



## GUIDELINE SRT/A3

### PESTICIDE USE WITHIN THE SWAN CANNING RIVERPARK

#### BACKGROUND

The Swan River Trust (the Trust) is responsible for the planning and management of waterways of the Swan Canning Riverpark (Riverpark). It has joint responsibility for the Riverpark's shoreline in conjunction with other foreshore land managers, including local government authorities and several state government agencies in which the land is vested. The use of pesticides including herbicides to control weeds and insecticides to eradicate mosquitoes often raises concern in the community who may request the Trust to intervene. In addition, foreshore land managers also seek clarification and comment from the Trust regarding its position in relation to the use of pesticides.

The *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006* and regulations do not control the legal use of pesticides; therefore the Trust does not have a legislated role in determining what pesticides are used or controlling how they are used in the Riverpark. The Trust does however have an interest in supporting the appropriate use of pesticides to ensure that ecological health and community amenity are protected.

#### OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this guideline are to:

- Establish the Trust's position regarding the administration and application of pesticides, including herbicides, within the Riverpark; and
- Provide general guidelines on the use of pesticides in the Riverpark.

#### GUIDANCE

##### SRT/A3.1 Development of pest management strategies

A pest "includes insects, weeds, fungi, nematodes, plant pathogens, and vertebrate pest animals" (DoH 2010). Thus, a "pesticide is any substance or mixture of substances used to destroy, suppress or alter the life cycle of a pest". It includes "herbicides, fungicides, insecticides, fumigants, bactericides, rodenticides, baits, lures, and repellents" (<http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/pesticides/Pesticides.htm>).

Weeds, insects and other pests within the Riverpark and adjoining areas can threaten environmental and public health, as well as creating a nuisance to users of the land. Foreshore land managers are encouraged to develop an integrated pest management (IPM) strategy to manage pests in their area of responsibility. For more information about pest management strategies including the benefits of IPM, please visit the following websites:

- <http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/pesticides/integratedpestmgmt.htm>
- [http://www.sardi.sa.gov.au/pestsdiseases/horticulture/horticultural\\_pests/diamondback\\_moth/integrated\\_pest\\_management](http://www.sardi.sa.gov.au/pestsdiseases/horticulture/horticultural_pests/diamondback_moth/integrated_pest_management)
- <http://www.epa.gov/opp00001/factsheets/ipm.htm>

The use of pesticides should be considered as part of a suite of potential control measures in the strategy - rather than a first and only option - and all measures should undergo a risk

assessment that identifies and mitigates any associated risks. Foreshore land managers are also encouraged to consult with the community in the development of their pest control strategy to help address community concerns.

### **SRT/A 3.2 Regulation of pesticides**

The State/Territory and Commonwealth governments have shared responsibility for regulating pesticides. Through a cooperative agreement between them (the National Registration Scheme), the Commonwealth regulates the manufacture, import, registration, labelling and distribution of pesticides up to the point of retail sale, while the State/Territory regulates all aspects of pesticide use after retail sale, i.e. “control of use”. The Commonwealth *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Act 1994* and the *Agricultural & Veterinary Chemicals Administration Act 1994*, and associated legislation administered by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority govern the availability of pesticides in Australia and all associated activities up to the point of retail sale.

In Western Australia, pesticide use is governed primarily by the *Health Act 1911* and the Health (Pesticides) Regulations 2011, both of which are administered by the Department of Health (DoH). Thus, DoH is the principal agency responsible for the control of use of pesticides in Western Australia. Other legislation including the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management (Agriculture Standards) Regulations 2013, Agricultural and Related Resources Protection (Spraying Restrictions) Regulations 1979, administered by the Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia, and the *Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Act 1984* and Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996, administered by the Department of Commerce, are also directly related to the use of pesticides.

Other legislation including the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* and Environmental Protection (Unauthorised Discharges) Regulation 2004, which are administered by the Department of Environment Regulation (DER) and the Environmental Protection Authority, address relevant issues such as environmental harm, pollution and waste management.

### **SRT/A3.3 Best practice management**

The Trust encourages foreshore land managers and the community to review the content of the following documents as they provide useful guide to “best practice” in the use of pesticides, particularly in and around a body of water (or waterway):

- A guide to the use of pesticides in Western Australia (DoH 2010);
- A guide to the management of pesticides in local government pest control programs in Western Australia (DoH 2009);
- Herbicides: Guidelines for use in and around water (Cooperative Research Centre for Australian Weed Management 2005);
- Code of practice for the use of agricultural and veterinary chemicals in Western Australia, Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia (DAFWA, 2005);
- Water Note 22: *Herbicide use in Wetlands* (Water and Rivers Commission 2002); and
- Guidelines for safe and effective herbicide use near water (DPIWE 2002).

### **SRT/A3.4 Management of application of pesticides in the Riverpark**

Foreshore land managers and the community need to be aware that pesticides, including herbicides readily bind to soil particles, and are subsequently transported in runoff to receiving water bodies. The sediment-laden runoff could have an adverse impact on the ecological functions of the river system, particularly fish and other aquatic life.

Where pesticides are to be used in the Riverpark, preferably as part of a pest management strategy, foreshore land managers must comply with all relevant regulations and are urged to apply 'best practice' in the application of pesticides. Adherence to relevant legislation, code of practice, guidelines and standards will contribute to ensuring that risks to the environment, workers, and visitors to the Riverpark, are appropriately managed.

In addition, following these guidelines will also ensure that pesticides are used in the most effective manner possible with regard to (i) timing of applications (season, time of day, climate and growth stage of the weed or insect), (ii) location, and (iii) type of pesticide used. Inappropriate use of pesticides can be expensive and could result in little or no discernible impact on the intended pest population.

Appropriate warning notices and/or signage as required by the DoH under regulations 88 and 89 of the Health (Pesticides) Regulations 2011 or other agencies, should be used to ensure the public are aware of local pesticide applications. These warnings may be local i.e. a sign on the day of spraying or more widespread such as

- (i) notices on local government website, and/or
- (ii) local newspapers, depending on the:
  - scale of the pesticide operation;
  - which pesticide to be used;
  - location (near houses, schools, areas with high density of sensitive receptors such as children or elderly); and
  - method of pesticide application (hand-held spray or widespread aerial distribution).

### **SRT/A3.5 Reporting of inappropriate use of pesticides in the Riverpark**

Members of the public are encouraged to report inappropriate use or disposal of pesticides to the appropriate authority e.g. your local government and/or DER (Pollution Response 1300 784 782).

#### **Related policies**

Policy SRT/D4 Stormwater management

Draft policy SRT/D20-Nutrient offset policy for the Swan Canning catchment

Policy SRT/EA1 Conservation, land use and landscape preservation

Policy SRT/DE5 On-site wastewater management systems and industrial wastewater

Policy SRT/EA2 Foreshore reserves

## TERMINOLOGY

**Pest** “includes insects, weeds, fungi, nematodes, plant pathogens, vertebrate pest animals, etc” (DoH 2010).

**Pesticides:** “A pesticide is any substance or mixture of substances used to destroy, suppress or alter the life cycle of a pest... Pesticides include herbicides, fungicides, insecticides, fumigants, bactericides, rodenticides, baits, lures, repellents and pesticides used on animals to control external parasites” (New South Wales Environment Protection Authority, <http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/pesticides/Pesticides.htm>).

Legally, a pesticide has the same ‘definition as an agricultural chemical product’ i.e.

“a substance or mixture of substances that is represented, imported, manufactured, supplied or used as a means of directly or indirectly destroying, stupefying, repelling, inhibiting of, or preventing infestation by or attacks of, any pest in relation to a plant, a place or thing; or destroying a plant; or modifying the physiology of a plant or pest so as to alter its natural development, productivity, quality or productive capacity” (DoH 2010).

## REFERENCES

Cooperative Research Centre for Australian Weed Management 2005 *Herbicides: Guidelines for use in and around water* ([www.weeds.crc.org.au](http://www.weeds.crc.org.au)).

DAFWA 2005 *Code of practice for the use of agricultural and veterinary chemicals in Western Australia*, Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia, South Perth.

DoH 2010 *A guide to the use of pesticides in Western Australia*; Western Australia Department of Health, East Perth.

DoH 2009 *A guide to the management of pesticides in local government pest control programs in Western Australia*; Western Australia Department of Health, East Perth.

DPIWE 2002. *Guideline for safe and effective herbicide use near water*; Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment, Tasmania.

New South Wales Environment Protection Authority, <http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/pesticides/Pesticides.htm>; accessed 10 April 2014.

Water and Rivers Commission 2002 *Herbicide Use in Wetlands*; Water Note 22, Water and Rivers Commission, East Perth.

## ADOPTION AND REVIEW DATES

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