

## **Pesticides Awareness Week 2013**

### **27<sup>th</sup> October – 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 2013**

The Ministry of Agriculture, Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Control Board will be celebrating Pesticides Awareness Week, 2013 under the theme “Store Wise – Save Lives” from the 27<sup>th</sup> Oct. – 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov., 2013. The Board which monitors the import, distribution, vending, use, storage and disposal of pesticides in Guyana will be carrying out numerous activities during the week to raise awareness about this unique group of chemicals.

Activities during the week will focus on pesticides storage practices and how important proper storage is to pesticides users and the general public. Improper storage of pesticides can lead to pesticides fires, spills and accidental poisonings such as suicide.

Pesticides are the only toxic substances released intentionally into our environment to kill living things. This includes substances that kill weeds (herbicides), insects (insecticides), fungus (fungicides), rodents (rodenticides), and others.

The use of toxic pesticides to manage pest problems has become a common practice around the world. Pesticides are used almost everywhere -- not only in agricultural fields, but also in homes, parks, schools, buildings, forests, and roads. It is difficult to find somewhere where pesticides aren't used -- from the can of bug spray under the kitchen sink to the airplane crop dusting acres of farmland; our world is filled with pesticides.

Pesticides have been linked to a wide range of human health hazards, ranging from short-term impacts such as headaches and nausea to chronic impacts like cancer, reproductive harm, and respiratory failure.

Acute dangers - such as nerve, skin, and eye irritation and damage, headaches, dizziness, nausea, fatigue and systemic poisoning - can sometimes be dramatic, and even occasionally fatal. Chronic health effects may occur years after even minimal exposure to pesticides in the environment, or result from the pesticide residues which we ingest through our food.

Pesticides are currently considered valuable and necessary to provide sufficient quantity of quality foods for the world's population. However, the protection of man and his essential needs such as water, air, food and protection from pesticides which are potentially dangerous, is in the public interest now and in the future. Therefore it is deemed necessary to provide for the management of pesticides, throughout its lifecycle.

Pesticides management in Guyana aims to alleviate the dangers associated with pesticides used in food production, ensuring food safety and protecting the lives of consumers and pesticides users. The Board will continue to strengthen public awareness activities in light of the growing concern about pesticides and its impact on human health and environment.