

Farm and rural safety



wisconsinpoisoncenter.org

About Wisconsin Poison Center

Wisconsin Poison Center is located in Milwaukee and is a program of Children's Hospital of Wisconsin. Although the program is associated with Children's Hospital, the Poison Center helps with all poison-related calls regardless of the patient's age.

When you call the Poison Center, you will speak with a specially trained nurse or pharmacist. Anyone who has a question or has had direct contact with a known or potential poison can receive immediate information.

From anywhere in Wisconsin you can contact the Poison Center toll-free, 24 hours a day at 1-800-222-1222.

Wisconsin Poison Center helps residents

- In 2016, a total of 39,584 calls for recommendations and information were answered by Poison Center medical staff.
- Over 57 percent of the poison cases recorded in Wisconsin occur in children (people less than 19 years of age) with the 1- and 2-year-old age group showing the greatest frequency.
- Medication errors account for 14 percent of all poison exposures. All age groups are affected by this type of poison exposure.
- Nearly 30 percent of callers to the Poison Center are physicians or nurses seeking support in helping treat their poisoned patient.

The following are common substances found around a farm and guidelines on how to stay safe if you come into contact with them:

Carbon monoxide

From portable generators, propane heaters, poorly ventilated furnances and water heaters

- Has no smell, and is colorless

Symptoms:

- Dizziness, upset stomach, headache, vomiting and sleepiness

For your safety:

- Use portable generators outdoors only
- Have your gas furnance and gas water heater checked every year by a service technician

Every day items

Can be dangerous if they come into contact with skin, are swallowed or inhaled

- Medicines
- Cleaning supplies
- Hair care products
- Paint
- Car and tractor chemicals

Symptoms:

- Depend on detail of exposure

For your safety:

- Keep the product in original container
- Have the original container with the label handy when calling the Wisconsin Poison Center



Lead

May be present in buildings built before 1978

- Lead in paint dust washes into the soil from paint dust and chips
- Small children may put it in their mouths

Symptoms:

- There may be no signs of lead poisoning

For your safety:

- Doctors recommend that children have a blood test to screen for lead at 1 and 2 years of age

Plants and mushrooms

Can cause symptoms by direct contact or through the air. For a list of indoor and outdoor toxic and non-toxic plants visit wisconsinpoison.org.

Symptoms (poison ivy/oak/sumac):

- Rash or itchy skin
- Blisters

For your safety:

- Do not eat wild mushrooms because many types are poisonous
- If exposed to poison ivy/oak/sumac, wash the area with warm water and dish soap
- Thoroughly clean clothing or items that may have come into contact with the plants, including pets



Pesticides

Chemicals used to kill insects, small animals or weeds. They may make you sick if they are swallowed, inhaled or absorbed through the skin.

For your safety:

- Read and follow all directions on the product label
- Wear a long-sleeved shirt and pants when using
- Place your body so the wind cannot blow the product toward you

Livestock vaccines and medications

Can be harmful to humans if not handled correctly, and can be very dangerous to pregnant women.

For your safety:

- Dispose of all used needles and syringes in a sharps container as they can be a source of infection if a prick-type wound occurs
- The veterinary antibiotic tilmicosin has been associated with human death and should not be used in automatically powered syringes. Report accidental injection to 911 immediately.

If exposed to silo gas, dairy pipeline cleaners, anhydrous ammonia or manure gas, **call the Wisconsin Poison Center immediately: 1-800-222-1212**

Silo gas

A poison that forms after silage is loaded into a silo. The formation of the gas is normal, but even limited exposure may be deadly. The gas can be present for up to 3 weeks.

Signs of silo gas:

- A yellow to reddish brown color in the air or on the silage and chute
- A bleach-like smell

Health effects:

- Burns to the nose and throat
- After exposure, the person may have difficulty breathing for the rest of his or her life
- Rapid loss of consciousness and death

For your safety:

- Maintain good ventilation
- Close the silo door when silage is fermenting
- Never enter a silo unless another person is present
- Keep children away from silos when silage is fermenting

Dairy pipeline cleaners

Used to clean pipelines after milking

Health effects:

- Burns to the skin, mouth and throat

For your safety:

- Keep young children out of the milk house and/or chemical storage area
- Properly store any chemicals in the original container
- Never use the measuring container as a drinking cup
- Keep chemicals up out of reach of children

Anhydrous ammonia

A dangerous product used to fertilize crops

Health effects:

- Burns to the skin and lungs

For your safety:

- Only trained adults should use anhydrous ammonia
- Wash hands and clothing after handling
- Wear protective clothing during use

Manure pits

Contain poisonous gases that can be released into the air during mixing of manure

Health effects:

- Loss of consciousness, death

For your safety:

- Do not rescue an unconscious individual near a manure pit without a self-contained breathing device
- Keep children away during agitation
- Maintain a buffer zone of 20 feet
- Consider wearing a portable gas detector



Well water

The United States has some of the safest drinking water supplies in the world. However, sources of drinking water can still become contaminated through naturally occurring chemicals and minerals, local land use practices, malfunctioning wastewater treatment systems and other sources.

Health effects:

- Contaminated drinking water can lead to excessive build up of nitrates or nitrites in the human body, causing a decrease in the blood's ability to transport oxygen to tissues.
- Infants less than 6 months of age appear to be most sensitive to the effects of nitrite on hemoglobin after consuming formula prepared with tap water that contained high levels of nitrites.
- Contaminants in tap water can also lead to abdominal illnesses, reproductive problems and neurological disorders.
- For more information please visit:
<https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/drinking/private/wells/index.html>

For your safety:

- Have private ground water wells checked regularly to ensure that water is safe for drinking.

**For poison education
information, contact:**

Cathy Smith
Program Coordinator
csmith@chw.org
(414) 266-2630

Kim Webber
Poison Center Manager
kwebber@chw.org
414-337-5495

Wisconsin Poison Center provides
24-hour, toll-free poison information
for all Wisconsin residents.

Interpreters are able to help all
non-English speaking callers.



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1-800-222-1222
wisconsinpoisoncenter.org

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Yog hais tias koj tsis txawj hais lus Askiv, peb yuav teem sij hawm muab kev pab txhais lus pub dawb rau koj. Hu rau (414) 266-7848 (TTY: 414-266-2465).