

Small Animals Affected by Flea and Tick Treatments

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Over the course of the last decade, there has been an increased awareness of small animal illnesses and deaths suspected to be from the use of localized flea and tick treatments (called “spot-on” treatments). These treatments are packaged in small ampules and applied topically to the animal’s neck and back. Most of the spot-on flea and tick treatments are intended for use on dogs and cats.

As the Federal agency charged with administration of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) received hundreds of calls from concerned pet owners and veterinarians regarding the possible correlation of animal illnesses and spot-on flea and tick treatments. As the Nebraska Department of Agriculture is the State agency with delegated authority by EPA to regulate pesticides locally, we are distributing this Pesticide Health Alert in order to explain the current circumstances and inform the public and state-licensed veterinarians about a national voluntary incident reporting program.

EPA considers reports from pet owners and veterinarians in evaluating whether additional regulatory action is needed. In order to help EPA better document the ill effects suffered by small animals, the agency is asking both pet owners and veterinarians to report these incidents. See the options on this EPA page to [Report Pesticide Exposure Incidents Affecting Pets or Domestic Animals](#). It is important to include the EPA Registration Number of the product involved, which should be printed on the product packaging.

EPA routinely examines this information to determine what concerns are being raised about registered products and whether further regulatory action is needed. EPA intensified its evaluation of the spot-on products due to an increase in the number of reported incidences. An overview of that evaluation can be found here, [EPA Evaluation of Pet Spot-on Products: Analysis and Plans for Reducing Harmful Effects](#).

Citizens and veterinarians may be interested in reading the information available on EPA’s [Protecting Pets page](#).

The [National Pesticide Information Center \(NPIC\)](#) (<http://npic.orst.edu>) provides experts who can answer a broad range of questions concerning pesticide-related issues, such as product use, health effects, etc. You can also call NPIC toll-free at 800-858-7378 or e-mail npic@ace.orst.edu. NPIC is open seven days a week, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Pacific Time.