

Pesticide Use Notification Plan

Wagga Wagga City Council 2021

Introduction

The Pesticides Regulation 2017 (the Regulation) requires the development of a plan to notify the public about pesticide application in outdoor public places. This pesticide notification plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Regulation.

The aim of this plan is to meet the community's right to know about pesticide applications made to outdoor public places that are controlled or owned by the Wagga Wagga City Council (Council).

Council carry out their functions with respect to the lands managed under the NSW Local Government Act 1993 and the NSW Crown Land Management Act 2016. This includes many land parcels such as roadsides, nature reserves, historic sites, Aboriginal areas, conservation areas, sportsgrounds and parks.

The Pesticide Use Notification Plan (PUNP) allows members of the community to take action to avoid the locations where pesticides are used, if they wish to do so.

The PUNP sets out how the Council will notify the community of pesticide applications it makes in public places. The PUNP describes:

- What public places are covered by the PUNP
- Who regularly uses these public places and an estimate of the level of use
- How and when Council will provide the community with information about its pesticide applications in public places
- How the community can access this plan and get more information about Council's notification arrangements
- Special protection measures that will be taken if the pesticide is proposed to be used adjacent to a sensitive place
- The information that will be provided including product name and purpose for which it will be used.

Council manages an extensive system of road reserves, easements, parks, sportsgrounds and natural areas. Council has a statutory responsibility to manage these areas to conserve nature and places of cultural value. Hence, weed and pest control programs are a management priority for Council and pesticides are an essential component of many of these programs.

Council pest management programs aim to use best practice techniques i.e. methods that are target-specific and cost-effective. This often requires an integration of a range of control methods. Biological control is used where effective agents are available. However, pesticides remain the main method of control for most pest species.

For example, many biological control agents have been released to assist with controlling weeds, but herbicides remain an essential component of most weed control programs undertaken by Council e.g. bush regeneration application techniques such as cutting-and-painting or stem injection of woody weeds, foliar spot-spraying and boom spraying. Council uses pesticides when necessary to control weeds, pest animals and diseases to protect public property and neighbouring lands from pest damage.

Public places covered by this plan

Council applies or allows pesticides to be used in the following categories of outdoor public places it owns or controls to which the public is entitled to have access:

- Nature reserves / conservation areas
- Parks and gardens
- Sportsgrounds
- Council managed Crown reserves
- Aboriginal Places of Significance
- Road reserves and drainage reserves
- Buildings owned or managed by Council
- Other areas of land connected with the management, maintenance or improvement of reserved lands e.g. shared pathways, easements, and operational land.

The majority of pesticide use by the Council consists of applying herbicides for weed control. Minor uses include but are not limited to applying insecticides to control certain insect pests, termiticides to protect buildings, fungicides to control pathogens, rodenticides to control rats and bird baits to control birds and the use of registered poison baits to control pest animals.

The main user groups and types of pesticide use in each of the categories of public place are summarised in the following table.

Public places	Affected users	Level of use	Type of pesticide use
Sports fields and ovals	Day users such as schools and sporting groups; general public, employees and contractors	Seasonal – may be high during relevant sporting season	Herbicides, insecticides such as spray and bait termiticides, fungicides and vertebrate baits or fumigants
Playgrounds	General public including children and families; employees and contractors	Highly variable and seasonal i.e. low to very high use	Some spot-spraying of herbicides and insecticides
Parks	General public including children and families; employees and contractors	Highly variable and seasonal i.e. low to very high use	Herbicides, insecticides including plant injection or spray and bait termiticides, fungicides and vertebrate baits including rodenticides, fumigants and bird baits
Utility easements	General public, employees and contractors	Low to medium use	Broad-scale and spot use of herbicides, insecticides and vertebrate baits and fumigants

Public places	Regular user groups	Level of use	Type of pesticide use
Roads, trails and other vehicular tracks including verges	General public, neighbours, motorists, employees and contractors	Variable – low in remote areas but often high near urban areas	Herbicides, insecticides and vertebrate baits including rodenticides and fumigants
Walking tracks and pathways	General public, campers, employees and contractors	Variable – low in remote areas but often high near urban areas	Herbicides, insecticides and vertebrate baits including rodenticides
Camping grounds and caravan parks	Individuals or groups staying for varying periods (days to weeks), employees and contractors	Variable and seasonal i.e. low to very high use	Herbicides, insecticides such as spray and bait termiticides, fungicides and vertebrate baits including rodenticides and bird baits
Cultural heritage areas and Conservation areas	General public, employees and contractors, volunteer groups	The use of these sites is highly variable and seasonal i.e. low to very high use	Herbicides, insecticides such as spray and bait termiticides, fungicides and vertebrate baits including rodenticides and bird baits
Public buildings and facilities	General public, employees and contractors	Medium to high use	Insecticides such as spray and bait termiticides, fungicides and vertebrate baits including rodenticides
Other areas	General public, employees and contractors	Use is highly variable and seasonal i.e. low to very high use	Broad-scale and spot use of herbicides, insecticides, fungicides and vertebrate baits including rodenticides and bird baits

Notification arrangements

This section of the PUNP describes how and when Council (either through its staff or through its contractors) will provide notice of pesticide use in public places, including special measures for sensitive places, arrangements for emergency pesticide application and circumstances where notice will not be given (including where the public place has been leased by Council to another party).

These notification requirements are based on Councils consideration of the following matters:

- Some areas have high visitor use (e.g. picnic areas and camp grounds in areas visited frequently, popular reserves close to urban areas); other areas are rarely visited by the public (e.g. nature reserves in more remote areas)
- Some members of the public may be more sensitive to pesticides than others
- Some members of the public may be more likely than others to encounter pesticides e.g. campers versus passing motorists

For some application techniques, the public is unlikely to come into direct contact with pesticides e.g. bush regeneration programs using the cut-and-paint or stem injection techniques or if the toxicity of the pesticide is quite low.

How and when notice of pesticide use will be provided

Because of the large area of land managed by Council, the range of potential pest species and the range of pesticides available for their control, it is not possible for all detailed uses of pesticides to be specified in this plan.

Notice of pesticide use will be provided in one or more of the following ways:

- The erection or placement of signs
- Postage of letters and letterbox drops
- Through the local media
- Council's website www.wagga.nsw.gov.au
- By telephone, fax, email or personal contact.

In most cases, the notification procedures will depend on the specific management technique (as follows), except where no notification will be provided.

For vertebrate pesticides covered by a Pesticide Control Order, notification will be as specified in the relevant Order, unless the Order does not specify all of the information required by the Pesticides Regulation. If the latter occurs, signs and/or notices will also provide the information required by the Pesticides Regulation.

For ground spot-spraying herbicides in areas frequently used, signs will be placed at the major entrances to the area to be treated. Additional information will also be available at the Council office, website or via the contact number on the sign. Signs will be put up immediately prior to pesticide use and will remain in place at least until the pesticide has dried (where the pesticide label, permit or Pesticide Control Order requires a longer period of signage, this will be followed).

For spot-spraying areas that are used infrequently, signs will be restricted to the operating vehicle only. Additional information will also be available at the Council office, website or via the contact number on the sign.

When using insecticides, rodenticides, fungicides, termiticides, fumigants or bird-baits, signs will be placed at the major entrances to the area or building to be treated. Additional information will also be available at the Council office, website or via the contact number on the sign. Signs will be put up immediately prior to pesticide use and will remain in place at least until the operation is completed (where the pesticide label, permit or

Pesticide Control Order requires a longer period of signage, this will be followed). When foliage is sprayed, signs will remain at least until the pesticide has dried.

Additional notification requirements for certain public areas are detailed below.

Parks and recreational use areas

At recreational and day use areas, signs will be placed at the major entrances to the area to be treated. Signs will be put up immediately prior to pesticide use and will remain in place at least until the operation is completed (where the pesticide label, permit or Pesticide Control Order requires a longer period of signage, this will be followed). When foliage is sprayed, signs will remain at least until the pesticide has dried.

Roads and trails including verges

Along roads and trails, signs will be placed before and after the area to be treated. Signs will be put up immediately prior to pesticide use and will remain in place at least until the operation is completed (where the pesticide label, permit or Pesticide Control Order requires a longer period of signage, this will be followed). When foliage is sprayed, signs will remain at least until the pesticide has dried.

In remote areas where it is unlikely that the public will encounter pesticides, signs will be restricted to the operating vehicle only.

Walking tracks and pathways

Along walking tracks and pathways, signs will be placed before and after the area to be. Signs will be put up immediately prior to pesticide use and will remain in place at least until the operation is completed (where the pesticide label, permit or Pesticide Control Order requires a longer period of signage, this will be followed). When foliage is sprayed, signs will remain at least until the pesticide has dried.

Camping grounds

At camping grounds, signs will be placed at the major entrances to the area to be treated. Signs will be put up immediately prior to pesticide use and will remain in place at least until the operation is completed (where the pesticide label, permit or Pesticide Control Order requires a longer period of signage, this will be followed). When foliage is sprayed, signs will remain at least until the pesticide has dried.

Cultural heritage areas

At cultural heritage areas, signs will be placed at the major entrances to the area to be treated. Signs will be put up immediately prior to pesticide use and will remain in place at least until the operation is completed (where the pesticide label, permit or Pesticide Control Order requires a longer period of signage, this will be followed). When foliage is sprayed, signs will remain at least until the pesticide has dried.

In some situations there will be direct liaison with the relevant stakeholders.

Playgrounds

Playgrounds will be closed prior to the use of any pesticides (except for minor control of insect pests using hand-held aerosols). Signs will be placed at the major entrances to the playground to be treated (except for minor control of insect pests using hand-held aerosols). Signs will be put up immediately prior to closure and will remain in place at least until the playground is re-opened for public use (where the pesticide label, permit

or Pesticide Control Order requires a longer period of signage, this will be followed). In addition to the information required under this Regulation, the signs will provide information on the closure of the playground.

Sporting fields and ovals

At sporting fields and ovals, signs will be located at the major entrances to the area to be treated and at a location where they are most likely to be seen e.g. amenities block, change room. Signs will be put up immediately prior to pesticide use and will remain in place at least until the operation is completed (where the pesticide label, permit or Pesticide Control Order requires a longer period of signage, this will be followed). When foliage is sprayed, signs will remain at least until the pesticide has dried.

Utility easements

When the Council is applying pesticides over electricity, telecommunications and pipeline easements, signs will be located at the major entrances to the area to be treated. Signs will be put up immediately prior to pesticide use and will remain in place at least until the operation is completed (where the pesticide label, permit or Pesticide Control Order requires a longer period of signage, this will be followed). When foliage is sprayed, signs will remain at least until the pesticide has dried.

Where a body other than the Council is responsible for management of an easement that requires the application of a pesticide, the other body will be responsible for notifying the public of its use of pesticides and the Council will not provide notification in relation to this land.

Public buildings and facilities

When the Council is applying pesticides to the inside or to the exterior of a public building or facility the area may be closed to the public. If this is not required, signs will be located at the major entrances to the area to be treated. Signs will be put up immediately prior to pesticide use and will remain in place at least until the operation is completed (where the pesticide label, permit or Pesticide Control Order requires a longer period of signage, this will be followed).

Where a body other than the Council is responsible for management of a public building or facility that requires the application of a pesticide, the other body will be responsible for notifying the public of its use of pesticides and the Council will not provide notification in relation to this land.

Special measures for sensitive places

The Regulation defines a sensitive place to be any:

- School, pre-school or kindergarten
- Childcare centre
- Hospital
- Community health centre
- Nursing home
- Other category of place declared to be a sensitive public place by the Environment Protection Authority by notice in the NSW Government Gazette.

For pesticide use within 150 metres of any sensitive places Council will provide prior or concurrent notice to that sensitive place by phone, door-knocking or letterbox drop, depending on what is practicable.

Notification of emergency pesticide applications

In cases where emergency pesticide applications are required to deal with biting or dangerous pests such as wasps, bees, venomous spiders, fleas, bird mites or rodents (that pose an immediate health hazard), signs will be placed on site. Additional information will also be available at the Council office or via the contact number on the sign. Signs will be put up immediately prior to pesticide use and will remain in place until the operation is completed (where the pesticide label, permit or Pesticide Control Order requires a longer period of signage, this will be followed).

Where broad-scale spraying is required at short notice (e.g. locust control) and public notification is not possible, special precautions will be taken to prevent the public encountering pesticides e.g. closure of camping grounds or walking tracks.

Pesticide contractors

To assist its compliance with this plan, where the Council uses professional contractors to apply pesticides on its behalf, it will require a written commitment that they will comply with the PUNP and all other legislative requirements.

Circumstances where Council will not provide any notification

Council will not provide notification in any of the following public places:

- Public places over which persons or organisations hold an existing lease on the land. For these places, the lessee will be required to carry out notification.
- Public places that have been closed temporarily to the public where the closure is unrelated to the pesticide use.
- Remote areas where there is little likelihood of them being encountered by the public e.g. areas where there is no vehicular access and low public visitation.

In addition, Council will not provide notification for the following pesticide uses in any of the public places it controls or owns where:

- Pesticides are used in small quantities and readily available at retail outlets to the general public for the control of pests for which they are registered.

Example 1: handheld spray bottle or backpack spraying not exceeding 1 litre of concentrate of herbicide per operator per job.

Example 2: minor control of indoor and outdoor pests using baits or hand-held aerosols.

Information provided in the notice

In accordance with clause 41 of the Regulation, the following information will be available from site signs/notices or by contacting the phone number listed on such signs/notices and from the Council office:

- The full product name of the pesticide as it is listed on the label
- The purpose of the application
- The proposed date, dates or date range of the pesticide application
- The place/places of pesticide use
- The contact telephone number of an officer from the Council
- Any warnings regarding re-entry to the place of application specified on the product label or the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) permit for use.

All of the information listed above will be available through the Council office. At a minimum the site signs/notices will indicate that a pesticide will be/is being applied and provide a phone number for the Council office. Signs/notices may be required to provide additional information as directed by the pesticide label, permit or Pesticide Control Order. In all cases the operator will also be able to provide all of the above information.

How the community will be informed of this plan

Copies of the PUNP will be available at the Wagga Wagga City Council Civic Centre Offices (Corner of Baylis & Morrow Street Wagga Wagga, NSW 2650). The PUNP can also be downloaded from the Council website (www.wagga.nsw.gov.au).

Future reviews of the PUNP

Unless there is a specific need for an earlier review, this notification plan will be reviewed after five years. Public consultation on any proposed changes will be undertaken if required as in accordance with clauses 42 and 44 of the Regulation.

Contact details

Anyone wishing to contact the Council regarding the notification plan or to obtain details of specific pesticide applications in lands managed by Council should, in the first instance, contact the Council directly.

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