



Office of  
Environment & Heritage  
NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service



# **Pesticide Use Notification Plan**

**for NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service**

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# 1. Introduction

The *Pesticides Regulation 2009* (the Regulation) requires the development of a plan to notify the public about pesticide application in outdoor public places. This pesticide notification plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Regulation.

The aim of this plan is to meet the community's right to know about pesticide applications made to outdoor public places that are controlled or owned by the Chief Executive - Office of Environment and Heritage or the Minister administering the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*. The New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service (which is part of the Office of Environment and Heritage) assists the Chief Executive and the Minister in carrying out their functions with respect to the lands managed under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, such as national parks, nature reserves, historic sites, Aboriginal areas, state conservation areas and regional parks. In addition to this, there are number of joint managed lands between National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and local Aboriginal communities. Throughout this plan, references to 'NPWS' should be taken to mean the NPWS carrying out functions on behalf of the Chief Executive and the Minister.

The Pesticide Use Notification Plan (PUNP) allows members of the community to take action to avoid contact with pesticides, if they wish.

The PUNP sets out how the NPWS will notify the community of pesticide applications it makes in public places. The PUNP describes:

- what public places are covered by the PUNP
- who regularly uses these public places and an estimate of the level of use
- how and when NPWS will provide the community with information about its pesticide applications in public places (i.e. what notification arrangements will be used)
- how the community can access this plan and get more information about NPWS's notification arrangements
- contact details for anyone wanting more information on the PUNP
- special protection measures that will be taken if the pesticide is proposed to be used adjacent to a sensitive place
- the information that will be provided including product name and purpose for which it will be used.

NPWS manages an extensive system of more than 860 conservation areas that protect approximately 7.1 million hectares. Under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, NPWS has a statutory responsibility to manage these areas to conserve nature and places of cultural value. Hence, weed and pest control programs are a management priority for NPWS and pesticides are an essential component of many of these programs.

NPWS pest management programs aim to use best practice techniques i.e. methods that are target-specific, humane and cost-effective. This often requires an integration of a range of control methods. Biological control is used where effective agents are available. However, pesticides remain the main method of control for most pest species. For example, while considerable effort has been devoted to research aimed at developing fertility control for foxes, poisoning with pesticides such as 1080 and other registered or approved products remain the only effective methods for broad-area control.

Similarly, many biological control agents have been released to assist with controlling weeds, but herbicides remain an essential component of most weed control programs undertaken by NPWS e.g. bush regeneration application techniques such as cutting-and-painting or stem injection of woody weeds, foliar spot-spraying and aerial spraying.

NPWS uses pesticides when necessary to control weeds, pest animals and diseases, to protect public property and neighbouring lands from pest damage and to protect the uses of public places from nuisance or danger.

## **2. Public places covered by this plan**

NPWS applies or allows pesticides to be used in the following categories of outdoor public places it owns or controls in New South Wales to which the public is entitled to have access:

- national parks
- nature reserves
- karst conservation reserves
- State conservation areas
- community conservation areas
- regional parks
- NPWS managed Crown reserves
- Aboriginal areas
- historic sites and
- other areas of land connected with the management, maintenance or improvement of reserved lands e.g. access roads and depots.

Information about these places can be obtained at [www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au](http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au).

The majority of pesticide use by the NPWS consists of applying herbicides for weed control and the use of registered poison baits to control pest animals. Minor uses include but are not limited to applying insecticides to control certain insect pests, termiticides to protect buildings, fungicides to control pathogens, rodenticides to control rats and bird baits to control birds. The main user groups and types of pesticide use in each of the categories of public place 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 or owned by NPWS**

<b>Public places</b>	<b>Regular user groups</b>	<b>Level of use of public place</b>	<b>Type of pesticide use</b>
<b>Viewing and day use areas e.g. picnic areas, lookouts, beaches</b>	Day visitors, recreational users, employees and contractors	Highly variable and seasonal i.e. low to very high use*	Herbicides, insecticides including plant injection or spray and bait termiticides, fungicides and vertebrate baits including rodenticides and bird baits.
<b>Roads, trails and other vehicular tracks including verges</b>	Recreational users, neighbours, motorists, employees and contractors	Variable – low in remote areas but often high near urban areas	Herbicides, insecticides and vertebrate baits including rodenticides.
<b>Walking tracks and pathways</b>	Recreational users, day visitors, campers, employees and contractors	Variable – low in remote areas but often high near urban areas	Herbicides, insecticides and vertebrate baits including rodenticides.
<b>Camping grounds and caravan parks</b>	Individuals or groups staying for varying periods (days to weeks), employees and contractors	Variable and seasonal i.e. low to very high use*	Herbicides, insecticides such as spray and bait termiticides, fungicides and vertebrate baits including rodenticides and bird baits.
<b>Cultural heritage areas e.g. North Head Quarantine Station, Mt Grenfell Historic Site</b>	The general public including recreational users, Aboriginal community members, scientists and educational groups, employees and contractors, volunteer groups	The use of these sites is highly variable and seasonal i.e. low to very high use*	Herbicides, insecticides such as spray and bait termiticides, fungicides and vertebrate baits including rodenticides and bird baits.
<b>Playgrounds</b>	Day visitors including children and families; employees and contractors	Highly variable and seasonal i.e. low to very high use*	Some spot-spraying of herbicides and insecticides. Pesticide use in playgrounds is undertaken when they are not in use.

<b>Public places</b>	<b>Regular user groups</b>	<b>Level of use of public place</b>	<b>Type of pesticide use</b>
<b>Sporting fields and ovals</b>	Day users such as schools and sporting groups; employees and contractors	Seasonal – may be medium to high during relevant sporting season	Herbicides, insecticides such as spray and bait termiticides, fungicides and vertebrate baits.
<b>Electricity, telecommunications and pipeline easements</b>	The general public including recreational users, employees and contractors	Low to medium use	Broad-scale and spot use of herbicides, insecticides and vertebrate baits.
<b>Other areas</b>	The general public including recreational users, Aboriginal community members, scientists, volunteer groups and educational groups, employees and contractors	Use is highly variable and seasonal i.e. low to very high use*	Broad-scale and spot use of herbicides, insecticides, fungicides and vertebrate baits including rodenticides and bird baits.

\*Use of these public places peaks during weekends/holiday periods usually, when high to very high use occurs in places close to urban areas while less frequent use occurs in more remote areas.

### **3. Notification arrangements**

This section of the PUNP describes how and when NPWS (either through its staff or through its contractors) will provide notice of pesticide use in public places, including special measures for sensitive places, arrangements for emergency pesticide applications and circumstances where notice will not be given (including where the public place has been leased by NPWS to another party).

These notification requirements are based on NPWS' consideration of the following matters:

- some areas have high visitor use (e.g. picnic areas and camp grounds in areas visited frequently, popular reserves close to urban areas); other areas are rarely visited by the public (e.g. nature reserves in remote areas)
- some park users may be more sensitive to pesticides than others
- some park users may be more likely than others to encounter pesticides e.g. campers vs passing motorists
- for some application techniques, the public is unlikely to come into direct contact with pesticides e.g. bush regeneration programs using the cut-and-paint or stem injection techniques
- the toxicity of pesticides vary.

### 3.1 How and when notice of pesticide use will be provided

Because of the large number of reserves managed by NPWS, the range of potential pest species and the range of pesticides available for their control, it is not possible for all detailed uses of pesticides to be specified in this plan. Thus, it is important that park users who wish to avoid places where pesticides have been used recently, contact the local NPWS office responsible for that reserve or area of land and ask the staff for details (a list of offices is available on the NPWS website).

Pesticide use is subject to suitable conditions (e.g. weather) but wherever possible information on pesticide use available from the local NPWS office will give at least three days' notice of planned pesticide use and current information for pesticides that have to be applied at short notice. Information available through local NPWS offices will also specify the area where pesticides will be used, the pesticide to be used and where signs will be displayed with the details of the operation.

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

- the erection or placement of signs<sup>1</sup>
- postage of letters and letterbox drops
- through the media
- NPWS website at [www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/alert/state-alerts](http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/alert/state-alerts)
- by telephone, fax, email or personal contact.

In most cases, the notification procedures will depend on the specific management technique as follows, except where no notification will be provided (see [section 3.5](#)).

- For vertebrate pesticides covered by a Pesticide Control Order ([www.epa.nsw.gov.au/pesticides/pco.htm](http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/pesticides/pco.htm)), notification will be as specified in the relevant Order, unless the Order does not specify all of the information required by the Pesticides Regulation. If the latter occurs, signs and/or notices will also provide the information required by the Pesticides Regulation (see [section 4](#) of this Plan).
- Notification for aerial spraying of weeds will comply with the procedures outlined in Appendix 1 (except for those situations described in [3.5](#)).
- For ground spot-spraying herbicides in areas frequently used, signs will be placed at the major entrances to the area to be treated (except for those situations described in [3.5](#)). Additional information will also be available at the local NPWS office and via the contact number on the sign. Signs will be put up immediately prior to pesticide use and will remain in place at least until the pesticide has dried (where the pesticide label, permit or Pesticide Control Order requires a longer period of signage, this will be followed).
- For spot-spraying areas that are used infrequently, signs will be restricted to the operating vehicle only (except for those situations described in [3.5](#)). Additional information will also be available at the local NPWS office and via the contact number on the sign.
- When using insecticides, rodenticides, fungicides, termiticides or bird-baits, signs will be placed at the major entrances to the area to be treated (except for those situations described in [3.5](#)). Additional information will also be available at the local NPWS office and via the contact number 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 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.

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<sup>1</sup>Signs put up by NPWS are often removed or subjected to vandalism. While NPWS will make every effort to replace signs removed or vandalised it cannot guarantee that this will occur in all situations.



Additional notification requirements for certain public areas are detailed below.

### **3.1.1 Viewing and day use areas**

At viewing and day use areas, signs will be placed at the major entrances to the area to be treated (except for those situations described in [3.5](#)). Additional information will also be available at the local NPWS office 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 Pesticide Control Order [[www.epa.nsw.gov.au/pesticides/pco.htm](http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/pesticides/pco.htm)] requires a longer period of signage, this will be followed). When foliage is sprayed, signs will remain at least until the pesticide has dried.

### **3.1.2 Roads and trails including verges**

Along roads and trails, signs will be placed before and after the area to be treated (except for those situations described in [3.5](#)). Additional information will also be available at the local NPWS office and via the contact number 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 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.

In remote areas where it is unlikely that the public will encounter pesticides (e.g. in remote areas of Nature Reserves that are used infrequently), signs will be restricted to the operating vehicle only.

### **3.1.3 Walking tracks and pathways**

Along walking tracks and pathways, signs will be placed before and after the area to be treated (except for those situations described in [3.5](#)). Additional information will also be available at the local NPWS office and via the contact number 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 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.

### **3.1.4 Camping grounds**

At camping grounds, signs will be placed at the major entrances to the area to be treated (except for those situations described in [3.5](#)). Additional information will also be available at the local NPWS Office and via the contact number 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 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.

### **3.1.5 Cultural heritage areas**

At cultural heritage areas, signs will be placed at the major entrances to the area to be treated (except for those situations described in [3.5](#)). Additional information will also be available at the local NPWS office and via the contact number 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 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.

In some situations there will be direct liaison with the relevant stakeholders.

### **3.1.6 Playgrounds**

Playgrounds will be closed prior to the use of any pesticides (except for minor control of insect pests using hand-held aerosols). Signs will be placed at the major entrances to the playground to be treated (except for minor control of insect pests using hand-held aerosols). Additional information will also be available at the local NPWS office and via the contact number on the sign. Signs will be put up immediately prior to closure and will remain in place at least until the playground is re-opened for public use (where the pesticide label, permit or Pesticide Control Order requires a longer period of signage, this will be followed). In addition to the information required under this Regulation (see [section 4](#) of this Plan), the signs will provide information on the closure of the playground.

### **3.1.7 Sporting fields and ovals**

At sporting fields and ovals, signs will be located at the major entrances to the area to be treated and at a location where they are most likely to be seen e.g. amenities block, change room (except for those situations described in [3.5](#)). Additional information will also be available at the local NPWS office and via the contact number 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 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.

### **3.1.8 Electricity, telecommunications and pipeline easements**

When the NPWS is applying pesticides over electricity, telecommunications and pipeline easements, signs will be located at the major entrances to the area to be treated (except for those situations described in [3.5](#)). Additional information will also be available at the local NPWS office and via the contact number 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 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 a body other than the NPWS is responsible for management of an easement that requires the application of a pesticide, the other body will be responsible for notifying the public of its use of pesticides and the NPWS will not provide notification in relation to this land. NPWS will request that body to comply with this plan.

## **3.2 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
- other category of place declared to be a sensitive public place by the Environment Protection Authority by notice in the NSW Government Gazette.

For pesticide use within 150 metres of sensitive places listed in cl.18, NPWS will provide prior or concurrent notice to that sensitive place by phone, door-knocking or letterbox drop, depending on what is practicable.

### **3.3 Notification of emergency pesticide applications**

In cases where emergency pesticide applications 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), signs will be placed 'on site' (with the exception of those situations described in [3.5](#)). Additional information will also be available at the local NPWS office and via the contact number on the sign. Signs will be put up immediately prior to pesticide use and will remain in place until the operation is completed (where the pesticide label, permit or Pesticide Control Order requires a longer period of signage, this will be followed).

Where broad-scale spraying is required at short notice (e.g. locust control) and public notification is not possible, special precautions will be taken to prevent the public encountering pesticides e.g. closure of camping grounds or walking tracks.

### **3.4 Pesticide contractors**

To assist its compliance with this plan, where the NPWS uses contractors to apply pesticides on its behalf, it will require a written commitment that they will comply with the PUNP.

### **3.5 Public places and pesticide uses where NPWS will not provide any notification**

NPWS will not provide notification in any of the following public places:

- public places over which persons or organisations hold an existing lease on NPWS land. For these places, the lessee will be required to carry out notification as per this plan
- public places that have been closed temporarily to the public where the closure is unrelated to the pesticide use [except for playgrounds; see [3.1.6](#)]
- remote areas where there is little likelihood of them being encountered by the public
  - e.g. areas where there is no vehicular access and low public visitation.

In addition, NPWS will not provide notification for the following pesticide uses in any of the public places it controls or owns:

- pesticides used in small quantities and readily available at retail outlets to the general public for the control of pests for which they are registered.
  - example 1: handheld spray bottle (e.g. for cut stump work) or backpack spraying not exceeding 1 litre of concentrate of herbicide per operator per job.
  - example 2: minor control of indoor and outdoor pests using baits or hand-held aerosols.

## **4. What information will be provided**

In accordance with 20(1)(h) of the Regulation, the following information will be available from site signs/notices or by contacting the phone number listed on such signs/notices and from the local NPWS office:

- the full product name of the pesticide as it is listed on the label
- the purpose of the application
- the proposed date, dates or date range of the pesticide application
- the place of pesticide use

- contact telephone number of an officer from the local NPWS office where the pesticide is being applied
- any warnings regarding re-entry to the place of application specified on the product label or the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) permit for use.

All of the information listed above will be available through the local NPWS office. At a minimum the site signs/notices will indicate that a pesticide will be/is being applied and provide a phone number for this local NPWS office. Signs/notices may be required to provide additional information as directed by the pesticide label, permit or Pesticide Control Order. In all cases the operator will also be able to provide all of the above information.

## **5. How the community will be informed of this plan**

Copies of the PUNP will be available at Office of Environment and Heritage Head Office Sydney CBD (Level 14, 59-61 Goulburn Street, Sydney). The PUNP can be downloaded from the NPWS website

([www.environment.nsw.gov.au/pestsweeds/PesticideUseNotificationPlan.htm](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/pestsweeds/PesticideUseNotificationPlan.htm)).

## **6. Future reviews of the PUNP**

Unless there is a specific need for an earlier review, this notification plan will be reviewed after five years. Public consultation on any proposed changes will be undertaken in accordance with clauses 21 and 22 of the Regulation.

## **7. Contact details**

Anyone wishing to contact the NPWS regarding the notification plan or to obtain details of specific pesticide applications in lands managed by NPWS should, in the first instance, contact:

The Information Officer  
Information Centre (Sydney CBD)  
National Parks and Wildlife Service  
PO Box A290  
SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1232  
Tel: 1300 361 967; [info@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@environment.nsw.gov.au)

Alternatively, contact can be made through the relevant regional office of the NPWS.

# Appendix 1. Public notification when aerial spraying weeds

For aerial spraying of weeds (normally boom or spot spraying) the below procedures will be followed (except for those situations described in [3.5](#)).

## i. Public notice

A public notice must be placed in a newspaper circulating in the local area and/or the NPWS website at [www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/alert/state-alerts](http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/alert/state-alerts) at least 14 days preceding the proposed operation to notify the public of:

- the area proposed to be sprayed and the reserve/beach/road/track closures; that these areas will be patrolled and cleared of people prior to spraying; and possible traffic delays;
- proposed dates or date range (date range is a maximum 28 day period) and anticipated duration of the spraying operation;
- the agency/council undertaking the operation;
- the full product name of the herbicide to be used (as per the label/APVMA Permit);
- purpose of the application *e.g. to control bitou bush*;
- any warnings regarding re-entry to the place of application specified on the product label or the APVMA permit for use; and
- a hotline or contact number.

## ii. On site signage

Signs will be placed on all roads, trails and tracks which give access to the treated area advising of the planned spraying operation and the closure of the reserve. The signs will be put up at least three days before the spraying operation.

Signs should contain the following information:

- the words “Warning – No Entry. Park closed to public. Aerial spraying of (*weeds or specific weed name e.g. bitou bush*) will occur in this area sometime during the period (*range of dates*)”
- full product name of the herbicide as listed on the label/APVMA Permit
- purpose of the application (e.g. to control bitou bush)
- who is undertaking the operation (i.e. the agency coordinating the spray program and not the contractor e.g. National Parks and Wildlife Service)
- map of the proposed area to be treated
- the place name at which the herbicide is to be applied
- proposed date/s and times (starting time – finishing time); the exact date will depend on various factors and thus the sign must specify a range of proposed dates
- contact details for inquiries (name and telephone number)
- any warnings regarding re-entry to the place of application specified on the product label/APVMA Permit.

Warning signs will be removed from the treated area the day after spraying (where the pesticide label, permit or Pesticide Control Order requires a longer period of signage, this will be followed).

### **iii. Notification prior to aerial application of pesticides within 150 metres of a dwelling, school premises, factory premises or another public place**

As specified in Pesticide Control Order (AIR-1), NPWS must notify and obtain the written consent from the occupier or person in charge of any dwelling, school premises, factory premises or another public place (excluding roads, travelling stock reserves and State Rail land), prior to aerially applying pesticides within 150 metres of that dwelling, school premises, factory premises or another public place. Such notification will include all information specified in section 4 of this plan. NPWS must keep a record of the notification provided and a copy of the written consent from the occupier.