

[Pet deaths linked to flea and tick collar \(ajc.com\)](https://www.ajc.com)

## Popular flea collar linked to 1,700 pet deaths across U.S.



Credit: Courtesy of Amazon

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## **Seresto collar still being sold on Amazon; EPA hasn't warned public of any potential risks**

A popular flea and tick collar has been linked to nearly 1,700 pet deaths across the country, according to [reports](#) citing documents obtained from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The Seresto collar, which can be worn for months as it releases small amounts of pesticide onto an animal's fur, is also suspected of sickening or injuring tens of thousands of cats and dogs as well as hundreds of their owners, reports said.

Seresto, developed by Bayer in 2012 and distributed by Elanco, is the top-selling collar on Amazon and is widely advertised as being safe for pets.

But the EPA — which regulates pesticides — has not warned the public to any potential risks of using the product despite receiving at least 1,698 reports of deadly incidents since the collar arrived on the market.

The federal agency has received more than 75,000 incident reports related to the collars, including nearly 1,000 reports of human illnesses through June 2020, [according to USA Today](#).

The alarming number of deaths was known behind the scenes for years but only became public knowledge after the Center for Biological Diversity — a nonprofit watchdog group — obtained documents from the EPA through a public records request.

“The EPA appears to be turning a blind eye to this problem, and after seven years of an increasing number of incidents, they are telling the public that they are continuing to monitor the situation,” said Karen McCormack, a retired EPA employee who called the staggering number of deaths and illnesses unprecedented. “I think this is a significant problem that needs to be addressed sooner rather than later.”

It’s unclear how Seresto compares to the safety of other pet collars.

A spokesperson for the agency told USA Today that the two pesticides found in Seresto were “eligible for continued registration” based on the latest scientific data and testing.

“No pesticide is completely without harm, but EPA ensures that there are measures on the product label that reduce risk,” the spokesperson wrote in an email. “The product label is the law, and applicators must follow label directions. Some pets, however, like some humans, are more sensitive than others and may experience adverse symptoms after treatment.”

Through the years, the collar had received numerous complaints from customers who claimed the collar had caused pets skin rashes and neurological issues.

In one case last year, a New Jersey veterinarian suggested an owner buy the Bayer Seresto collar for use on her indoor service animal.

Rhonda Bomwell’s 9-year-old Papillon suffered a seizure June 2 after wearing the collar for one day, reports said.

The dog, Pierre, collapsed and stopped breathing.

Bomwell said she administered CPR but never thought to remove the collar. She rushed Pierre to the hospital, but he died before receiving treatment.

“I just didn’t put it together,” she said, noting that she had never used a flea and tick collar before.