

Bug Foggers Are Dangerous and Cause Injury Despite Relabeling Efforts

Insecticide foggers, also called "bug bombs," are still causing injuries in the U.S., despite the fact that manufacturers were ordered to modify the products' labels in order to make them safer. The study team notes in the Centers for Disease Control's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report noted that some types of incidents even increased.

The best precaution is not to have bugs inside your house in the first place, so depriving food, shelter and water from insects. If these steps don't work and you want to use insect sprays, it's necessary that you read and follow the label directions." – Walter Alarcon of the CDC's National Institute for Occupational Safety via email to Reuters.

Due to high injury rate the EPA required bug bombs to have improved instruction labels after 2012, with images emphasizing safety precautions such as leaving the home for at least two hours and ventilating the area well for an additional two hours. But the rate of illness related to bug bombs was not reduced. Some types of incidents even increased.

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If you're going to use foggers or bug bombs follow all instructions and keep them away from heat sources and evacuate the building. The EPA has put out a series of videos regarding fogger safety.

Obviously, we at OLM contend there are better ways to eliminate a bug problem other than through the use of toxic chemicals, though eliminating the problem in the first place

by depriving them of food, water, and shelter is the right first step. Keeping the home as clean as possible, use essential oils like neem and lemongrass to wipe down, spray, and clean every surface insects may come in contact with.

Alarcon and colleagues used several health surveillance databases to see whether the relabeled products changed the statistics, characteristics, or severity of illnesses with bug bombs between 2007-2015. In particular, they looked at data from pesticides programs and poison control centers in Texas, Florida, North Carolina, Michigan, Washington, California, Louisiana, New York, Oregon and Nebraska. Among 3,222 illnesses, common symptoms included coughing, vomiting, nausea, respiratory pain and abdominal pain. Five percent of cases happened in children less than five years of age, and 14% of injuries occurred in adults over age 60.

Exposure narratives in case reports indicated that most users didn't read or follow label directions," Alarcon said.

Individuals who did not leave their houses throughout the insect bomb installation were much more likely to report illness. Others had problems following re-entry to their homes too early or by spraying themselves from simply pointing the nozzle in the wrong direction.

Foggers are obsolete residential pest management apparatus for many reasons. It isn't too powerful for several insects, like bed bugs or cockroaches. It certainly introduces a fantastic concern for human exposure to pesticides following usage as residue is left on surfaces which individuals, particularly toddlers and young kids, develop into contact afterwards.

It is quite simple to abuse them adhere to the directions correctly. I have a tough time following the specific instructions."- Dr. Alex Lu of the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health in Boston (wasn't involved in the study).

A limitation of this study is the poison control centers might not have info from those who had moderate cases and did not report their encounters. A few of the cases might also be considered "false positives" because the symptoms might not be brought on by foggers, the authors note. Moreover, the analysis only includes data from 10 nations and also for three years following the new EPA label conditions have been in force.

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