



BELLINGEN
SHIRE COUNCIL

Pesticide Use Notification Plan

September 2023

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1. Introduction

This pesticide use notification plan (the plan) has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Pesticides Regulation 2017* (the Regulation). The plan details how Bellingen Shire Council (Council) will notify the community of the use of pesticides in any public place it owns or controls.

The plan describes the methods of communication Council will utilise to notify members of the community of pesticide applications it makes or allows to be made to public places that it owns or controls.

It describes:

- what public places are covered by the plan
- who is most likely to use or access these public places and an estimate of the level of use
- how and by what means the Council will provide the community with information about pesticide applications within lands it owns or controls
- how the community will be informed of the notification arrangements contained in the plan
- how often future reviews of the plan will be conducted
- contact details for anyone wishing to discuss pesticide use and notification with Council

Council applies pesticides in a range of circumstances to manage pests in public places. When implementing works in outdoor public places, including weed control works, Council utilises a 'toolbox' of management options. These include spraying and stem injection with appropriate pesticides at approved rates, mechanical methods, manual removal techniques, biological controls, and other bush regeneration techniques.

Council considers and uses alternative methods (e.g. biological controls) to pesticide application where appropriate; where methods are proven to be successful and are cost effective.

2. Public places covered by this plan

Council will use and allow the use of pesticides in the following categories of outdoor public places that it owns or controls in the Bellingen Shire:

- public parks, gardens, and reserves
- outer perimeter of playgrounds
- picnic areas
- sporting fields and ovals
- road verges and reserves
- laneways and pathways
- easements accessible to the public
- drains
- swimming pool grounds
- cemeteries
- waste depots
- Crown land
- interiors and exteriors of buildings

Council's estimate of the level of community use, regular user groups and types of pesticide used in each of these categories of public places is summarised in the following table.

Public places	Regular user groups	Level of use of public space	Type of pesticide use
Public Parks, Gardens and Reserves	General Public Community Groups Volunteer Groups Elderly	High	Spot Herbicide Spot Insecticide Broadscale Selective and Non-Selective Herbicide
Outer perimeter of Playgrounds	General Public Children Young Families Pregnant	High	Spot Herbicide Spot Insecticide
Picnic areas	General Public	High	Spot Herbicide

	Children Young Families Elderly Pregnant		Spot Insecticide
Sporting fields and ovals	Sporting clubs and associations General Public Community Groups Social Groups Schools Maintenance Volunteers Caretakers Section 355 Committees	High	Spot Herbicide Spot Insecticide Broadscale Selective and Non-Selective Herbicide Broadscale Insecticide
Road verges and reserves	General Public Cyclists Horse Riders Graziers	Medium to High for Urban based roads Low for rural roads	Spot Herbicide Spot Insecticide Broadscale Selective and Non-Selective Herbicide
Laneways and pathways	Local residents People who work in the area Visitors	Medium to High	Spot Herbicide Spot Insecticide Broadscale Selective and Non-Selective Herbicide
Easements accessible to the public (e.g. road, rail, water, sewer, electricity)	Local residents People who work in the area	Low to medium	Spot Herbicide Spot Insecticide Broadscale Selective and Non-Selective Herbicide
Drains	Local residents living adjacent to the drain People who walk or drive past the drain	Low to medium	Spot Herbicide Spot Insecticide Broadscale Selective and Non-Selective Herbicide
Swimming pool grounds	Sporting Groups General public Children Families	High	Spot Herbicide Spot Insecticide
Cemeteries	General Public Staff Contractors Elderly	Medium	Spot Herbicide Spot Insecticide Broadscale Selective and Non-Selective Herbicide
Waste Depots	General Public Staff Contractors	High	Spot Herbicide Spot Insecticide Broadscale Selective and Non-Selective Herbicides
Crown land	General public	Low to High	Spot Herbicide Spot Insecticide Broadscale Selective and Non-Selective Herbicides
Interiors and exteriors of public buildings	General Public Staff Volunteers Community groups	High	Spot Herbicide Spot Insecticide Spot use of insecticides Bait rodenticides Spray termiticides

			Spray ant control Bait termiticides Bait ant control Bait bird control
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Note: Spot herbicides include cut and paint and stem injection methods.

3. Notification Arrangements

This section of the plan describes how and when Bellingen Shire Council will provide notice of pesticide use in public places, including special measures for sensitive places that are adjacent to public places, arrangements for emergency pesticide applications and circumstances where notice will not be given.

These notification requirements are based on Bellingen Shire Council’s assessment of:

- The level of usage of public places where pesticides are to be applied
- The extent to which members of the public that are most likely to be sensitive to pesticides and are likely to use these areas regularly
- The extent of activities that may be undertaken within public places that may raise the potential for the public to come in direct contact with pesticides (such as picnic areas where food is to be consumed; children groups coming in contact with pesticide in playgrounds / ovals; sporting and other recreational activities that result in contact with the ground, thus increasing the potential for contact with pesticides)
- The types of pesticides to be used within public areas
- The application techniques used and the subsequent likelihood of public contact

3.1. How notice of pesticide use will be provided

Because of the large number of public places managed by Council, the range of pest species and the range of pesticides for their control, it is not possible for all uses of pesticides to be specified in this plan. Therefore, it is important that members of the public who wish to avoid places where pesticides have been used recently contact Council for further details.

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

- Signage during application
- Information on Council’s website and/or social media channels
- Public notices in newspapers
- Letters or letterbox drops
- Email
- Door knocking
- Phone contact
- Signs on access doors

3.2. When notice of pesticide use will be provided

3.2.1. Outdoor recreation areas

The notification arrangements described below will apply to the following public place categories owned or controlled by Council within the LGA:

- Public parks and gardens
- Outer perimeter of playgrounds
- Picnic areas
- Sporting fields, ovals, and related sporting facilities
- Swimming pools

For these 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 application 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.

Notification of planned pesticide application will be provided to the general community through Council's website ('Pesticide Use Notification' updated every three months).

3.2.2. Outdoor public thoroughfares and certain easements accessible to the public

The notification arrangements described below will apply to the following public place categories owned or controlled by Council within the LGA:

- Road shoulders, verges, road reserves and footpaths
- Laneways and pathways
- Road, sewer, and electricity easements accessible to the public
- Drains
- Crown Lands

For these outdoor public places, information will be available to the general community through Council's website ('Pesticide Use Notification' updated every 3 months). Signs will be provided to the general community near the application area or main entrance during the application and remain until the completion of the application.

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

For roads and reserves, signs will be erected where a significant area has been treated by broadscale herbicide application with a herbicide that has a withholding period, which may impact produce including livestock. The signage displayed will state the day control was carried out, herbicide used and the Council contact number.

3.2.3. Interiors of public buildings

For interiors of buildings owned or controlled by Council, signs will be provided near the application area or main entrance at least 24 hours prior to application and remain for at least 24 hours afterwards for the following pesticide uses:

- Spot use of insecticides
- Bait rodenticides
- Spray termiticides
- Spray ant control

Information for the general community will be posted on Council's website ('Pesticide Use Notification' updated every 3 months) about the above applications and on the following pesticide uses in the above council buildings:

- Bait termiticides
- Bait ant control
- Bait bird control

In addition, 5 days prior notice of all programmed pesticide use in Council childcare facilities will be given to operators of the facilities.

3.2.4. Special measures for sensitive places

Clause 39 of the Regulation defines a sensitive place to be any:

- school, pre-school, kindergarten, or childcare centre
- hospital, community health centre, or nursing home
- place declared to be a sensitive place by the Environment Protection Authority by order published in the Gazette

The EPA requires that at least 5 working days advance notice is given to neighbouring sensitive places when pesticides are applied by outdoor spraying within 20 metres of a common boundary (NSW EPA 2021).

For non-emergency reactive pesticide use in outdoor public places next to sensitive places, Council will provide notice to the occupier in person or by phone, email or by placing the notice in the person's letter box.

If a pesticide must be used to deal with an emergency in an outdoor public place that is adjacent to a sensitive place, a pesticide use notice will be given immediately before in person or by phone, email or by placing the notice in the person's letter box.

3.2.5. Notification of emergency pesticide applications

In cases where emergency pesticide application in public places is 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), notification in person or through a letter, email or phone call will be provided to adjacent landholders immediately before the carrying out of the work.

3.2.6. Pesticide contractors and lessees of public places

Where Council uses contractors to apply pesticides on its behalf, the contractor is responsible for ensuring that notification is made in accordance with the notification requirements of this plan. The contractor may request Council assist with this responsibility. The Council staff member responsible for engaging the contractor is to ensure that information pertaining to the application of the pesticide will be available to the general community on Council's website.

On Council owned or controlled lands that remain a public place, over which persons or organisations hold an existing lease, Council will not provide notification of pesticide use. However, Council will require the lessee/s to comply with the notification requirements in accordance with this Pesticide Use Notification Plan.

Pesticide records need to be completed as soon as practicable after the use of the pesticide and no later than 48 hours after application and retained for 3 years.

3.2.7. Prevailing weather conditions

Prevailing weather conditions will be checked prior to applications and recorded in the pesticide use records (where required by label or permit). Pesticides will not be applied in unsuitable weather conditions as described on the label or permit.

4. Information that will be provided

In accordance with clause 41.1(h) of the Regulation, notice of pesticide use will include the following information:

- the full product name of the pesticide to be used
- the purpose for which the pesticide is to be used
- the proposed date/s or date range the pesticide is to be used
- the places where the pesticide is to be used
- any warnings regarding re-entry to or use of the place of application specified on the approved label or the permit for the use of the pesticide
- contact telephone number or email address for the Council officer who people can contact to discuss the notice

5. When notice of pesticide use in public places will not be provided

Council uses small quantities of some pesticides that are widely available in retail outlets and ordinarily used for domestic purposes (including home gardening). Council does not intend to provide notice for such pesticide applications other than by way of description in this plan (or general information on Council's website). This will apply to minor control of indoor and outdoor insect pests using baits or aerosol cans; and spot weed control using brush, wand or handheld spray bottle (e.g. for stem injection and cut and paint work), or backpack spraying not exceeding 1 litre of concentrate of herbicide per operator per day.

Where pesticide application, not exceeding 1 litre of concentrate of herbicide per operator per day, is carried out by operators using a mobile machine such as a mower, notification will be provided by signage located on the machine.

Notice will not be provided at the following prescribed public places:

- Areas deemed 'remote'. These are areas where there is little likelihood pesticide use will affect the public directly, i.e. areas with no vehicular access or low public visitation
- Where pesticide is applied by community groups or contractors working on public land such as Landcare and Dunecare, where application is equivalent to domestic use

6. How the community will be informed of this plan

Bellingen Shire Council will advise residents of this plan and its contents by:

- making a copy of the plan available for viewing, free of charge, at its main office at 33 Hyde St Bellingen
- placing a copy of the plan on its website www.bellingen.nsw.gov.au
- placing a notice in the NSW Government Gazette

7. Future reviews of this plan

The notification plan will be reviewed every five (5) years or when circumstances require a review of the plan.

The review will include:

- placing the plan and any amendments on public exhibition and calling for submissions by the community and public
- recommendation for alterations (if applicable) to the plan

8. Contact details

Anyone wishing to contact Bellingen Shire Council to discuss the notification plan or to obtain details of pesticide applications in public places should contact:

The General Manager

PO Box 117 Bellingen NSW 2454

Ph: (02) 6655 7300

Email: council@bellingen.nsw.gov.au

Web: www.bellingen.nsw.gov.au