



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**February is National Pesticide Safety Education Month**  
*New Mexico Department of Agriculture reminds the public to read the label*

LAS CRUCES – Did you know that a disinfectant wipe is a pesticide? If your answer is “no,” you are not alone. Many people are not aware of what defines a pesticide and may not understand the importance of reading labels prior to using pesticides. It is for those reasons the New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA) is using National Pesticide Safety Education Month as an opportunity to remind the public to be safe and always read the label.

“Most people only think of insecticides or herbicides when they hear the word ‘pesticides,’ but it can also mean disinfectants, insect repellent, swimming pool treatments and many other products,” said New Mexico Agriculture Secretary Jeff Witte. “As the agency that regulates pesticides in the state, our team at NMDA wants to ensure that New Mexicans are educated when it comes to pesticide use and are staying safe. The first step to safety is reading the label.”

Per state statute, the [NMDA Pesticide Compliance](#) staff certifies and licenses people who apply pesticides in the state, ensures pesticide products in New Mexico are properly registered and investigates suspected misuse of pesticides.

NMDA provides continuous outreach for the public when it comes to pesticide education and awareness. With funding from – and in collaboration with – the United States Environmental Protection Agency, NMDA recently rolled out three commercials to educate the public about [using disinfectants at home](#), [hiring a licensed pest control company](#) and the importance of [reading the label for safety information](#).

NMDA also holds free pesticide disposal events around the state each year to provide opportunities for New Mexicans to properly and safely dispose of pesticides. Over the past 14 years, NMDA has partnered with recycling companies and hosts to hold these events, at which over 750,000 pounds of unwanted pesticides and their containers have been collected. Most recently, NMDA held pesticide disposal events in Deming and Santa Rosa in October. The amount collected at the Deming event (36,182 pounds) was

the fifth-largest amount collected since NMDA began holding disposal events in 2007. The next pesticide disposal event will be in Albuquerque in April, and details will be announced soon.

The first [National Pesticide Safety Education Month](#) was in 2018, and the purpose is to reinforce core principles of safe pesticide use with many audiences and raise awareness of and support for the land-grant university Pesticide Safety Education Programs. Both the [United States Environmental Protection Agency](#) and the [Pesticide Environmental Stewardship](#) provide pesticide-related information and resources.

For questions regarding pesticide compliance in New Mexico, please email [pesticides@nmda.nmsu.edu](mailto:pesticides@nmda.nmsu.edu) or call 575-646-2134.

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The logo consists of five stacked words in a bold, sans-serif font. The words are: 'NATIONAL' in orange, 'PESTICIDE' in blue, 'SAFETY' in blue, 'EDUCATION' in red, and 'MONTH' in green.

National Pesticide Safety Education Month logo



Cutline: Pesticides are not limited to insecticides or herbicides. Pesticides include many household cleaning items, such as disinfectants, bleach, sanitizers and more. During National Pesticide Safety Education Month, the New Mexico Department of Agriculture reminds the public to be safe and always read the label. (Stock photo by formatoriginal)