

General warning about native wildlife in areas where zinc phosphide baits are used for mouse control

The community is strongly advised not to touch dead or sick wildlife, specifically grain feeding birds, suspected to be affected by the mouse baiting program currently being rolled out in western and central NSW.

Due to the ongoing mouse plague in western NSW and the need to protect crops, a range of strategies are being used for pest control.

A registered pesticide for controlling mice in paddocks is zinc phosphide. Zinc phosphide is used to coat grain, and when eaten it reacts inside the gut to produce highly toxic phosphine gas, which can be released if the body cavity is opened. Also, phosphides may be absorbed through broken skin and can be toxic.

To protect your health, you are strongly advised not to touch any affected native wildlife you may find.

Grain eating, predatory and scavenging native wildlife, especially birds, may be affected by the poison.

If you find a native animal you suspect has been poisoned:

- Do not touch it due to the risk of harm from exposure to the pesticide or the toxic phosphine gas that may be given off.
- If animal is alive
 - contact your local wildlife rescue organisation. Use the IFAW rescue app at www.ifaw.org/au/resources/wildlife-rescue-app to find your nearest group or call WIRES 1300 094 737
 - or**
 - contact a local vet.
- Record all details, including species, number, location and photograph.
- If there are more than 5 dead animals of the same species – report the event to the Environment Line on 131 555 or to info@epa.nsw.gov.au
- If animal is dead – refer to the *Guidance on the handling and disposal of dead mice* fact sheet or leave the carcass if it is safe to do so.

If you have touched a carcass without adequate personal protective equipment and experience nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, coughing and/or shortness of breath seek urgent medical treatment.

If concerned about possible exposure, contact the Poisons Information Centre on **13 11 26** or go to www.poisonsinfo.nsw.gov.au.

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NSW Environment Protection Authority

Email: info@epa.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.epa.nsw.gov.au

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