



Strychnine Use in Saskatchewan

The emergency use of two per cent liquid strychnine concentrate (strychnine) to control Richardson's ground squirrels is approved in Saskatchewan until November 2027. This web page details requirements of the Emergency Use Registration, as well as information specific to vendors and strychnine users.

Understanding the Emergency Use Registration (EUR)

An EUR is a temporary, time-limited authorization by Health Canada's Pesticides Regulatory Directorate (formerly the Pesticide Management Regulatory Agency). It allows the limited use of pesticides that are not otherwise registered when an agricultural emergency exists.

Emergency use of strychnine was approved in Saskatchewan to respond to severe crop and pasture damage caused by Richardson's ground squirrels.

Only two per cent liquid strychnine is authorized under this EUR, and its use is restricted to Richardson's ground squirrel control.

Application of strychnine is only recommended within the following application windows:

- March 1 to June 15
- July 15 to September 1

Strychnine Stewardship Program

Under the EUR, users in 208 RMs in roughly 15 crop districts in southern and western Saskatchewan will have access to strychnine.

This [map](#) shows where strychnine can be used in Saskatchewan. Use outside of the indicated areas is prohibited.

Strychnine use is only recommended during the following application windows:

- March 1 to June 15
- July 15 to September 1

Strychnine will only be available through the Strychnine Stewardship Program administered by RMs. All sales, use and monitoring activities will be documented in adherence to the program guidelines below.

- [Strychnine Stewardship Program Guidelines](#)

Information for Strychnine Users

Strychnine users must complete mandatory online training and may only apply strychnine in approved areas and timelines.

Users are responsible for record-keeping, environmental protection measures and compliance with all label and EUR restrictions. Environmental protection measures include in-burrow bait placement and carcass removal to limit the likelihood of non-target poisonings. All records must be returned to the RM office and will be shared with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, which will provide them to Health Canada's Pesticide Regulatory Directorate.

Training is now available online through the [SARM website](#). Those interested should confirm their nearest participating RM office prior to taking training.

- [View Participating RMs as of May 12, 2026](#)

After completing the 90-minute online training program, users are required to complete a mandatory Treatment Plan and Declaration Form to become a certified strychnine user.

[Treatment Plan and Declaration Form \(Fillable PDF\)](#)

[Treatment Plan and Declaration Form \(Print PDF\)](#)

Information for RMs

RMs must complete mandatory pesticide vendor training and strychnine-specific training. Staff distributing strychnine must demonstrate understanding of declaration forms, eligibility requirements, distribution limits and audit expectations. RMs are responsible for maintaining complete and accurate records, including sales logs, user declaration forms, applicator training certificates, product evaluation forms and returned product documentation. All records are subject to provincial audit.

Strychnine Distribution and Availability

Participating RM offices will distribute strychnine to those who have met all requirements of the Strychnine Stewardship Program. In some cases, RMs in eligible areas may choose not to distribute strychnine and may instead enter into an agreement with another RM to distribute on their behalf.

When the approval was received on March 31, 2026, no stocks of strychnine were available for distribution in Canada. Canada's registered strychnine supplier is working to import the active ingredients, manufacture the two per cent liquid strychnine concentrate and distribute the product across Saskatchewan and Alberta.

An initial, limited supply of strychnine is expected in early June, followed by additional monthly shipments. Strychnine will be distributed evenly among participating RMs with a per producer limit to manage supply.

As the spring application window closes on June 15, producers are encouraged to use alternative registered rodenticides, as well as biological and cultural controls, for RGS control in spring 2026.

Strychnine inventories are expected to increase during the July 15 to September 1 application window.

Protection of Species at Risk

The EUR of strychnine was approved with careful consideration of species at risk, predatory animals and the environment. It includes measures to protect non-target species, including:

- Screening for species at risk: Areas with documented species at risk populations will be avoided unless suitable methods to mitigate risk can be demonstrated. Risk mitigation measures must be appropriate for the specific species at risk that are present.
- In-burrow application: All Richardson's ground squirrel burrows are required to be covered following bait application. This application methodology ensures bait is available only to the targeted pest, protecting non-target animals.
- Carcass collection and monitoring: There are strict monitoring requirements under the approved EUR. Following application, all treated areas must be monitored daily for the first week and weekly for three additional weeks. All carcasses must be collected and disposed of through incineration or burial to mitigate risks of secondary poisoning through the consumption of poisoned carcasses.

Questions about the EUR and Strychnine Stewardship Program can be directed to rgs@gov.sk.ca.

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