



Secure Pesticide Storage: Security and Safety-promoting Features of Pesticide Storage Facilities¹

Thomas W. Dean²

This document describes nine features that specifically promote pesticide storage facility security and safety.

Introduction

In actual practice, the fundamental goal of "security" is always the same: **effective safeguard**. Therefore, certain features of a pesticide storage facility should expressly aim at providing exactly that. These features include:

- signs
- fire control equipment
- spill cleanup equipment
- exterior lighting
- a personal protective equipment (PPE) locker
- a water supply
- a locking door

- gated fencing
- security-enhancing workplace actions

Signs

Install easy-to-read signs that clearly identify the purpose and use of the facility. Make sure each sign can be read from 50 feet away. Using **3-inch letters** will do this.

Install the following signs:

- On each outside wall: **PESTICIDE STORAGE -- KEEP OUT**. (*Four signs total.*)
- Beside the door: **NO SMOKING**. (*One sign total.*)
- On the door: **AUTHORIZED USERS ONLY**. (*One sign total.*)

Fire Control

A pesticide storage facility should provide users a way to quickly put out a *small* (newly ignited) fire.

1. This document is Fact Sheet PI-32, part of a series from the Pesticide Information Office, Food Science and Human Nutrition Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. For additional information, contact the Pesticide Information Office, University of Florida, P.O. Box 110710, Gainesville, FL 32611-0710, (352) 392-4721. Published: April 2004. Revised: November 2004. Please visit the EDIS website at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.

2. Thomas W. Dean, Ph.D., assistant extension scientist, Pesticide Information Office, Food Science and Human Nutrition Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, 32611-0710.

To provide this capability, mount *two (2) fire extinguishers*. Mount one on the *inside* of the building. Put the other on the *outside* of the building. Locate both of them *near the doorway*.

Install fire extinguishers that are ABC-rated (for use against trash, electrical, and oil fires) and contain 20 pounds of dry chemical.

Spill Cleanup Equipment

Keep the following items on hand and *inside* the pesticide storage facility:

- plastic-bristled broom
- sturdy plastic dustpan
- sturdy plastic trash can
- 50 pounds of clean absorbent (e.g., cat litter, vermiculite, etc.)
- 1 pkg. of heavy-duty, 30-gallon, plastic bags
- hand-held, 8-inch, squeegee
- a flat-tipped shovel

Exterior Lighting

The outside of a storage facility's door should be illuminated at night.

If area-wide lighting is not present, install a light fixture on the storage facility wall. Aim the light to shine on the storage facility door. Mount the switch near the door knob.

Equipment Locker

Install a clothing and equipment locker (cabinet) *outside* the facility. Place the locker near the storage facility's door. Use the locker to store a complete set of personal protective equipment (PPE). Examples of PPE articles commonly indicated on pesticide product labels include:

- chemical-resistant gloves
- rubber boots or chemical-resistant overshoes

- respirator
- protective eye wear
- chemical-resistant apron
- coveralls

Have the locker's inventory match the PPE listed on the most rigorously-labeled pesticide being kept in the storage facility.

Keep this equipment in serviceable condition and *reserved only for use during spill clean-up work*.

Water Supply

Install a water faucet on the *outside* of the pesticide storage facility.

Locate the faucet near the facility's principal doorway. Position the faucet approximately 3 feet above ground level. This height makes it easier to operate. It also provides clearance for a 5-gallon bucket (or equivalent) to serve as a catch basin.

The water faucet at the storage facility is **not** intended for pesticide spray mix preparation (mixing/loading) work. Such work should be conducted elsewhere (for example, either at a mix/load facility, or "in-field" at the application site.)

Instead, water available at a pesticide storage facility should only be used for:

- routine storage facility maintenance
- emergency decontamination
- spill clean-up work

Security Measures

A multi-layered security system is your best defense against theft, vandalism, and terrorist efforts.

Three features described earlier directly strengthen storage facility security. These include a *lighted doorway*, a *visible location*, and *prominent signs*. These features improve the ability to monitor a storage facility. *Monitoring is the heart of security*.

Two other storage facility features directly affect security:

- a locking door
- gated fencing

Locking Door

Florida law requires a **locked door** on any facility storing a **restricted-use pesticide**. Because of the security concerns of modern times, its a good idea to have a locked door on every pesticide storage facility no matter what type (or how much) pesticide is stored.

Any lock is better than none. The best type of lock is a key-operated **dead bolt** mounted **in the door**. Hasp-mounted padlocks are less secure because hasps are more easily pried or cut.

Gated Fencing

Gated fencing is a physical barrier between the pesticide storage facility and the rest of the world. Fencing causes would-be trespassers to have second thoughts. Thus, because of its psychological value alone, almost any sort of fencing is better than none. However, storage site security is more enhanced by sturdy fencing (chain link, or equivalent.)

Of course, fencing can surround more than just the storage facility itself. Gated fencing for an entire property helps deter facility trespass. Locked gating vastly improves security fencing.

Other Security Steps

Several specific **workplace actions** directly enhance storage facility security. These include:

- **Identify** each authorized storage facility user.
- **Train** every storage facility user to lock the door after each use.
- **Keep** a current list of storage facility key holders.
- **Maintain** an entry/exit *log* as part of storage facility operations.

- **Teach** authorized users to look for and report abnormal events and unusual changes.
- **Designate** a facility supervisor and an alternate supervisor.
- **Post** names and local numbers for immediate emergency contact. Include:
 - Storage Facility Supervisors
 - Fire Department Contact
 - Law Enforcement Contact
 - Medical Care Contact
- **Show** every authorized facility user the location of the nearest telephone.