

# Popular Insecticide The Sensation Of 1948

“Here’s something new. The sensation of 1948.  
It’s the new, the amazing *Black Flag Super Insect Spray*.”

--Ed Fleming 

Lincoln, Me. (DG)—

In my work on radio commercials and radio advertising, I have found the majority of radio sponsors relatively easy to write about. Unfortunately, there are some products that are now embroiled in controversy long after radio’s golden age ended. Although these products are now controversial, they were popular radio sponsors during the golden age. Since it is my job to inform you of the radio sponsors and commercials during radio’s golden age--- no matter how controversial they are now, these products will be included with the others. I leave it up to you if you want to continue reading this article.

When I say controversial, tobacco products immediately come to mind. With that thought, you might be surprised this article doesn’t concern any type of tobacco product. It’s a product that is totally different.

Since the dangers of this product were made public, the people’s emotions were as strong as they have been with today’s tobacco controversy. If you’re wondering what this infamous product is, it’s a handy household product that is still made and sold today--- although it’s made completely different from what it use to be. During radio’s golden age, this product (as it was made back then) was considered safe to use. This product, you ask? Household insecticide.

Why household insecticide is considered controversial has to do with 2 of the era’s most effective bug killers--- the infamous “**D.D.T.**” and “**Chlordane.**” Although these 2 insecticides did its job in killing insect pests, they were also considered dangerous to the environment--- and in **D.D.T.**’s case, lethal to the population of the American Bald Eagle. For their trouble, **D.D.T.** and **Chlordane** were eventually banned from further use (for the record, **D.D.T.** was banned in 1973; **Chlordane** in 1988).

Now you know the bad side of **D.D.T.** and **Chlordane**, let’s go back to the year 1948. Back then, **D.D.T.** and **Chlordane** were seen in a completely different light. They were the most effective and popular insecticides in the elimination of annoying insect pests. Many bug killer brands in 1948 included either insecticide in their respected formulas. One such product, and the featured subject of this article, contained both of them. At the time, it was a revolutionary new brand of insecticide--- **Black Flag Super Insect Spray**.

Radio listeners heard announcer Ed Fleming talk about this amazing insecticide on **NBC’s FRONT PAGE**



**FARRELL** serial program. Fleming referred to **Black Flag** as “**The Sensation of 1948.**” He also stated the product was the most effective insecticide ever made for home use.

There was a reason why **Black Flag Super Insect Spray** was more effective than other insecticides. That reason was strength in numbers. Instead of just one bug-killing ingredient, **Black Flag Super Insect Spray** contained **5** different insecticides in one blue can. They were **Lethane, Pyrethrum, Piperonyl Butoxide**, and of course, **D.D.T.** and **Chlordane**. In the commercial, Fleming stated that **Chlordane** was “**the newest insect killing agent.**” All by its lonesome, **Chlordane** was more effective in killing crawling insects than any other insecticide--- **including D.D.T.**

Since **Black Flag Super Insect Spray** contained 5 different insecticides, it did away with just about any insect pest known to mankind. It was sprayed with the handy **Black Flag Sprayer** both in the air and on a surface, wherever the bug problem originated. In a matter of seconds, insects within the immediate area were kicking the bucket with astonishing speed. It didn’t matter if the insects flew, crawled, or stood on their heads, **Black Flag Super Insect Spray** was an equal opportunity bug killer. It took great delight in killing them all.

If the insects thought **Black Flag Super Insect Spray** wore off over a short period of time, they were in for a little surprise. Once it was sprayed, **Black Flag** kept on killing bugs. For those insects entering a sprayed area long after it was originally applied, they also met with their doom. With dead insects all over the place, the people who used **Black Flag Super Insect Spray** enjoyed the summer months free of insect pests. However, they may need a broom and dustpan to clean up the dead bugs.

In the commercial, Fleming stated **Black Flag** was made in 3 different forms--- liquid, powder, and a new device known as the aerosol can. Instead of mixing and/or pouring into the **Black Flag Sprayer**, **Black Flag** in the aerosol can was ready to spray. Fleming also mentioned **Black Flag** was safe to use--- provided it was used as directed on the can. All **Black Flag** users had to use caution in the mixing, pouring, and spraying of the insecticide.

The grim realities of **D.D.T.** and **Chlordane** stirred up a hornet’s nest long in the future. In the meantime, the biting, stinging, flying, and crawling insects were finding life difficult and very brief, thanks to **Black Flag Super Insect Spray**. No other insecticide brand came close to its impressive track record of killing insect pests.

