NEWS RELEASE

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American Association of Poison Control Centers and the National Pesticide Information Center
Partner to Bolster Pesticide Safety and Education

ALEXANDRIA, VA – Today, two prominent organizations dedicated to improving public health and preventing poisoning announce a new partnership focusing on pesticide safety and education. The American Association of Poison Control Centers (AAPCC), which supports the work of the nation’s 55 poison control centers, and the National Pesticide Information Center (NPIC) – a cooperative agreement between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Oregon State University – are teaming up to help people stay safe around pesticides. As a category, pesticides are one of the top ten substances regularly reported to poison centers nationwide and many of these exposures are preventable through proper education.

NPIC and AAPCC have unique expertise and real world experience in working directly with individuals to prevent and manage pesticide poisonings. According to Dr. David Stone, director of NPIC, “Both our organizations understand the circumstances that typically lead to exposures, recognize signs and symptoms that indicate harm, and are armed with the knowledge necessary to prevent poison exposures through outreach and education.”

Together, these national organizations will develop health and safety educational materials related to products such as antimicrobials, herbicides and insecticides. According to AAPCC Executive Director Stephen T. Kaminski, J.D., “These bilingual materials will focus on the general public, and include topics such as safe storage practices, exposure reduction techniques, the least-toxic approaches to pest control and emergency preparation.”

In addition to their cooperation on educational materials and outreach efforts, AAPCC and NPIC will magnify communications between their organizations. Currently, several hundred referrals are made to one another annually, depending on the nature of the call. A new initiative will include sharing pesticide alerts, recalls, trends in poisonings and other emergent events to increase our national surveillance and improve public health outcomes. A key feature of the new collaboration will be leveraging AAPCC and NPIC’s social media presence in order to further disseminate important messages to diverse audiences.

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AAPCC supports the nation’s 55 poison center members in their efforts to treat and prevent drug, consumer product, animal, environmental and food poisoning. Members staff the Poison Help hotline at 1-800-222-1222 that provides free, confidential, expert medical advice 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year from toxicology specialists, including nurses, pharmacists, physicians, and poison information providers. In addition, AAPCC maintains the only poison information and surveillance database in the United States, providing real-time monitoring of unusual poisoning patterns, chemical exposures and other emerging public health hazards. AAPCC partners with federal agencies such as EPA, HRSA and the CDC, as well as private industry.

To learn more, visit www.aapcc.org, like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter (@AAPCC), and read our blog at aapcc.wordpress.com.

NPIC provides objective, science-based information about pesticides and related topics to help people to make informed decisions. NPIC is a cooperative agreement between Oregon State University and the US Environmental Protection Agency (cooperative agreement #X8-83458501). The phones are open at 1-800-858-7378 from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. EST, Monday - Friday. Information is provided at no cost, by highly trained specialists who rely on sound science and tailored approaches. The website at npic.orst.edu includes over 700 pages in English and Spanish, featuring fact sheets, FAQs, and videos. NPIC works closely with the EPA and several state agencies, sharing data about trends in pesticide exposure.

To receive tips about reducing pesticide risk in the home and garden, like “NPICatOSU” on Facebook, YouTube, and follow us on Twitter (@NPICatOSU).