

SAPCA's Call To Duty To Promote Responsible Pesticide Use

Veterinarians from all over South Africa get more pesticide poisoning incidents on their examination table than they would like. The most common reason for pesticide poisoning in pets is the misuse or incorrect use of pesticides in and around the house.

Pesticides can be inhaled, absorbed through the skin, eaten or transmitted by secondary exposure. This is why the South African Pest Control Association (SAPCA) sensed the urge to educate all parties involved in caring for pets, consumers and veterinarians.

Although many pesticides can be applied manually by consumers themselves, SAPCA wants to encourage the public to make use of a professional pest-management company employing registered PCO's.

"This is a valuable referral service knowing that by using a SAPCA member you will receive quality work, good service and ensure that your family and the environment are taken care of, whilst your pest problem is effectively resolved," says Mark Enslin, President of SAPCA.

When exposed, pets can suffer from a wide variety of effects ranging from slight to severe. According to a survey done at the University of Pretoria in 2005, the majority of veterinarians that completed the questionnaire identified tremors, salivation, seizures, bradycardia, dyspnoea and miosis as the most common signs, with paresis or paralysis also being experienced occasionally. The veterinary community holds the key to eradicating these types of incidents as they interact with pet owners directly on a daily basis. A collaborative approach could prove the answer by slowly, but surely, starting to eradicate these types of incidents from society and the examination table.

People don't realise that, technically, anything can be dangerous to human and animal health – with regard to chemicals. The wider public should be aware of the procedures when using chemicals, as it is often not the chemicals that harms pets or the environment but the incorrect use thereof.

For more information, contact SAPCA on 086 111 4556 or visit www.sapca.org.za or contact the Griffon Poisoning Centre on 082 446 8946.