

Stormwater tip – May 2016

According to the EPA, homeowners apply 10 times more pesticides per acre than the average farmer applies! It is best to eliminate or minimize the use of chemical pesticides. While killing harmful insects, the chemicals also kill beneficial insects like praying mantises and ladybugs. If you feel you must use pesticides around your home, read the label carefully, follow directions exactly, and spot spray where ever possible. Always wear protective clothing and dispose of any excess material at a hazardous waste drop-off.

There are many recipes for natural homemade pesticides. When using any of them in your gardens, apply sparingly and never in the hot sun. Some of the more popular ones are shown below.

Spider repellent – mix 1 tablespoon of lemon oil with one quart of water in a spray bottle, and use as needed in areas where spiders are a concern. A dishpan of hot soapy water (Ajax or Dawn dish soap are suggested) can be poured around the outside of your home, or porches or in garages to form a barrier. This should last several weeks or months.

Garden pests – mix 1 TBSP vegetable oil, 1 tsp liquid dish detergent and 2 cups of water in a spray bottle and shake to mix. Spray your plants lightly every 7 days as a preventative measure or more frequently if there is already a pest problem.

Diatomaceous Earth is an all natural solution for insects of all kinds. It can be sprinkled on top of the soil around plants and shrubs. It is also safe to use indoors for ants and roaches. It can be purchased in garden centers or on Amazon.