M. 2005. Interpreting pesticide label wording. UF/IFAS EDIS Publication PI-34. <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/PI071> (accessed September, 2008)

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Bureau of Compliance Monitoring, 3125 Conner Drive, Bldg. 8, L-29, Tallahassee, FL 32399-1650, Phone: 850-488-3314, <http://www.flaes.org//complimonitoring/index.html> (accessed September, 2008).

Nesheim, O.N. and F.M. Fishel. 2005. Proper disposal of pesticide waste. UF/IFAS EDIS Publication PI-10 <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/PI010> (accessed September, 2008)