



GLYPHOSATE

INFORMATION NOTE – AUGUST 2018

It is the policy of the Welsh Government to reduce to the lowest possible level the effect of pesticide use on people, wildlife, plants and environment while making sure pests, diseases and weeds are effectively controlled. All pesticide products available in the UK have to meet strict regulatory standards to ensure they do not pose a threat to human or animal health and the environment. The regulatory authorities undertake ongoing scientific research to make sure such chemicals are safe to use and have no long-lasting effect on the environment.

Glyphosate is the active substance in many herbicides and is widely used around the world. All pesticide active substance approvals are subject to periodic review and the approval of glyphosate has recently gone through this process. In November 2017, the European Union re-approved the continuing use of glyphosate from 16 December 2017. Reviews of the scientific data by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the European Chemicals Agency's Committee for Risk Assessment have found no safety concerns that would prevent continuing approval, and UK scientists agree with this assessment. The new approval lasts until 15 December 2022; use beyond that date would be subject to a further decision.

Risks associated with the use of pesticides in amenity areas, such as parks, is specifically considered as part of the authorisation process. Legally enforceable conditions of use are imposed on the way products can be applied to ensure the public are not exposed to levels of pesticides that would harm health or have unacceptable effects on the environment.

Pesticides in amenity areas should be used responsibly and only as part of an integrated programme of control. They can help deliver substantial benefits for society which include: management of conservation areas, invasive species and flood risks; access to high quality sporting facilities; and safe public spaces (for example, by preventing weed growth on hard surfaces creating trip hazards), industrial sites and transport infrastructure.

In regards to glyphosate use for controlling invasive non-native plant species you may wish to note recent research undertaken by Swansea University examining the physical and chemical control of Japanese knotweed. These were the largest field trials of their kind ever undertaken worldwide. Initial [results were published](#) earlier this year. Though no control treatment delivered complete eradication of Japanese knotweed glyphosate applied at an appropriate dose, phenological stage and level of coverage was found to be the most effective control treatment. They made a recommendation for stakeholders to discontinue the use of other widely used herbicides for control of Japanese knotweed and unnecessary physical control methods that add equipment and labour costs and increase environmental impacts, without improving control compared to spraying alone.

The Welsh Government works with industry bodies and others to promote best practice in vegetation and weed management in the amenity sector. We support the work of the [Amenity Forum](#) in promoting the importance of sustainable pesticide use and developing user practice so that all amenity pesticide users are operating to consistently high standards. We strongly encourage engagement with the Amenity Forum, particularly at Local Authority level, so we can be assured that amenity pesticide users in Wales are conforming to the standards expected under the UK [National Action Plan for the Sustainable Use of Pesticides](#) and EU law. The Amenity Forum's main objective is to be the collective body representing the amenity industry, in relation to pesticide use and weed and pest control within the sector. To deliver on this, the Forum has developed a number of activities which include issuing [guidance notes](#) to support 'Best Practice' messages, organising conferences and workshops and working closely with the Chemicals Regulation Division of the Health and Safety Executive to ensure the amenity sector meets the requirements of the Nation Action Plan.

Please find below information from the [Health and Safety Executive website](#) regarding obligations tailored for those in the amenity sector using professional pesticide products.

Those who use, or cause or permit others to apply, plant protection products or who store and/or dispose of products are subject to a number of legal requirements. Key points to note are:

- Use of plant protection products should be considered as part of an integrated programme of control. The [Amenity Forum](#) provides practical advice on how this can be done.
- Anyone who applies pesticides as part of their professional activities must (including those previously operating under grandfather rights) hold a [recognised specified training certificate](#).
- All those purchasing professional plant protection products must reasonably believe that products are used by someone holding a specified certificate.
- All application equipment, except knapsacks and hand-held, must possess a certificate demonstrating that it has passed an officially recognised test conducted by the [National Sprayer Testing Scheme](#). Equipment has to be tested on either a three, five or six yearly basis thereafter depending on when the most recent test was conducted and the type of equipment. All equipment must be calibrated on a regular basis.
- Users, or those who cause or permit use, must ensure that: all reasonable precautions are taken to protect human health and the environment; applications are confined to target areas; and in certain areas (including public spaces and conservation areas) that the amount used and frequency of use is as low as reasonably practicable.
- Priority is given to particular products where there are risks to water quality.
- Professional users and distributors take all reasonable precautions to ensure handling, storage and disposal operations do not endanger human health or the environment.
- Storage areas are constructed in such a way as to prevent unwanted releases of products.