

BELLINGEN SHIRE COUNCIL

PESTICIDE USE NOTIFICATION PLAN

NOVEMBER 2014

**Bellingen Shire
COUNCIL**



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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 2009* (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. Council ensures that where appropriate pesticides are applied to public places by suitably qualified persons in a safe and responsible manner, minimising risk to the community or environment.

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 in order to manage pests in public places. When implementing works in outdoor public places, including weed control works, Council considers a holistic and integrated approach and therefore utilises a ‘toolbox’ of management options. These include spraying and stem injection with appropriate herbicides at approved rates, mechanical machinery, 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 proposes to use or 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 PLACE	TYPE OF PESTICIDE USE
Public Parks, Gardens and Reserves	General Public Community Groups Volunteer Groups	High	Spot Herbicide Spot Insecticide Broad Scale Selective and Non Selective Herbicide
Outer perimeter of Playgrounds	General Public Children Young Families	High	Spot Herbicide Spot Insecticide
Picnic areas	General Public Children Young Families	High	Spot Herbicide 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 Broad Scale Selective and Non Selective Herbicide Broad Scale 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 Broad Scale Selective and Non Selective Herbicide
Laneways and pathways	Local residents People who work in the area Visitors walking or driving	Medium to High	Spot Herbicide Spot Insecticide Broad Scale 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 Broad Scale Selective and Non Selective Herbicide
Drains	Local residents living adjacent to the drain Local residents who walk past or drive past the drain	Low to medium	Spot Herbicide Spot Insecticide Broad Scale Selective and Non Selective Herbicide
Swimming pool grounds	Sporting Groups General public	High	Spot Herbicide Spot Insecticide

	Children Families		
Cemeteries	General Public Staff Contractors	Medium	Spot Herbicide Spot Insecticide Broad Scale Selective and Non Selective Herbicide
Waste Depots	General Public Staff Contractors	High	Spot Herbicide Spot Insecticide Broad Scale Selective and Non Selective Herbicides
Crown land	General public	Low to High	Spot Herbicide Spot Insecticide Broad Scale 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

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 level of usage of public places where pesticides are to be applied.
- The types of pesticides to be used within public areas.
- For some application techniques, the public is unlikely to encounter pesticides e.g. Bush regeneration programs using cut-and-paint or stem injection methods.

3.1 How and when 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 detailed uses of pesticides to be specified in this plan. Therefore it is important for members of the public who

wish to avoid places where pesticides have been used recently, contact Council and ask staff for further details.

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

- Signage during application (Signs put up by Council are often removed or subjected to vandalism. While Council will make every effort to replace signs removed or vandalised it cannot guarantee that this will occur in all situations).
- Information on Council's website (which will describe programmed, reactive and emergency pesticide use in public places)
- Public notices in newspapers
- Letters or Letterbox drops
- Email or fax
- Door knocking
- Phone contact
- Public announcement via radio

3.2 Pesticide sensitive register

Council will allow persons and organisations to nominate to have their details placed on a central register which would allow them to be notified of certain types of pesticide uses in particular places, as described in this section of this plan. Council will also notify local medical practitioners in the Shire of the pesticide sensitive register.

Community members can nominate themselves as pesticide sensitive by emailing Council at council@bellingen.nsw.gov.au, or registering via Council's website.

Where reasons for nomination are environmentally based, rather than chemically sensitive individuals, the area will be assessed for appropriate alternatives for weed control and a management approach agreed with landholders to ensure required weed management works are completed.

3.3 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 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 and on Council's website.

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

- Weed control works completed by cut and paint or stem injection methods, used as a very specific/controlled application.
- 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 and low public visitation
- Where pesticide is applied by community groups working on public land such as Landcare and Dunecare, where application is equivalent to domestic use.

3.4 When notice of pesticide use will be provided

3.4.1 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.

Where any of the above pesticide uses occur adjacent to sensitive places the occupiers will be provided with 48 hours prior targeted notice by phone, mail or letterbox drop (whichever is most practicable).

For sporting fields, ovals and related sporting facilities, sporting groups and occupiers of sensitive places who register interest with Council can also receive notice of the above pesticide use by email at least 48 hours prior to application.

Notification of planned pesticide application will be provided to the general community through advertisements in the Bellinger Courier Sun and Don Dorrigo Gazette in the week prior to application, and on Council's website (updated every three months) about the forward program for the above applications, and on the following pesticide uses in outdoor recreation areas:

- spot herbicides
- spot insecticides
- bait ant control

3.4.2 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 advertisements in the Bellinger Courier Sun and Don Dorrigo Gazette in the week prior to application, and on Council's website (updated every 3 months) about the forward program for broadscale selective and non-selective herbicide use. 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.

Information on the programmed and reactive spot use of herbicides will also be posted on Council's website every three months. Where programmed spot herbicide applications occur on outdoor public thoroughfares and the above easements, within 20 metres of a sensitive place, and/or parties who register with Council, prior notice by telephone, mail or letterbox drop will be provided at least 5 working days beforehand.

Notice will not be given where occupiers of properties adjacent to Council public places use pesticides on parts of these public places near their properties.

3.4.3 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 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

3.4.4 Special measures for sensitive places

Clause 18 of the Regulation defines a sensitive place to be any:

- school or pre-school
- kindergarten
- childcare centre
- hospital
- community health centre
- nursing home
- place declared to be a sensitive place by the Environment Protection Authority.

Special notification measures for programmed pesticide use in outdoor public places adjacent to sensitive places for each category of public place have already been noted.

For non-emergency reactive pesticide use in outdoor public places next to sensitive places, Council will provide concurrent notice shortly before use to the occupier by phone, door-knock or letterbox drop, depending upon what is practicable.

If a pesticide must be used to deal with an emergency in an outdoor public place that is adjacent to a sensitive place, Council will organise a door-knock in that sensitive place, preferably at least 30 minutes before, so people are aware that a pesticide is about to be used to deal with a dangerous pest infestation.

3.4.5 Notification of emergency pesticide applications

In cases where emergency pesticide applications in public places 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), notification through a letter, door knocking or phone call will be provided to adjacent landholders.

3.4.6 Pesticide contractors and leasees 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 to 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.

4. WHAT INFORMATION WILL BE PROVIDED

In accordance with clause 20(1)(h) of the *Pesticides Regulation 2009*, notice of pesticide use will include the following information:

- the full product name of the pesticide to be used, and
- the purpose of the use, clearly setting out what pest or pests are being treated, and
- the proposed date/s or date range of the pesticide use, and
- the places where the pesticide is to be used, and
- contact telephone number and email address of the Council officer who people can contact to discuss the notice, and
- any warnings regarding re-entry to or use of the place of application specified on the product label or the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority permit.

5. 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 33-39 Hyde St Bellingen.
- placing a copy of the plan on its website www.bellingen.nsw.gov.au
- placing a notice in the Bellinger Courier Sun and Don Dorrigo Gazette.
- placing a notice in the NSW Government Gazette

6. FUTURE REVIEWS OF THE 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/general public
- recommendation for alterations (if applicable) to the plan

7. 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:

Carmen Muldoon
Invasive Plants Officer
PO Box 117 Bellingen NSW 2454
Ph: 66557300
Email: council@bellingen.nsw.gov.au
Web: www.bellingen.nsw.gov.au