

10 tons of pesticide collected in October by the Pesticide Disposal Assistance Program

Setting records and hitting milestones is nothing new for the Pesticides Disposal Assistance Program. The program has been doing it since its inception in 1980, when it became the first pesticide collection program in the country.

Since its beginning, the PDAP has properly collected and disposed of over 3.6 million pounds of pesticides. You would think that eventually the pounds of materials collected across the state would wane some after 37 years of collection. However, recently in the month of October, the program removed 10 tons of pesticide from farmers and homeowners who visited one of the collection days.

“We are proud that this is the first program of its type in the nation,” said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. “It offers farmers a viable option to do the right thing and protects our waterways and land from improper dumping.”

Since 1976, it has been illegal to dispose of pesticides in landfills. This program is designed to be a non-regulatory, amnesty-type program, even for pesticides that have been banned for decades. Pesticides brought to the collection sites are taken by the contractor to a hazmat incinerator located out of state.

Collection steadily increases not decreases according to Derrick Bell, Pesticide Disposal Assistance Program manager. From 1980-1989, the program averaged 33,564 pounds a year. In 2000, this was up to about 138,000 pounds a year and last year, the program set a record with 198,015 pounds collected.

“I often get asked if there will be a point when collections slow, that we will have all the banned and outdated pesticides that are out there,” said Bell. “Products change, different pesticides come on the market and commodities change. Sometimes it can be children taking over the family farm and finding pesticides. There are a number of reasons why pesticides need disposing, and this program helps with proper disposal.”

The program rotates collection days among all 100 counties plus the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indian territory so each has a collection day every other year. About 45 collection dates are held per year. Schedules are posted online at www.ncagr.gov/PDAP. Collections are arranged through county [Cooperative Extension offices](#).

The program also responds to pesticide disposal issues related to hurricanes, tornados, severe weather and flood and fire damage.

In 2016 following Hurricane Matthew, the program responded with both specialized collection events staged for Hurricane Matthew and a number of onsite pickups to assist in pesticide disposal concerns resulting from the widespread flooding.

The program is paid for through the Pesticide Environmental Trust Fund, which receives money through registration fees that companies pay on each pesticide product sold in the state and through an appropriation from the General Assembly.