

EPA Takes Major Actions to Reduce Americans' Risks from Mouse and Rat Poisons / Move will better protect children, pets and wildlife

Release date: 06/07/2011

Contact Information: Dale Kemery (News Media Only) kemery.dale@epa.gov 202-564-7839 202-564-4355

WASHINGTON – To better protect children, pets and wildlife, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced today that it is moving to ban the sale to residential consumers of the most toxic rat and mouse poisons, as well as most loose bait and pellet products. The agency is also requiring that all newly registered rat and mouse poisons marketed to residential consumers be enclosed in bait stations that render the pesticide inaccessible to children and pets. Wildlife that consume bait or poisoned rodents will also be protected by EPA's actions.

"These changes are essential to reduce the thousands of accidental exposures of children that occur every year from rat and mouse control products and also to protect household pets," said Steve Owens, assistant administrator for EPA's Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention. "Today's action will help keep our children and pets safe from these poisons."

Children are particularly at risk for exposure to rat and mouse poisons because the products are typically placed on floors, and because young children sometimes place bait pellets in their mouths. The American Association of Poison Control Centers annually receives between 12,000 and 15,000 reports of children under the age of six being exposed to these types of products.

In 2008, EPA gave producers of rat and mouse poison until June 4, 2011 to research, develop and register new products that would be safer for children, pets and wildlife. Over the past three years, EPA has worked with a number of companies to achieve that goal, and there are now new products on the market with new bait delivery systems and less toxic baits. These products are safer to children, as well as pets and wildlife, but still provide effective rodent control for residential consumers.

While many companies that produce rat and mouse poison products have agreed to adopt the new safety measures, a handful of companies have advised EPA that they do not plan to do so. Consequently, EPA intends to initiate cancellation proceedings under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act, the federal pesticide law, against certain non-compliant products marketed by the following companies to remove them from the market:

- Reckitt Benckiser Inc. (makers of D-Con, Fleeject, and Mimas rodent control products)
- Woodstream Inc. (makers of Victor rodent control products)
- Spectrum Group (makers of Hot Shot rodent control products)
- Liphatech Inc. (makers of Generation, Maki, and Rozol rodent control products)

In addition to requiring more-protective bait stations and prohibiting pellet formulations, EPA intends to ban the sale and distribution of rodenticide products containing brodifacoum, bromadiolone, difethialone and difenacoum directly to residential consumers because of their toxicity and the secondary poisoning hazards to wildlife. These rodenticides will still be available for use in residential settings, but only by professional pest control applicators. The compounds will also be allowed for use in agricultural settings; however, bait stations will be required for all outdoor, above-ground uses to minimize exposure to children, pets and wildlife.

To help avoid rat and mouse infestations in and around homes, EPA stresses the importance of

rodent prevention and identification measures such as:

- Sealing holes inside and outside the home to prevent entry by rats and mice
- Cleaning up potential rodent food sources and nesting sites
- Looking for rat and mice droppings around the kitchen
- Keeping an eye out for nesting material such as shredded paper, fabric or dried plant matter
- Finding evidence of gnawing and chewing on food packaging or structures

EPA also urges consumers to keep the following tips in mind whenever using rodenticides in their homes:

- Always place traps and baits in places where children and pets cannot reach them
- Use all products according to label directions and precautions
- Be sure to select traps that are appropriate to the type and size of rodent (e.g., rat vs. mouse)

More information on rat and mouse products that meet EPA's safety standard:

<http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/mice-and-rats>

More tips and information on controlling rodents:

<http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/controlling/rodents.htm>