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Joint Press Release

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Mainers Urged to Sign Up for Free Disposal of Banned, Unusable Pesticides

AUGUSTA—This October, the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry's (DACF) Board of Pesticides Control (BPC) will team up with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to help Mainers dispose of banned pesticides or unusable pesticides.

This free disposal program is open to homeowners, family-owned farms and greenhouses. Collection will occur at sites located in Presque Isle, Bangor, Augusta and Portland. To qualify, people must **register by September 26, 2014**.

Governor Paul R. LePage is urging Mainers to take advantage of this opportunity to protect the environment and save money through this once a year collection event that highlights cooperation between government agencies. "This is an opportunity for Mainers to dispose of unusable pesticides properly and at no expense," said Governor LePage. "By consolidating collections into four central locations and using in-house resources and expertise, we can reduce disposal costs to about \$2 per pound. That's a great value for Maine taxpayers."

It's not unusual for homes and farms to have unintentional hazardous waste—banned pesticides or pesticides that have become caked, frozen, or otherwise rendered unusable—sitting around in basements, garages, or barns. These chemicals can be difficult and expensive to dispose of; DACF Commissioner Walt Whitcomb stressed the importance of proper disposal of banned or unwanted pesticides.

"It's important for the protection of public, wildlife, and environmental health that these products are dealt with properly and not thrown in the trash or down the drain, where they can contaminate land and water resources, including drinking water," said Commissioner Whitcomb. "People holding these chemicals should contact the BPC as soon as possible to register for the October collection."

"Providing an easy and no cost solution for Mainers to properly dispose of pesticides is a win for the environment and public health," said Maine DEP Commissioner Patricia Aho. "The collection events cover the State and are held in Presque Isle, Bangor, Augusta and Portland, providing accessible methods of collection and future disposal."

The collected chemicals go to out-of-state disposal facilities licensed by the federal Environmental Protection Agency where they are incinerated or reprocessed.

Registration by September 26, 2014, is mandatory—drop-ins are not permitted. To register, get details, and learn important information about the temporary storage and transportation of obsolete pesticides, go to the BPC Web site at <http://www.thinkfirstspraylast.org>, or call 207-287-2731.

The Maine Obsolete Pesticides Collection Program, jointly sponsored by the BPC and DEP, and paid for entirely through pesticide product registration fees, has kept more than 90 tons of pesticides out of the waste stream since its start in 1982.

- *For more information on the Maine Board of Pesticides Control, go to: <http://www.thinkfirstspraylast.org>.*
- *For more information on the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, go to: <http://www.maine.gov/dep>*

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Important Note to the Media: Since registration is required, please post any information from this release as soon as possible. This will allow adequate time for participants and the Board of Pesticides to process applications. *Thank you for your help in getting the word out!*