

# There is a safe way to use pesticides

With gardening season fast approaching I would like some advice on using pesticides safely.

M.K. Troy

Steps to safer pesticide use are outlined by the Environmental Protection Agency.

1. Read the label first and follow directions carefully. Buy only what you need and mix only what you can use. Apply as directed.
2. Don't apply pesticides outdoors on windy days. Indoors, leave a room until a pesticide has had a chance to work and open a window when you return to the sprayed area.
3. Avoid inhaling pesticides or spilling them on your skin or, in the garden, on the ground.
4. Wash thoroughly with soap and water after using a pesticide. Wash your clothing separately from the family wash.
5. Never transfer a pesticide or other poison into a container, such as a soft drink bottle, that could attract children. It is illegal to do so — and extremely dangerous. Always keep children and pets away from pesticides, application equipment and clothing, treated area, and containers.
6. Dispose of all empty containers properly.
7. Read and follow all directions for storage and disposal of pesticides out of the reach of children, preferably under lock and key. Know what to do if someone is accidentally poisoned by a pesticide. Check the label for statement and practical treatment.

Consumer Mailbag answers questions on environmental issues. Address all mail to Concern, Inc., Detroit, 1 Northfield Plaza, Troy, GRACE R. GLUSKIN

## consumer mailbag



A puppet from a fast-food restaurant can serve as a planter, giving new meaning to the tired 'green thumb' cliché. (Photo by Pat Bordman)

## Put new twist on cliches

She's got the world on a string. Don't put your foot in your mouth. Keep your eye on it. She has her head in the clouds. He has eyes in the back of his head. You hit it right on the nose. He has ants in his pants.

These and other expressions can be particularly perplexing to a child inexperienced with language and the world of metaphors, symbolism and figurative speech. Adults use phrases without even a thought to their literal meaning. But, children might be thrown into a whirl of confusion after hearing them. Instead of expanding their understanding of speech, such expressions send them into such a muddle, the rest of a conversation may be lost to them.

Yet, we cannot deprive them of these colorful ways of communicating by eliminating them from speech. Here's a project that will help explain the intent of two figures of speech, and help get a head-start on spring as well.

SOME FAST FOOD restaurants and other child-oriented concerns use plastic hand puppets and give-aways. You'll need one puppet per child, dirt and lima bean or other fast growing seeds.

Simply have your child fill the head, hands and upper portion of the body with dirt. All but two inches of the remainder should be filled with gravel



Pat Bordman

or small pebbles. Then, using a twist-tie, securely close the bottom of the puppet so nothing falls out.

Now, poke a hole in each hand of the puppet with a pencil or other pointy object. Put one or two lima bean seeds into each hole. If a small seed is used, several seeds may be placed in the hole. They should be pressed very slightly into the soil.

Using an eyedropper, water the inside of the hole. If the seeds are soaked in water the night before their use, they will sprout faster. Continue to water sparingly for several days. The seeds will pop right out of the hole as they grow toward light.

Talk about a green thumb, that puppet has life right in the palm of it's hand.

## volunteers

The Oakland County Volunteer Bureau, a program of the Volunteer Action Center of United Community Services, has weekly listings of volunteer opportunities. Further information about these and other volunteer needs at over 200 agencies may be obtained by calling the bureau at 642-7272. Any non-profit organization needing volunteer assistance may also call the bureau.

**COURT WATCHERS** — Volunteers are needed to observe the Oakland County Circuit Court in Pontiac. No special qualifications are necessary; one-half day training is given. Observing may be done at the convenience of the volunteer, once a week or more often. Reports turned in by volunteers are combined with the reports of other observers and submitted annually to judges and court administrators.

**PLANT PERSON** — Meadow Brook Hall in Rochester needs volunteers with a "green thumb." People who enjoy arranging flowers, planting and transplanting. The hours are flexible.

**OFFICE ASSISTANT** — volunteer with typing and mimeographing experience is needed by The League of Voters in Birmingham. Primary responsibility will be to assist with the assembling of the monthly bulletin. Time commitment is two days per month.

**GIFT SHOP ASSISTANT** — Volunteers are needed for the gift shop at Providence Hospital, Southfield. Hours available are on Tuesday, or Wednesday or Thursday for four hours. Training is provided.



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