

Protect your family and pets

There are numerous health risks associated with the incorrect use of pesticides.

LEA JACOBS.

USING the services of a pest controller who is not registered with the Department of Agriculture could adversely affect the health of your family and pets.

This is according to Peter Dreyer from South Coast Pest Control, who is a member of the South African Pest Control Association (SAPCA).

Mr Dreyer warns that many consumers are unaware of the health risks associated with the incorrect use of pesticides.

Act No 36 of 1947 states pesticides may only be applied, for purposes as indicated on their respective labels, by a registered pest controller.

"Unfortunately, there has been an increase in unscrupulous contractors. Consumers should be wary of anyone who quotes a drastically reduced rate."

He added the approved chemicals cost a certain amount and anyone who quoted below those prices was either not using the correct pesticide, was diluting the mixture, or was not using chemicals at all.

"I have heard some real horror stories. The one which stands out was when the department caught someone using a cooldrink bottle to dispense the chemical onto foundations."

While using the correct chemicals was vital, so too was the correct application.

Gustav Lindenberg from Pest Control Specialists in Tweni whose franchise is registered with the Pest Control Services Industries Board

(PCSIB) said safety formed a vital part of any pest controller's job.

"Safe handling, mixing and application of chemicals are all important.

"Most people are unaware that the effects of poison on humans are often delayed, with symptoms only appearing at a later stage."

Mr Liebenberg said the world was moving away from the use of dangerous chemicals wherever possible.

He went on to say his company had started using mechanical methods such as trapping and also tries to use preventative measures as much as possible.

"There will always be times where poison has to be used," he said.

"However, when registered pest controllers use chemicals, they do so in a responsible manner."

He believed many homeowners had become more aware of environmental issues and were opting to use more natural options.

He said that research had shown that pesticides used to kill rodents have a direct impact on other species.

"Owl boxes are a natural alternative and are becoming increasingly popular. Installed in trees, the boxes encourage owls to nest and hunt over a fairly large area keeping the rodent population down."



Dangerous: Although termites can cause

