

## Code of Best Practice No. 4 Using Herbicides on Roads and Public Areas

This Code of Best Practice doesn't provide exact solutions to the problems of managing weeds but following its practical guidance will help to protect sprayers, members of the public and users of public areas from the potentially harmful effects of pesticides.

### The main risks

Pesticides are valuable tools for agricultural production but only when used in a responsible manner. A pesticide is a poison which when misused can cause considerable harm. The main risks when applying herbicides on roads and in public areas are to:

- The person spraying the herbicide, if they don't take care
- Users of the area being sprayed such as children, dogs, livestock and wild animals
- Endemic plants and animals in National Conservation Areas
- Everyone downstream through contamination of water courses with herbicides

This code of practice is intended to guide you in applying pesticides to avoid these harmful effects.

### Who is this code of practice for?

For government employees, contractors and members of the public spraying herbicides on roadside verges, around houses, offices and other buildings and in amenity areas. It also includes control of woody weeds and stumps in these areas.

### Good practice spraying herbicides on roads and in public areas

- Be aware of **traffic hazards** when applying pesticides along roadside verges, especially near corners. Put out traffic cones or work with an assistant to warn traffic and protect you while you are working.
- Wear **hi-visibility** clothing, a jacket or a hi-vis vest.
- When spraying **right next to water**, for example along the Run, spot spray weeds with a **specially formulated product** such as Roundup Pro Bio to avoid harming marine creatures downstream.
- Areas around **offices or public buildings** should be sprayed after working hours, to avoid affecting the workers and members of the public.
- Warn the public by putting up clearly **visible signs** at least 8" x 12" in size with the words "CAUTION - HERBICIDE SPRAYING" at all access points to the area, and leave them for at least 2 weeks after treatment.
- For **private houses**, make sure all inhabitants are informed of what you're doing. Ideally, put up warning signs as well.
- **Don't cut the grass or weeds** before you spray, herbicides are designed to work on actively growing plants.

There are specific conditions which it is important to follow when spraying weeds right next to water.

Watch out for ferns and other native plants in Conservation Areas.

Aim to spray weeds early on in their growing cycle but before they start flowering and setting seeds, as seeds are not very vulnerable to herbicides and will sprout as soon as conditions are right.

### Things to look out for

- For picnic sites and roads in **Conservation Areas**, are there any ferns or other native plants in the verges? Make sure you avoid spraying them, spot-spray target weeds.
- Is there a **stream or other water course** nearby? Don't let your herbicides poison the water supplies.
- Are there any **ponds or troughs** which could be poisoned and affect livestock?
- Do **people, livestock or pets** use the area you are going to spray? Make sure you protect them by keeping them away from the area for at least 2 weeks after treatment.

### The basics

- Always read the **label** and follow the instructions for dose rate, frequency of application and the personal protective equipment required.
- When **spraying near water** use the correct product.
- Choose the correct **nozzle** for the job, check the product label.
- Make sure you are using the right **personal protective equipment** for the product.
- Avoid walking through **wet vegetation** you've just sprayed, you're poisoning yourself.
- Also avoid walking through **unsprayed vegetation** after applying a pesticide and wearing the same coveralls or protective clothing.
- Don't spray if it is **too windy, too hot or too wet**. You are only wasting effort and money and could cause harm through drift.
- Avoid spraying on steep or **very rough terrain**, the weight of the sprayer can pull you over.
- Dispose of **rinsings** from the knapsack sprayer on or at the edge of the area treated, but avoid exceeding the recommended dose rate on the target itself.
- Store pesticides in a **lockable store** away from food stuffs, and out of the reach of children and pets.

### Advice and further information

- Contact the Farmer Support Team or Pest Control Services Officer at ANRD on 24724 for advice on pesticides and application rates.
- Contact EMD for advice on working in National Conservation Areas.