

ILLAWARRA DISTRICT WEEDS AUTHORITY

PESTICIDES NOTIFICATION PLAN

AREA OF OPERATION

Local Government Areas of Wollongong City, Shellharbour City and Kiama Municipal Council.

PLAN PERIOD

Start Date: 1 September 2021

Completion Date: 31 August 2026

1. DEFINITION

A pesticide is any substance or combination of substances used to destroy, suppress or alter the life cycle of any pest. These include herbicides, insecticides, fungicides and rodenticides.

For the purposes of this plan the Illawarra District Weeds Authority (IDWA) will only be applying herbicides to control priority weeds on member council controlled public lands.

2. INTRODUCTION

This Notification Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Pesticides Regulation 2017.

The aim of this Plan is to meet the community's general right to know about pesticide applications made to public places that are controlled or owned by the constituent member councils of the Illawarra District Weeds Authority (IDWA) – namely Wollongong City, Shellharbour City and Kiama Municipal Council. The Plan allows members of the community to take action to avoid contact with pesticides, if they wish. It does not mean that the community is at any greater risk or harm from pesticides. The IDWA ensures that pesticides are applied to public places in a safe, responsible manner, without harm to the community or the environment.

Throughout this plan, references to the "IDWA" should be taken to mean the IDWA carrying out priority weed control functions on behalf of the constituent councils of Wollongong City, Shellharbour City and Kiama Municipal Council.

The Plan sets out how the IDWA will notify members of the community of any pesticide applications made by its staff to public places. It describes:

- what public places are covered by the Plan;
- who regularly uses these public places and an estimate of the level of use;
- how and when the IDWA will provide the community with information about its pesticide applications (i.e. what notification arrangements will be used);
- how the community will be informed of the notification arrangements contained in the Plan;

- how future reviews of the Plan will be conducted; and
- contact details for anyone wishing to discuss pesticide notification with the IDWA.

The IDWA is committed to reducing its impact on the environment in all areas of its operations including its ongoing maintenance program. The IDWA only uses herbicides in its operations program to control priority weeds as defined under the Biosecurity Act 2015, Biosecurity Regulation 2017 and Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan. In its use of herbicides the IDWA, wherever possible, only uses products that are proven to have minimal impact on the surrounding environment whilst remaining an effective pesticide. The IDWA ensures that only trained operators apply herbicides to public places in a safe and responsible manner.

3. PUBLIC PLACES COVERED BY THIS NOTIFICATION PLAN

This notification plan must describe where it operates and the categories of public places it covers. Public places include the following areas that the public is entitled to access:

- Parks and Gardens
- Public (Bushland) Reserves
- Playgrounds
- Sporting Fields and Ovals
- Road Verges
- Laneways and Pathways
- Drains and Easements
- Golf courses (owned or controlled by council)
- Caravan/Holiday Parks
- Cemeteries
- Swimming Pool Grounds

A public place also includes any other outdoor property that is leased out but the public is entitled to access.

3. WHO USES THESE PUBLIC PLACES

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

Table 1. Regular user groups, level of use of public places and type of pesticide used in public places controlled by the IDWA on behalf of its constituent councils.

| Public places | | Regular user groups | Level of use of public place | Type of pesticide use |
|--|-------|---|------------------------------|---|
| a) Parks and gardens | | General public (families, children, elderly people); recreational users; visitors to the area | Medium to high | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Spot Spraying Herbicides - Non-selective herbicides Selective herbicides • Broadscale selective herbicides |
| b) Public (bushland) reserves | | Volunteer community groups, general recreational users, visitors to the area | Low to medium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Spot Spraying Herbicides - Non-selective herbicides Selective herbicides • Broadscale non-selective herbicides •Broadscale selective herbicides |
| c) Playgrounds | | Children and young families | High | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Spot Spraying Herbicides- Selective herbicides |
| d) Sporting fields and ovals | | Sporting clubs and associations; school sports groups; general recreational users | High | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Spot Spraying Herbicides - Non-selective herbicides Selective herbicides • Broadscale selective herbicides |
| e) Road verges | Rural | Local residents | Low | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Spot Spraying Herbicides - Non selective herbicides Selective herbicides • Broadscale selective herbicides |
| | Urban | General public | High | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Spot Spraying Herbicides - Non selective herbicides Selective herbicides |
| f) Laneways and pathways | | Local residents; families; people who work in the area; visitors to the area | Medium to high | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Spot Spraying Herbicides– Non-selective herbicides |
| g) Drains and easements accessible to the public | | Local residents | Low to medium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Spot Spraying Herbicides – Non-selective herbicides Selective herbicides |

| Public places | Regular user groups | Level of use of public place | Type of pesticide use |
|--|---|------------------------------|--|
| h) Golf courses (owned or controlled by Council) | Members; community groups; general public | High | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spot Spraying Herbicides - Non-selective herbicides • Selective herbicides • Broadscale selective herbicides |
| i) Caravan/Holiday Parks | Visitors to the area; families | Low to High (seasonal) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spot Spraying Herbicides - Non-selective herbicides • Selective herbicides |
| j) Cemeteries | General public; visitors to the area | Medium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spot Spraying Herbicides – Non-selective herbicides • Selective herbicides |
| k) Swimming Pool Grounds | General public; visitors to the area | Low to high (seasonal) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spot Spraying Herbicides • Non-selective herbicides • Selective herbicides |

4 HOW AND WHEN NOTIFICATION WILL OCCUR

Whenever a pesticide is applied by IDWA staff to a public place as identified above notice will need to be made according to the notification process detailed below. All signage will either need to carry the information required by item 9 of this plan or be available by contacting the phone number listed on such signs.

These notification arrangements are based on the IDWA's consideration of the following matters:

- some areas have high visitor use (eg playgrounds, sporting fields) whilst other areas are less used by the general public (drains and easements, rural roads)
- some users may be more sensitive to pesticides than others
- some user groups are more likely to encounter pesticide use than others (i.e. golfer's vs motorists).
- the toxicity of pesticides varies.

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

- the erection or placement of signs
- by letters, email or phone contact
- doorknocking
- letterbox drops
- social media

The IDWA will respond to all reasonable requests for information made to the IDWA concerning herbicide usage by its staff.

Situations where no notification will be required are described in Section 6.

a) Parks and Gardens

At parks and gardens, signs will be prominently displayed on the spray vehicle. Additional information will also be available from the spray operator and via the contact number shown on the sign. Where information on the spray vehicle may not be readily visible to regular users of the public place additional signage will be placed on site at the park or garden.

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 order specifies a longer period of signage, this will be followed).

Where Parks are to be treated with a broadscale pesticide application, the IDWA will take the additional step of restricting access to the spray area for the duration of the operation.

b) Public (Bushland) Reserves

At public (bushland) reserves, signs will be prominently displayed on the spray vehicle. Additional information will also be available from the spray operator and via the contact number shown on the sign. Where information on the spray vehicle may not be readily visible to regular users of the public place additional signage will be placed on site at the bushland reserve.

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 order specifies a longer period of signage, this will be followed).

Where Public reserves are to be treated with a broadscale pesticide application, the IDWA will take the additional step of restricting access to the spray area for the duration of the operation.

c) Playgrounds

Playgrounds will be closed prior to any pesticide use (including use situations detailed in Section 5) but only where that Pesticide use occurs within 10m of children's playground equipment. This closure does not apply to the rest of the park or reserve in which a playground is situated.

Signs will be prominently displayed at the main entrances to the playground to be treated and on the spray vehicle. Additional information will also be available from the spray operator and via the contact number shown on the signs.

Signs will be put up immediately prior to pesticide use and will remain in place at least until the product is dry and the playground re-opened for public use (where the pesticide label, permit or order specifies a longer period of signage, this will be followed).

d) Sporting Fields and Ovals

At sporting fields and ovals, signs will be prominently displayed on the spray vehicle. Additional information will also be available from the spray operator and via the contact number shown on the sign. Where information on the spray vehicle may not be readily visible to regular users of the public place additional signage will be placed on site at the sporting field or oval.

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 order specifies a longer period of signage, this will be followed).

Where sporting fields or ovals are to be treated with a broadscale pesticide application, the IDWA will take the additional step of advising by letter, email or phone, all associations / user groups who have booked use of the space, five (5) days prior to the application of the pesticide to the designated field or oval.

e) Council Laneways and Pathways

Along public laneways and pathways signs will be prominently displayed on the spray vehicle. Additional information will also be available from the spray operator and via the contact number shown 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 order specifies a longer period of signage, this will be followed).

f) Council Drains and Easements

When the IDWA is applying pesticides over council controlled easements and drains signs will be prominently displayed on the spray vehicle. Additional information will also be available from the spray operator and via the contact number shown 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 order specifies a longer period of signage, this will be followed).

g) Road Shoulders and Verges

Rural Roads -Whenever a pesticide is applied by IDWA staff to a road shoulder or verge on rural roads that are owned or maintained by Council, notice will be provided by prominently displaying signage on the spray vehicle.

Urban Roads - Whenever a pesticide is applied by IDWA staff to a road shoulder or verge on urban roads that are owned or maintained by Council, notice will be provided by prominently displaying signage on the spray vehicle.

In both situations additional information will also be available from the spray operator and via the contact number shown 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 order specifies a longer period of signage, this will be followed).

h) Golf Courses

Whenever a pesticide is applied by IDWA staff to a council controlled or owned public golf course, notice will be provided by prominently displaying signage in the pro shop (the Golf Course superintendent will ensure that signs are permanently displayed within the Pro Shop area outlining the spray program and pesticides to be used) and on the spray vehicle. Additional information will also be available from the Golf Course superintendent, the spray operator and via the contact number shown on the sign.

Signs will be put up immediately prior to pesticide use and will remain in place at least until the product is dry and the operation is completed (where the pesticide label, permit or order specifies a longer period of signage, this will be followed).

Where golf courses are to be treated with a broadscale pesticide application, the IDWA will take the additional step of restricting access to the spray area for the duration of the operation.

i) Caravan/Holiday Parks

Whenever a pesticide is applied by IDWA staff to a public caravan/holiday park notice will be provided by prominently displaying signage outside the main office to the park and on the spray vehicle. Additional information will also be available from the Park manager, the spray operator and via the contact number shown on the sign.

Signs will be put up immediately prior to pesticide use and will remain in place at least until the product is dry and the operation is completed (where the pesticide label, permit or order specifies a longer period of signage, this will be followed).

j) Crematoriums and Cemeteries

At crematoriums and public cemeteries signs will be prominently displayed on the spray vehicle. Additional information will also be available from the spray operator and via the contact number shown 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 order specifies a longer period of signage, this will be followed).

k) Swimming Pool grounds

Whenever a pesticide is applied by IDWA staff to public swimming pool grounds notice will be provided by prominently displaying signage on site at the pool grounds and on the spray vehicle. Additional information will also be available from the pool manager, the spray operator and via the contact number shown on the sign.

Signs will be put up immediately prior to pesticide use and will remain in place at least until the product is dry and the operation is completed (where the pesticide label, permit or order specifies a longer period of signage, this will be followed).

5. PESTICIDE NOTIFICATION USING DRONE TECHNOLOGY

From time to time the IDWA may undertake a targeted control program on priority weeds using drone technology. This will primarily be used to help control heavy and inaccessible infestations of priority weeds on identified public reserves throughout the three member council areas. Where drone programs are undertaken the following notification process will be followed:

- at the beginning of the season notifying on member council social media platforms the proposed program so as to advise the general community of the IDWA annual drone based program
- letterbox dropping of residents immediately adjoining the proposed spray area. *
- directly advising local Councillors and other interested parties as identified, by post or email*.
- prominently displaying signs at the main entrance points to the control site. ^
- displaying pesticide details on the spray vehicle including a contact number; ^
- responding to all reasonable requests for information made directly to the IDWA.

* To be undertaken a minimum of 5 days prior to the proposed spray program.

^ To be undertaken during the application and removed when the control program is complete.

All public areas to be controlled for priority weeds using drone technology will be closed at least 1 hour prior to and during any pesticide application.

When application of a pesticide is to occur within 150m of a dwelling, school or factory premises or another public place, the IDWA must notify and obtain written consent from the occupier or person in charge of these places, prior to applying the pesticide within the 150m limit. Such notification will include all information specified in Section 8 of this plan. The IDWA must keep a record of the notification provided and a copy of the written consent from the occupier.

6. PESTICIDES AND USE SITUATIONS NOT COVERED BY THIS NOTIFICATION PLAN

Poisons scheduling is the system used to classify substances based on their potential health risk. The National Drugs and Poisons Schedule Committee assesses substances and lists those that are classified as poisons in the *Uniform Poisons Standard*. States then enforce this classification – the relevant legislation in NSW is the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1966.

There are four schedules applicable to pesticides:

1. Unscheduled substances are not considered poisons.
2. Schedule 5 (S5) poisons have low toxicity or a low concentration and pose only a low to moderate hazard.
3. Schedule 6 (S6) poisons have moderate to high toxicity and can cause injury if used inappropriately.
4. Schedule 7 (S7) poisons are substances with high to very high toxicity. There are restrictions on the purchase and use of S7 poisons.

For the purposes of this Notification Plan, notification will **not** be required to be provided in the use of the following pesticides or use situations:

- ***Any Unscheduled substance***

The heading on the product label indicates which poison schedule the pesticide belongs to. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) also contain this information.

This decision is based on the knowledge that Unscheduled substances pose very low health risk and when applied as per label directions should not pose any serious health or safety risk.

- ***Non spray methods***

The application of any pesticide by Cut-stump, Stem Injection or Basal Bark techniques.

- ***Small use situations***

Pesticides used in small quantities and readily available at retail outlets and applied by knapsack or hand held applicators, in aerosol cans and as small baits.

- ***Pesticide use by members of the public***

In some circumstances, members of the public may use pesticides to maintain public places such as laneways and pathways or whilst undertaking environmental remediation works in public reserves. Where the IDWA or the constituent member council allows such pesticide use notice will not be required.

- ***Emergency pesticide use***

In cases where emergency pesticide applications are required to deal with a dangerous pest infestation the IDWA will not be required to give notice. Such situations may include dealing with a rapidly invasive pest weed infestation. The IDWA will endeavour however to provide information on the pesticide application on request at its Kiama office and to the person applying the pesticide.

7. SPECIAL NOTIFICATION MEASURES FOR SENSITIVE PLACES.

This notification plan must separately state what notification arrangements will be in place to provide special protection where pesticides are used in public places that are adjacent to sensitive places. Clause 39 of the Pesticides Regulation 2017 defines a sensitive place to be any;

- school, pre school, kindergarten or childcare centre
- hospital
- community health centre
- nursing home, or
- any other place to be declared to be sensitive place by the Environment Protection Authority by notice in the NSW Government Gazette.

Under the amended Pesticides Regulation, pesticide use on any property **within 20 metres** of a common boundary with a sensitive place will require at least five working days' advance notice being given. This notice will be provided by:

- phone, email, letter box drops or post depending what is practicable.

This notification will occur at least five working days prior to the pesticide application process. Five days advance notification of sensitive places **will** also be required to be provided in the use of pesticides or use situations as identified under Section 5 of this Plan, with the exception of *Emergency Pesticide Use*. If a pesticide must be used to deal with an emergency in an outdoor public place that is within 20 metres of a sensitive place, the IDWA will organise a door knock of that sensitive place immediately prior to the pesticide application occurring.

Whenever a pesticide is applied by IDWA staff to any public place (as listed under Section 2 of this Notification Plan) adjacent to sensitive place, but outside the 20 metres common boundary, notice will be provided by:

- door-knocking or telephoning (depending on what is most practicable) the identified sensitive place immediately prior to the spraying being done and advising of the intended application.
- displaying pesticide details on the spray vehicle including a contact number during the application; and
- responding to all reasonable requests for information made directly to the IDWA

This notification will occur just prior to and during the application process. Notification of sensitive places will **not** be required to be provided in the use of pesticides or use situations as identified under Section 5 of this Plan, whenever such pesticide application occurs outside the 20 metre boundary.

8. ARRANGEMENTS GOVERNING PESTICIDE USE BY CONTRACTORS AND LESSEES OF PUBLIC PLACES

To assist with the compliance of this plan, where the IDWA uses contractors to apply pesticides on its behalf, it will ensure that notification is made in accordance with the notification requirements of this plan.. The IDWA will require contractors as a condition of their contract to comply with this plan.

The IDWA will not provide notification on public places over which persons or organisations hold an existing lease on council land. For these places the IDWA, will not provide notification of pesticide use, but will request the lessee to carry out notification of the lessee's pesticide use in a manner consistent with this plan. Where possible the IDWA in consultation with the relevant member council will require lessees, as a condition of their lease, to comply with this plan.

9. WHAT INFORMATION WILL BE PROVIDED?

In accordance with Clause 41 (1) (h) of the Pesticides Regulation 2017, the following information will be available from site signs/notices or by contacting the phone number listed on such signs and from the IDWA office.

- the full product name of the pesticide used as it is listed on the pesticide label;
- the purpose of the application, including the pest that is being treated;
- the date or date range that the pesticide will be applied;
- the place where the pesticide will be used
- product specific warnings regarding re-entry to the place of application as specified on the label or the APVMA permit for use (if appropriate); and
- contact telephone number for the IDWA

In all cases the spray operator will also be able to provide this information.

10. HOW THE COMMUNITY WILL BE INFORMED OF THIS PLAN

The IDWA will consult with the community on the draft Notification Plan, including the types of public places covered and the proposed notification methods. The draft Notification Plan will be placed on public display for 28 days at each of the constituent member council administration offices. A notice will be published on the Illawarra District Weeds Authority (IDWA) website. www.idnwa.com.au advising that the Plan has been prepared and is available for public comment. A copy of the draft Plan will also be available on the Illawarra District Weeds Authority (IDWA) website. www.idnwa.com.au

The IDWA will consider all comments from the community prior to finalising the Plan.

The IDWA will advise residents of the contents of the final Notification Plan by:

- Making a copy of the Plan available for public viewing at the IDWA administration building.
- Placing a copy of the Plan on the IDWA website; and
- Placing a notice in the NSW Government Gazette.

The IDWA must also notify the NSW Environment Protection Authority (NSW EPA) in writing that the plan has been finalised and whether or not the plan was prepared, exhibited and notified in accordance with the Pesticides Regulation 2017.

11. FUTURE REVIEWS OF THIS PLAN

The Notification Plan will be reviewed in five years. The review will include:

- Report on progress of implementing the Notification Plan;
- Public consultation on the notification methods outlined in the Notification Plan; and
- Recommendation for alterations (if applicable) to the Notification Plan.

12. CONTACT

Anyone wishing to contact the IDWA regarding the Notification Plan or to obtain details of specific details of pesticide applications in public places should contact:

David Pomery
Chief Weeds Officer
Illawarra District Weeds Authority
PO Box 148 Kiama 2533
Phone : 02 42331129
E-mail : dpomery@isjo.org.au