

**APSE Seminar**  
**23<sup>rd</sup> July 2009**

**Managing parks in  
challenging times**



# EU pesticides legislation and possible impact on amenity pesticide use.

# EU Thematic Strategy for pesticides

Treaty of Rome (environmental objectives)

6<sup>th</sup> Environmental Action Programme

Thematic Strategy for Pesticides

(Aim to reduce risk to human health and the environment)



# EU Thematic Strategy for Pesticides

Pre-marketing  
authorisation

Directive 91/414  
(to be replaced  
by **regulation**)

Use stage

Member state  
actions

**Sustainable Use  
Directive**

Standards for new  
machinery

Post-use Monitoring  
Maximum Residue  
Levels and Water  
Framework Directive  
**Statistics Regulation**

# Pesticide authorisation regulation

Modernise and rationalise regulatory regime:–  
Raise bar in terms of perceived levels of protection, get the regime to work more efficiently.

Negative impact on product availability:–  
Use of hazard criteria as basis for approval of products.  
Lack of clarity on definitions means impact is uncertain.

*Less of an issue for amenity than agriculture/horticulture?*

# Sustainable Use Directive

National Action Plans.

On-going training and certificates for users, distributors and advisers.

Sprayer testing. (NSTS)

Protection of water and other sensitive sites.

Promotion of integrated approaches (IPM).

*More of a challenge for the amenity sector.*



# National Action Plans – Policy

National Action Plans shall set quantitative objectives, targets, measures, indicators to reduce risks and impact of pesticides...and encourage development of IPM and alternative approaches and techniques in order to reduce dependency on the use pesticides.

# Training

Member states shall ensure all professional users, distributors and advisors have access to appropriate training by bodies designated by competent authorities. This shall consist of both **initial and additional training to acquire and update knowledge as appropriate.**

Training shall cover: legislation; hazards; risks to humans, symptoms of poisoning and first aid measures; risks to the environment; IPM; storage, handling, mixing and disposal, preparation; operation, use and maintenance of application equipment; emergency action in case of accidents; health monitoring and access facilities to report incidents; counterfeit products; and record keeping.

# Sprayer testing

Member states shall ensure that pesticide application equipment in professional use shall be inspected at regular intervals...at least every 5 years until 2020 and then every 3 years thereafter. All machines shall have been tested by 2016 and from this date only those which have passed an inspection can be used.

Handheld equipment and knapsacks may be exempted from testing, provided member states ensure operators have been informed on the need to regularly change accessories, on risks linked to the equipment and that operators are trained in proper use. Provided that risk and scale of use assessments are carried out.

Handhelds, knapsacks, application equipment not used for spraying pesticides or other types of machinery (must be listed in national action plans) may be tested less (or more!) frequently. Provided that risk and scale of use assessments are carried out.

# Protection of Water

Member states shall ensure that appropriate measures to protect the aquatic environment and drinking water supplies from the impact of pesticides are adopted.

Measures shall include: giving preference to products not classified as dangerous for the aquatic environment; giving preference to the most efficient application techniques; use of mitigation measures which minimise off-site pollution caused by spray drift, drain-flow and run-off.

Measures also include minimising or eliminating applications along roads, railway lines, very permeable surfaces or other infrastructure close to water or on sealed surfaces with a high risk of run-off to water or sewage systems

# Protection of 'specific areas'

Taking account of risk assessments and having due regard for necessary hygiene, public health and biodiversity member states shall prohibit or minimise use in areas used by the general public or vulnerable groups.

Areas are defined as parks, public gardens, sports and recreation grounds, school grounds and playgrounds and in the close vicinity of healthcare facilities (also protected areas as defined under the water framework directive, Natura 2000 sites and areas recently treated which are used by or accessible to agricultural workers).

# Integrated approaches

Member states shall take all necessary measures to promote low pesticide-input pest management, giving priority to non-chemical methods so that professional users switch to lowest risk practices and products. Low input defined as IPM.

Member states shall establish or support the establishment of necessary conditions for the implementation of IPM, making sure professional users have information, tools, decision-making and advisory services at their disposal.

General principles of IPM to be implemented by all professional users by start of 2014. Sector specific IPM may be drawn up by professional users and member states shall encourage their adoption.

# The use of pesticides

Protecting the environment using pesticides  
Protecting the environment from the use of  
pesticides

# Why we need pesticides

Pesticides are cost-effective tools for use in amenity areas, parks, sports facilities, industrial areas, roadways and footpaths for reasons of **safety, efficiency, aesthetic value, public health, to meet legal requirements as well as economy.**

# Safety

Weed growth can:

- ▶ Obscure warning and direction signs;
- ▶ Reduce or completely obstruct visibility for drivers at junctions and corners;
- ▶ Hide dangerous obstacles and valuable equipment;
- ▶ Disrupt and raise tarmac, concrete and paved areas, creating trip points;
- ▶ Clog drainage channels, causing carriageway or footway deterioration and flooding with possible aqua-planeing by cars during heavy rainfall;
- ▶ Create a fire hazard when dry or dead;
- ▶ Provide harbourage for rats and mice.

Moss growth on hard surfaces can cause pedestrians or games players to slip and injure themselves.

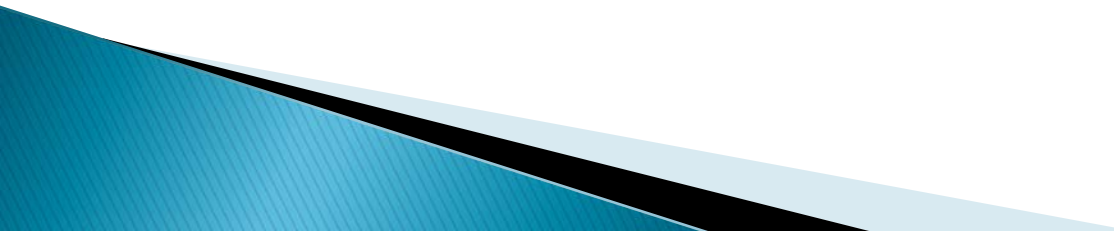
# Efficiency

The use of herbicides or growth regulators can improve efficiency by:

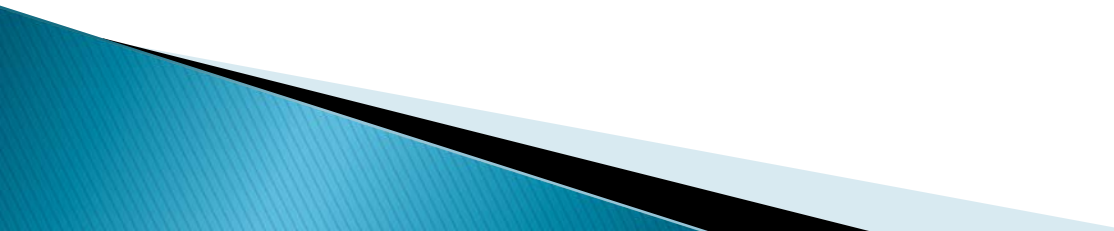
- ▶ Allowing a person to eradicate weeds over a much larger area in one day than someone with a hoe or a mechanical cutter;
- ▶ Achieving a longer-lasting kill – other methods rarely remove more than the foliage leaving the roots to regenerate;
- ▶ Reducing the need for maintenance work and costly replacement of fences, walls, roadways, pavements etc;
- ▶ Avoiding physical damage to trees, shrubs, and other items by mechanical tools;
- ▶ Eliminating the risk of injury to operators of mechanical cutting and cultivating equipment;
- ▶ Keeping waterways clear of weed growth which can impede flow, leading to flooding and increased pumping costs.

# Aesthetic Value

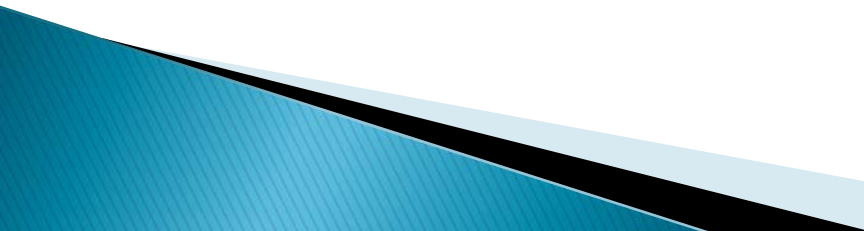
The use of herbicides, fungicides and insecticides can:

- ▶ Remove unsightly weeds from path edges, around trees and shrubs in pavements, public parks, cemeteries and other open spaces;
  - ▶ Improve the growth of trees and shrubs by removing competition for nutrients and water;
  - ▶ Eradicate unwanted weeds, diseases and pests in turf, especially where good playing surfaces are essential such as golf courses, bowling greens, football and cricket pitches and tennis courts;
  - ▶ Clear weeds from kerbs and other areas where they can trap unsightly rubbish, this can reduce the cost of litter collection;
  - ▶ Improve the appearance of unkempt areas, discouraging vandalism, graffiti and fly-tipping.
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# Public Health

- ▶ Herbicides can eliminate vegetation in waste areas which harbour vermin;
  - ▶ Insecticides can control disease-bearing pests such as fleas, flies, cockroaches and mosquitoes.
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# Legal requirements

- ▶ *The Noxious Weeds Act (1959)* requires landowners to eliminate scheduled weeds such as ragwort , various thistles and docks to prevent their seeds contaminating neighbour's land;
  - ▶ *Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981)* specifies control of certain plants such as Giant Hogweed and Japanese knotweed.
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# Economy

In economic terms ...

...a number of local authorities have compared the cost of hand-weeding with that of chemical control. In a borough which has about 600km of footpaths and pavements, the estimate for hand-weeding was about £200,000; the estimate for chemical control (two treatments) was about £20,000, which also gave much better results and longer control.

# Best Practice Guide to Amenity Weed, Pest and Disease Control

- 1 Identify the problem**
- 2 Decide on control measures**

In many cases the solution may be dependent on a combination of control methods due to the vagaries of weather, available labour, costs, equipment and staff training.

Following an 'Integrated Amenity Management Programme' in conjunction with the use of pesticides is more likely to provide a high standard and cost effective end result.

# Integrated Pest Management

## **Hard surfaces – pavements, roads, etc**

Sweeping programme – remove silt/dirt preventing germination

Design – seal all cracks where weeds can germinate

## **Grass – sports pitches, golf courses**

*Cultural practices to help prevent the conditions that favour disease*

Aeration – improves drainage, root establishment

Scarification – removes thatch

Fertiliser programme – encourages a healthy grass sward

Dew removal

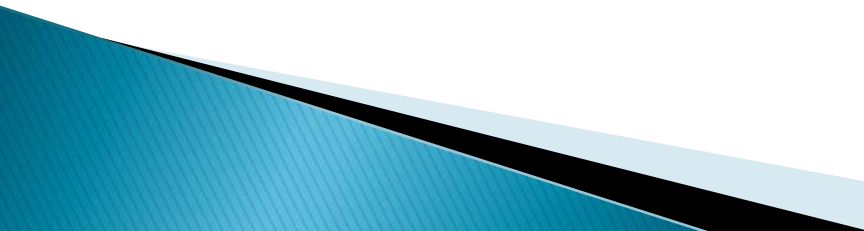
Improve light and airflow

## **Shrub beds**

Mulches and ground cover to prevent weed growth

# Safe use of pesticides

## Simple checklist

- ▶ Do I need to use pesticides?
  - ▶ Have I looked at alternatives? (IPM)
  - ▶ Am I qualified to choose which pesticide to use?
  - ▶ Do I know someone who is qualified? (BASIS)
  - ▶ Do I have full details of the problem?
  - ▶ Do I have legal storage facility?
  - ▶ Do I have qualifications to apply pesticide or do my staff? (NPTC)
  - ▶ Am I using a contractor, if yes have I checked their qualifications?
  - ▶ Am I in receipt of all records?
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# Code of practice for using plant protection products

# Conclusion –some key messages

- World is changing –EU Thematic Strategy will put pressure on product availability, so development of integrated approaches necessary.
  - Pesticides are effective and economical means of managing vegetation, however risks associated with use are what we seek to minimise.
  - Amenity use contributes to pollution of water, but risks can be minimised through adoption of ‘**Best Practice**’ and following the Code of Practice.
  - Local Authorities are major users, with a wide variation in standards though.
  - Local Authority structures make it difficult to effectively target messages.
  - Government implementation of EU pesticides legislation requires industry, Local Authorities and other stakeholders to play their part.
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