

GLYPHOSATE

The City of Stonnington is responsible for the management and maintenance of 150+ parks, sportsgrounds and areas of natural bushland, plus hundreds of kilometres of roads, footpaths and laneways.

A range of weed control techniques are employed to keep community assets free of invasive and destructive weeds – including using the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority approved herbicide, glyphosate.

What is glyphosate?

Glyphosate is a broad spectrum herbicide that works on a wide variety of leafy weeds. It doesn't distinguish one weed from another.

It is commonly used to control weeds in domestic and agricultural situations, plus on local government land such as parks, sportsgrounds, footpaths and roadways.

Why do we use glyphosate?

Glyphosate is an approved weed killer by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority, the Australian government's national regulator of agricultural and veterinary chemical products.

Glyphosate is used as an approved, effective and cost effective method of controlling weeds in parks, gardens, footpaths and other public areas.

It is the most widely used herbicide by local councils and other public land managers in Australia.

Which glyphosate product do we use?

In Australia, there are around 500 products containing glyphosate registered for use. These include commonly known weed killers - Roundup, Roundup Biactive, Accord, Rodeo and Touchdown.

The City of Stonnington uses Roundup Biactive. It is considered more environmentally sensitive than the original Roundup formulation, and is approved for use in areas such as around streams, creeks, dams, channels and drains.

The product is a water soluble herbicide for non-selective control of annual and perennial weeds, and is considered the most efficient and effective method of controlling weeds across the city.

Where is glyphosate used?

The glyphosate-based product, Roundup Biactive is used to eradicate weeds in City of Stonnington parks, gardens, sportsgrounds, roadside kerbs and footpaths.

How is glyphosate applied?

Glyphosate is applied by trained staff in accordance with the manufacturer's safety instructions.

Before working with glyphosate staff are provided training in the safe use of the product.

The product is applied as a liquid, sprayed directly onto weeds with a hand-held applicator.

How are the public advised when glyphosate is being applied?

Advisory signs 'Weed Spraying in Progress' are erected before the product is applied and remain in place until the treated area is dry.

In some instances a blue dye is added as a visual indicator of which weeds have been treated.

Is it safe to use a park after it has been sprayed?

Glyphosate becomes inactive when it dries, at which time the treated area is ready to be used.

What should you do if you or a pet step on wet grass that has been sprayed?

Although the weed killer is diluted to an approved concentration it is recommended you wash any part of your or your pet's body that has come into contact with the wet grass.

Are there alternatives to glyphosate?

Yes. The City uses a range of weed control management techniques including manual removal, steam, slashing, mulching, strategic planting and approved herbicide spraying.

At this time the most efficient, effective and cost competitive method of weed control is approved herbicide spraying.

Concern about the use of glyphosate-based chemicals

In the past few years there has been increasing media coverage and community concern around the use of glyphosate-based herbicides such as Roundup.

As a result, a growing number of cities around the world have banned, or declared an intention to ban, the use of glyphosate amid concerns about its safety and impact on human health.

These concerns exist despite the national chemical regulator, Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority and many of its counterparts around the world, declaring glyphosate safe to use in accordance with the manufacturer's label instructions.

Council's response to glyphosate concerns

In response to concerns around the safety of glyphosate the City of Stonnington will:

- » explore the feasibility of phasing out the use of glyphosate-based herbicides for weed control, subject to a suitable alternative being identified.
- » continue to use approved glyphosate-based herbicides in a minimal, selective and targeted manner – in accordance with the label instructions, the product safety data sheet, safe work procedures, personal protective equipment prescriptions and Council's OHS policies and procedures.

- » where feasible, use alternative weed control methods (such as steam) in priority locations such as playgrounds.
- » maintain a 'No Spray' Register allowing residents to request that weeds not be sprayed adjacent to their property. Residents on the register would be responsible for the management of weeds adjacent to the property.
- » provide updated training for all staff in the safe handling, mixing and use of glyphosate-based herbicides and the correct use of personal protective equipment.
- » ensure 'Spraying in Progress' signs are displayed during herbicide application by staff and contractors.
- » complete a 6-month controlled trial of alternative weed control methods including steam and non-glyphosate based chemicals to measure cost, efficiency and suitability.
- » continue to monitor developments in respect to the use of glyphosate.

'No Spray' Register

A 'No Spray' register has been set up for residents who do not want herbicide used to control weeds adjacent to their property.

If a property is listed on the 'No Spray' register we will no longer apply herbicide to control weeds in the kerb or footpath adjacent to the property.

If you would like to register your property on the 'No Spray' register visit stonnington.vic.gov.au/weeds

By signing up to the register you agree to control weeds in the kerb and footpath to the same standard as would be achieved by herbicide spraying.

More information

For more information about glyphosate-based herbicides visit the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority at <https://apvma.gov.au/>