

Safe storage and disposal of zinc phosphide mouse bait

Suzy Balogh

Former Agricultural Protection Officer

Eric Davis

Former Program Leader Vertebrate Pests

Zinc Phosphide containers

Zinc phosphide mouse bait should be in well sealed waterproof containers. Always check seals on bait containers (anything could have happened during transport).

A number of RLPB staff that have stored zinc phosphide mouse bait in their normal chemical store have noticed gas within the shed when they open the door. This must be considered when storing bait in sheds (see recommendation on storage in sheds).

Storage in sheds

There needs to be adequate ventilation both at both roof and ground level if zinc phosphide mouse bait is stored in a closed shed. Normal ventilation that is adequate for a small quantity of Larvacide is not sufficient for storage of large quantities of zinc phosphide without this extra ventilation.

Recommendation:

Where zinc phosphide is stored in a closed shed, the doors should be opened at least 15 to 30 minutes prior to entry. Note that where it is necessary to store large quantities of zinc phosphide in a closed shed, it is also recommended that you wear a respirator when entering the shed.

Legal requirements for storing Zinc Phosphide bait

The Permit specifies that storage facilities must:

- be secure, locked, dry, fire resistant, cool (< 30°C)

- not be accessible by children, pets or wildlife
- ensure no contact with acids, water, heat or sources of ignition.

Preferred storage

- Store in a dry open sided shed with weld mesh, lockable doors.
- If the only available storage facility is a closed shed, the airing and respirator procedures recommended above should be adopted.
- Where possible and practical, order only sufficient bait for weekly use.
- Where possible, have the bait delivered directly to the airstrip for immediate use (cover with a tarpaulin or sheets of tin if there is a possibility of rain)

Storage on farms

The Permit specifies that bait can be stored on farm, but only until the end of the baiting program on that farm. Storage facilities must comply with label requirements.

Personal safety

- All persons handling Zinc Phosphide bait are reminded that, like all chemicals, this product is potentially dangerous and they are legally required to follow permit conditions
- All persons must wear their correct personal protective equipment, including respirator, overalls and gloves.
- If bait has been stored in a closed shed, allow 15 to 30 minutes venting or airing with the door open before entering and also wear a respirator if the shed contains a large volume of bait
- Remember, if you can smell Zinc Phosphide, it has not been cleared from the air you are working in – wear a respirator.



- When opening containers (drums, pails or bags), do so in the open air standing side on to the wind.

What respirators do I need when handling Zinc Phosphide bait?

The permit specifies that a full face respirator fitted with a combined particulate/phosphine gas cartridge must be worn when opening and venting zinc phosphide drums. A full face or half face respirator with the same cartridge must also be worn when handling bait at other times. Goggles are also recommended where half face respirators are worn.

Remember to change cartridges at recommended intervals or earlier if you notice any resistance when breathing through the cartridge.

How must I dispose of zinc phosphide bait?

The permit and label state: disposal is by burial in one (1) metre deep pit and covered with damp soil. This burial site must be specifically marked and set up for this purpose – clear of waterways, vegetation and roots.

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