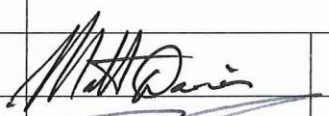
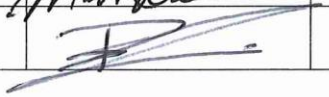
Pesticide Use Notification Plan

Document Number (TRIM):	D-17-56699		
Revision Number	1		
Date Created:	08th May 2017		
Next Review Date:	1st August 2018		
Reviewed By:	Matthew Davies		28/7/17
Approved By:	Ross McKim		28/07/17

PO Box 101 Geraldton WA 6531
Geraldton Civic Centre T 08 9956 6600 F 08 9956 6674
Mullewa Office T 08 9956 6643 F 08 9961 1206
E council@cgg.wa.gov.au W www.cgg.wa.gov.au
ABN 55 907 677 173

Contents

1. Introduction

The Pesticide Use Notification Plan provides information on the City of Greater Geraldton's management of pesticide applications in public places that are owned or managed by the City of Greater Geraldton – including works undertaken by City staff and external contractors.

This pesticide notification plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *West Australian Public Health Act 2016* and Health (Pesticides) Regulations 2011.

The aim of this notification plan is to meet the community's general right to know about pesticide applications made to outdoor public places and buildings that are owned or managed by the City of Greater Geraldton. The Plan allows the community to take action to avoid, or minimise contact / exposure with pesticide applications applied in public places and buildings.

The plan sets out how the City of Greater Geraldton will notify members of the community of:

- pesticide applications it allows to be made to outdoor public places and buildings that it owns or manages;
- the public places and associated user groups that are covered by the plan;
- the methods that the City of Greater Geraldton will use to provide the community with information about pesticide applications in public places;
- the means of accessing the Plan to obtain further information about the City of Greater Geraldton notification arrangements;
- the conduct of future reviews of the Plan; and
- the contact details for anyone wishing to discuss the Plan with a City of Greater Geraldton Officer.

The City of Greater Geraldton is committed to ensuring that pesticides are applied in a safe and responsible manner, minimising potential harm to the community and the environment.

The City of Greater Geraldton is committed to ensuring pesticide use is:

- effective;
- efficient;
- justified;
- minimised; and
- at the lowest possible toxicity to achieve the desired outcome.

Pesticide applications must be undertaken in accordance with the *"Guidelines for the Safe Use of Pesticides in Non-Agricultural Workplaces"* (West Australian Department of Health).

The use of pesticides is also recognised as an occupational hazard that requires management under the Occupational Safety and Health Act (1984). The City of Greater Geraldton has an occupational hygiene function which includes provision for conducting personal atmospheric air monitoring and personal biological exposure monitoring for pesticides in use at the City. All workplace hazardous substances, including pesticides, are identified and assessed in the City's electronic chemical management system (ChemAlert).

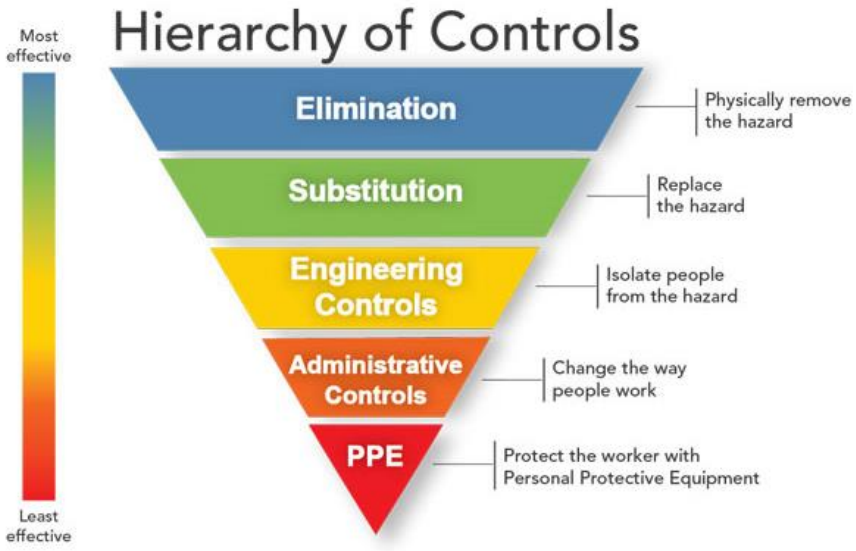
Only City of Greater Geraldton approved pesticides may be applied on land and buildings owned and managed by the City. A list of approved pesticides can be obtained from the City.

The City of Greater Geraldton continues to review and investigate alternative control methods to the use of pesticides use where available, suitable and practicable.

2. Safety and risk management principles

The City of Greater Geraldton is committed to providing safe and healthy workplaces and community facilities, for all workers, contractors, visitors and community members. To meet this commitment, the City of Greater Geraldton will identify actual and potential hazards, assess risk of injury / illness associated with those hazards, eliminate risk, and where possible, implement control measures in accordance with the hierarchy of control principle and legal requirements. To determine the effectiveness of the measures taken the City also conducts exposure monitoring, work practice auditing, review and evaluation as appropriate.

As far as practicable, the City of Greater Geraldton applies the hierarchy of control approach to managing hazards and risks as in the model diagram below.



The City of Greater Geraldton is developing and promoting robust systems for managing risk that include documented safety management plans, policies and procedures, work method statements, risk assessments, chemical approval processes and site improvement audits.

All City employees and contractors are expected to follow City of Greater Geraldton procedures including the minimum of a site assessment of risk using a Take-5 and/or job hazard analysis (JHA/JSA) prior to commencing work tasks.

3. Why does the City need to control weeds?

The need for weed control addresses risk management responsibilities including:

- Meeting the community's expectations for functional and aesthetically appealing parks, public open spaces, sports grounds, natural areas and facilities;
- Ensuring the survival of turf, trees and plants in parks and road reserves and improving the biodiversity values in bushland;
- Ensuring the public can safely use the area (particularly with Bindi and Caltrop weed infestations), preventing weeds from becoming trip hazards in paths or lawn, ensuring kerbing, pathways and infrastructure are not obscured and reducing fuel loads in bushland for prevention of bushfires; and
- Minimising damage to infrastructure thus increasing the lifespan of the area.

4. What methods of weed control are available in industry?

- Herbicide applications;
- Saturated steam applications (hot water injected with steam);
- Mechanical whipper snipping, mowing, slashing, and/or manual removal;
- Turf management programs (mowing, fertilising, watering);
- Mulching, hydro-mulching; and
- Use of ground covering plants able to smother the weeds.

5. Why are pesticides used?

The majority of pesticide use consists of applying herbicides for weed control, and applying insecticides to manage certain insect pests. Both types of control are covered in the general term of 'pesticides'.

Herbicides are used to eliminate weeds to meet the community's expectations for functional and aesthetically appealing parks, public open spaces, sports grounds, natural areas and facilities.

Pesticide use on the City of Greater Geraldton's controlled land includes both programmed and reactive applications that may be variable from season to season including:

- application of herbicides to all public places, including parks, reserves, roads and pathways is applied reactively to control weeds on an as needs basis;
- the application of insecticides, fungicides, rodenticides, soil additives, growth inhibitors, and algaecides applied reactively to control pests on an as needs basis; and
- baits used to control outbreaks of vermin or pests in public open spaces, and to protect buildings and infrastructure from damage by termites and other soil pests.

6. Why does the City of Greater Geraldton use herbicides to control weeds?

The City of Greater Geraldton local government area covers 12,625 square kilometres and includes parkland, roads, verges, paths, bushland and foreshore areas.

Given the scale of the area and weed infestation problems, mechanical and/or hand removal methods to control weeds are not effective in achieving an appropriate level of weed control. Herbicides supplement the non-herbicide methods of weed control as they have the ability to control the underground stems of weeds, not just the leaf, so weeds cannot re-grow. Follow up applications are necessary to control new weeds that have grown from seed blown into the area or have grown from the residual seed bank in the soil.

Weeds are a primary cause of bushland degradation. They are often introduced to bushland areas by wind, domestic animals and walkers, or by dumping garden refuse, particularly on bushland fringes. If left uncontrolled, weeds smother native vegetation and can penetrate further into bushland, changing its appearance, and greatly reducing its biodiversity value. Healthy native plants support local native animals so it is vital that any threats to bushland health are addressed. Weeds are also a fire hazard as they dry out and die.

The City cannot completely eradicate weeds but aims to control them. Herbicides are used as a last resort and only if mechanical methods cannot achieve the level of control required to meet risk management responsibilities, and to maintain public open space and road verges safe for public use.

7. Types of pesticides used

The City of Greater Geraldton uses a number of different pesticides for different application purposes. Site evaluations are undertaken to determine the method of application. Descriptions of these pesticides are listed below.

Herbicides

- Selective: A selective herbicide is designed to target a specific species or plant type.
- Non-Selective: A non-selective herbicide is designed to control a wide variety of plant species.

Fungicides

- Fungicides kill or prevent the growth of fungi and their spores.

Algaecides

- Algaecides control the growth of algae in water bodies and artificial turf surfaces.

Pest Animal and Insect Control Products

- Rodenticides: To deal with pests such as rats and mice.
- Termiticides: For the control of termites.
- Insecticides: To manage ants, cockroaches, spiders, wasps, millipedes, mosquitos, parvovirus

Growth Regulator Product

- Insecticide: The application of a growth inhibitor is a preferred solution for mosquito control as it tackles the larvae at an early stage and has a longer lasting effect.

8. Explanation of the Poison Classification for pesticides

Many of the substances used in people's daily lives can be poisonous when used incorrectly. These include common products such as medicines, tablets, solvents, cleaning aids, glues and of course pesticides.

To help people know how toxic or poisonous a substance may be there is a legislated Poisons Schedule.

These are lists of substances which are classified according to their toxicity (poisonous potential.) Scheduled substances must carry basic instruction labels warning that the substances:

- are poisonous or can cause injury;
- must be used carefully by people;
- must be kept away from children.

A substance that is considered poisonous, or can cause injury, must be listed in one of the poison schedules. There are eight different schedules.

Pesticides may be either unscheduled or listed in poison schedules 5, 6, or 7.

Unscheduled:

These are **very low in toxicity** and are unlikely to cause harm to humans provided they are used in accordance with label directions. Most aerosol cans fall into this classification.

Schedule 5 Pesticides:

These have **low toxicity** and are available to the public but require caution in handling, use and storage.

Schedule 6 Pesticides:
These have **moderate toxicity** and are available to the public and also require caution in handling, use and storage.

Schedule 7 Pesticides:
These have **high to very high toxicity**, are extremely hazardous and dangerous to health and have a high potential for causing harm at low exposures. They require special labelling, handling and use and are not available to the general public.

Important note: The City of Greater Geraldton, where possible, aims to use a chemical with the least toxicity and lowest schedule capable of controlling the associated weed problem; however some instances may require a higher schedule chemical to control the outbreak.

9. Who governs the use of pesticides for weed control?

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) controls and regulates pesticides, including herbicides. The APVMA assesses chemical products for toxicology, efficacy, environmental impact, residues, breakdown times and occupational health impacts.

Herbicide use in non-agricultural areas is covered by an Off Label Permit granted to the Department of Agriculture and Food WA by the APVMA. This permit allows WA Local Government Authorities to use herbicides in areas that are non-agricultural such as parks, road reserves and bushland areas.

The WA Health Department controls the City's herbicide operations through the Health (Pesticides) Regulations 2011 and associated guidelines. The legislation permits the City and all WA Local Government Authorities to use herbicides in their weed control programs, in accordance with product instructions and Safety Data Sheets.

10. Public places where pesticides are applied

The City of Greater Geraldton proposes to use or allow the use of pesticides in the following categories of outdoor / indoor public places that are owned or controlled by the City. The table below summarises the potential users and notes the types of pesticides that may be used.

Table One: Public Places and Application Summary

Public places	Regular user groups	Type of pesticide use
Public parks, reserves, picnic & BBQ areas	• General use • Residents and visitors • Sporting groups • Active and passive recreational users • Schools • Corporate & private bookings • Companion animals • Events hire	• Herbicides • Insecticides • Fungicides • Algaecides
Playgrounds	• Residents and visitors • Childcare groups • Schools	• Herbicides

Public places	Regular user groups	Type of pesticide use
Road reserves / verges and streetscapes (NB: rare and endangered flora provisions)	• Residents and visitors • Walkers • Cyclists • Vehicle operators / passengers	• Herbicides • Insecticides • Fungicides
Footpaths, laneways, cycle paths and public roads	• Residents and visitors • Walkers • Cyclists • Vehicle operators / passengers	• Herbicides
Water park surrounds, outdoor pool, and water features / ponds, picnic and BBQ areas	• General use • Residents and visitors • Schools • Sporting groups • Events hire	• Herbicides • Algaecides
Sporting fields, ovals, courtyards & skate park facilities	• General use • Active and passive recreational users • Schools • Sporting groups • Residents and visitors	• Herbicides • Insecticides • Fungicides
Street trees and planter boxes	• Residents and visitors	• Herbicides • Insecticides • Fungicides
Drainage reserves;	• Drainage reserves are fully fenced and generally not accessible to the public	• Herbicides • Fungicides • Algaecides • Insecticides • Rodenticides
Easements accessible to the public, including drains.	• Residents and visitors • Walkers • Cyclists	• Herbicides • Insecticides
Car parks and public toilets	• General use	• Herbicides • Insecticides • Rodenticides
Natural areas / foreshore reserves / crown land controlled by the City of Greater Geraldton	• Residents and visitors (to park or reserve) along designated paths or tracks	• Herbicides • Insecticides • Rodenticides
Grounds and interiors of City of Greater Geraldton owned or managed buildings	• General use • Schools • Sporting groups • Events hire	• Rodenticides • Herbicides • Insecticides • Fungicides • Algaecides
Animal Management Facilities	• Animal owners • Rangers	• Virucides

11. Verge conservation

Guidance has been developed by the WA Roadside Conservation Committee for conservation assessment and management of weeds and protection of original vegetation communities. Where roadside native vegetation has been assessed as high value these sections are marked with yellow 'hockey sticks'. A list of recognised roadside environmental weeds is held by the City and verge treatments will be modified to facilitate listed verge conservation areas in conjunction with the advice of the City's Natural Environment officers.

Guidance documentation for this topic is listed in the Further Information section of this Plan.

12. Pesticide application methods

The City of Greater Geraldton use various weed control application methods including broad acre spraying and targeted (spot) application.

Broad Acre Spraying:

Is used for large open areas such as sports ovals and unrestricted site access. Broad acre spraying:

- is generally undertaken by machinery with boom sprays or a vehicle mounted with a boom spray unit;
- is the most effective and efficient method to spray pesticides to large open spaces such as sports ovals; and
- uses a foam marker as a visual reference to ensure uniform coverage of chemicals in open areas, eliminating overlapping of pesticide application. Markers are not pesticide.

Targeted Application:

Is used for small areas or where obstacles or site constraints restrict access of larger machinery. It can be applied by:

- backpack spray units or vehicle mounted tanks and hoses with applicable control attachment spray units;
- wick or sponge wiping via a handheld applicator which is applied directly onto the targeted plants or weeds;
- cut and paint / basal bark treatment which involves painting pesticide directly onto a woody cut plant; and
- using controlled droplet applicators.

Rodenticide Application

Rodenticide baits are used for inside and outside of buildings by placing rodenticide bait inside purpose built bait stations so children and unwanted animals are not exposed.

Insecticide Application for Mosquitos

The City of Greater Geraldton Environmental Health team monitor and treat mosquitos on a seasonal case by case basis and from customer complaints. The City does not conduct insecticide fogging spray application as it is not deemed necessary. Geraldton encounters frequent high winds which do not support mosquito breeding unlike other areas with large stagnant water bodies. The City of Greater Geraldton uses a granular form of insecticide for mature larvae when required.

13. Pesticide notification register

City of Greater Geraldton residents wishing to be advised in advance of pesticide spraying activities occurring within 100 metres of their residence can request to be added to the City of Greater Geraldton's Pesticide Usage - Resident Notification Register. The Register is managed by the CGG Parks Coordinator.

Notifications are automatically generated via email or text message. It is the resident's responsibility to ensure that the details listed on the Pesticide Usage - Resident Notification Register are up to date.

Registrants will be contacted annually for re-registration. Failure to re-register within 28 days will result in removal from the Register.

14. Notification arrangements

Notification of spraying is based on the type of chemical control (e.g. unscheduled or scheduled). The community is advised of scheduled control applications in advance. Unscheduled control is conducted on a case by case basis, so prior notification is not possible.

Scheduled Chemical Weed Control Program:
Scheduled control is carried out at set intervals and requires planning due to the larger areas of spraying required. Local residents will be notified of pesticide use in line with the notification summary table (table 2 on next page) which includes:

- information displayed and presented on the City's website www.cgg.wa.gov.au;
- warning / information signs erected at main entrances of parks, reserves and playgrounds; and
- vehicle / machinery and equipment signage.

Unscheduled Chemical Weed Control:

- chemical weed control is a secondary action resulting from streetscape, park and natural area maintenance activities;
- spraying is undertaken if deemed required at the time of these activities; and
- it is intended that this will only involve minimal spot spraying of weeds.

Instances Where Notice of Pesticide Use Will Not Be Given Prior:
The City of Greater Geraldton will not give notification for spot spraying of domestic strength herbicides used by:

- hand application;
- cut and paint application; and
- stem injection method.

The City will also not give notification for the use of domestic strength insecticides used by hand application for insect and rodent baiting in garden beds, tree bases, planter boxes, indoor car parks, buildings and public toilets.

External Providers of Services (Contractors) to the City of Greater Geraldton:
External contractors engaged by the City of Greater Geraldton applying pesticides on any of the City's owned or leased land must liaise with the City of Greater Geraldton to ensure notification arrangements are put in place and this Plan is followed.

Where the City of Greater Geraldton utilises an external contractor(s) to apply pesticides on its behalf, the City of Greater Geraldton will ensure that notification is made in accordance with the notification requirements of this Plan.

Pesticide Notification Register:
Residents that have registered and are listed on the pesticide notification register will also receive an automated notification (via text message or email) at least 24 hours prior to application.

15. Information provided

The City of Greater Geraldton will include in the pesticide notification the following information:

- active constituent of the pesticide to be applied and used;
- the purpose of the use, clearly setting out what pest(s) or weed(s) are being treated;
- the proposed date or date range of the pesticide use;
- the locations where pesticide is going to be used; and
- the City of Greater Geraldton contact telephone number and corporate email address.

The City of Greater Geraldton complies with and enforces contractor compliance with the specifications of the manufacturer's pesticide labels, Safety Data Sheet (SDS) and any permits issued by the Australian Pesticide and Veterinary Medicines Authority, including additional warnings and safety protocols.

All signage displayed will be in accordance with the *West Australian Department of Health (Pesticides) Regulations 2011* signage requirements – Appendix A.

Notification of any pesticide application will be in accordance with the Plan.

Table two provides typical examples of treatment locations, signage and notifications.

Table Two: Application Notification Summary

Public Place Location Type	***Site Signage***	***Vehicle & Equipment Signage***	***Pesticide Notification Register***	***Public notice on City's Website***
Reserves, and playgrounds	✓	✓	✓	✓
Footpaths, laneways, cycle paths and public roads	✓	✓	✓	✓
Water park surrounds, outdoor pool	✓	✓	✓	✓
Picnic and BBQ areas	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sporting fields, ovals, courtyards & skate park facilities	✓	✓	✓	✓
Street trees and planter boxes	✓	✓	✓	✓
Drainage reserves	✓	✓	✓	
Easements accessible to the public, including drains	✓	✓	✓	✓
Car parks and public toilets	✓	✓	✓	
Natural areas / foreshore reserves / crown land controlled by the City of Greater Geraldton	✓	✓	✓	✓
Grounds and interiors of City of Greater Geraldton owned or managed buildings	✓	✓	✓	
Unscheduled chemical weed control	✓	✓	✓	

16. Future reviews of the plan

This Pesticide Notification Plan will be reviewed annually or when legislation or circumstances require a review of the Plan. The review will include:

- a short report on progress of implementing the Plan;
- an evaluation on the notification methods outlined in the Plan;
- a review of alternative options for pesticide use and their feasibility and;
- an update on the latest research on pesticide use.

17. How the community will be informed of this plan

City of Greater Geraldton will advise residents of the Plan and its contents by placing a copy on the City's website www.cgg.wa.gov.au.

18. Further information

General:

- *A Guide to the Management of Pesticides in Local Government Pest Control Programs in Western Australia* (Department of Health's website) www.health.wa.gov.au
- *Health (Pesticides) Regulations 2011* (Available at State Law Publisher website) www.slp.wa.gov.au
- Department of Agriculture and Food www.agric.wa.gov.au
- *Guidelines for Separation of Agricultural and Residential Land Uses – Establishment of Buffer Areas* August 2012 (Available at Department of Health's website) www.health.wa.gov.au
- Roadside Conservation Committee, '*Assessing Roadsides: A guide for conservation value'*, WARCC, 2002.
- Roadside Conservation Committee, '*Verge Notes: roadside environmental weeds list'*, July 2014
- Roadside Conservation Committee*, 'Handbook of Environmental Practice for Road Construction and Maintenance Works*', WARCC, 2010
- Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA), *https://apvma.gov.au/chemicals-and-products/chemical-review/listing*

Glyphosate:

- Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA); *https://apvma.gov.au/sites/default/files/images/13891-glyphosate-fact-sheet-april2016.pdf*
- Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA); *https://apvma.gov.au/sites/default/files/publication/20701-glyphosate-regulatory-position-report-final.pdf*
- International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), World Health Authority (WHO; *https://www.iarc.fr/en/media-centre/iarcnews/2016/glyphosate_IARC2016.php*
- European Chemicals Agency Committee for Risk Assessment (ECHA); *https://echa.europa.eu/-/glyphosate-not-classified-as-a-carcinogen-by-echa*
- European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) ; *http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.2903/j.efsa.2015.4302/epdf*

19. Contact Details

Anyone wishing to contact the City of Greater Geraldton to discuss the Pesticide Use Notification Plan should contact:

Coordinator Parks – Maintenance Operations
PO Box 101, GERALDTON WA 6531
Geraldton Civic Centre (08) 9956 6600
Mullewa Office (08) 9961 1007

Or by email: council@cgg.wa.gov.au
Or access the website: www.cgg.wa.gov.au

SUMMARY OF DOCUMENT REVISIONS			
Rev. No.	**Date Revised**	**Section Revised**	**Revision Description**
1	01/08/2017	All	New Plan

Attachment One: West Australian Department of Health (Pesticides) Regulations 2011 - signage requirements

89. Verge spraying using moving vehicle

(1) This regulation applies to the spraying of a registered pesticide on a verge — (a) from a moving vehicle; or (b) by one or more persons accompanied by a moving vehicle.

(2) The vehicle must display at all times while the spraying operation is in progress — (a) a warning sign with the words "CAUTION: [NAME OF CHEMICAL] BEING APPLIED." in capital letters not less than 50 mm in height in a prominent position on the vehicle; and (b) a flashing yellow warning light.

[Regulation 89 inserted in Gazette 29 Jan 2016 p. 270.]

89A. Park spraying using moving vehicle

(1) This regulation applies to the spraying of a registered pesticide in a park or an area of a park — (a) from a moving vehicle; or (b) by one or more persons accompanied by a moving vehicle.

(2) The vehicle must display at all times while the spraying operation is in progress — (a) a warning sign with the words "CAUTION: [NAME OF CHEMICAL] BEING APPLIED." in capital letters not less than 50 mm in height in a prominent position on the vehicle; and (b) a flashing yellow warning light.

(3) In addition, warning signs with the words "CAUTION: [NAME OF CHEMICAL] BEING APPLIED. AVOID CONTACT WITH AREA WHEN SIGN IS DISPLAYED." in capital letters not less than 50 mm in height must be displayed — (a) so that the signs — (i) are clearly visible to persons approaching the spraying operation; and (ii) are at a distance from the spraying operation that provides adequate warning of the application of the pesticide; and (b) for the following periods — (i) while the pesticide is being applied; (ii) after the pesticide has been applied until any surface to which it was applied has dried.

[Regulation 89A inserted in Gazette 29 Jan 2016 p. 270-1.]

89B. Verge or park spraying using stationary vehicle

(1) This regulation applies to the spraying of a registered pesticide on a verge, or in a park or an area of a park, by one or more persons accompanied by a stationary vehicle.

(2) The vehicle must display at all times while the spraying operation is in progress — (a) a warning sign with the words "CAUTION: [NAME OF CHEMICAL] BEING APPLIED." in capital letters not less than 50 mm in height in a prominent position on the vehicle; and (b) a flashing yellow warning light.

(3) In addition, warning signs with the words "CAUTION: [NAME OF CHEMICAL] BEING APPLIED. AVOID CONTACT WITH AREA WHEN SIGN IS DISPLAYED." in capital letters not less than 50 mm in height must be displayed — (a) so that the signs — (i) are clearly visible to persons approaching the spraying operation; and

(ii) are at a distance from the spraying operation that provides adequate warning of the application of the pesticide; and (b) for the following periods — (i) while the pesticide is being applied; (ii) after the pesticide has been applied until any surface to which it was applied has dried.

[Regulation 89B inserted in Gazette 29 Jan 2016 p. 271-2.]

89C. Spraying in public place other than verge or park spraying

(1) This regulation applies to the spraying of a registered pesticide in a public place other than on a verge or in a park or an area of a park.

(2) Warning signs with the words "CAUTION: [NAME OF CHEMICAL] BEING APPLIED. AVOID CONTACT WITH AREA WHEN SIGN IS DISPLAYED." in capital letters not less than 50 mm in height must be displayed in the area where the pesticide is being applied — (a) at intervals sufficient to provide adequate warning of the application of the pesticide; and (b) for the following periods — (i) while the pesticide is being applied; (ii) after the pesticide has been applied until any surface to which it was applied has dried.

[Regulation 89C inserted in Gazette 29 Jan 2016 p. 272.]

Attachment Two: Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) – 13891 Glyphosate Fact Sheet April 2016

Australian Government
Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Glyphosate

Safety and use

The simple rule for safe use of agricultural and veterinary chemicals is to read the label and follow the safety and use instructions.

WHAT IS GLYPHOSATE?

Glyphosate is a weed killer which works on a wide variety of leafy weeds. It doesn't distinguish one from another, and it works best after the seed has sprouted.

ARE GLYPHOSATE PRODUCTS SAFE TO USE?

Yes, glyphosate products which are registered with the APVMA are safe to use, provided they are used as per the label instructions. Registered products have an APVMA or NRA approval number on the label.

Glyphosate is registered for use throughout the world and current regulatory assessment is that it does not pose a risk to humans when used according to the label instructions.

WHAT ARE 'LABEL INSTRUCTIONS'?

All chemical products have instructions for safety and use on the label. The labels on glyphosate products are there for your safety and provide practical information on how to use each product. Always read the label instructions and use only as directed.

By following the directions you maximize the product's effectiveness and minimise your risk of exposure to the chemical.

ARE AREAS WHICH HAVE BEEN TREATED WITH GLYPHOSATE SAFE FOR CHILDREN AND ANIMALS?

Always check the label for specific instructions about how to use any chemical products near people, including children, and animals—and follow the instructions.

Products containing glyphosate are safe to use in areas which will be later used by people and animals provided the label instructions are followed. The label instructions will tell you how long people or animals should avoid an area that has been treated—follow these instructions. In most cases, once the product is dry, it is safe to re-enter, but always check the label.

CAN PRODUCTS CONTAINING GLYPHOSATE STILL BE SOLD IN AUSTRALIA?

Yes, products containing glyphosate are legal to sell in Australia provided they are registered with the APVMA.

CAN LOCAL COUNCILS AND CONTRACTORS STILL USE GLYPHOSATE PRODUCTS?

Yes, provided they are registered with the APVMA and used according to the label instructions.

INTERNATIONAL REPORT ABOUT GLYPHOSATE

Last year a report was released by the World Health Organisation's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) which classified glyphosate as 'probably carcinogenic to humans'.

The role of IARC is to identify things that have the ability to cause cancer—they look at both substances and lifestyles. IARC also classify indoor emissions from burning wood and high temperature frying, some shift work, and consumption of red meat in the same category as glyphosate.

When making an assessment of the risk of these substances or lifestyles they do not consider how this risk is managed in actual situations. They did not assess the risk of glyphosate causing cancer when used according to the label instructions in a registered chemical product.

Following this initial assessment, the World Health Organisation's pesticide specialists are doing a comprehensive risk reassessment of glyphosate and their findings will determine whether regulators, such as the APVMA, decide to take any further action in relation to glyphosate.

This group of experts will look at scientific studies and data from all sources including unpublished scientific data, which will then be independently peer-reviewed during the assessment process. The APVMA is a member of this expert scientific group and results are expected to be published in mid 2016.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS FOR THE APVMA?

The current scientific assessment by expert scientists at the APVMA has concluded that glyphosate products are safe to use, provided they are used in accordance with the label instructions. Therefore no action to change the use or availability of products containing glyphosate is required at this stage.

The APVMA assessment is based on scientific evidence from a broader range of studies than was used by the IARC in their assessment. It is also consistent with what regulators in other countries, such as Germany and Canada, have done. Both have concluded that current labels for glyphosate products contain appropriate instructions for use to keep those regularly handling glyphosate safe.

However, all findings by international agencies are taken very seriously and, as a member of the World Health Organisation expert group on this matter, the APVMA will be directly involved in assessing consideration of all studies and data.

The current status of regulatory action taken, or proposed, by other regulators around the world will be looked at, as well as any relevant residue studies and any proposed changes to maximum residue limits by other countries.

Following this comprehensive scientific analysis and assessment of risk, the APVMA will decide on whether regulatory action is required for glyphosate products registered for use in Australia. Based on current evidence, no significant changes are expected.

THE ROLE OF THE AUSTRALIAN PESTICIDES AND VETERINARY MEDICINES AUTHORITY

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) is the Australian Government agency responsible for agricultural and veterinary chemical product registration.

Before a chemical product can be sold or manufactured in Australia, it must first go through scientific assessment by the APVMA to check its safety and whether it works as expected and claimed by the manufacturer. These checks are designed to protect the health and safety of people, animals, plants and the environment. If a product meets very strict requirements it is registered for use in Australia.

The APVMA does not monitor or enforce the correct use of agricultural and veterinary chemicals once they are registered.

The correct use of agricultural and veterinary chemicals is first-and-foremost the user's responsibility. The approved directions for use are on the label of every registered product in Australia and must be followed. Incorrect use of these chemicals in Australia is monitored and enforced collaboratively by Safe Work Australia, and state and territory government authorities.

MORE INFORMATION

+61 2 6210 4701

WWW.APVMA.GOV.AU

ENQUIRIES@APVMA.GOV.AU

This information is current at April 2016 and subject to revision. Please check our website to ensure you are viewing the most recent information.