

USE OF HERBICIDES IN THE TOWN

Previous policy number: 2.2.16

Policy Statement

The Town strives to provide a high quality and aesthetically pleasing environment for residents and visitors, with a large focus on leafy and landscaped parks, gardens, and natural areas. In order to do this, unwanted species must be managed, and the Town is dedicated to undertaking this in a considered manner with as little herbicide intervention impact on the environment and people as possible.

Policy Details

Maintaining an offering of quality parks and natural areas means keeping them safe to users, pruned, mowed, planted, and predominantly weed free.

Not only are weeds aesthetically displeasing, they can degrade natural areas, and other landscapes, by seeding prolifically and outcompeting the natural vegetation. Weeds readily spread into unwanted areas such as kerb lines, private property and turf if they are not managed effectively.

The Town controls weeds in the following circumstances;

1. In turf;
2. Natural areas;
3. Parks;
4. Footpaths;
5. Kerb lines;
6. Medians and roundabouts; And
7. Laneways.

The Town currently follows the best practice approach considered to be Integrated Weed Management (IWM). This means that weeds are controlled using a mix of the following methods, mainly;

1. Covering bare ground with mulch or ground cover plants.
2. Chemical control; And
3. Manual control.

The Town actively pursues trials to reduce the impact of chemical control for the purpose of treating weeds. To date this has included alternative products, alternative applications schedules, as well as diluted mixes of herbicides.

The Town relies mainly on two herbicides for weed control. These are shown in the table below.

Policy Positions

Current Chemical Control Regimes

The Town is unable to cease the use of herbicides completely while maintaining the current aesthetics without a substantial budget increase, or significant risk to the existing ecosystem. Considering this, the following schedule and frequency will be undertaken, with products approved for use by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA). In all instances, minimisation of the volume of herbicide is preferred, and might require an increased frequency of visits, but less herbicide, or vice versa.



Purpose	Product	Product Schedule	Treatment Frequency	Volume Used Annually
Turf	Spearhead	Schedule 6	Annually	30 litres
Turf (edges, around infrastructure)	Glyphosate	Schedule 5	Quarterly (max) as required	50 litres
Natural areas	Glyphosate (unless areas is in a trial)	Schedule 5	Six weeks	152 Litres
Parks	Glyphosate	Schedule 5	Eight weeks	140 Litres
Footpaths	Glyphosate	Schedule 5	Bi-annually	2 litres
Kerb lines	Glyphosate	Schedule 5	Bi-annually	12 litres
Medians and round-a-bouts	Glyphosate	Schedule 5	Bi-annually	2 litres
Laneways	Glyphosate	Schedule 5	Bi-annually	4 litres
Drainage sumps	Glyphosate	Schedule 5	Bi-annually	10 litres

Manual Weed Control

With support from volunteers, such as the Friends of Mosman Park Bushland, contractors, and internal employees, hand weeding occurs frequently throughout the Town. In order to gain the most value from hand weeding, this mainly occurs among newly planted areas where watering is occurring, or where weeds have grown in plants rendering chemical control ineffective.

Mulching and Planting for Weed Suppression

The Town will routinely budget for ground cover and mulch in public places that present as weed problem sites. This includes median islands, roundabouts and other areas which are difficult to frequent for weed management.

Trialling Alternative Methods

The Town is committed to trialling alternative products and regimes for the purpose of controlling weeds in the Town. To note, the Town has tried many alternative in the past with varying success. If a new product, or treatment option, becomes available and is deemed viable, the Town will proactively select locations where trials can be undertaken. This will be in liaison with Council, as well as the local and surrounding community. If at any time a trial is deemed ineffective, administration will advise Council and take proactive measures to regain control of the site.

The Town will work with industry and other local government authorities to seek out and assess other products, and as such will not re-produce trials done by other local governments unless there is justification that the outcome may be different given our situation.

Chemical Spray Exclusions

The Town operates a *Do Not Spray Register* whereby residents can advise the Town they do not wish the adjacent footpath, kerb line or fence line to be sprayed. It then becomes the resident's responsibility to maintain this adjacent area as weed free throughout the year.

The Town also has some individual arrangements with residents adjacent or nearby public land who engage in a similar agreement where the Town does not spray and they manually remove weeds. These agreements currently make up a very small number however is an option made available.

Definitions

Schedule: Australian classification system used to determine regulatory controls.

Chemical Control: Method of control utilising chemicals.

Manual Control: Method of control utilising manual means such as hand weeding or hand tools.

Herbicide: Chemical used in the control of plants, including weeds.

Governance References

Statutory Compliance	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i> <i>Health Act (Pesticides) 2011</i> <i>Health Act (Pesticides) Regulations 2011</i> <i>Public Health Act 2016)</i> .
Organisational Compliance	Nil.

Policy Administration

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Technical Services		Executive Manager Technical Services
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1	26 November 2019	OCM-161-2019
2		
3		