



Hunter's Hill Council's use of herbicides

Hunter's Hill Council understands community concern over the use of herbicide in light of recent news coverage around the USA civil law suit connected to 'Round Up', a commonly used herbicide.

The following fact sheet provides information on current use and strategies in relation to the use of herbicide in the local community.

What is glyphosate?

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) defines glyphosate as a weed killer which works on a wide variety of leafy weeds. It doesn't distinguish one from another, and it works best after the seed has sprouted.

Are glyphosate products safe to use?

Glyphosate is registered for use in Australia by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA). The APVMA advise that products containing glyphosate can be used safely in accordance with directions on the label.

Glyphosate is also registered for use throughout the world and current regulatory assessment is that it does not pose a risk to humans when used according to the label instructions.

Why does Hunter's Hill Council use herbicides?

Council workers apply herbicides containing glyphosate for the purpose of weed control. Weed control is essential for the management of our local waterways, biodiversity, property and assets and our natural and built environments.

How is health and safety of Council workers and the community monitored?

The health and safety of Council workers and the community is taken very seriously and Council ensures that responsible practices are in place for the safe use of herbicides whilst protecting the environment.

Council staff who apply pesticides are appropriately trained in accordance with the requirements of the Pesticides Act 1999 and application occurs in accordance with directions on the label.

What are 'label instructions'?

All chemical products have instructions for safety and use on the label. The labels on glyphosate products provide practical information on how to use the product safely. Following the directions maximises the product's effectiveness and minimises risks of exposure to the chemical.

Are areas which have been treated with glyphosate safe for children and animals?

The APVMA advises that products containing glyphosate are safe to use in areas which will be later used by people and animals provided the label instructions are followed. Employees using these chemicals will be monitored by their supervisor to ensure compliance. The label instructions will tell you how long people or animals should avoid an area that has been treated.

Can products containing glyphosate still be sold in Australia?

Products containing glyphosate are legal to sell in Australia, provided they are registered with the APVMA.

Can local councils and contractors still use glyphosate products?

Provided the products are registered with the APVMA and they are used according to the label instructions it is advised that councils and contractors can use glyphosate products.

How do I know if pesticides are being used in our local parks and bushland?

Application of any herbicides within a public area is notified in accordance with Council's Pesticide Use Notification Plan (which includes herbicides, insecticides and algacides). This plan is approved by the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

In addition, herbicide application within waterways is undertaken in accordance with an Environment Protection Licence (EPL) issued and regulated by the EPA.

If you are concerned, you should make sure you look out for any pesticide notification signs when entering a park or bushland in the Hunters Hill Municipality. Notices are placed at the entrances to our parks on the day of spraying, immediately prior to pesticide application and remain in place until the park is reopened for public use later that day. The public is requested not to use the parks on the day that the pesticide is applied.

What steps are being taken to ensure community and staff safety?

- Seeking alternative methods where possible. As is the case in most councils in Australia, Hunter's Hill Council uses glyphosate within our parks. This is done in conjunction with other non-chemical techniques such as hand weeding wherever possible in parks and bushland.

- Regularly conducting risk assessments and reviewing our controls. We will continue to seek advice and keep the public updated. This will be done as part of our review process.
- Ensuring staff preparing and using chemicals are sufficiently trained and equipped with personal protective equipment.
- Ensuring any areas such as parks and bush being sprayed are barricaded effectively and the community informed to ensure that all children, adults and animals visiting these areas are kept safe from chemical exposure at all times.

More information?

Further information regarding the perceived health concerns associated with the use of glyphosate can be found on the [APVMA website](#)

APVMA Fact Sheet: [APVMA Glyphosate Safety and Use Fact Sheet August 2019](#)

SafeWork NSW Fact Sheet: <https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/resource-library/hazardous-chemicals/be-aware-glyphosate-and-organophosphates-fact-sheet>