



## **EMALAHLENI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY**

### **EDUCATION AND AWARENESS CAMPAIGN ON HARZARDOUS PESTICIDES AND CHEMICALS**

## **EMALAHLENI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY HARZARDOUS PESTICIDES AND CHEMICALS SAFETY TIPS AND AWARENESS CAMPAIGN**

### **WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ORGANOPHOSPHATES**

Organophosphates have been found to be the cause of the death of Children who were said to have consumed snacks from local spaza/tuck shops. The organophosphate identified is called Terbufos. This organophosphate may be harmful to human health and in this instance lethal. Organophosphates are also harmful to the Environment and its use must be regulated by relevant pieces of legislation.

#### **1. What is Organophosphate?**

- Organophosphate is not one substance but a group of substances, which are usually used in agriculture or as pesticides, herbicides, and insecticides.

#### **2. How long does it take to get sick from organophosphates?**

- organophosphate poisoning symptoms can range from mild to severe and vary widely depending on the type and degree of exposure. Experts classify the effects of toxicity by the length of exposure:
  - acute effects occur within minutes to 24 hours
  - subacute effects appear 24 hours to 2 weeks after exposure
  - chronic effects appear from weeks to several years after exposure

#### **3. What are the symptoms after exposure?**

- Gastrointestinal problems such as diarrhoea, nausea, and vomiting saliva and tears
- Respiratory problems such as difficulty in breathing
- Neurological problems such as seizures

- Cardiovascular problems such as changes in heart rhythm

**4. How can organophosphates be found in food?**

- Storage of food with organophosphate
- Not washing hands after using organophosphate and touching food (Contamination)
- Using of organophosphate in food stores to kill pests and rats
- Using organophosphates without following Health Guidelines

**5. How can I prevent myself and my loved ones from exposure and consumption of contaminated food?**

- Buy food from shops that are licensed or permitted by the authorities to sell food.
- Avoid buying re-packaged food, sweets and snacks, you do not know where those hands have been.
- Avoid buying food from random hawkers on the streets
- Always check the labelling on the food products.
- Never buy pesticides or herbicides from unlicensed retailers or on the street for domestic use or any use.
- Report to authorities if you encounter people selling these products.
- Always wash your fruits and vegetables before consumption.
- Teach your children to be responsible and discourage them from buying food, snacks and sweets from the streets or unlicensed shops.

**6. What are the consequences of selling organophosphates illegally?**

- Under South African Law, it is illegal to sell or possess, or use pesticides that are not registered by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development.
- Violators can face fines and imprisonment.

**7. What should I do if poisoning with organophosphate occurs?**

- Go to the nearest Health Care Facility immediately.
- Report the incident to local authorities and SAPS(Police).

**Important Notice: This information is intended for Educational Purposes Only, for Professional advice or opinion on any aspect of this article, please contact the responsible authorities.**