



Chemical Weed Spraying Activities Safe Working Practices

The use and storage of pesticides used in Chemical Weed Spraying operations is subject to the Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986.

1. These safety guidelines have been introduced to take account of the regulations and supercede all previous documents. They do not take account of scheduled operations as required by the Poisonous Substances in Agriculture Regulations 1984 for which other documents are available.
2. If you must use pesticides as part of your business or employment you must have received adequate instruction and guidance in the safe, efficient and human use of pesticides and be competent for the duties you are required to perform. Employers must ensure that employees get the instruction and guidance they need to enable them to comply with the requirements of the Regulations.
3. It is a requirement of the Regulations that persons who fall into the following categories will have to obtain a certificate of competence recognised by the Minister.
 - 3.1 Persons applying pesticides approved for use in Agriculture, Horticulture and Forestry, to land, buildings or the contents of buildings not in his or his employer's ownership or occupation.
 - 3.2 Persons born later than the 31 December 1964 applying pesticides approved for Agriculture, Horticulture or Forestry unless he is under the direct supervision of a person holding such a certificate.

4. OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 These guidelines seek to safeguard employees in the performance of their duties and contains sufficient information appertaining to their work.
- 4.2 It is the primary aim of this Authority to ensure that all employees using pesticides in the course of their work are adequately informed, instructed, trained and supervised regarding their own particular job.
- 4.3 The guidelines identify problems associated with the job. Employees must at all times observe the precautions contained in this guidance.
- 4.4 Each employee is expected to co-operate with the guidelines thereby ensuring that safe working procedures are adhered to and that any problems encountered are reported immediately to their section supervisor.

5. SAFE HANDLING OF PESTICIDES

- 5.1 All pesticides must be treated with respect and the following safety precautions observed at all times.
- 5.2 Read the label on the container and this will help you to ensure that the correct product is in the container. Check that the information sheet corresponds with the instructions on the supplier's label.
- 5.3 Always apply the pesticide in accordance with the supplier's instructions. Should the instructions be not available, report the matter to your Supervisor and do not use the product.
- 5.4 Never transfer the pesticide to another container, e.g. especially a lemonade bottle etc.
- 5.5 Always ensure that you wear the protective clothing appertaining to each pesticide described in the appropriate information sheet. Should the clothing and/or the equipment not be available report to your Supervisor and DO NOT use the pesticide.
- 5.6 Examine containers regularly, isolate and make safe leaking containers immediately.

6. GENERAL SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

- 6.1 Ensure that where pesticides are stored, essential protective clothing and equipment is readily available.
- 6.2 When dealing with pesticides DO NOT SMOKE. Do prevent the spread of contamination into sewers and water courses.
- 6.3 Contain any spillages wherever possible.
- 6.4 For your personal protection always refer to the details on the appropriate information sheet.
- 6.5 Be meticulous in your personal hygiene and ensure that you have within proximity of your workplace a supply of water, soap and towels.
- 6.6 Always wash your hands before eating or smoking.

7. SAFE SPRAYING

- 7.1 Read the label - always follow the maker's instructions.
- 7.2 Wear the appropriate protective clothing, following the instructions on the information sheet.
- 7.3 Disposable overalls should not be worn more than once.
- 7.4 Standard overalls should be washed at least daily after use. If badly stained or contaminated remove immediately for washing.

- 7.5 Keep all clothes not worn for spraying safe from contamination and in the accommodation provided for them.
- 7.6 Respirators and dust masks - use only the approved type. If you require any information ask your Supervisor or the Safety Officer.
- 7.7 When opening containers, protect yourself from splashing and always fill the tank carefully.
- 7.8 Remainders - Any pesticides left in containers can be a real danger. Wash out the container and pour the rinsing into the spray preparation.
- 7.9 Spray with care - Keep out of the spray drift and do not spray in windy weather. Always turn off the spray before attending to the nozzles.
- 7.10 Never suck or blow through nozzles to clear them.
- 7.11 Before you smoke, eat or drink get off the spray area, remove protective clothing except overalls and boots and wash your hands thoroughly.
- 7.12 At the end of each day's work, take off your protective clothing and place it in the separate accommodation provided. Wash rubber boots and gloves before removing them. Wash the inside of your gloves before putting them away. Always use clean water - do not use water intended for personal use. Under no circumstances are you to take protective clothing home.

8. STORAGE AND DISPOSAL OF PESTICIDES

- 8.1 All spray pesticides must be stored under cover.
- 8.2 Close tightly any partly filled containers and store them securely away. All pesticides should be stored away from other materials.
The following groups should be stacked separately:-
 - (a) Liquid Formulations
 - (b) Solid Formulations
 - (c) Scheduled Poisons
- 8.3 All spray pesticides should be stored in a frost-free environment.
- 8.4 Safely dispose of all used containers. After cleaning out and thoroughly rinsing the Container deposit it in the refuse bin marked "For disposal at official tip".

NOTE: Do not puncture or burn aerosol dispensers. If an unopened container of pesticide is not needed and the container is in good condition with the label intact, notify your Supervisor who will arrange for collection by the manufacturers. DO NOT use any Chemical Weed Spraying Activities Safe Working Practices empty pesticide container for other purposes.

9. FIRST AID

Always ensure that you have a First Aid box nearby which must include any eyewash solution. For specific First Aid treatment read the instructions contained on the information sheet. If you feel ill, STOP WORK.

If you experience difficulty with your:-

- (i) eyes
- (ii) feeling sick
- (iii) finding difficulty in breathing
- (iv) feeling exceptionally thirsty or sweating profusely,

report the matter immediately to your Supervisor, get yourself examined by your doctor making sure he is aware of the pesticides you have been using.

10. STORAGE OF PESTICIDES

To fulfil its legal obligations under existing Health and Safety legislation the Council must fully comply with the requirements of the Pesticides Regulations 1986. The Regulations set out the criteria that has to be observed when pesticides are taken into storage and also details the requirements for the training and certification of storekeepers. The minimum certification requirement accepted by the Minister of Agriculture is the Certificate of Competence for Nominated Storekeepers administered by the British Agrochemical Standards Inspection Scheme Limited (BASIS for short).

- 10.1 No person must store pesticides in a local authority building unless he has received the necessary training and instruction in order for him to carry out the operation successfully.
- 10.2 Quantities of pesticides up to a maximum of 200 kilos or 200 litres or an aggregate quantity not to exceed that total may be stored in a metal fireproof container provided it is situated in a dry, well ventilated building and can be made secure.
- 10.3 With effect from the 1st January 1987 no person shall store a pesticide for the purpose of sale or supply in a quantity in excess of 200 kilograms or 200 litres or an equivalent mixture unless he has first obtained a Certificate of Competence recognised by the Minister of Agriculture (BASIS).
- 10.4 Pesticides should always be stored in a secure building, designed as far as possible to contain the pesticides in the case of a fire.

The store should be sited away from living accommodation and on land which is not subjected to flooding and away from water courses and drains. There should be good access for all types of vehicles (including fire tenders) and fertilisers and flammable materials would not be stacked near to the store.

- 10.5 All stores should be constructed of a non-combustible material. It should be well ventilated particularly at low level and the roof should be of a light material (non asbestos sheeting or similar) that can act as a vent in the case of a fire.
- 10.6 The floor should be non porous and a bund should be constructed in order to contain Chemical Weed Spraying Activities Safe Working Practices the total liquid quantity of the store in case of serious leakage or fire. It should also be made rodent proof.
- 10.7 All windows should be barred against intruders and the doors securely locked.

11. DISPOSAL OF PESTICIDES AND PESTICIDE CONTAINERS

If a quantity of pesticides are to be disposed of with the container unopened and the label intact, in most cases the supplier will collect it.

In the case of opened or partly used containers the contents should be applied to the land at the correct dosage rate. The container should then be thoroughly rinsed and disposed of in accordance with the advice given in this document.

Waste disposal contractors will collect unwanted pesticides and containers subject to the relevant requirements.

Pesticide Containers

It is permissible for containers that have been used to be buried, provided they are thoroughly rinsed then punctured, some containers may be burnt but only under strict conditions.

The pollution control department at Devon County Council can advise on a suitable site and also the legal requirements on the disposal of pesticides.

Protective clothing in the form of coveralls and gloves must always be worn when handling pesticide containers.

11. SAFE METHOD OF WORK : CHEMICAL WEEK SPRAYING

In addition to the requirements outlined above, operatives involved in Chemical Week

Spraying must:-

- 11.1 Take reasonable care for their health and safety and of other persons who may be affected by acts or omissions at work.
- 11.2 Not interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interest of health, safety or welfare.
- 11.3 Take care to see that the public are not exposed to any hazards from work processes.
- 11.4 Wash hands before taking meals. Chemicals which touch the skin must be washed off as soon as possible.
- 11.5 Read the instructions on the label before using chemical weedkillers and adhere to them. Only use weedkillers provided by the Council.
- 11.6 Ensure the weedkiller is mixed correctly as recommended on the instruction label. Do not exceed the recommended dosage.
- 11.7 Wear the protective clothing (particularly gloves) and equipment provided at all times. If the equipment is defective - change it.
- 11.8 Take care to avoid spraying onto crops, livestock and household pets. Do not contaminate water sources.
- 11.9 Do not spray where and when children are playing and do not let them near while working, especially during windy conditions. Do not spray into the wind.

- 11.10 Restrict the immediate spray area so you have control over it.
- 11.11 Under no circumstances transfer chemicals into **unmarked containers** such as beer and soft drink bottles. If you must use a container other than the original, ensure that it is labelled 'Poison - Chemicals' and use the contents immediately. Any surplus must be disposed of safely. Consult your Supervisor about the safe disposal of all empty containers of chemical.
- 11.12 Under no circumstances throw empty weedkiller containers into ponds or watercourses.
- 11.13 Under no circumstances use empty chemical containers for anything other than their original use.
- 11.14 Under no circumstances leave weedkilling apparatus and materials unattended, unless under lock and key.
- 11.15 Wear a fluorescent jacket if working on or near a highway.
- 11.16 Know the location of First Aid materials.
- 11.17 If you feel unwell consult your doctor and inform him that you have been using weedkiller. Notify your Supervisor as soon as possible.
- 11.18 If an accident occurs, ensure that an accident form is completed as soon as possible (see Accident Reporting).