

Appendix ii – Pesticide Policy

Should pesticides be used?

To determine if pesticide application is required several factors have to be assessed:

- Identify the weed/pest
- Cost
- Any previous problems experienced
- Identify best means of control e.g. hoeing
- Consider environmental impact

Choose product

Once it has been decided that pesticide application is the ideal method a COSHH risk assessment should be carried out on the product to be used. The COSHH assessment includes:

- Justification on the need to use pesticides
- Assesses all the hazards
- Evaluates the risks
- Organises the work to prevent/control exposure
- Monitors exposure
- Reviews the situation annually

Safety

Pesticide application is covered by the following legislation :

- Part III Section 16 of the Food and Environment Protection Act (FEPA) 1985
- The Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986
- The Control of Pesticides (Amendment) Regulations 1997
- The Plant Protection Regulations 1995
- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
- Codes of Practice - Orange Code
- Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992

The Council will, as far as is reasonably practicable, protect the health, safety and welfare of their staff whilst they are at work by providing :

- Washing facilities
- Appropriate PPE
- Training and supervision
- Up to date COSHH assessments
- Conduct health monitoring if required

The staff are responsible for:

- Using the exposure control methods provided
- Use and store of PPE correctly
- Practice high standard of personal hygiene
- Reporting defects
- Safety of others e.g. use warning signs; avoid spraying near to pets and pedestrians

Application

Only trained operatives (PA1 and PA6) are to carry out the pesticide application following best practice as outlined below.

Spraying procedure

- Only competent, PA1/PA6 trained operatives are to spray
- Assess the locations to be sprayed and with which product
- Familiarise yourself with the product i.e. appropriate PPE, application rates, and specific hazards, etc by reading and understanding the product label
- Check condition of PPE and equipment. Complete maintenance record
- Calibrate the sprayer and pesticide
- Using a secure vehicle, ensure it contains the following:
 1. Emergency spillage kit
 2. Secure storage box with calibration equipment Supply of mixing water
 3. Supply of clean water
- If working alone, follow the Council's 'lone working' procedure and inform the Ground Maintenance Team Leader
- Carry out spraying and complete operator spray records
- Upon completion of spraying (if there is still unused diluted pesticide in the knapsack sprayer, use it on other untreated areas). Thoroughly rinse the equipment and dispose the washings on the designated area at the depot.
- Return unused pesticide containers to the store and update the stock record
- Clean durable items of PPE and store them. If damaged, PPE should be put into plastic bags and firmly secured for disposal with empty containers.
- Photocopy operator spray records and send the original to the Council offices. The operator is to keep the photocopy for their personal records.
- Complete health monitoring records if the COSHH risk assessment determined the need to do so and send to the Council offices.

Environmental issues

Just as it is necessary to conduct a COSHH risk assessment to ensure that nobody's health is put at risk from the use of pesticides, so it is important to consider any possible impact to the environment before using them. Wildlife habitats and species likely to be present in and around the area to be sprayed should be identified.

It should be determined how best to avoid risk to these habitats and species if spraying is to be carried out. Bees, other beneficial / harmless insects, butterflies, wildflowers, birds and mammals need to be taken into account at the timing/method of application. A one-metre buffer zone should be adhered to when knapsack spraying near waterways, with the likelihood of the product leaching into groundwater being assessed prior to use.

Transportation

There are wide-ranging regulations, which impinge upon the movement of pesticides. Deciding whether these apply depends on a number of factors:

- Is the pesticide classified as dangerous goods for carriage purposes?
- What is its category?
- How is it packaged?
- What size pack does it come in?
- How big is the total load? If the regulations are triggered, there are detailed requirements covering vehicle and product labelling, vehicle design and consideration, documentation, driver training and certification, etc. Contact the HSE for further advice.

In general, most of the actions required in the Codes of Practice will safeguard both people and the environment these include:

- Using a secure, purpose-made storage chest
- Having an emergency spillage kit
- Having a product label to hand
- Securing the knapsack
- Ensuring the vehicle is secured if left unattended

Storage

All pesticide products are stored in a purpose-built locked cabinet, located at the depot. There are warning signs on the outside of the cabinet and only team leaders have access to it. A stock record is kept in the depot office identifying the contents of the cabinet in case of an emergency.

Disposal

The aim should always be to minimise the amount of pesticide waste produced by:

- Only purchasing the quantity needed
- Implement good stock control
- Mixing the correct amount for the job in hand
- Using returnable or refillable packs where possible

Pesticide waste falls into two categories:

- Empty containers and packaging should be triple rinsed and stored in a secure place ready for disposal. Depending upon the product, these are either disposed of by a licensed waste disposal contractor, or through the normal refuse disposal route.

- Unused diluted pesticide is used on other untreated open spaces. Contaminated washings are disposed of at the depot at a designated disposal area.

Record keeping

A good pesticide recording system is a sensible management tool. It provides the Council with:

- Information on pesticide applications, in case of disputes
- Economic and safe storage of stocks of pesticide
- COSHH risk assessments and, if applicable, health monitoring Information on the method and disposal of waste
- Maintenance records of equipment

As well as storing the pesticide products, the depot also holds the records on :-

- Stock control
- Copy of COSHH risk assessment Copy of product safety data

The Council offices hold onto:

- Operator spray records
- COSHH assessments
- Product safety data
- Disposal records
- Equipment maintenance records
- Health surveillance, if applicable

Emergency procedures

The Council, as well as its staff, have wide ranging duties under the Health and Safety regulations, too minimise the risks of exposure the COSHH principles of selecting the least toxic product and then taking steps to reduce the chances of accidental exposure, should be applied. Always follow the safe working practices determined in the COSHH risk assessment and the product label.

Personal contamination is through one of three routes:

- Absorption
- Inhalation
- Ingestion

The highest level of exposure arises from accidental exposure with concentrated product. This is why appropriate PPE should always be used in any handling of the product.

What to do if you feel unwell

- Stop work

- Tell someone
- Seek medical help by calling your GP or by visiting A&E. Make sure to provide the doctor or hospital with a copy of the product safety data sheets or at the very least the name of the active ingredients.

What to do if your colleague feels unwell

If you suspect pesticide poisoning then:

- Stop the casualty working
- Call for medical help immediately
- Assess your personal risk and take care not to endanger yourself. Use correct PPE
- Move casualty away from the application area and away from the source of contamination
- Remove their PPE, taking care not to contaminate yourself
- If other clothing has been contaminated, remove that as well
- Keep casualty warm
- Provide doctor or hospital with product labels and product safety data sheets, or at least the name of the active ingredients.

First aid

DO NOT induce vomiting unless specifically recommended on the product label.

For skin contamination, wash thoroughly using plenty of clean water and remove all of contaminated clothing.

For contaminated eyes, flush the eye with plenty of running water (e.g. tap water for at least 15 minutes). Cover the eye with a sterile eye pad or clean, non-fluffy material.

Seek medical attention as soon as possible.

If the casualty is unconscious:

- Check breathing passages are clear
- Remove loose fitting dentures
- Place in the recovery position
- If breathing stops, start artificial respiration
- If the heart stops, start heart massage immediately

Dealing with spillages

If spillage occurs and there is a risk of contamination take prompt action to limit the affects by:-

- Stopping access to the affected area
- Containing the spill
- Informing the Environment Agency if necessary

If the amount spilled is small, or you find a leaking container then, using the correct PPE :-

For liquid:

- Contain the spill with absorbent material and then use it to soak up the liquid
- Or, use the contents immediately
- Or pour the contents of the damaged container in a sound container that originally held the same product
- Or, carefully place the leaking container into a larger suitable container. NEVER use an empty or a food/drink container. Make sure the new container is clearly labelled.

For solids (including material used to contain liquid spillage):

- Gently sweep up to avoid raising a dust
- Sprinkle area with sand or an absorbent material (not sawdust) and re-sweep
- Dispose of sweeping via a licensed waste disposal contractor