

## DON'T BE FOOLED!

The following was provided by an individual concerning her experience with a so-called humane method of dealing with prairie dogs. Although she gave us permission to use her name and location Prairie Dog Pals felt it best just to convey the information.

I would like to share my experience with the subject of humane prairie dog control. \*Last fall\*, I took a half day seminar with the XXXXXX County to learn how to properly use and then obtain a substance called Fumitoxin Aluminum Phosphide Pesticide. Several of these small pellets are placed deep inside a prairie dog's hole, then sealed off with stuffed newspaper. Upon absorbing the moist conditions of the earth, the pellet dissolves into a gas and the prairie dog goes to sleep..... permanently.

I was in a class with generally like-minded people who really didn't want to kill prairie dogs, but were at wits end with an over populated situation. My inner voice told me this was wrong, and I went against that and my obviously weak convictions. I received certification and used the material on a small field.

This Spring, there are prairie dogs around my house/yard, lethargic, spasmodic, confused, vulnerable, and sadly dying slowly. You can walk right up to them and they don't know where to go.... if anything they walk into a strange place and sit there. They are a picnic for my hunter pets. My cats are sick and spend most of the time sleeping. My dogs are also carrying carcasses around, but don't yet seem to be sick.

I intend to bring this information to the County. Will advise if learn any more from them. But my belief is that they should not be supporting this to the public as a "humane method of control".

This is not our first experience with this compound. In 2004 the City suspended poisoning when it realized that it was a cruel way to dispose of the prairie dogs. It also represented a threat to companion animals and other wild animals that might feed on the dead prairie dogs, and might pose a risk to humans as well. Dick Fagerlund, the Bugman, had this to say to a property owner who chose to dispose of his prairie dogs using this ghastly method.

As for the method used to kill the prairie dogs, the pest control company used the most hideous product available. When Fumitoxin is used to kill animals, the results are extremely cruel. The active ingredient in Fumitoxin is aluminum phosphide, a deadly gas that releases phosphine gas into the burrows when it is exposed to air. Phosphine gas burns the skin and eyes of the prairie dogs as well as the mucous lining of their mouths as they scream and their lungs as they attempt to breathe. They are literally on "fire" internally and externally as they slowly die in excruciating pain. The mothers in the burrows try to save their

babies but cannot escape the gas that is destroying them slowly but surely. These animals do not just go to sleep when the gas is introduced into their burrows. They literally burn in hell until God mercifully takes their little souls.

I realize that you were probably unaware of the mode of action of the gas used to kill the prairie dogs, but Jesus knew very well how it works. All I can say is that when the company decided to use the Fumitoxin on God's little creatures, Jesus wept.

I hope the church reconsiders how they deal with perceived pest animals in the future.

And finally, in response to the continued poisoning at Kirtland, Yvonne Boudreaux, president of Prairie Dog Pals, had this to add:

I'm not sure where this thread started, but I just have to weigh in. How can "anyone" CONDONE killing these intelligent creatures?? with or without "the facts", as if MORE disinformation makes poisoning palatable, reasonable??? Nothing, no one deserves to die by Fumitoxin! (aluminum phosphide) The known facts of this cheap poison is that it takes them several days to die, bleeding out from all their orifices, IF it is done "right".... However, the truth is much worse... I rescued a juvenile female 2 years ago, three weeks after a documented poisoning. She was blind and emaciated, but I took her back to a treatment cage for further care with some hope. Unfortunately, she was found dead the next morning with maggots eating their way out of her lungs. THEY DO NOT "GO TO SLEEP"! Ardeth's only error is that they have poisoned multiple colonies... many, many times... over DECADES!

#### FIND ALTERNATIVE TO POISON

By Rosalie Little Thunder, board chair of Seventh Generation Fund, board member of Predator Conservation Alliance and member of Sicangu Lakota Oyate.

We (Lakota) have a concept, a discipline that we articulate as "Woableza," which is to carefully analyze a given situation, not only the long-term impact, but the bigger picture. We had to do so to survive the natural elements and human co-existence. But it's a different world now and so the "relatedness" that was an essential element of our cosmology is often dismissed as irrelevant or stupid.

I'd still like to paint my big picture of the prairie dog.

Once upon a time, the human beings that needed to survive on the prairie saw (over a few thousand years) that everything had a purpose and that no one species was autonomous. We are all related. The buffalo, as a sacred (keystone)

species, was the most responsible for the proliferation and diversity of other species. The pispiza (prairie dog) was its tightest kin, also bearing responsibility for the well-being of over a hundred other species.

But in the new world according to the anthropocentrics, there were too many Indians, too many buffaloes to support them and far too many seemingly-useless prairie dogs, and they all had to go in holocaustic order.

The natural world changed dramatically. Some ecological damage can repair itself and some damage is so great that it is irreversible.

I'm very confused about the smaller picture. I do know what the American culture is about - individualism and capitalism - and that people have to survive in a very fragmented, unrelated way. In that sense, I can see how prairie dogs can be a problem to beef production.

Even then, I think that prairie dogs are getting a bad rap. I've heard it said that they denude the earth and deprive the cows of grass and that cows and horses break their legs in the holes.

For one thing, prairie dogs proliferate where they are safe from predators. There are reasons, according to natural law, that prairie dogs do what they do (and they're not tuned in to economics). And if humans could tune in to the Natural Law station, perhaps we could come up with wiser solutions than poisoning.

The cry for poisoning, I suspect, was a weak cry by affected few, but the politics of those times needed a handy issue. And so, the worst management plan was shaped by those who pretend to protect wildlife.

The current poisoning is decimating, not only the prairie dogs and interdependent species, but is also threatening the only thriving ferret population on the face of the Earth.

I am not a biologist or an expert of any kind, just a simple Lakota. But using common sense, I'd like to make humble suggestions.

Let's not buy into this South Dakota prairie dog plan (when considering the bigger picture and the long haul, it's just too costly). I trust common folks to ask their legislative leadership for honesty and express their concern about this matter. Let's use our God-given brains to figure out a better alternative.

Appeal to your South Dakota legislators (you can find them at <http://legis.state.sd.us/index.cfm>). Please ask them to reject any plan that forces landowners to poison prairie dogs on their own land.

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