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Paris, 5 December 2023

PRESS RELEASE

The health authorities are reiterating their warning on the dangers of using banned insecticides to tackle cockroaches, bed bugs, etc.

Between January 2018 and June 2023, the French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety (ANSES) and the poison control centres registered 163 cases of poisoning related to SNIPER 1000 EC DDVP. This product contains the insecticide dichlorvos, which is banned in France.

With the number of poisoning cases on the rise and bed-bug infestations receiving extensive media coverage, the health authorities wish to remind everyone of the potential hazards of using banned insecticides.

The [toxicovigilance report](#) of 5 December 2023 publishes the findings of analyses conducted by ANSES and the poison control centres (CAPs) on cases of poisoning that have occurred since 2018 related to the use of SNIPER 1000 EC DDVP, which contains dichlorvos.

A toxic product banned in 2013

This active substance of the organophosphate class is classified as lethal by inhalation, and toxic in contact with the skin or if swallowed. It can cause asthma-like respiratory symptoms, eye and neurological disorders potentially leading to unconsciousness, and skin allergies. It is also highly toxic to aquatic organisms. Its use in insecticides for household use has been banned in France since 2013.

However, dichlorvos-based insecticides — mainly imported from abroad (outside the European Union) — can be found illegally on markets and in bazaars. They are sold mainly under the names SNIPER 1000 EC DDVP® or SHOOTER 1000 EC DDVP® to control pests such as bed bugs and cockroaches. This biocidal product can also be found on e-commerce platforms or via private ads on social media.

Cases of poisoning on the rise

Despite its 2013 ban in France for household use, the CAPs recorded 170 incidents involving SNIPER 1000 EC DDVP® between 1 January 2018 and 30 June 2023. A total of 206 people were exposed to the product during this period.

Since 2018, there has been an increase in the number of cases of poisoning by this insecticide, 104 cases being reported between January 2022 and June 2023. This increase should be seen in light of the upsurge in bed-bug infestations in recent years. ANSES's expert appraisal of July 2023 found that 11% of French households had been infested by bed bugs between 2017 and 2022.

While most poisoning cases reported to the CAPs were mild, almost 10% were moderately severe and 5.5% very severe, including three deaths (accidental or due to ingestion with suicidal intent).

Information on the place of purchase was available in almost half of the cases studied by ANSES and the CAPs. Most people said they had bought the product in markets (37.1%) or shops/bazaars (20%), particularly in the northern *arrondissements* of Paris and in Seine-Saint-Denis.

The authorities working to protect consumers

As part of its consumer protection mission, the Directorate General for Competition, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control (DGCCRF) has for many years been monitoring the compliance of biocides intended for the general public, in particular bed-bug control products.

Since the beginning of 2023, the DGCCRF has carried out nationwide checks on more than 500 shops, e-commerce platforms and social networks: almost 400 bottles of SNIPER 1000 EC DDVP® or SHOOTER 1000 EC DDVP® have already been seized in 23 outlets, and online advertisements withdrawn.

In addition, a recall campaign targeting SNIPER 1000 EC DDVP® has been running on the [RappelConso](https://www.rappelconso.gouv.fr/) website since 8 November 2023.

The authorities recall how to tackle bed bugs

In response to this upsurge in poisoning cases, the health authorities have issued a reminder of what to do in the event of a bed-bug infestation in the home.

Bed bugs have developed resistance to almost all over-the-counter insecticides. Consequently, **physical (mechanical and thermal) control is to be prioritised initially over chemical control.**

If the infestation persists, you are advised to contact a trained pest control professional with a "certibiocide" certificate registered with the Ministry of Ecological Transition.

Advice and information are available (in French only) on the "[Punaises de lit](#)" (bed bugs) page of the Ministry of Health and Prevention website, under the heading [Punaises de lit? L'État vous accompagne](#) (Bed bugs? The government is here to help) and under the [Stop punaises](#) page of the Ministry of Ecological Transition's website.

If you have any questions, you can call the national hotline **0806 706 806**; an adviser from your local housing information agency (ADIL) will be happy to help and explain the steps you need to take.

Finally, as a general rule, opt to buy biocidal products from conventional distribution channels where they can advise you on application and storage.



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